



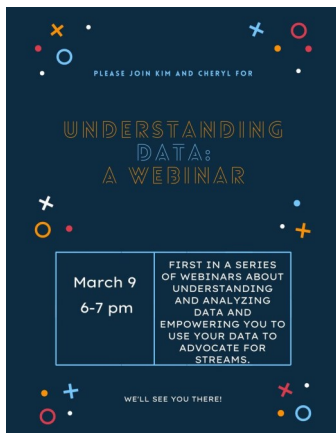
# Blue Thumb in Pictures

## March 2023



### Blue Thumb Training for New Volunteers in Tahlequah

Volunteers learned about stream ecology and stream monitoring. The *Tahlequah Daily Press* covered the training both before and after the event, thus helping us make even more people aware of how they can take action to protect our streams, rivers, and lakes.



← Blue Thumb staff jumped into the realm of data with an entry level webinar for volunteers on “Understanding Data.” We covered the basics of just “what is data?” and set the stage for an additional webinar where we will cover Blue Thumb chemical data in June. Watch the recorded webinar at [www.bluethumbok.com](http://www.bluethumbok.com).



→ The Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts Employee Group recognized Kim Shaw with a President’s Award at the OACD meeting in February. Way to go, KIM!



Ottawa County Conservation District director Grant Victor joins Blue Thumb volunteer Ed Trumbull on Horse Creek, a tributary to Grand Lake. The exhibit above is a new venture among Blue Thumb, Friends of Blue Thumb, the Grand River Dam Authority, and Har-Ber Village in Grove to help the public understand how they can protect our water resources. Horse Creek, pictured above and featured in the exhibit, flows through Grant’s property.



“Butterflies, Birds, and Bees Oh MY!” was sponsored by the Crow Creek Community and taught Tulsans how to have “nature friendly” yards. We had a great turnout! The Tulsa County Conservation District and City of Tulsa were in a leadership role.



## Bug Collections and Quality Assurance

Volunteers all over the state have been working with Blue Thumb staff to 1) make benthic macroinvertebrate collections from their streams and 2) perform their winter quality assurance duties. Ann Marshall at Fourmile Creek in El Reno is filling her dissolved oxygen bottle as part of the winter QA.

Every year Blue Thumb updates their quality assurance plan for the US Environmental Protection Agency since they are a primary funder of the Blue Thumb Program. QA efforts take many forms. Volunteers learn to do chemical monitoring at their training, still they are checked on a different parameter of their monitoring each quarter.

Volunteers who need to “brush up” on their chemical testing can turn to the Blue Thumb website and find videos of how to run each test.

## School Days in the Creek!

Students from Bishop Kelly in Tulsa came to the stream with their teacher, Amour Beals, who completed Blue Thumb training in September. Candice led a benthic macroinvertebrate collection plus gave the students an introduction to stream ecology, which included seining for fish and making on-site observations. The cold, misty winter weather cooperated.



Efforts continue by Blue Thumb staff to communicate with entities who can encourage a better way to maintain streams in cities and towns.

Recent efforts include a presentation made to the *Central Oklahoma Stormwater Alliance*.



**Volunteers were all over Home and Garden Show!** Blue Thumb cooperated with the Tulsa County Conservation District to create and staff the district’s annual Home and Garden Show exhibit. This year the theme was a two-fer; Blue Thumb’s 30th Anniversary (and Tulsa CCD’s role in the program) and the Yard by Yard Community Resiliency Project. Volunteer time for the event was approximately 70 hours, and an estimated 650 people visited the exhibit. These types of events are an exceptional way to get the word out about conservation!

**The whole Water Quality Division** came together on March 8 & 9, 2023, for the annual water quality retreat at St. Crispin’s near Seminole. The yearly get-together allows time for fellowship, idea sharing, updates, planning for the future, and creative problem solving.

