

# Fishing better at Gardens

**By Tom Betz**  
*The Goodland Daily News*  
The Community Lake Assistance Program project is slowly coming to an end at Smoky Gardens, and the results are beginning to show with larger fish and better fishing conditions.

One item that is improving is the tremendous growth of channel cat in the lake. In the past month, there have been a good number of four to five pound fish with some reaching eight pounds, said Kenny Sanderson, Smoky Gardens board chairman.

Credit for this growth appears to be from the fish feeding program, he said, but the larger fish are eating more than the fish food.

With the over 40 cedar trees placed in the lake, the crappie and bluegill populations have exploded beyond expectations.

As a result, there seems to be an unlimited supply of small fish to be food for the larger predator fish. Unfortunately, this has improved the habitat for the carp too, Sanderson said.

"The carp recruitment and the explosion of crappie and blue gill is exactly why we have decided to increase the bass length limit from 15 inches to 18 inches," he said. "This is designed to increase the predator base to help control the overpopulation of carp, crappie and blue gill — that can quickly wipe out the bass hatch of the year — which compete directly by feeding on the same types of food when small. The small crappie and blue gill will eat the eggs of nesting bass."

Some Smoky Gardens' board members have been asked why there wasn't any stocking of fish, and some people

felt the improvement project was a waste of money for rock piles, dredging and habitat enhancement.

"These items are needed for fish to survive and grow," Sanderson said. "People have houses to live in, stores that stock food for us to buy, roads to travel to get there and an endless number of places to go and things to do for recreation."

"In contrast, the cedar trees provide both shade and security, a place for small fish to hide and survive and a place for predator fish to rest and ambush prey.

"The rock piles provide access for fisherman, and a place for small fish and crayfish to survive," he said. "A store with food."

The dredging was to add diversity to the bottom to allow different depths for fish to find desirable oxygen levels and comfortable temperatures to survive climatic changes.

"As far as I know there has not been any stocking of bass, blue gill or crappie since the original re-stocking after the draining and dredging done in 1976," Sanderson said.

Channel cat is a different story, he said.

"There have been several stocking of channel cat," Sanderson said, "and this will continue every year they are available. The stocking varies from 500 to 2,000 fish from six inches to 10 inches in length. Stocking of channel cat is necessary because they do not reproduce in the Smoky Gardens type of lake."

Over the past two springs, the electrofishing samples by State Fish Biologist Lynn Davignon, have shown

an increase in the size and number of bass in the lake.

"I have seen two bass over six pounds and half a dozen or so close to five pounds," Sanderson said. "Most of these were caught by the more avid bass fisherman, but occasionally caught by the traditional worm or minnow."

"I personally have caught many bass ranging from six inch in length to about five pounds," he said. "There is a good number of bass in the eight to 12 inch size, and we hope to see these be in the 10 to 15 inch range next spring."

"This size is a very enjoyable bass to catch and release," Sanderson said.

Carp numbers remain fairly high based on the spring sampling, and Sanderson said efforts continue to remove as many as possible.

"Many people are fishing for carp in an effort to help remove them," he said, "and every one removed does a little to help."

"Try some corn on a hood sometime, and you might be surprised how enjoyable carp are to catch," Sanderson said, "you can imagine the fight of a six to 20 pound fish."

While the grant project is about done, Sanderson said the Smoky Gardens board has a number of other projects yet to come. One of those will be to build two new shelters.

"As a board we have enjoyed working towards improving the fishery," he said, "and want to thank everyone involved in helping to improve Soldiers Memorial Park. A special thanks to Bob McClure, park caretaker, who keeps the grounds looking good. He has helped many times on his days off."

## Lies effect running mate's campaign

WASHINGTON — As a member of Congress in 1986, Dick Cheney was present for one of the defining moments in the Iran-Contra scandal — a White House meeting where Oliver North misled members of the House Intelligence Committee.

The episode, however, didn't keep Cheney from defending North at the Iran-Contra hearings a year later or from stumping for him in 1994 when North ran for the U.S. Senate.

With his record scrutinized anew as George W. Bush's running mate, Cheney is declining to discuss his role as a top Republican on the House committee that investigated the Iran-Contra scandal in the mid-1980s.

"This race is about the future and what Governor Bush and Secretary Cheney will do for the country, not on a resolved situation from the past," Cheney spokesman Dirk Vande Beek explained.

Thirteen years ago, Congress held nationally televised hearings into whether the Reagan administration improperly arranged for military assistance to the Contra rebels battling communism in Nicaragua at a time when U.S. aid to the rebels had been banned by Congress.

Cheney helped lead the Republican defense of the Reagan administration and North, trying to counter Democratic accusations of lying and cover-up by highlighting North's tireless efforts on behalf of the communist-fighting guerrillas.

Cheney even gave away some of his own time for asking questions at the 1987 hearings so North, dressed in crisp military uniform, could give a tutorial on Soviet-financed military might in Central America and the dire straits of the Contra fighting force.

"Colonel North has been, I think, the most effective and impressive witness certainly this committee has heard, and I know I speak for a great many Americans when I thank him for his years of devoted service to the nation, both in the United States Marine Corps and as a member of the NSC (National Security Council) staff," Cheney said in July 1987, concluding his questioning of North.

Cheney's intersection with the scandal actually began earlier.

When news stories in mid-1986 suggested that North was overseeing a secret arms network to the Contras at a time when such assistance was banned, then-House Intelligence Com-

mittee chairman Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., pressed for a meeting.

In the White House Situation Room on Aug. 6, 1986, North told Cheney, Hamilton and nine other lawmakers on the intelligence committee that his "principle mission" was to coordinate contacts between U.S. officials and the Contras.

North told the lawmakers he gave the Contras advice on human rights and stressed the need for an improved civic image.

As the Aug. 6 discussion ended, Hamilton "expressed his appreciation ... and indicated his satisfaction in the responses received."

But minutes after the congressmen departed, North returned to his work coordinating military supplies to the Contras.

A year later, after being granted immunity from prosecution at the Iran-Contra hearings, North admitted he'd made false statements and "misled the Congress" in the Aug. 6 meeting.

"I tried to avoid telling outright lies. But I certainly wasn't telling the truth," North explained in his 1991 book.

North did not return phone messages and a written request for comment sent to his office this week.

Of the eight Republicans who signed the minority report on the Iran-Contra affair, Cheney was the only one who had been lied to face-to-face by North at the 1986 meeting.

Still, Cheney remained supportive of the Reagan White House and of North.

In an interview, Hamilton credited Cheney and the Republicans with doing an effective job of protecting President Reagan in the Iran-Contra hearings.

"My impression of the position of the House Republicans generally, of which he (Cheney) was one, was that they really took the attitude that the end justifies the means," Hamilton said.

"In other words, the support of the Contras was so important that if you fudged the law a little bit and fudged the truth it was justified because we were fighting communism," Hamilton added.

Former Democratic Rep. Bob Kastenmeier, another member of the intelligence committee, was less complimentary.

"Cheney was a member of the minority serving the White House and not the committee, and he was the only member on the other side I would say that about," said Kastenmeier. Kastenmeier also attended the Aug. 6 meeting.

Washington attorney Dick Leon, who worked as a lawyer for Republicans at the Iran-Contra hearings, defended Cheney.

"It was made very clear to us by Mr. Cheney personally that we were there to get to the bottom of the facts wherever they would lead us," Leon said.

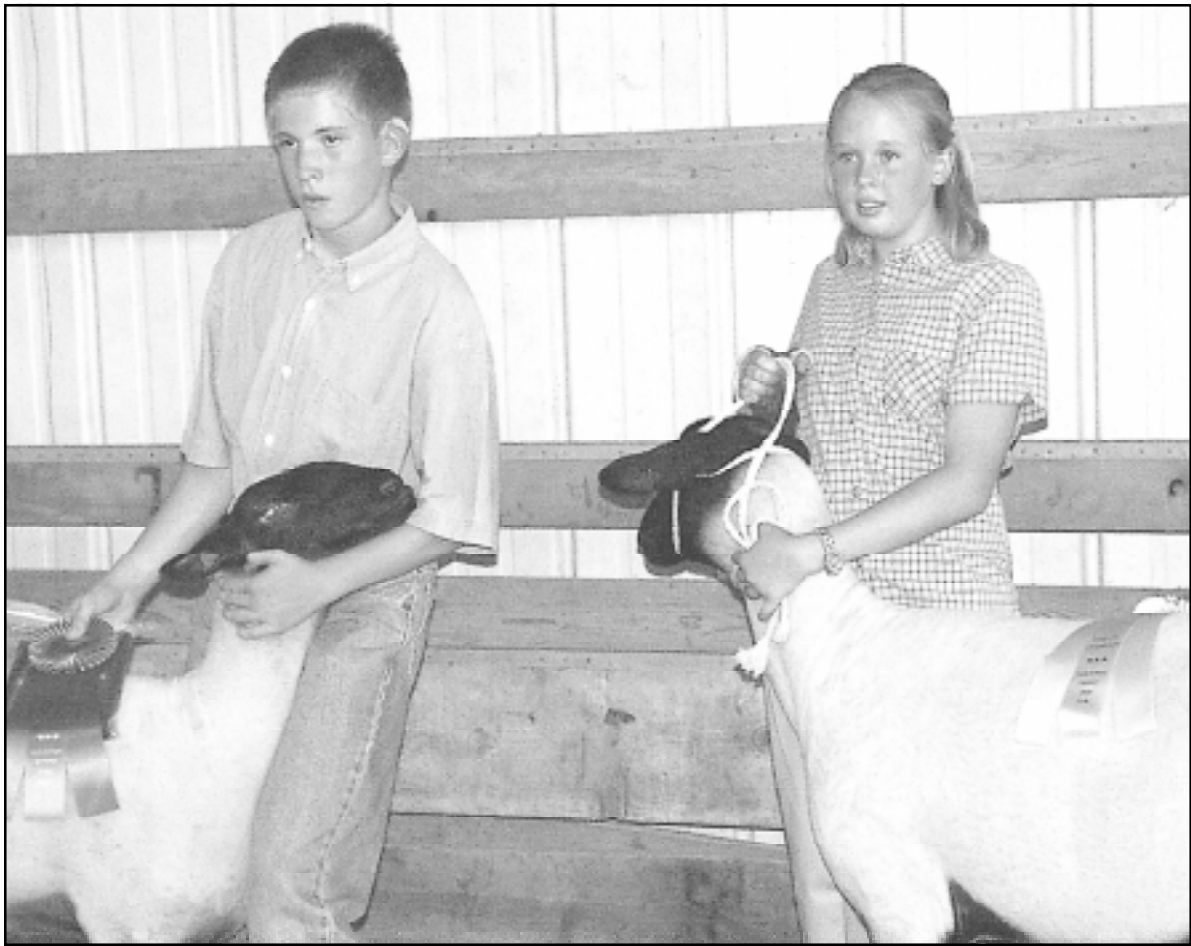
He also noted Cheney and other congressional Republicans signed a final report that was "quite critical of some of the most senior members of the administration, from the secretaries of defense, state and the White House chief of staff on down to North and his immediate superiors."

Cheney and seven House and Senate Republicans characterized the White House's deception as "a fundamental mistake" but suggested the deception was not designed to hide any illegalities.

Cheney and his GOP colleagues, however, refused to join Republican Sens. Warren Rudman and William Cohen and Democrats in concluding that Reagan failed in his constitutional duty to "take care that the laws be faithfully executed."

Seven years later, Cheney campaigned for the former Marine colonel in his unsuccessful bid for a U.S. Senate seat from Virginia.

## Rewards for a job well done



Ana McClung and Michael Hall placed in the junior sheep lead competition on Monday at the Northwest Kansas District Free Fair. McClung (right) won overall grand champion, and Hall (left) placed as a reserve grand champion.

Photo by Dana Sulsberger/The Goodland Daily News

## Clowning is family tradition

**CLOWNS, from Page 1**

Northwest Kansas District Free Fair kids rodeo, something they do every year.

Whitmore said he's been clowning around for almost eight years.

He said he and Jim Weeters, who works for a veterinarian supply company, joined together to get the kids rodeo started after it had been canceled for a number of years.

They then volunteered their time to be the rodeo clowns, Whitmore said, and Brock followed in his father's footsteps two years ago.

The three were at the rodeo Monday, making sure the children riding the calves don't get hurt and entertaining

the crowd.

Whitmore said when choosing something to wear, he looks for a loud and entertaining outfit. He chooses a pair of lose and baggy pants so that when he needs to move he can.

There isn't much danger of the kids getting hurt, he said, but he's there just in case. He said he's never been injured.

"With these rodeos there isn't a lot of danger," he said. "The kids sure have a lot of fun though."

Whitmore doesn't just entertain the cows, he and the others in the clown gang are also responsible for entertaining the crowd.

They spend a lot of time outside the arena, he said, making the rounds in the

grandstands and talking to the kids.

"Jim (Weeters) is usually the one who will talk and joke around with the announcers," said Whitmore.

At the kids rodeo, inexperienced children try their hand at calf riding, and that's why it's important that the clown gang be nearby.

"Usually when the kids hit the ground you can hear the air leaving their bodies in a rush," Whitmore said.

It isn't a long way to fall, he said, but it can knock the wind out of a kid.

"On Monday the arena was dusty," Whitmore said. "When the kids fell they would just sit there shaking their heads and rubbing the dust from their eyes waiting for the air to get back to them."

## Historic trail diary rescued from trash

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — One man's trash is another's treasure — or in this case, history.

Members attending the California-Oregon Trails Association national convention this week learned that lesson when an 1866 diary was presented. The rare volume tells the story of settling the West in the words of a young woman on an overland trails journey from Iowa to Oregon.

Shann and Bill Rupp, association

members from California, received the diary months ago from a man who had recovered it from a Monterey, Calif., trash dump.

The man scavenges as a hobby and knew what he found was golden. The diary was stored in a tin box, along with a pair of leather baby shoes. He then searched out the association's Web site.

Such artifacts are prized. Many are held in repositories such as the

Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley or the Newberry Library in Chicago.

"These kinds of original documents are really the crown jewels of trails study," said John Mark Lambertson, director of the National Frontier Trails Center in Independence, which will house the diary.

The memoir intrigues local trails scholars for other reasons. All the other diaries held at the Independence trails center were written by men, and only one described a trip to Oregon, Lambertson said.

Association scholars say this account of a trip to Oregon was penned by a 14- to 18-year-old girl.

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