

# The Goodland Star-News



Sherman County Conservation District Awards

Friday, February 10, 2006

## Three kids learn to appreciate conservation

By Tom Betz

*The Goodland Star-News*

Three freshmen are spending extra hours every week to learn about environmental issues and developing an appreciation for conservation.

BreAnna Nemecheck, Devin Mangus and Adam Duell are members of the Sherman County Eco-Meet Team and have been named this year's Friends of Conservation Award winners.

They meet once a week with their coach Sandy Rodgers, Conservation District Manager, to study current environmental issues involving forestry, soil, wildlife and water.

In October the team went to an Eco-Meet competition in Hays where they finished fourth by one point. They were the youngest team in the competition and most teams had four members.

The team members are now preparing for the Envirothon being held in May in Salina with high school teams from across the state.

Coach Rodgers said the idea for the Eco-Meet team came as a way to introduce more kids to conservation issues, and encourage them to consider becoming conservation or wildlife officers.

"I enjoy working with the kids," Rodgers said. "There is a lot of fun involved, but they do work hard to understand the environmental issues and relate them to where we live."

At the Eco-Meet Mangus said each member took a written test, and there was an outdoor identification contest where the team members worked together.

The team showed their interpretative skills where each one picked an



Danny Farmer, technician, helped Adam Duell and Devin Mangus, members of the Eco-Team, identify grasses at Smoky Garden before the team went to the Eco-Meet in Hays in October.

Photo by Sandy Rodgers/District Manager

animal and then produced a skit where they talked about the animal and showed how it related to the others.

For the skit Nemecheck was Fifi the fox, Mangus was Ricky Raccoon and Duell was Squeaky a 13-line ground

squirrel. The team members and their coach spent time at a Wal-Mart looking for supplies to make their costumes for the skit, which were a mask and tail of the animal they were portraying.

In the skit for the Eco-Meet each one had to explain five things about

the animal they were portraying such as how it sleeps, what is its habitat, how it reproduces and the specific characteristics of the animal.

The judges at the Eco-Meet, which was held at the Sternberg Museum, were wildlife and parks officers and

museum staff. Rodgers said the skits were performed in front of all the other teams as the audience.

Duell said his favorite part of the Eco-Meet was staying in the Sternberg and spending the night there in sleeping bags.

There will not be a skit at the upcoming Envirothon, but Rodgers said there will be a series of environmental classes given by professional experts in the morning, and the competition will be in the afternoon.

The current issue they are studying is "water stewardship in a changing climate," and Rodgers and her team are studying the types of soil found in Sherman County and how the land is affected by rain and irrigation.

Preparing for the Eco-Meet the team spent time at Smoky Gardens with Danny Farmer, soil conservation technician, learning about the grasses and how to identify them, and went to Nemecheck's to learn about identification of trees.

Nemecheck said she enjoys working with Rodgers and said she thought the college level test at the Eco-Meet was challenging.

The outside part of the competition was a timed program where each team were given a list of tasks like finding insect evidence, identifying leaf and grasses and identifying wildlife tracks and habitat.

"They keep me sharp," Rodgers said. "This is our first year, and we recruited the team through their involvement in 4-H. I recruited them by talking to Dana Belshe about who might be interested in getting this started."

**See TEAM, Page 2**

## 62nd annual meeting, Monday, Feb. 13 6:30 p.m. VFW Hall





Eco-Team Coach Sandy Rodgers meets with BreAnna Nemecheck and the other team members

# Four kids are Eco-team

## TEAM, from Page 1

Starting with a team of freshmen Rodgers hopes they will stay together through high school, and is thinking they may add another team for next year.

“I think being on the team has changed my direction,” Mangus said, “and I will look at going into biology later in life. I think I would like to be a wildlife officer.”

Nemecheck said being on the team has helped her learn more about animals and plants, and will be helpful to her later in life.

Duell said he thinks the lesson they are learning is that people need to keep the earth nice and clean to help preserve the environment. He wants to get kids to help clean up highways and parks. He thinks he would like to be a wildlife officer, and said he is best at identifying animals.

Learning about wildlife the team finds out what is the habitat, how to improve it and how it is important in the big picture.

Rodgers said the Eco-Meet was organized through the Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance and the Sternberg Museum.

She is delighted to get kids interested in thinking about these issues.

She said there is a national competition for environmental teams, but does not have a date or place for the meet. To go to the national you would have to win the state competition.

As a team Rodgers said Mangus is good with mammals and grasses, Duell is creative especially in the interpretative skills and Nemecheck is good with trees. The three enjoy learning together, and working with their coach.

Mangus doesn't think the environment is doing well, and said he is worried it will get worse and worse. One of the things he thinks will help is people using more electric and hybrid cars.

“I think there are things we can do,” he said, “but I know there are downsides to all things.”

Nemecheck agrees and said she sees the farms getting bigger and the number of small farmers will continue to decrease.

Both think the conservation practices of less tillage and terracing is helping to conserve water. Mangus

See TEAM, Page 3

## Sherman County Conservation District • Program 2006

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(Recognize former Award Winners)

Friends of Conservation Award .....	Sandy Rodgers
State Poster Award .....	Bill Selby
Poster, Limerick & Essay and Computer Technology Contest .....	Sandy Rodgers
	Dan Farmer
Windbreak Award .....	Western State Bank
Bankers Award .....	Western State Bank
BUSINESS .....	Lonnie Whiteker
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# Soil survey, important for the future

By Patrick L. Abel

*Soil Scientist, Manhattan*

Selecting a plan for your future retirement, one that shows the greatest return and allows for the best security for you and your family, is something everyone feels is important as you look down the road.

This is also true with our soil resources. Today, more than ever, we all have an obligation to conserve our soils in order to ensure that in later years they will remain productive and return the greatest benefit and security to those who depend on them.

In order to achieve this, all land users should make soil conservation a priority, and the first step is for them to know the soils on their land and realize the proper use and potential of those soils. The success of any practice applied to the land will depend on determining a land use pattern that is within the capability of the soil and which will provide the greatest return. Selecting the proper land use for each field is, there-

See SOILS, Page 8

Fifi the Fox, Ricky Raccoon and Squeaky, a 13-stripe ground squirrel were the characters BreAnna Nemecheck, Devin Mangus and Adam Duell chose to portray in their skit at the Eco-Meet held in October at the Sternberg Museum in Hays. The team finished fourth.

Photo by Sandy Rodgers/Conservation District

## Four kids are Eco-team

TEAM, from Page 2

said one thing that will help is planting crops that take less water like wheat and sunflowers.

"I think to save the aquifer we have to use less water for crops," Duell said. "We need to look for plants that take less water than corn."

Duell thinks there will be a new variety of corn developed that takes less water.

"We are lucky to live where we are," Mangus said. "I think we have an advantage with our

farm backgrounds, and we have support from our parents.

"I probably won't farm in the future, but will live on a farm."

Nemecheck said she wants to live on a farm where she can have horses.

All three think the Eco-Meet team is a great program and want to get more kids involved.

Mangus thinks they will be better prepared for the competition next year, and is looking forward to the Envirothon.

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# Couple loves what they are doing

By Pat Schiefen

The Goodland Star-News

The winners of this year's Kansas Banker's Award for using superior conservation practices in Sherman County love what they do, and it shows.

Sweethearts since high school, Velta and Bob Bradshaw returned to his parent's farm in 1987, when Bob's mother died, after being away for 25 years. Bob's parents, Bob Sr. and Carrie Bradshaw, had farmed the place 18 miles south and west from Goodland for 55 years.

The Bradshaws say water is a top concern for them. They are located on a vein of water. Their cattle operation has six windmills and seven earthen dams in valleys where they can collect runoff. The dams do not always have water in them, though, Bob said.

Part of the improvements to their cattle operation has been piping water to different parts of the pasture so the cattle graze more evenly, Velta said. The underground pipes were installed with the help of cost share programs from the state water resources administered by the conservation dis-



Velta and Bob Bradshaw are having fun being back on the farm and raising cattle.  
Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

trict.

For the last two years, she said, they have put in new terracing with the help of state cost share. They have been able to plant wheat in those fields.

Bradshaw's have done a great job managing water and grazing, said Sandy Rodgers, Conservation District Manager.

The Banker's Award is sponsored by the Kansas Banker's Association. A committee is formed to take nominations and includes a member from one of the local banks. The banks rotate the position every year. Lyle Hammer from Western State Bank was on the committee this year. The committee tours each nomination's operation to see their conservation practices.

"The award recognizes conservation practices that are above and beyond," Rodgers said.

The couple have developed a partnership in the operation. They needed to buy some heifers to help build their herd, Velta said, and Bob couldn't go to the sale so he suggested she go.

"I didn't think she would go," Bob

recalled, "Velta went and bought 40 heifers.

"I paid \$23 more a head than I should have," she admitted.

When she went to buy ear tags, she said, the color they had was pink so the heifers became the "pink ladies." Bob said he'd always liked the musical "Grease" and that's where the name came from. They artificially inseminated the cows and are waiting for them to have their first calves.

"Every farm wife needs some incentive," Bob said. "The cows with orange ear tags are Velta's."

They use half their land in farming and the rest for ranching. They grow wheat, sunflowers and sorghum. Their sorghum has tended to have high nitrates, Bob said, because the growing conditions have been so dry.

He said he puts the high-nitrate feed on the bottom of the silage pile with the silage on top. When the moisture in the piles moves to the top, the amount of nitrates declines. They have Kansas State University recommend a feed rations, he said, adding

See BRADSHAW, Page 5

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Above is a picture of the Bradshaw's "pink ladies" eating after Bob had feed them. Velta bought the "pink ladies" at auction in McCook. Below is a picture of one of the terraces that the Bradshaws have put in the last two years getting part of the money from state cost share. Photos by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star News



# Couple loves their job

**BRADSHAW, from Page 4**

that they buy their silage from Dallas Eckhardt.

Nitrates accumulate in crops growing under stress such as drought. Nitrates are converted to nitrites in animals by the rumen bacteria once the plants are eaten, extension experts say. Normally nitrites are converted to ammonia and excreted by the animals. High levels get into the blood and prevent the cells from transporting oxygen so the animals die of asphyxiation.

Velta and Bob are both busy in different ways in their farming operation. Bob said he takes care of the cows and farming. Velta does the record keeping and the feed buying for the cattle in her office on the computer.

They have been married for 48 years and have three children. They have two daughters and one son. Cyndi lives in Shawnee Mission. Robin and Rod live in Salina. They have eight grandchildren. Some of the grandchildren come and help at harvest.

After they were married, Velta said, they lived on the farm and in Garden City for a while, then moved to Salina.

Bob worked in construction and built houses, Velta said. She was a real estate broker and sold Bob's houses. They lived in Salina for 25 years.

His parents started farming on the original part of the place in 1932, he said, and moved the house from Haigler, Neb., in 1945.

Velta said her father was a Wesleyan minister. He thought he should only stay at one church for three years at a time, so they moved quite a bit, Velta said. Her family moved to Goodland from Colorado Springs before her junior year in high school.

Velta was born in Big Bow, east of Johnson City. She said her mother made her a birthday cake for her first birthday and got salt instead of sugar. Her mother didn't waste anything, so she gave it to the chickens and they died.

"The best part of what I do is that I get to work with my husband now," Velta said.

## Rebuilding those terrace systems

**By Craig T. Scheuerman**

*Civil Engineer, Hays*

Terrace rebuilding is a subject we hear a lot about, but lately some new questions have been raised. Do I need to rebuild every terrace in the field, or can I just rebuild every other one?

To decide about rebuilding, first you need to know something about how a terrace system is designed. Terraces are designed to contain a ten-year rain without overtopping. This means they can hold the total runoff from a rain that would occur once in ten years on the drainage area above the terrace.

When terraces are rebuilt, every terrace in the system needs to be re-

stored to original design height for the system to have adequate capacity and work properly. If only every other terrace were rebuilt, the old terraces, with their low capacity, would overtop. The overflow runs down the slope and is caught by the rebuilt terraces. Since these terraces are only designed to handle the runoff from the area above, the excessive runoff from the old terraces would cause the newly rebuilt terraces to overtop.

If terrace spacing is a problem, an entire new system may help. Spacing can be adjusted by installing new terraces with wider channels. In certain situations, a new system may improve alignment and farmability.

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# Winner has passion for his trees

By Sharon Corcoran

*The Goodland Star-News*

A man with a passion for trees, Joe Bauman has been collecting leafy and evergreen varieties most of his life. Now the windbreak on his farm is gaining notoriety.

Bauman grew up on County Road 17 just north of I-70 and still lives there. He planted 1,200 trees in three rows in an "L" along the road from his house and then half a mile west along the Interstate in 1989.

Mostly Austrian pines, he said, the windbreak has a few other trees mixed in to replace ones that died during the past 17 years.

The windbreak started as a barrier to the noise from highway traffic, he said; it acts as a snow fence, too. Bauman's passion for trees and his collection of them started much earlier. Bauman, 62, said the farm had only one tree when he was a boy, but he quickly helped change that.

His grandfather was a bindweed agent, Bauman said, and often people he worked for had trees out in a pasture or somewhere else they didn't want them. His grandfather dug those trees up and moved them to their yard, and Bauman helped to raise them, carrying buckets of water to keep them alive.

"I thought it was the neatest thing to water them," he said.

Bauman said he went to Colorado and loved all the trees in the mountains. He knew then he wanted to plant more at home.

"I've always had a passion for trees," he said, "the shade, the smell and, as a boy, climbing them and putting in a rope for a swing.

Trees are something you can always enjoy," he said.

"It's important to have a plan in life," he added, "and then take the time to do it. I always wanted to plant a lot of trees."

A lot of the trees in the back yard were planted after dark, he said, when it was cooler and he had the time.

Bauman has an assortment of trees in his yard, accumulated from many sources. One, he said, a guy was trying to sell as a live Christmas tree, but no one bought it. Bauman bought it in Janu-



Joe Bauman (above) won the Windbreak Award from the conservation district for his windbreak planted in 1989 along I-70 and County Road 17 west of the city. Bauman's wife Darlene (left) works at their business, Bauman's Norwest Recreation Inc.

Photos by Sharon Corcoran/The Goodland Star-News



See TREES, Page 7

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**TREES, from Page 6**

ary and dug in the frozen soil in the back yard to plant it.

“He’s been collecting them close to 55 years,” his wife Darlene said. “He’s a tree man. I don’t suppose there’s a kind he doesn’t have.”

Joe Bauman said his favorite trees are the pines. He’s not as fond of Chinese elms. With them, he said, you need to be a lumberjack and climb up there with a chainsaw to get rid of dead branches, and they drop tons of leaves on the yard.

When he added the windbreak, Bauman dug a ditch next to the trees and pumped water from an irrigation well nearby to fill it. He ran that the first three years until the roots were solid. Getting good rains and snows helped a lot, he said, and he hopes things are getting back to that.

The last couple of years, he has had to water the trees around the yard. In bad times, he said, they need more attention than in good years. A lot of windbreaks are struggling now, he said, some barely holding their own even with drip systems.

Bauman said he has saved many trees by adding them to his collection. The manager of an apartment complex called him in the early 1980s and

asked him to get rid of some trees at the complex with hail damage. There were 40 five- to six-foot trees, he said, with hail damage on one side. He told the manager he would remove the trees if he could have them. All but four survived the transplant, he said, and they no longer show any damage.

Trees aren’t the only things he has accumulated over the years; he has held onto other things he got as a kid and has taken in things and repaired them.

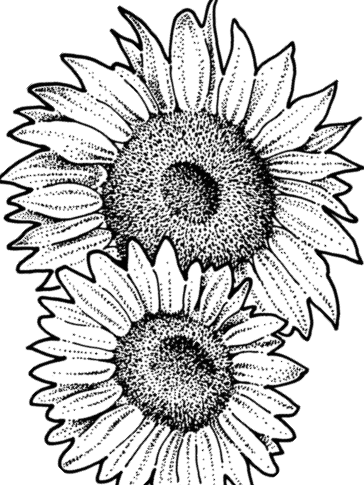
“That’s why there’s so much stuff around here,” Bauman said. “I have a lot of things from when I was a kid, toys and tools. A lot of times I’ve bought things at auctions people were getting rid of because they thought they were broken.”

The Baumans own Bauman’s Norwest Recreation Inc. and Bauman’s Welding and Steel Supply, which they opened in 1973. His parents, the late Norman and Eileen Bauman, were farmers. The late George and Ruby Dimmitt were his grandparents.

The Bauman farm is a quarter section, and he still raises wheat there. The couple have two sons, Chris and Gary Bauman, both of Goodland.




Joe Bauman has been collecting a variety of trees and planting them in his yard at 6364 County Road 17. He grew up on the farm and helped his grandfather plant and take care of trees as a child and has added trees throughout his life.



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Joe Bauman told his dog Snoopy to sit, when the dog was running around and jumping in greeting, when he stopped by the house.

# Soil survey good tool for the future

**SOILS, from Page 3**

fore, a matter of deciding whether a particular plan is best for the soil type. Although many soils may be suited for crop production, others may be more suitable for hay and pasture, or even left in its native state for timber and wildlife management. To help in this decision, it is very important for land users to understand their soils' capabilities and characteristics. An important management tool to use in this understanding is the soil survey provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The soil survey contains maps so users can locate the various soils

found on their land and find a wealth of information about their soils. Land users will find the soil survey helpful in determining crop suitability and productivity along with information on the use and management for rangeland, pastureland, timber production, and tree species selection for windbreaks. Information is also provided to aid users in farm pond selection, septic system suitability, and engineering and construction capabilities along with many other useful interpretations. A detailed description of the soils' physical and chemical properties can also be found.

This is just a broad overview of information that may be found using the

soil survey for your area. By using this information, landowners will become more aware of what their soils' capabilities are and be able to use this knowledge to pattern their land use to fit these capabilities.

If you would like to learn more about the soil survey in your area and obtain soil maps and the related information, go to your local U. S. Department of Agriculture's Service Center and talk to the conservation district staff. The soil survey maps and information can be obtained on-line by accessing the Web Soil Survey at [www.soils.usda.gov/survey](http://www.soils.usda.gov/survey).

For information visit the Kansas web site at [www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov).

## Dry times good time for grassland review

**By Roger W. Tacha**

*Conservationist, Colby*

OK, it DID rain some (finally!!) in most of northwest Kansas this spring and summer.

Unlike the last four to five years, the GREEN in the grass almost hurts your eyes. Amazing!!

The warm-season grasses that are predominant on our range certainly are resilient. They appeared to be

dead prior to this summer — but, nope, they ARE alive!! I didn't say totally healthy — I said "alive."

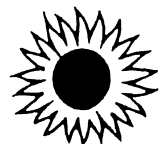
These plants readily responded to moisture, but good recovery in our short and mid-grass country doesn't happen that quickly.

Blade widths of the grasses are not what they should be. Even though clipping/weighing projects that the Natural Resources Conservation Ser-

vice is conducting in all counties are showing fairly good total production, it is primarily due to the grass plant's explosion of many fine-bladed leaves and seed stalks. This could be the plant's response to four to five year's drought suppression.

Another factor we CANNOT easily see is the root system beneath these

**See DRY, Page 13**



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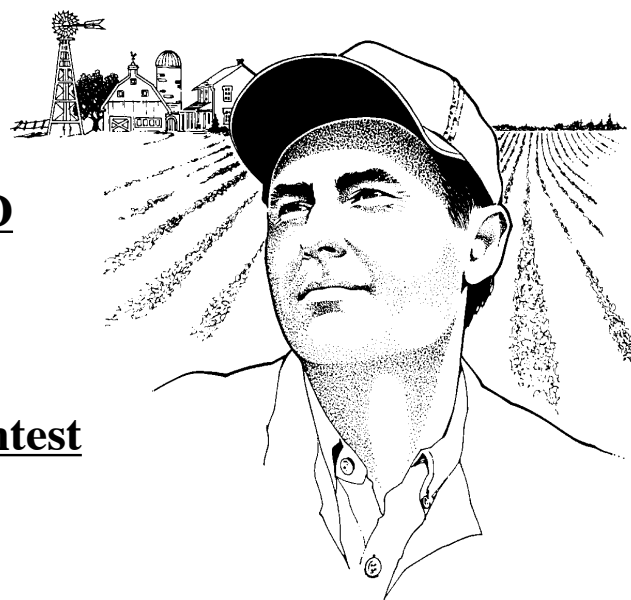
Joe Bauman

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