

Dry years present conservation challenges

By Fred Wedel

District Conservationist Sherman County

Another year has flown by. Many Sherman County residents are probably glad that 2002 is behind us.

Because 2002 was so very hot, windy and dry, Sherman County resources suffered. As the Sherman County Conservation District prepares for its 59th annual meeting, I want to share my thoughts with you. This year presents challenges and opportunities as drought recovery begins.

Change is all around us. Uncertainty about the future is always present. The U.S. economy has ups and downs. The World political climate is unsettled. It has been said of the early pioneers to Sherman County, "They Came to Stay." Now we must say, "I Am Here to Stay," and then determine how staying is possible.

You say, where are the opportunities? I will name a few. Many political, social and economic circumstances seem beyond our control. Weather and climate are beyond control. However the management decisions and operation of a farm or ranch can be controlled. The management and wise use of soil, water, air, plants and animals can be controlled. Let me illustrate. Even though 2003 precipitation is an unknown, we know subsoil moisture is at an all-time low. So, how can soil and environmental quality be improved while making the most of the precipi-



Fred Wedel

tation that does fall to earth?

Here are some ideas:

- Eliminate plow layers and hardpan layers.
- Reduce mechanical tillage and adopt no-till whenever possible.
- Match irrigated acres to available water (rule of thumb, 5 gpm per acre).
- Use crop rotations that require less irrigation water.
- Rest and defer native range so grass plants can rebuild root systems.
- Return low-yielding fields with class IV and VI soils to grass.
- Plant grass waterways and crosswind trap strips where needed to catch snow.
- Leave more crop residue to catch winter snowfall (standing cornstalks).
- Use strip till and no-till planting methods.
- Install a planned grazing system that achieves a minimum of 74 percent rest during the growing season (four-pasture system).

The key to recovery from several years of dry weather is grabbing the opportunity to make management changes on a farm or ranch. Now is the time to move to a higher level of conservation on the working lands of Sherman County, the Topside of Kansas. This will help guarantee profitability during years of more

District report for 2002

This is the Annual Report of the Sherman County Conservation District for the Calendar year of 2002.

The 2002 Annual Meeting was held February 25th, 2002 at the VFW in Goodland. Mr. & Mrs. Harlan House and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew House and Freda House were named Conservationists of the Year. Mr. & Mrs. John Baker were awarded the Banker's award and Mr. & Mrs. Bryan Hatcher were recipients of the Windbreak Award. Jona Neufeld received the Educator of the Year Award.

One hundred sixty five cooperators enjoyed the meal furnished by the District and local banks. Lynn Ihrig introduced Darin Richardson and Amanda Hoffman 4-H members who provided the entertainment for the evening. Dennis Shank and Bill Selby were elected to the board by secret ballot.

Thirty-six plaques were presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting for the Poster, Limerick, Essay Contest and Hyper-Studio Stack Contest. Sandy Rodgers, District Manager

See REPORT, Page 11

normal precipitation and climate.

By establishing goals for the operation of a land unit, you will discover that the new Farm Bill and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) offer opportunities to work toward implementation of the goals for a particular field.

The four areas of EQIP are: 1) wind erosion 2) water quality and livestock waste 3) water quantity and management of the Ogallala Aquifer and 4) grazing lands health. Management incentives and conservation practice cost shares

are available for contracts with good environmental benefits. Other programs that may fit are Conservation Reserve, Wildlife Habitat, Wetland Reserve and Conservation Technical Assistance. The last is available to everyone and does not require involvement in a specific cost-sharing program.

Take a moment, stop by the Conservation District office and if we have not met, introduce yourself. I am anxious to work for you on your farm or ranch to help you achieve your conservation goals.

Today's Farmer

Production Professional and Environmental Protector

Kansas farmers and ranchers remain committed to providing a safe, wholesome food supply, a clean environment and raising healthy families. Their health, well being and livelihood depend on sound use of these precious natural resources.

For Kansas farmers and ranchers concern for the environment is part of doing business.



Hawkeye Spraying Service



Congratulates the Sherman County Conservation District Award Winners:

CONSERVATIONISTS OF THE YEAR AWARD

Mr. & Mrs. Allen Quenzer

BANKERS AWARD

Melvin, Marsha, Mike, Teresa & Mark Sieck

WINDBREAK AWARD

Mr. & Mrs. Darle Fortmeyer

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Jim McDowell, NRCS Hays office

STATE Poster Winner

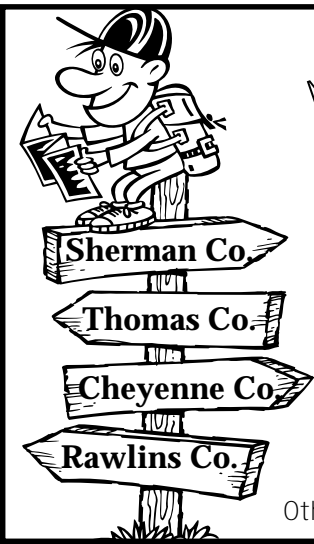
Alexis Schields daughter of Ron & Kim Schields

Honorable Mention Limerick Winner

Jance McKee son of Jim & Judy McKee



For All Your Spraying Needs Call: (785) 899-7140



Maps

NOW Available
A great gift idea!!

Maps

JUST UPDATED

Sherman, Thomas, Cheyenne and Rawlins
Counties.

Ownership Maps by

Western Cartographers

Available at:

★ The Goodland Star-News ★ All Pro Auto Parts,
St. Francis ★ Shay Realty, Atwood ★ Cheyenne County Clerk

Or by calling 1-800-752-3402

Other Counties available in Neb., Okla., S.D., Colo., Wyo., & Kansas

Working with Fred, Dan, the district board

By Sandy Rodgers

Conservation District manager

Well, it has been 22 years since Lawrence Tedford, then the district conservationist, and the Conservation District board took a chance on me and gave me the job of district secretary on Aug. 19, 1980.

Bill Selby was on the original board that hired me, and he is still putting up with me to this day. I was pretty scared and thought I was in way over my head, but I don't give up easy and you can't believe how many people were there to help me.

The district employees across the state have quite a network and are always eager to help each other. I had the opportunity to be president of that organization from 1987 to 1990.

The area clerk at the (then) Soil Conservation Service was Maxine Peier, and I learned more about filing for the government, correct procedures, and the like from her than you can imagine. This lady was amazing, and we all strived to be half as efficient as Maxine. She has been retired for several years.

Along in the mid-'80s, the board changed my title to district manager, which, with it, came more responsibility. My job is to administer the business of the district board and to work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service staff to help Sherman County farmers achieve



Rodgers

their conservation goals.

Over the years, I've made lots of friends, had lots of funny stories to tell (mostly on me), entered the computer age, learned ever-changing government programs and got to know lots of employees and district board members who have come and gone. And yes, I am still here, and very glad to be here.

I was at a retirement gathering for one of my dearest friends, the one who convinced me I would be a good president for the state employees organization. She always encouraged me to succeed. Her name is Kay Wasinger and she worked 35 years for the Ness County Conservation District.

Someone asked me when I was going to retire. I never had thought about it! But, God willing, it will be several more years.

Now we get to the part about working with Fred Wedel and Dan Farmer. It was hard to say goodbye to Dick Fletcher, who had been the conservationist in Sherman County for several years, and you are always worried about WHO are they going to send here next!

I had met Fred Wedel at High Plains Pilot Project meetings and knew who he was. I had

always been impressed with his input at meetings. Well, low and behold, Fred got the job in Goodland.

I'm sure he was more worried about me than I was him. He probably thought, "How am I ever going to make any changes in an office where the district manager has been there FOREVER?"

Guess What! We have both been very open minded and are lucky to be able to bounce new ideas off of each other and solve problems together. I've only told him to go to his room once. (Just joking.)

He is tolerant of all my dog stories and supportive of my community commitments. Dan Farmer came to the office in July and I thought we had it made, 'cause anyone with the name Farmer had to be right for the job. Everything Fred and I don't know about GIS and Arcview mapping, he does. We hit the jackpot!

To make a long story short, I really enjoy my job, working with my co-workers and the people in Sherman County.

Join us for a fun and informative evening at the Sherman County Conservation District's 59th Annual Meeting.

Sherman County winners in poster, limerick, essay contests

Winners in the Sherman County Conservation District poster, limerick and essay contests were announced this week.

Posters 3rd and 4th Grade

1st MaryKate Williams
2nd Seth Stramel
3rd Audrey Titus
Honorable Mention
Morgan Powell
Austin Avelar

Dallas DeLaRosa
Sydney Winston

Posters 5th through 8th Grade

1st Ryan Taylor
2nd Alexis Schields
3rd Brennen Clouse
Honorable Mention
Alexis Bateman

See WINNERS, Page 13

ALCORN/HAYDEN ASSOC.

CONGRATULATES THIS YEAR'S
WINNERS OF THE
CONSERVATION AWARDS!

Conservationists of the Year: Mr. & Mrs. Allen Quenzer

Bankers Award: Melvin, Marsha, Mike, Teresa and Mark Sieck

Windbreak Award: Mr. & Mrs. Darle Fortmeyer

Educator of the Year: Jim McDowell

State Poster Winner: Alexis Schields daughter of Ron & Kim Schields

Honorable Mention Limerick Winner: Jance McKee son of Jim & Judy McKee

Local and state poster & limerick contest honor students.

Exclusive Goodland Agents for **American Agri Ins.**

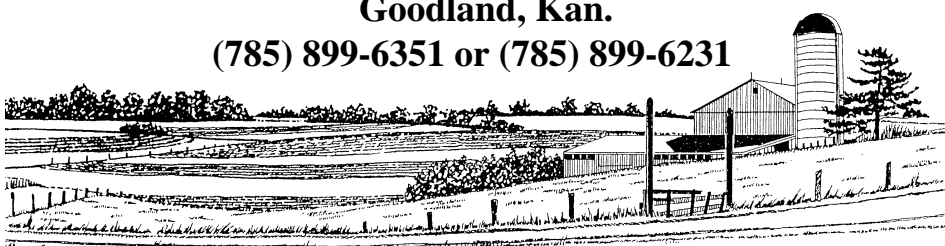
Offering **CRC Plus - MPCl.**

Two Locations:

1402 Main Street • 1624 S. Main Street

Goodland, Kan.

(785) 899-6351 or (785) 899-6231



TRUCK & TRACTOR REPAIR, LLC

714 E. Hwy. 24

Goodland, Kan. 67735

**Wishes to Congratulate
all the Conservation Winners!!**



30 Years Experience

Cat • Cummins • Detroit

4-Wheel Drive Tractors

Full line of Truck Parts and Accessories

Phone: 785-899-2401

District annual report

REPORT, from Page 9

and Fred Wedel, District Conservationist presented conservation programs prior to the contest.

The Goodland Daily News published the Annual Soil Conservation Edition. KLOE/KKCI radio continues to support conservation throughout the year.

Sherman County Farmers continue to support conservation in Sherman County. All Compliance plans are on schedule. Approximately 318 CRP contracts are in place for approximately 42,406.5 acres, roughly 18-20 percent of the County. The State Water Resources Cost Share Funds have been allocated for the 2002 program year. Practices include irrigation system upgrades, tanks, livestock wells, terraces and diversions. The Sherman County Conservation District agreed to be a pilot county for the State Water Resources Cost Share Program Irrigation Water Management Practice. There are four EQIP contracts, one active Great Plains Conservation Program contract and three Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program contracts in Sherman County.

The Sherman County Conservation District continues a strong education and information program. A fairbooth was displayed in August. Fred Wedel, District Conservationist and Sandy Rodgers, District Manager worked with 5th and 6th graders and the second Hyper Studio Contest was a big success. The 3rd through 6th grades also participated in the Poster, Limerick and Essay Contest. Sandy gave programs in the classroom and Fred took 5th and 6th graders on a mini tour to look at conservation practices in the field.

The District offers grass seed, flags, trees, rabbit netting, weed barrier, polymer and gyp blocks for sale as a service to area cooperators, as well as, providing additional funding for the District Programs.

Sherman County Conservation District paid dues to the National Association of Conservation Districts, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts, the KACD Auxiliary, Western Prairie RC&D, and the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts Employees Organization.

The District works closely with their conservation partners, including State and National legislators, NRCS,

County Commissioners, K-State Extension, Wildlife and Parks, FSA, Groundwater Management District #4 and many others to reach mutual conservation goals. The District continued their Memorandum of Understanding with Wildlife and Parks con-

A Winner

A farmer brought crops to the fair.
His grain was beyond compare.
He used crop rotation
For his soil preservation.
He won first place fair and square.

Vance Johnson, 8th grade, was the winner in the Sherman County Conservation District Limerick contest.

cerning cost share funds. Three producers were awarded cost share funds through this MOU for tree plantings. Sharon Bowker continues as the representative to the Western Prairie RC&D with Sandy Rodgers serving as alternate. Sharon Bowker and

Sandy Rodgers assisted Western Prairie RC&D with making a video of Projects in Sherman County for the RC&D State meeting. Sandy Rodgers serves on the local advisory commit-

See REPORT, Page 12

GOODLAND MACHINE & AUTOMOTIVE LLC

THE TRI-STATE AREA'S QUALITY STATE OF THE ART ENGINE REBUILDING CENTER

Irrigation Services:

1. In Field Service Work:
2. New & Re-built Irrigation Motors
3. New & Used Gearheads and Parts
4. Cooling Coils
5. Machine Shop Service

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE AREA CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS!

Rental Cars Available thru Rent-A-Ride 899-6628

Terry Selbe and Pam Mendenhall - owners

419 E. 19th • Goodland, Kan.
(785) 899-6628 • (785) 899-3444



CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE
SOIL CONSERVATION WINNERS!

Let First National Bank
help with your agriculture programs:

- Leasing Programs for equipment and sprinkler systems.
- Ag Real Estate Loans
- Cattle Loans for Livestock operations and feeder cattle.

Ask about our Ag Line...

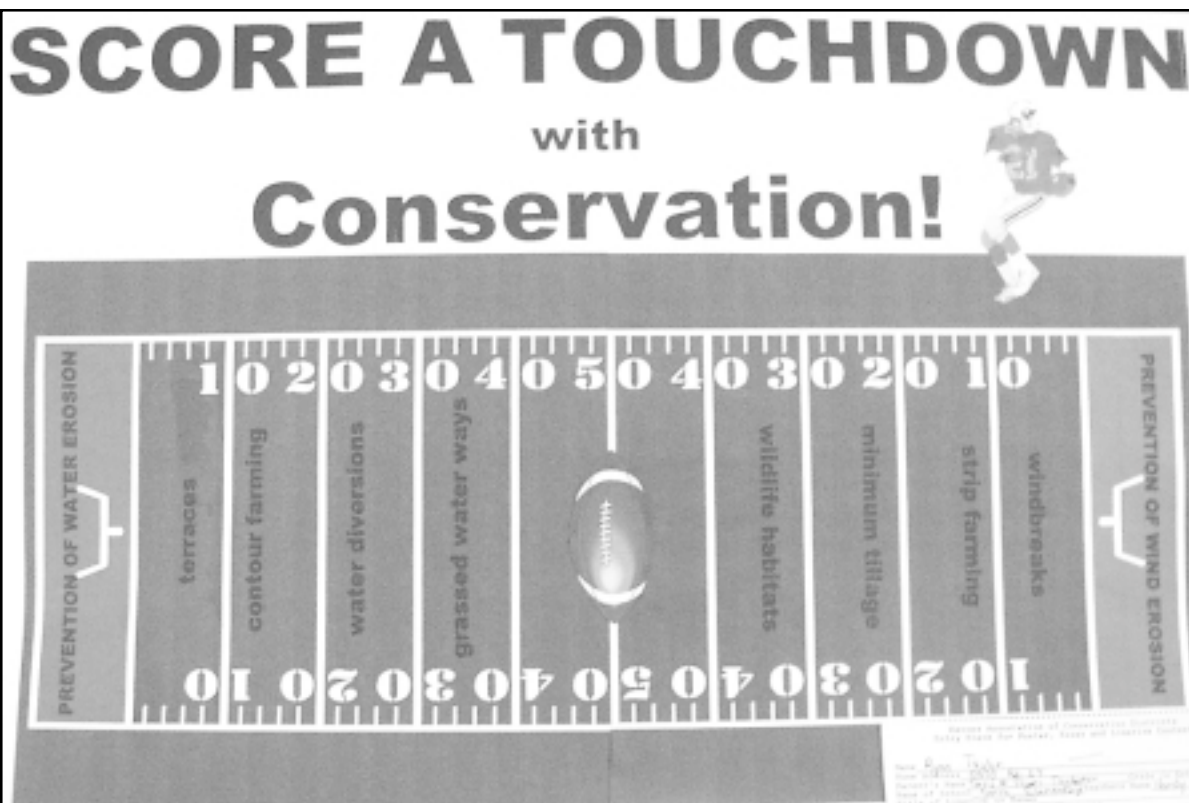
Your master note for farming operations
that allows you to set up a line of credit.

"Neighbors helping Neighbors"



Bird City, Colby, Goodland, Kirk, Oberlin,
Quinter, Sharon Springs, & St. Francis





Ryan Taylor, 5th-8th grade, was the winner in the Sherman County Conservation District poster contest.

**59th Annual meeting Sherman County Conservation District, 6:30 p.m.,
Monday, Feb. 24, Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall, 824 Main Ave.**

District annual report

REPORT, from Page 11

tee for Western Prairie RC&D and Fred Wedel serves as an advisor to that group.

The Sherman County Conservation District Manager, Sandy Rodgers, continues to participate in the Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance. This group consists of District Managers representing nine County Conservation Districts. Their objective is to search for funding through grants and foundations to enhance and ensure a quality environment for future generations in Northwest Kansas. Sandy currently serves as President.

Sandy Rodgers, District Manager hosted the Area Employees Seminar at the Ringneck Resort for the 18 Counties in Area 1 in June.

Dan Farmer joined the conservation team as Conservation Technician in July and Kyle Schwindt former technician was stationed in Sharon Springs.

The District offered prize money to 4-H and individual fairbooths that carried a conservation theme.

National Wildlife Week and Soil Stewardship weeks were observed by distributing educational material to the schools, public library, various offices and churches in Goodland.

Mr. & Mrs. Lynn Ihrig, Mr. & Mrs. Dean Graber, Dennis Shank and Fred Wedel attended the KACD Convention held at Wichita in November. Alexis Schields won 1st place in the State Poster Contest and Jance McKee won Honorable Mention in the State Limerick Contest.

The District reviewed their long-range program and also reviewed the memorandums of understanding with all cooperating agencies.

The Sherman County Conservation District's objective is to promote locally led conservation and to assist landowners and operators apply conservation practices to the land with the technical assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Conservation Office is available for assistance to anyone needing help solving his or her conservation needs. The District Board meets the first Thursday after the first Tuesday of every month with the exception of July.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE CONSERVATION WINNERS!!!!



We at BANKWEST OF KANSAS understand the struggles that farmers have daily. That is why we offer a wide variety of products and services to help keep your farm operation going through these difficult times such as

- Checking Accounts
- Operating Lines of Credit
- Machinery and Equipment
- Loans
- Livestock Financing
- Farm and Ranch Real Estate Loans
- FSA Loans
- Online Banking

With location in Goodland, Colby, St. Francis, Idalia Colo.



www.ebankwest.com
1-888-828-2265 or 785-899-2233





Goodland Sheet Metal carries several lines of high efficiency heating and air conditioning systems for residential and commercial applications.

We also repair most brands.
Let us bid a quality system for you.

Goodland Sheet Metal LLC
1616 Broadway • Goodland, Kan. 67735
(785)899-7263

Cochran Farm Supply



 Circle D Trailers
  Miller Loaders

 PJ Trailers
  Long Agribusiness

Now selling Farm Trac and Land Trac Tractors.
Mike and Glenda Cochran • 2702 Road 64 • (785) 899-0096

Drought sets records

By Ken Kuiper
State Biologist

Records were set in Kansas making 2002 the driest, hottest year in recorded history. Drought can be devastating for many wildlife species. For game birds, a reduction in both

nesting and survival success usually characterize drought years.

Kangaroo rats do well in drought conditions. They escape the heat and wind in burrows. These animals require no free water. They produce metabolic water from the food they eat.

There are a variety of other adaptations that help animals survive in dry, hot conditions. For instance, turtles and insects have shells that resist water loss. Thirteen-lined ground squirrels reduce water loss through

true hibernation during the heat of the summer.

Fairy shrimp are invertebrates found in western Kansas's playa lake pools. After rainfall and ponding in playas, these animals hatch and com-

plete their life cycle in about 21 days. To survive drought, their eggs remain viable in the soil for 20 years or more until conditions are right for hatching.

During drought periods, coyotes and other animals will dig into the

sand of a dry creek to find water. They also have the adaptive capability to travel to a water supply for survival.

Pheasants can be seen drinking

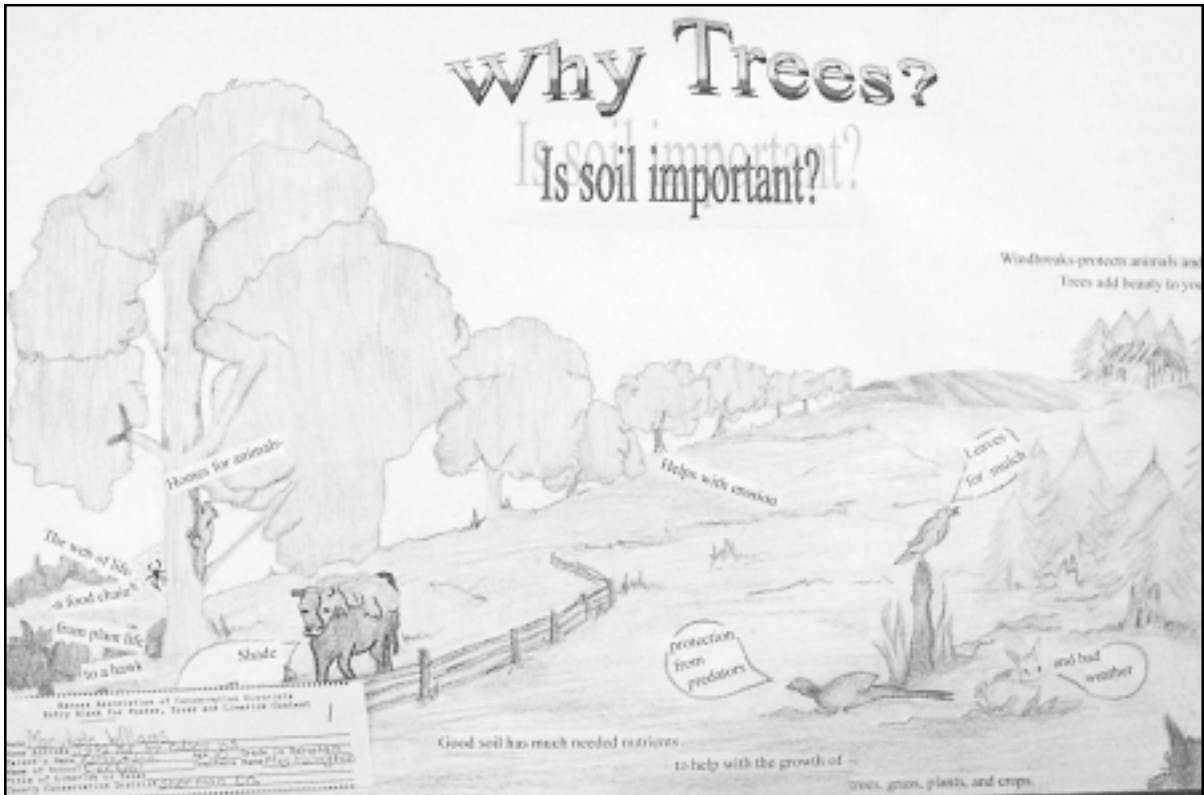
See DROUGHT, Page 14

District contest winners

WINNERS, from Page 10

- Natashia Cecil
Breanna Nemechek
Kayla Long
Limericks 3rd and 4th Grade
1st Abby Jolly
2nd Mac Purvis
3rd Riley Oharah
Honorable Mention
Katlyn Topliff
Dallas DeLaRosa
Jamie Gittinger
Limericks 5th through 8th Grade
1st Vance Johnson
2nd Robbyn Juleson
3rd Zac Price
Honorable Mention

- Ross Townsend
Julica Bonsall
Brooke Lennington
Essays
1st Devin Mangus
2nd Breanna Nemechek
3rd Kayla Long
Honorable Mention
Patrick Heiter
HyperStudio Stacks
1st Chance Davis
2nd Colton Nelson
3rd Danielle Pettibone
Honorable Mention
Debra Dawdy
Cassie Cooper
Ryan Irvin



Mary Kate Williams, 3-4th grade, was the winner in the Sherman County Conservation District poster contest.

Congratulations to Sherman County Conservation District Award Winners

Mueller Grain Company

17th & Center General Office 1204 Main
Goodland, Kan. (785) 899-3639

Congratulations Conservation Award Winners!

CONSERVATIONISTS OF THE YEAR

Mr. & Mrs. Allen Quenzer

WINDBREAK AWARD

Mr. and Mrs. Darle Fortmeyer
1609 Main
Goodland, Kan
(785) 899-3647
1-800-246-4036

BANKERS AWARD

Melvin, Marsha, Mike, Teresa and Mark Sieck

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

Jim McDowell, NRCS Hays Area Office

Wanted: Ag Loans

See Randy Schoenthaler at the Goodland office
1302 Main.

Congratulations to the winners.

See us for all your lending needs.

Colby, Kan. 785-462-2224	Goodland, Kan. 785-899-6220
Hoxie, Kan. 785-675-2224	McDonald, Kan. 785-538-2224

Each depositor insured to \$100,000

WATER CONSERVATION

Our lives are dependent on water.
Farmers use it to sow and make fodder.
Without water we die.
Let's conserve it and why
So generations to come will not rotter.

Abby Jolly, 3-4th grade, was the winner in the Sherman County Conservation Distirct Limerick contest.

Drought sets records

DROUGHT, from Page 13

water from ponds and irrigation systems during a hot day.

Overgrazing of native rangeland can reduce plant vigor and forage production. Forage utilization can be managed by reducing livestock numbers and/or adjusting the length of the grazing period. Using these grazing techniques can help maintain healthy rangeland for both domestic livestock and wildlife.

Wildlife guzzlers, wildlife watering facilities and backyard birdbaths can benefit wildlife during drought conditions. Following standard designs found in the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Field Office Technical Guide ensures that all design considerations are covered.

This guide can be found online at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov. Then click on the FTOG logo. Watering facilities should always have an escape route for prey species, and they must provide a stable water supply to meet the needs of the animal during a critical period.

Wildlife can survive drought conditions in Kansas. Management and thoughtful planning can help species with critical habitat survival needs. Assistance for installation of practices that benefit wildlife is available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service office and conservation district office located at your local county USDA Service Center.

For more information about NRCS programs, visit the Kansas web site at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov.

Saluting the winners

The staff of the Goodland Star-News salute the winners of the Sherman County Conservation Awards. It is always enjoyable to have an opportunity to visit with these people, and it gives our readers a chance to learn about families throughout the county.

Tom Betz
Editor

GOODLAND MACHINE & AUTOMOTIVE LLC

THE TRI-STATE AREA'S QUALITY AUTO REPAIR CENTER

"AAA Auto Repair Facility"

Auto Services:

1. Oil Change & Service:
With Free AAA Inspection of Vehicle thru March 15, 2003.
2. Tire Sales & Service:
Flat Tire Repair Computer Balancing
3. Computer Diagnostics of Any Make of Vehicle

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE AREA
CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS!

Rental Cars Available thru Rent-A-Ride 899-6628

Terry Selbe and Pam Mendenhall - owners

419 E. 19th • Goodland, Kan.
(785) 899-6628 • (785) 899-3444



Congratulations to all the winners



Spring is just around the corner, stop in your WAL-MART SUPERCENTER for all your spring needs:

- Potting Soil
- Seed
- Lawn Care
- Clay Pots
- Fertilizer
- Patio Furniture

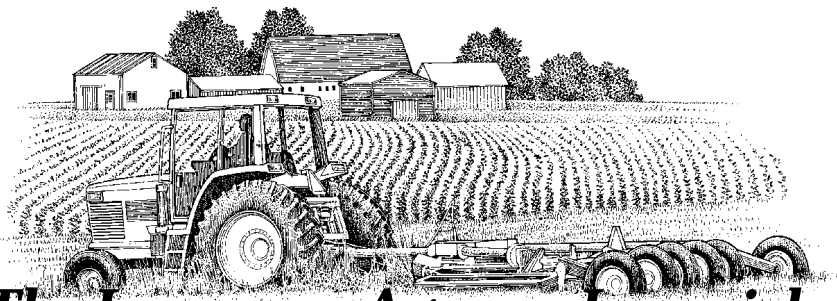
Come see all of our winter apparel at reduced rates.

WAL★MART
ALWAYS LOW PRICES. ALWAYS WAL-MART.

Always

SUPERCENTER
WE SELL FOR LESS

2160 Commerce Rd.
Goodland, Kan. 67735
(785) 899-2111



The Insurance Agency, Inc. wishes to congratulate all conservation award winners.

Educator of the Year

Jim McDowell, NRCS Hays Area Office

State Poster Winner

Alexis Schields daughter of Ron & Kim Schields

Honorable Mention Limerick Winner

Jance McKee son of Jim & Judy McKee

Conservationists of the Year

Mr. & Mrs. Allen Quenzer

Bankers Award

Melvin, Marsha, Mike, Teresa & Mark Sieck

Windbreak Award

Mr. & Mrs. Darle Fortmeyer

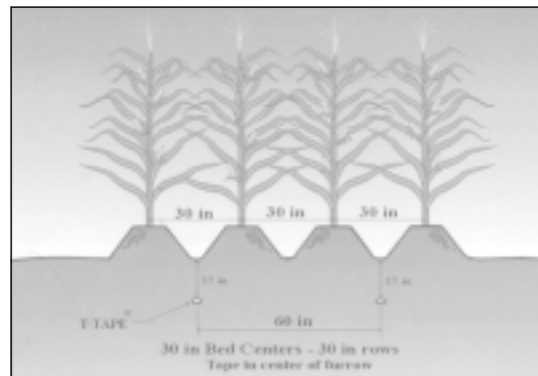


Roxann Kling

117 E. 9th ~ P.O. Box 833
Goodland, KS 67735
Office ~ 785.899.5011 Fax ~ 785.899.5201

Susan Doke

No Matter What You Grow Or Where You Grow It, There's A T-Tape® Product That's Right For You.



Drip irrigation with T-Tape TSX offers a long list of benefits including increased crop quality and crop yields, reduced water consumption, energy costs and crop chemical and fertilizer usage.

- Increased crop quality and crop yields
- Reduced water consumption
- Lower energy costs
- Increased yields
- Reduced weed pressure
- Improved disease control
- Savings on crop protection material usage
- Less soil compaction, drier furrows, and easier field access



723 W. Hwy. 24 • Goodland, Kan.
(785) 899-5628 or 1-800-798-5628



We deliver solutions for agriculture worldwide.

Girl Scout Cookies, a sweet deal for subscribers

The Goodland Star-News

Pay for a year's subscription and get two boxes of cookies

\$72

Get a six month subscription and get one box of cookies

\$38



The Goodland Star-News

1205 Main, Goodland • 784-899-2338



Congratulations

Sherman County

Conservation District Award

Winners!

KLOE 730^{am}
Full Service Radio

KWGB
97.9

102.5^{FM} KKCI
Best of the 70s, 80s, & 90s