



Garrett Geist (left) showed an ancient fish tail he found to Jordan Stasser, Hailey Linnell and Jason Cowan during North Elementary's annual fossil field trip. William Fulcher and son Brendan (above) checked out a small fish vertebra they found. Teresa Sieck (right) took a close-up of Jace Cowan with the shark tooth he found.

Photos by Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News



Students go fishing in ancient ocean

By Tom Betz

The Goodland Star-News
Fifth graders from North School spread out over the chalk cliffs near Russell Springs, scouring the rock for ancient fish on their annual fossil-hunting trip.

A line of school buses and Suburbans wound through the pasture, stopping near the edge of a series of deep canyons on the south side of the Smoky Hill River south of Russell Springs.

Kids and adults pulled out screwdrivers, ice picks and hammers to attack the chalk cliffs, looking for ancient fish bones. The kids trained eager eyes on the rocks, looking for signs of bones, a shark tooth or other remains of ancient ocean inhabitants.

The spring trip has become a favorite of the fifth graders, who spend several weeks studying about fossils and the history of the ancient oceans of Kansas before they dig.

Myron Tedford organized the expedition with the help of the other fifth grade teachers, Mary Frazier and De Burkett. Parents and adults are recruited to accompany the kids on the day-long trip.

This year's version was delayed a week by rain, but Friday, May 13, the sun came up on a clear day as about 58 kids and 29 adults.

For the fourth year Greg Sweatt, a paleontologist and high school art teacher from Parker, Colo., came to give the kids some background on what they were going to see.

Sweatt, who grew up searching for fossils along the Brazos River in southwest Texas, has been scouring the Smoky Hill chalk of Kansas for years. Before heading out Sweatt showed the students some of the fossil specimens he had found, and paintings of the ancient fish as they would have looked 65 million years ago. He recently got a contract to build a fossil fish statue for a

multicultural building in Parker.

The buses stopped at the Wallace Museum to give the kids a first-hand look at some of the fossils that have been found in northwest Kansas.

The second stop was the site of the German family massacre, north of Russell Springs.

In 1874, a band of Southern Cheyenne killed John German, his wife and three children. Four daughters were taken captive, starting what was known as the Red River War.

Volunteer experts went ahead to the canyons, looked the area over to spot the best places were for the kids to find evidence of the ancient oceans.

The crew included Sweatt, Larry Harper of Goodland and his wife Judy, head cook at Northwest Kansas Technical College, and Bill Frazier of Thread FX.

The landowner, Larry Haver-

field, who lives south of Russell Springs, gave permission for the field trip, and has given permission to other people to search the canyons on his land. He rode his motorcycle out in the morning to say hello to the volunteers and see what they had found.

When the buses parked, kids and adults poured out. Sweatt talked about the surrounding canyons and reminded the kids to watch for wildlife, but not to bother any.

With the word to "go," the kids broke into groups and followed the volunteers to the digs. Excited kids brought hunks of rock to Sweatt, Frazier and the Harpers to see if they had found a piece of history.

In the sun, the kids consumed several gallons of water. Some poured water on their bandannas to keep cool.

About two hours later, the kids and adults gathered around the buses to show their prizes. Nearly

everyone found something, including seashells, clamshell pieces, fish jawbones, fishtail bones and lots of shark teeth. Sweatt said the kids found a number of good specimens in the Niobra chalk common in the Smoky Hill area.

Kids on the trip:

Tedford's Class: Reed Bellamy, Dallas DeLaRosa, Jay Farris, Mikail Freeman, Brendan Fulcher, Jordan Garza, Garrett Geist, Nicole Hendrich, Laine Herl, M'Lynn Hinger, Abby Jolly, Priscila Ledesma, Haley Linnell, Riley Oharah, Morgan Powell, Rachel Schorzman, Page Seeger, Seth Stramel and Sydney Winston.

Burkett's Class: Ann Aguirre, Richard Bacasegua, Cassie Battistoni, Tyler Fisher, Jaime Flores, Michaela Garrett, Samantha Gutierrez, Jacob Garcia, Blaine Luther, Dolores Montoya, Albert Mouchette, Jaron Ragels, Alex Rangel, Shawn Reiter, Cappi Tho-

mas, Sydnee Thornburg, Skylar Williams, Jim Sheats and Rachel Montoya.

Frazier's Class: Austin Avelar, Katelyn Coon, Jason Cowan, Jamie Gittinger, Jacee Herl, Ryan Hillmer, Ryder Kling, Joel Linin, Garrett Nemechek, Taylor Peden, Mac Purvis, Curtis Ross, Sloan Ruhs, Breana Rutz-Cross, Parker Sieck, Keaton Sloan, Audrey Titus and Kasarah Woodrow.

Adult sponsors: Kevin and Barb Winston, Jeanne Stasser, Gene and Paula Geist, Brigham Sloan, Susan Bellamy, Stacy and Neal Thornburg, Dean Oharah, Rick Farris, Marci Peden, Brenda Ross, Bill Fulcher, Rich Stramel, Lori Titus, Jovita Gutierrez, Sherri Thomas, Sondra Smith, Jerry Nemechek, Vicki Cross, Kris Cowan, Teresa Sieck, John Hendrich, Tina Hickson, Jay Jolly, Michael Reiter, Chandra Ruhs, Roxann Kling and C.T. Lindley.

Contest wants to know when first load of new wheat will roll in

Everyone is counting the days to wheat harvest, and there is a prize for guessing when it starts.

The person who comes closest to guessing when the first load of Sherman County wheat will be delivered to a participating elevator

will win \$50 in the Goodland merchants' annual Harvest Countdown contest.

The second prize will be \$35 and third \$15. Winners will be awarded scrip, which can be spent at participating businesses. People can enter

the contest at *The Goodland Star-News* or at participating stores.

There are a few rules.

- The first load of 2005 wheat must have a moisture content of 14 percent or less and be brought to Frontier Equity Exchange in

Goodland, Ruleton or Brewster or Mueller Grain in Goodland. The winning load must have been cut in Sherman County.

- Entry guesses can be made at all Frontier Equity elevators, Mueller Grain, Dorman Brothers, Hitch-

cock, and *The Star-News*.

- You must be 18 or older to enter. No purchase is necessary.

- Entry deadline is Thursday, June 21. If harvest starts before then, the winning entry must be made at least 24 hours before the

first load was delivered.

- Previous winners and previous first loads are ineligible, as are employees and relatives of employees at *The Star-News*.

corrections

The headline for a story on J.C. Zahradnik on the Page 12 of the Tuesday, May 31, edition of *The Goodland Star-News* said he was an ex-Cowboy. Zahradnik moved from Goodland in the sixth grade, before playing for the high school. This was an editing error.

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In the story "Sentencing in fatality delayed" on Page 9 of the same

paper, one accident victim's name was misspelled. Her name is Mary Wyant, not Wyatt. This was a reporter's error, repeated in several stories over the last few months.

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A photo caption on Page 3 of that edition left the name of Eugene Elliott off the list of veterans buried in the Goodland cemetery since last Memorial Day.

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The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to re-

port errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.

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402 Grand	221 Cottonwood	418 Main (Sold)
1224 Main (mixed use)	2157 Caldwell	504 Front - Kanorado
1625 Wyoming	401 Walnut	1680 Fay - Burlington
415 W. 2nd	114 College	950 Centennial Drive
714-18 Eustis	729 W. 31st St.	

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