

# Prairie Dog Park gets a new playground

## Prairie Dog State Park News

Toby Kuhn

Park Manager

After many years, Prairie Dog State Park finally has a playground. The play structure was installed on Sept. 21 and 22. Staff from Prairie Dog State Park, Norton Department of Corrections Crew Three, Webster State Park and Cedar Bluff State Park installed the structure and the independent play components. On Oct. 21, park staff installed the swing set. Currently, we are waiting on the de-

livery of the remaining mulch and landscape timbers to complete the playground. Once the playground is completed, we can proceed with the road, sidewalk, parking area and additional landscaping. All of the work will be ADA compliant. This project has been long overdue and is a much needed amenity for our park patrons.

The play structure was manufactured by Athco and is a Play-booster. It consists of a double slide, a curved single slide, a natural climbing rock, fire pole, loop pole, various platforms and a vertical climbing ladder. Independent play structures are two raccoon spring rockers, three mushroom climbers and a bear face panel. The swing set is a single bay, two swings, manufactured by Little Tykes. The

safety surfacing material is wood mulch to a depth of 12 inches. All of the components were installed to comply with the NPSI regulations. We have received many positive comments from the kids who have had a chance to use the playground.

Park staff has requested playground equipment for many years through the budgeting process. Unfortunately, the project was never funded. Not wanting to give up, long-time camp hosts Mike and Vickie Bailey took it upon themselves to begin a fund-raising project in 2009. Through their efforts and the generous donations received, a total of \$7,675 was raised. In addition, park staff scaled back the renovations to Prairie Dog and Shady Rest campgrounds to also

increase the amount of money available for a playground. When that wasn't enough, park staff applied for a Land Water Conserva-

tion Fund grant to bring the project to fruition. Final costs will be in excess of \$35,000. The private donations were what tipped the scale to our favor. These privately donated monies showed the strong support our park patrons have for the park and this project.



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As time and money allows, we plan on developing the playground area even further. We would like to install horseshoe pits, a basketball court, shade structures and eventually, a community shelter. With all of the families camping in the park, we believe it is important to

cutting and dedication ceremony will be held next spring. We would like to thank all of the individuals, businesses and charities that contributed to the playground:

I.O.O.F. Norton Lodge No. 157  
Norton Lions Club Charities  
Nex-Tech, Inc.

Moffet Drug The Vollertsen Corp.

Gall Motor Co., Inc. New Look Body Shop

New Age Industrial Corp., Inc.  
Shelby Mulford

James and Lida Sharp  
Mick and Colette Miller



## Welcome . . . to Prairie Dog State Park

A prime place to experience the shortgrass prairies of western Kansas, Prairie Dog State Park occupies 1,150 acres on the shores of Keith Sebelius Reservoir in Norton County. The park is home to a thriving prairie dog colony and is the site of the last remaining adobe house in Kansas. The renovated adobe house was built on the site in the early 1890's. A 1.4 mile nature trail

complete with interpretive signage is a great way to explore the park. Two vintage 19th century buildings are preserved here, including a one room school and renovated adobe house. Sebelius Reservoir is well known for its excellent fishing opportunities. In recent years, anglers have found productive fishing for black bass, walleye, wiper, crappie, catfish and saugeye.



Jasper

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