



# Blue Thumb—In Pictures

## February 2017



### Recognizing Volunteers!



Blue Thumb has begun recognizing our volunteers, first in our end of the year newsletter and now monthly on our Facebook page. We want you to know them too; Darlene Shaw was highlighted for January, and we thought we would share a little about her. You might have guessed from her last name that she is related to our Quality Assurance Officer, Kim Shaw. Darlene is Kim's mom and she went beyond just asking what her daughter does for a living, she experiences it every month.

Kim invited her mom to a Blue Thumb training several years ago, so she could better understand what Kim does on a day-to-day basis, and then she claims she got tricked. Kim told her mom that since she had all this training, she might as well put it to use so; she began monitoring with a high school teacher and her students. She did this for

about five years and then the teacher moved on and Darlene needed a new partner. In stepped Kim, and both she and Darlene enjoy the quiet time spent together in the outdoors and making discoveries together.

“Monitoring just reinforces the idea that everything influences something else; the ripple effect. In winter the chlorides are high because roads are salted. Likewise, in spring and summer other chemicals show up because of lawn treatments. We have been “tree huggers” from way back; recyclers, buying biodegradable products, composting,” Darlene said. “Our creek site is Crutch Creek under I-40. Sadly we have witnessed a lot of erosion around the bridge pylons. That is scary!!!! We have a golfer in the area because we find lots of golf balls!!! And odd bits of clothing and beer cans (which we recycle). It is under a bridge so it is a party area.”

Darlene is very proud of her daughter and loves their adventures, which for Christmas included a sky-diving lesson! Kim is committed to keeping her mother monitoring, for her mom's birthday this year Kim gave her a new pair of her very own waders! Thank you, Darlene for your commitment to Blue Thumb and for all you do for clean water in Oklahoma!

### The Blue Thumb Blog!



Rob has started blogging about his adventures as a new Blue Thumb educator! He has written two so far and we post them on our webpage at <http://www.bluethumbok.com/the-blue-thumb-blog> and then share it on Facebook. Here's a short excerpt—As an adult, the first day at a new job isn't much different than the first day of school when we are kids. The day is filled with excitement, nervousness and the unexpected. Most importantly, it's a new beginning, the first step of an exciting new journey. My first day, and first two weeks, as the Conservation's Commission's new Blue Thumb Educator have been no different. It has been a whirlwind two weeks that included an ice storm, a farm show and the warmest of welcomes from everyone here at the Conservation Commission.

## Spreading the Word!



Top left—Jeri and Rob attended a Friends of Town Branch Creek meeting where volunteer Jahna Hill shared a year's worth of monitoring data with interested citizens. Top right—Candice Miller stands at the display for both Project WET and Blue Thumb at the Environmental Expo.

## Bug Collections!



Top left—Jahna and Rob doing the Macro Shuffle in Town Branch Creek! Top right—Nick uses a dip net to get bugs out of the vegetation in Sharp Creek. Bottom left and right—Yes, both of the pictures were taken in February!

