



Will Godwin explores East Texas natural history with his students as they prowl the grounds of Jarvis Christian College looking for signs of insect life.

A Very Good Win and Very Good Friends for

Natural East Texas

The idea and existence of the East Texas Natural History Museum at Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins germinated, sprouted, grew and began bearing fruit seemingly overnight.

The inspiration for the natural history museum came about at the christening of another of Jarvis' more recent accomplishments, the March 2011 opening of a 2-mile nature trail, made possible with a grant from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. James Goodwin, an entomologist and professor of biology, spearheaded the grant effort and the development of the trails during Sebetha Jenkins' tenure as Jarvis president.

This trail is 85 percent forested and replete with a 1,600-foot boardwalk to traverse wetlands, and it has a covered pavilion with restroom facilities. This trail is open to the public every day, one hour after daylight and two hours before dark. Visitors need just sign in at the guard building at the entrance to Jarvis.

On opening day of the trails, college president Cornell Thomas asked Goodwin what he was planning for his next

project. Goodwin boldly asked for an unused dormitory building to create a natural history museum.

"One week after the trail opened, President Thomas gave me the building," Goodwin said. "At the time, our collection was only four cabinets of small insects like mayflies, dragonflies, horseflies, beetles and aquatic insects."

Beyond having only a very modest collection, the bigger challenge would be reinventing a dormitory that had been unused for years. The building was filled with stored junk. It also needed electrical and plumbing work and a working air-conditioning unit to be suitable for housing delicate collections of dried plants and pinned insects and provide adequate work areas for research.

Back when Goodwin was building the trails, he'd relied heavily upon the donated services of another entomologist col-

league and friend, William Godwin. The two had worked together on past research. So Goodwin asked Godwin to help out on the wetland permitting part of the trails project. That relationship carried over into a partnership. Godwin joined the faculty at Jarvis. The two then worked together to develop the museum. Working with many volunteers including students, other faculty and church groups, they cleaned, repainted, rewired, carpeted and added air conditioning to the building.

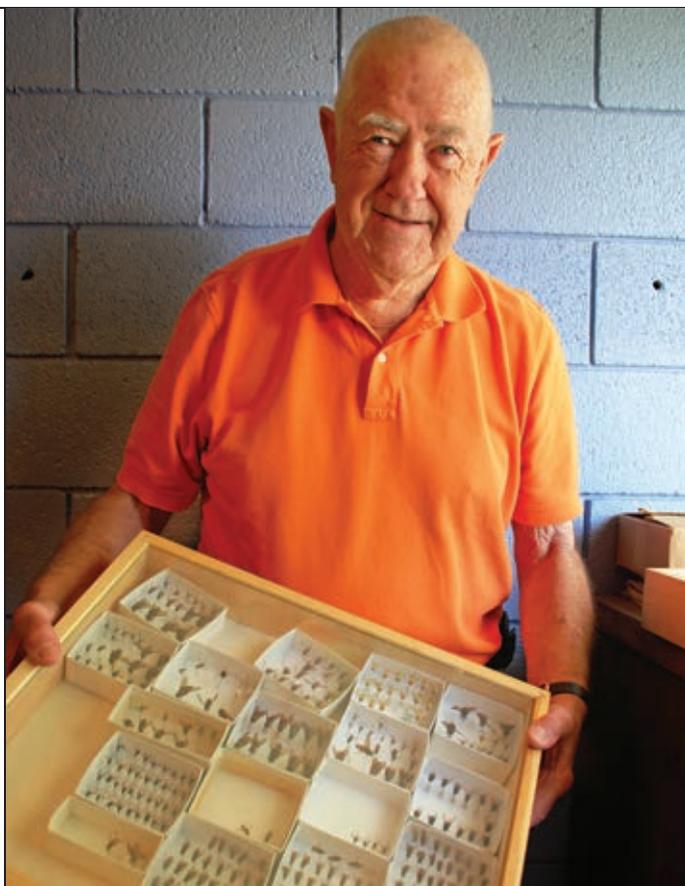
With all of the help, it wasn't long before the building was in usable condition; but, Godwin said, beyond the small bug collection, they had no other collections, no blackboards, no equipment and no furniture. So they turned to what he calls "the most valuable piece of collecting equipment, the telephone." He said he'd call collectors and say, "We have a deal you can't refuse. I can give you a climate-controlled room to store your collections, and you can become a research associate. Your collection will still be yours, and will be well taken care of, and we can use it for education and inspiration." Repeatedly, he and Goodwin used that win-win approach to score numerous collections for the museum.

A father-and-son lepidopterist duo, Robert Nuelle Sr. and Robert Nuelle Jr. from Houston, have loaned 10,000 specimens of their significant butterfly and moth collection to the museum. On his blog about the loan, the elder Nuelle wrote: "That is one of the great things about the [the museum]. Collections can be placed here for study and research. Our holdings will form the basis of a good start in the area of Texas butterflies and moths and joins other amazing collections like Dr. Will Godwin's Coleoptera—beetles and Dr. James Goodwin's Tabanidae—horseflies."

Another significant collection the natural history museum was able to secure was a 5,000-specimen herbarium of plant specimens from the U.S. Forest Service in Nacogdoches. At first, the administrators at the Forest Service were reluctant to deposit the collection at the museum because it was unknown and small, and they were not certain it would be well taken care of. Godwin called upon the Botanical Research Institute of Texas in Austin, undisputed plant authorities, and asked them to pledge to take care of the collection so that the museum could deposit it. The botanists agreed, and, with the collection now installed at Jarvis, a cadre of scientists visit frequently to use the facilities for research and plant collecting.

Of the symbiotic relationship, Godwin says, "These scientists would have to spend hundreds of hours to search for the plants they are collecting. We take them where they want to go. We give them a lab to work in. We save them money." But, he says—and here's the "ah ha" moment. "They must agree to work with our students at Jarvis."

By any standards, Jarvis is a small college. It was incorporated in 1928 as a historically black college or university. One would reason that students attending such a small four-year college would not typically have access to major authorities of science on a regular basis. But, with the installation of the museum and the flow of visiting scientific experts, students are now exposed to and can work with some of the foremost entomologists, botanists and scientists in the United States and



James Goodwin volunteers an enormous amount of time and energy to the museum he helped found at Jarvis during his tenure.

internationally, from as far away as Russia.

Godwin says it's counterintuitive to what most believe of the college experience. Most think they must go to a large school to gain the knowledge and access to the experts that they need to succeed in the science fields. But in reality, those courses may have hundreds of students, and it may be years before a student works closely with top-notch experts. At Jarvis, these renowned experts come to them. All a student has to do is express an interest to be included in fieldwork, and as an undergraduate, they will be outflanking all of their peers at much larger colleges.

Since the grand opening last fall, the natural history museum has made notable progress, mostly through the efforts and contacts of Godwin and Goodwin. And although Goodwin has now retired from Jarvis, he still devotes an enormous amount of volunteer time serving as museum director.

"The museum has expanded into way more than a natural history collection," he said. He explained that Godwin is not just a "bug collector" but a collector at heart. Therefore, the museum has come to house crockery and pottery shards from the 1800s that have been excavated from the region. Also on display is a collection of vintage pelt stretchers used by trappers and a growing collection of fish specimens collected predominantly locally. Additionally, there are a fair amount of rocks and minerals and also some taxidermied birds and small mammals.

The museum also houses Godwin's collection of paintings by Dan Lay, who was among the first Texas wildlife biologists

working in game management and conservation. Lay published many articles for professional journals, and he performed extensive fieldwork in East Texas. His study also led to the protections for the red-cockaded woodpecker, which was placed on the endangered species list. He also co-authored "Land of Bears and Honey: A Natural History of East Texas" with Joe C. Truett, about the ecological impacts of humans on East Texas. The paintings on display at the museum are all related to nature and his studies of the East Texas ecosystem.

For a museum that is not even a year old, the Jarvis facility is well on its way to becoming a coveted place for botanists, biologists and entomologists to use as a base for fieldwork. There are now eight research associates attached. And in addition to the rooms that house specimens, there is a small conference room, two specimen preparation rooms, a supply room and nine dorm rooms for sleeping quarters. Ultimately, some of the sleeping quarters may be whittled down as collections grow, and they need more space for those.

In addition to being an economic benefit to the region, the museum and instructors are also available for scheduled classroom and group field trips. Presentations can center on the purpose of collecting and include demonstrations of how they do it, or they can be tailored to a particular species. In the past, for residents to see the types of specimens available at the museum and participate in the types of activities held there, they would have had to travel to Baton Rouge, Austin or Houston. "Everything we do is open to the public," Godwin says. "We thrive on more fellowship."

The Godwin-Godwin team has boundless energy and enthusiasm for the future. Notably, the museum activity is not part of the Jarvis budget, so all of its growth has come from donations, loans and volunteers, but that has not seemed to slow it down. Goodwin and Godwin hope that as the word gets out about the activities, others will be motivated to loan their collections. They are also seeking anybody with a love of natural history who would like to volunteer. They can use all types of skills, from carpentry to pinning insects to label typing. They can find ways for just about anybody to contribute. In particular, they are looking for an enclosed trailer to help them



with their outreach. They would like to be able to take their show on the road to schools and classes that can't visit Jarvis and to be able to promote the museum at local festivals and nature events. In addition to sharing their wealth of knowledge, they want the trailer to gain exposure for the museum and let the public learn it exists.

Besides the educational goldmine, economic benefits and pure entertainment value of this museum for our region, there is an overarching and important mission. It's to collect and preserve a record of the local flora and fauna of Northeast Texas that has been traditionally overlooked. The process includes identifying all of the components of habitat diversity and the microhabitats ranging from saline prairies to bogs to sandy barrens and glades. The further mission is to guide global specialists to these areas for research

to help further understand locally rare habitat types.

Creating baselines to determine how our ecosystem is changing, counting and studying insects, collecting plants, and studying habits and habitats of living creatures is a pretty interesting way of life. Between Goodwin and Godwin, they've practically been to the ends of the earth, studying and serving in Asia, Africa, North and South America, Europe and Australia. And they both have knowledge and impressive credentials, wisdom, charisma and a love for what they do. But more important, they want to share all of it with their students, with visitors and with everybody who lives in or visits East Texas.

Interestingly, these good professors' last names, Goodwin and Godwin are variants of the same ancient English surname, Godewyn or Godwine. According to onomastics, which is the study of the meaning of proper names, their surnames are both composed of "god," denoting either "god" or "good," and "wine," meaning friend or protector. Surnames are a link to centuries past, where they distinguished one's livelihood. These two have very much proven to be good friends and protectors of our East Texas natural history.

To take part in this incredible endeavor, either by scheduling a group visit, volunteering, donating a collection, or donating other resources such as an enclosed trailer, contact Godwin. He can be reached at (936) 556-2289 or wgodwin@jarvis.edu.

Jarvis Christian College is located in Hawkins on Highway 80.

Cooperative-Inspired Leadership Lessons

Two local teens, Ashton Baucum, daughter of Wood County Electric Cooperative members Chuck and Terri Baucum of Mineola, and Emilee Davis, daughter of WCEC member Kevin B. Davis of Mineola, served as Wood County Electric Cooperative's ambassadors on the annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour. These young ladies represented WCEC well as they traveled to Washington, D.C., in June where they visited historic monuments, toured museums and met with lawmakers at the U.S. Capitol.

This trip was an opportunity for these young ladies to meet with about 1,500 other student leaders representing other electric cooperatives from across the country. Photo galleries and more information about this annual event are posted on the Youth Tour website: youthtour.coop.



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Still Improving Our Communities in the 21st Century

The single most important factor in the growth and success of our rural and farming communities has been the delivery of electricity. The essential force behind the building of the wires, infrastructure and our communities has been electric cooperatives.

Wood County Electric Cooperative was founded by our local people on principles that are still followed today. Concern for Community is not just one of the seven principles we hang on our wall and publish in our public relations material. It's a real tenet backed by real work as we focus on sustainable development of the communities that we live in, work in and serve.

Each year, the cooperative supports local charitable and economic efforts through donations to livestock and 4-H shows, rodeos, volunteer fire departments, libraries, multiple chambers of commerce and local cause-driven organizations including the Pilots Club, Shriners, American Cancer Society, Lions Club, Challenger League, CASA, Christmas Sharing and others. On average, the cooperative spends about \$50,000 annually through its donation and sponsorship program. Priority is given to regional organizations that foster growth and development of local youths, sponsorship of causes that help the underprivileged, and those that concentrate on civic and community development of our nine-county territory.

Every year, the cooperative implements a \$25,000 "Power My World" scholarship program, sponsors 10 area high school students on a weeklong East Texas Rural Electric Youth Seminar leadership camp, and sponsors one or more teens on the Government-in-Action Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. WCEC personnel also give educational demonstrations and presentations to local schools and civic groups regarding the cooperative's structure, electrical safety and conservation.

Information on how to request donations, speakers and scholarships, with the appropriate forms and applications, can all be found at wcec.org.

Another way we strive to promote economic growth and enliven our communities is through the pages of Texas Co-op Power. This is a statewide magazine published by Texas Electric Cooperatives that WCEC and other Texas cooperatives offer their members. In addition to being a quality publication, it's a super way for cooperatives to get meaningful news into the hands of members because co-ops can publish local stories on the magazine's customizable pages. In WCEC's local section, we make it our business to highlight various businesses, people, organizations and just plain ol' good folks who positively affect our region or offer services that are for or affect our members.

Over the years, we've told you about patriots of our country; people who make tamales; raise miniature horses; train people to ride regular-sized horses; those who grow flowers and veggies; make wine and beef jerky; love and care for orphaned, troubled or disadvantaged children; and run high-tech businesses in remote settings. We've highlighted people and organizations that can teach us energy-efficiency lessons through example and we've told you about amazing organizations and people who work to feed, clothe or heal those who need it. And we've written about those who grow trees (Christmas and otherwise) and those who are creating sustainable areas like arboretums, parks, walking trails and museums to leave a legacy of our natural world to future generations.

Did any of these articles make a difference? We think so because we heard from many members who were delighted to make "the discovery" of these persons, places and things



among these pages. And, from those who were discovered, we hear good things, too. We recently reached out to several of our past interviewees, and this is what they had to say:

FEBRUARY 2013: Garden Valley Farm Tomatoes, Barbara Delker

"We saw a lot of people coming by that had never been here before. In fact we were running out of tomatoes. We even had to change our hours until we increased production. We saw a big difference and so many people said they had seen us in the magazine. And directly because of the article we had 10 p.m. news coverage on one of the Tyler TV stations. It was very good for us."

MARCH 2013: Williams' Tamales and Pies, Barbara Williams

"We had people here in Hawkins that drove by us every day that had never stopped but that did because of the article. We also had people that came as far away as Sulphur Springs. One woman drove 80 miles. It has really helped us, and we have had repeat customers because of it. It's been wonderful!"

JUNE 2011: Sky Ranch, Sam Hasz, Director of Facilities

"I was amazed at how many people in the community really got a glimpse of what Sky Ranch does for the first time even though they have lived in the community for quite some time. The number of comments I received regarding the efficiency and excitement that occurs at Sky Ranch based on the story that was read in your magazine was pretty incredible. The story that was run highlighting Sky Ranch allowed many people to gain a perspective as to what we do within the community without even coming to our property."

MARCH 2008: Quitman Arboretum & Botanical Garden, Pam Riley, President

"It made people aware of our very existence and what we are trying to achieve. Because of the article in the TCP we've received a lot of positive attention, had people volunteer, and we've had

businesses and organizations donate much-needed items and services."

All of these local stories (since 2008) still live and are accessible on our website in the news center. Here, members can also find an online form to submit their own ideas for stories. We know there are countless undiscovered special members and member businesses and organizations in the nooks and crannies of our beautiful region. And we can only tell their stories in these local pages if we know of them. That would be impossible without your help.

So we invite you to go online to wcec.org to nominate a special member or member business for consideration for a story. Once there, select the news center and then click on the link for Texas Co-op Power magazine. A form will come up, and you just fill it in.

We can't promise that we will cover every story right away, but we do promise to put them on our list for consideration. After all, these stories provide a threefold service. They help members find services, they publicize local businesses and charities to foster success, and therefore they help our local economy thrive.

From inception, the primary mission of WCEC was, and still is, the delivery of safe, reliable, affordable electricity. But, we also have the greater realization that our members and the communities they live in are our greatest assets. So, as we fulfill our mission, we also know it's just as important to ensure our region and our members thrive. And, for all these years, we've accomplished this through active support in many and varied ways.

As we celebrate our 75th anniversary, we also celebrate the diversity and accomplishments of the necessary, the unique and the outstanding people that make up our membership for they are the heart and soul of our East Texas, our electric cooperative.

