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Sherman County Conservation District Award Winners!

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District has another busy year assisting farmers

By Fred Wedel
District Conservationist

The annual meeting of the Sherman County Conservation District will be February 13, 2006. I have enjoyed another busy year assisting the farmers and ranchers, of Sherman County, Kansas. The people of this area continue to meet new challenges head on.

Last year I talked about change and that change will continue. Some areas of Sherman County received some more moisture than in 2004 while other areas of the county remain dry and would have enjoyed more timely rains. A big challenge for late 2005 and 2006 are skyrocketing fuel and energy costs. These costs affect all aspects of agriculture, especially irrigation costs here in the High Plains of Northwest Kansas. The high cost of energy along with declining water tables has changed the profitability of irrigated crops into the foreseeable future.

I believe agriculture will remain competitive and profitable in Sherman County. Modern conservation practices adopted by our farmers and



Wedel

ranchers will help to keep agriculture sustainable. I also believe we are seeing a paradigm shift from the intensive use of irrigation during the sugar beet days and the recent intensive irrigation of corn, to more limited irrigation. By changing to a 2, 3 or 4 crop rotation, farms can remain profitable while reducing the amount of irrigation water applied annually to the fields. Winter wheat, sunflowers, corn and grain sorghum can all be grown successfully by changing plant populations and the sequence of crops grown.

Last year I talked about "No-Till" fanning practices as the wave of the future. I continue to believe this to be true and challenge everyone involved in agriculture in Sherman County to study why I believe this way. No-Till fanning promotes soil quality and soil health in ways that intensive tillage systems never can. Soil quality always precedes water quality and air quality. Soil quality and health is defined as the capacity of a specific kind of soil to function, within natural or managed ecosystem boundaries, to

sustain plant and animal productivity, maintain or enhance water and air quality and support human health and habitation.

In the semi-arid climate of Sherman County, moisture is usually the limiting factor in crop and range production. Conservation practices that capture and maintain soil moisture are critical to successful production. Tillage always dries topsoil, destroys soil structure and reduces moisture infiltration rates. Crop residue always increases organic matter, reduces wind speed at the soil surface, reduces

moisture evaporation, minimizes runoff, reduces soil erosion and more importantly is food for the soil microorganisms. The soil is really a living breathing ecosystem that stores, transforms, and cycles nutrients through the soil.

In summary, I urge everyone to look at and study the agronomics of crop production and soil health. Analyze each step of the production system to determine if all steps are truly necessary.

A mentor of mine told me long ago that to make a profit, receipts need to

be greater than expenses. I am not talking lightly the difficulty during the past 5 to 6 years of drought. I believe that tough times do not last, but tough people do. Many times when someone says it can't be done, they are interrupted by someone who is already doing it.

I welcome the opportunity to visit with you about conservation on your farm or ranch. I am in the conservation office on 210 West 10th St. Goodland, KS 785-899-3070ext3. For more information go to: <http://www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/>

District annual report for 2005

This is the Annual Report of the Sherman County Conservation District for the Calendar year of 2005.

The 2005 Annual Meeting was held February 14th, 2005 at the VFW in Goodland. Mr. & Mrs. Glenn Burk and Mr. & Mrs. Mike Burk were awarded the Conservationists of the Year Award; Mr. & Mrs. Steve Duell received the Banker's Award; and Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Elliott were recipients of the Windbreak Award.

Dana Belshe was recipient of the Friends of Conservation Award.

One hundred eighty cooperators enjoyed the meal furnished by the District and local banks. Lynn Ihrig introduced the group Les Chantes who provided the entertainment for the evening. Bill Selby and Dennis Shank were re-elected to the board by secret ballot.

Thirty-six plaques were presented at the 2005 Annual Meeting for the

Poster, Limerick, Essay and Hyper Studio Stack Contest. Sandra Rodgers, District Manager, Fred Wedel, District Conservationist and Dan Farmer, Technician presented conservation programs prior to the contest.

The Goodland Star-News published the Annual Soil Conservation Edition. KLOE/KKCI radio continued

See REPORT, Page 1



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Sherman County Conservation District Annual report

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ues to support conservation throughout the year.

Sherman County Farmers continue to support conservation in Sherman County. All Compliance plans are on schedule. Approximately 469 CRP contracts are in place for approximately 54,697.3 acres. The State Water Resources Cost Share funded jobs for 2005 included irrigation system upgrades, tanks, livestock wells, terraces and diversions and septic systems that were failing. There are 32 active EQIP contracts, one Wetland Reserve 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 fair booth was displayed in August. Sandy Rodgers, District Manager worked with fifth and sixth graders on the Poster, Limerick, Essay and Hyper-Studio Stack Contest. The third through fourth grades participated in the

Poster and Limerick Contest. Sandy gave programs in the classroom. The District Board voted to give two scholarships to graduating seniors in Sherman County who plan on attending a higher learning institution, with their choice of study being related to agriculture. The scholarships were given to Jordan Anderson and Aubrey Winter. Sandy is working with three freshman, BreAnna Nemechek, Devin Mangus and Adam Duell who make up the Sherman County ECO-Team. This group studies with District Manager Sandy Rodgers weekly. The group entered the Eco-Meet held in Hays in October and were fourth overall. They will enter the Envirothon in May, 2006. The Eco-team is an independent study project supported by Sherman County 4-H.

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 District's 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 concerning cost share funds. One Sherman County producer applied for these funds. Sandy Rodgers serves as the Conservation District's representative to the Western Prairie RC&D with Fred Hall serving as alternate. Greg Nemechek represents the Sherman County Commissioners. Greg Nemechek, Sandy Rodgers, Mary Volk, Janet Rumble, and Fred Hall serve on the local advisory committee 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 six 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 was re-elected President of the group.

The District offered prize money to 4-H and individual fair booths 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. Dean Graber, Mr. & Mrs. Lynn Ihrig and Fred Wedel attended the KACD Convention held at Wichita in November. Holton Witman won First Place in Division Two in the State Poster 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.

Conservation District annual work plan for 2006

Purpose of the Annual Work Plan:

The purpose of the Annual Work Plan, in conjunction with the Conservation Partnership, is to schedule and plan the conservation work needed that is essential to a sound soil and water conservation program for Sherman County. Additionally, the Annual Work Plan will allow for optimum planning with regards to our ongoing Conservation District programs for the coming year.

GOAL 1: REDUCE EXCESSIVE EROSION

STRATEGY: ASSIST NRCS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM PLANNING

- Action 1: Promote a strong public education and awareness program using the District's Information Program.
- Action 2: Set priorities for dispersing the SWRCSP monies.
- Action 3: Assist NRCS with conservation planning.

STRATEGY: PROMOTE CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM

- Action 1: Assist NRCS with development of new CRP contracts.
- Action 2: Promote public awareness of CRP through the District Information and Education Program.
- Action 3: Have grass seed available for sale.
- Action 4: Assist landowners in locating grass drills for their use.
- Action 5: Promote mowing and light disking to achieve healthy grass stands through news articles, etc.

STRATEGY: ASSIST WITH THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM

- Action 1: Make resource assessment information available to all interested parties.
- Action 2: Assist NRCS with the develop-

See WORK, Page 12

Congratulations to Sherman County Conservation District Award Winners

Windbreak Award

Joe Bauman

Bankers Award

Robert & Velta Bradshaw

Friends of Conservation Award

BreAnna Nemechek

Adam Duell

Devin Mangus

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PLAN, from Page 11

ment of EQIP contracts.

•Action 3: Promote EQIP through the District's Information and Education Program.

STRATEGY: PROMOTE CONSERVATION TILLAGE IN SHERMAN COUNTY

•Action 1: Use media to educate public on conservation tillage.

•Action 2: Cooperate with the Conservation Tillage Information Center.

•Action 3: Cooperate with NRCS presenting the benefits of No-till (direct seeding) through field demonstrations.

STRATEGY: WHERE MUTUAL EROSION PROBLEMS ARE INVOLVED THE DISTRICT WILL WORK WITH THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

GOAL 2: IMPROVE WATER MANAGEMENT

STRATEGY: ADMINISTER THE WATER RESOURCES COST SHARE PROGRAM

•Action 1: Administer the SWRCSP by setting priorities, processing applications and making every effort to disperse all monies allocated to Sherman County.

STRATEGY: CONSERVATION OF OGALLALA AQUIFER

•Action 1: Promote irrigation effi-

ciency through irrigation water management.

•Action 2: Promote crop rotations that encourage limited irrigation.

STRATEGY: COOPERATE WITH GMD#4

•Action 1: The District will cooperate with GMD#4 in implementing the Irrigation Development Plan policies as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding between the District and GMD #4.

•Action 2: The District will cooperate with GMD#4 concerning the Irrigation Initiative funds.

STRATEGY: MAKE PUBLIC AWARE OF NON-POINT SOURCE POLLUTION PLAN

•Action 1: Prepare project work plans for the NPS program and apply for NPS funds to address non-point concerns in Sherman County

•Action 2: Cooperate with the LEPA office in solving environmental concerns.

•Action 3: Administer the NPS funds by taking applications, processing them and make every effort to disburse all monies allocated to Sherman County.

GOAL 3: IMPROVE RANGE CONDITIONS

STRATEGY: INCREASE AWARENESS OF PRINCIPLES OF RANGE MANAGEMENT

•Action 1: Offer scholarship to Range Youth Camp.

•Action 2: District will consider selection of Range Management Award.

•Action 3: The District will have native grass seed for sale.

•Action 4: The District will prioritize and evaluate all range/livestock State Water Resource Cost Share applications and prepare Grazing Management Plans for them.

•Action 5: Assist with any emergency CRP Haying and Grazing programs.

GOAL 4: WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

STRATEGY: PROVIDE MATERIAL FOR WINDBREAKS AND WILDLIFE PLANTINGS

•Action 1: Trees for windbreaks and wildlife plantings will be available for purchase through the District.

•Action 2: Promote continuous CRP sign up and CRP enhancement incentives.

•Action 3: Cooperate with the local Pheasants Forever Chapter.

STRATEGY: DISTRICT WILL COOPERATE WITH KANSAS WILDLIFE AND PARKS.

•Action: 1 Participate in Memorandum of Understanding with Wildlife & Parks

for cost share funds to promote

wildlife management practices.

GOAL 5: MANAGEMENT OF RIPARIAN AND WETLANDS

STRATEGY: PROMOTE RIPARIAN AND WETLANDS PROTECTION PROGRAM

•Action 1: Use the news media to educate the public concerning riparian & wetlands protection.

•Action 2: Offer tree planting in riparian areas only through the State Water Resources Cost Share Program.

GOAL 6: INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

STRATEGY: DISTRICT INFORMATION PROGRAM

•Action 1: The District will continue to direct an information program using the news media.

STRATEGY: PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

•Action 1: The District will offer their own Awards Program and select an outstanding cooperator.

•Action 2: The Annual Poster, Limerick and Essay contest along with the Hyper-Studio Stack contest will be held in cooperation with the local school district to promote interest in Soil and Water Conservation.

•Action 3: Sandy Rodgers, District Manager will make conservation talks and tours available to interested parties.

•Action 4: Awards will be offered for fairbooths which have a conservation theme.

•Action 5: The District will contact the 4-H clubs and schools regarding the KACD Speech Contest.

•Action 6: Soil Stewardship material will be offered to local churches.

•Action 7: The District will be represented at Area and State conservation meetings.

•Action 8: The District will have a fairbooth.

•Action 9: The District will support and assist the Western Prairie RC&D.

Sandy Rodgers, District Manager will serve on the Western Prairie RC&D Council as the Conservation District Representative.

•Action 10: The District will offer two scholarships to high school graduates

majoring an agricultural field.

•Action 11: The District will sponsor and Sandy Rodgers will mentor an eco-meet/envirothon team or teams to promote conservation education to 8th through 12th grade students.

GOAL 7: MANAGEMENT SERVICES

STRATEGY: SUPPORT THE NORTHWEST KANSAS CONSERVATION AND ENVIRON-

See PLAN, Page 13

Congratulations

Soil Conservation Winners 2006!



The
Goodland Star-News

1205 Main
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Dry times may be proper time for grassland review

DRY, from Page 8

plants. They would normally be several feet deep. However, after this drought, these structures have weakened — they are less dense and probably about half as long as they could be.

It will take at least **THREE** things to get the rangeland healthy: Moisture, rest and time.

• **MOISTURE:** Yes, probably a no-brainer. If/when it rains, grass grows.

• **REST:** This is a big one because people can control it. It's a direct management function. The range grasses in our part of the world can remain

healthy with grazing. In fact they **SHOULD** be grazed. It's part of how they evolved.

However, they need at the very minimum, 30 percent rest during the growing season. Sixty to eighty percent is even more appropriate. It's all how the grass plants evolved and responded to grazing by early herbivores.

The rest is simply "reprieve from being bitten" more than once. And it can only happen if grazing animals are **ABSENT** after the initial grazing occurs — they are removed — possibly sold, lotted, or rotated to other pastures.

Even if stocking rates are severely reduced,

individual animals will likely eat (bite) the same individual plants over and over. Thus, the plant doesn't get the rest required to recover and build root reserves. Instead, it's using up root reserves just to maintain and survive.

• **TIME:** Time is another factor to recognize and accept but cannot be controlled.

The short- and mid-grass country simply doesn't get the 30-40 inches of annual moisture to recover from drought or severe grazing pressure in a year or two. In this 15-25 inch moisture zone, it could take many years to heal — maybe 10-15.

So, with the elements of moisture and time, we put up with them. But the rest/management factor is a **TOOL** that should be used to every advantage — not **JUST** in dry times, but **ALL** the time. It is relatively easy to apply to almost any grazing scenario.

For more information about grasslands, go to your local U. S. Department of Agriculture's Service Center and talk to the conservation district staff.

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

Sherman County Conservation District work plan for 2006

PLAN, from Page 12

MENTAL ALLIANCE

• Action 1: Allow the District Manager to work with the Alliance to obtain additional funding for the District and promote conservation education events.

STRATEGY: PREPARE ANNUAL BUDGET

• Action 1: Part of the District's financing will be accomplished by working with the County Commission and the State of Kansas for matching funds. Other District activities will supplement the financial needs of the District.

STRATEGY: REVIEW MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING

• Action 1: The District will review the memorandums of understanding with each co-

operating agency.

STRATEGY: LONG RANGE PLANNING

• Action 1: The long range program will be reviewed.

STRATEGY: PROVIDE SERVICES TO COOPERATORS

• Action 1: Along with trees and grass seed, the District will also handle marking flags, polymer, weed barrier, gyp blocks, drip irrigation parts and rabbit netting.

STRATEGY: ANNUAL MEETING

• Action 1: Make all arrangements concerning the Annual Meeting, meals, speaker, awards, etc.

• Action 2: Cooperate with local banks, NRCS, and Extension Office to select Bankers Award recipients.

• Action 3: Prepare and distribute Annual

Report and Financial Statement.

DISTRICT PRIORITIES, PROCEDURES, & POLICIES

Work planned by District Cooperators will be laid out by the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the order requests are received. Consideration will be given to availability of equipment, materials, and labor.

Priority will be given to Highly Erodible Land and Compliance requirements regarding conservation planning.

Farmers and contractors will be used in surveys and checking out practices to more fully utilize the services of the NRCS personnel. Conservation plans will be developed whenever possible before the application of conservation

practices or land use changes are made. These plans will include the proper use and treatment of soil, water and related land resources. Co-operators will be urged to maintain conservation practices already applied.

The Sherman County Conservation District will meet the first Thursday after the first Tuesday of every month with the exception of July.

The Sherman County Conservation District will hold its Annual Meeting during the month of February.

All services offered by the Sherman County Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.

A grass treatment designed for livestock

By Kelly J. Klausmeyer

Agricultural Engineer, Hays

An option for confined livestock producers that is increasing in use is a grass filter to treat runoff. The practice is called Wastewater Treatment Strip and can be a simple and cost-effective way to deal with runoff from feedlots.

The strip works by spreading the runoff from a feedlot over a large area to infiltrate it into the soil. The nutrients in the runoff water then can be used as fertilizer by the grass growing on the filter area. Normally, cool-season grasses such as smooth brome will be planted on the strip. The grass is then cut and baled into hay, recycling the nutrients back into the cattle.

clung the nutrients back into the cattle.

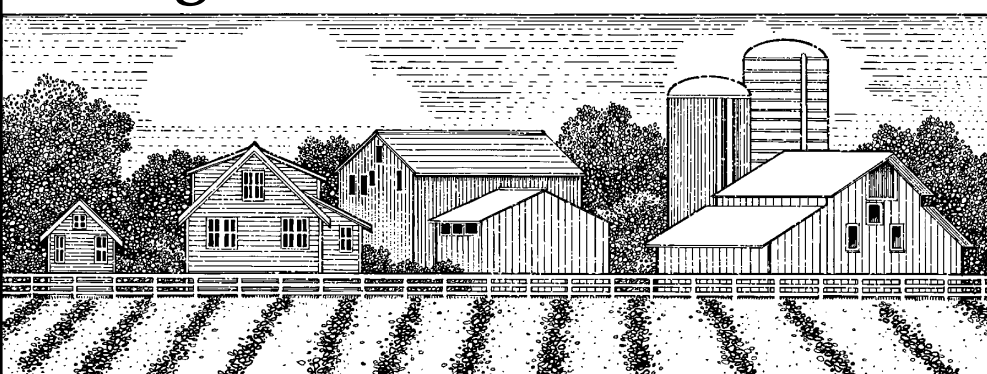
A properly designed treatment strip will consist of three parts: a settling basin, a flow distribution device, and the grassed strip. The settling basin is a must to keep solid manure out of the treatment strip. The settling basin looks similar to a terrace, placed directly below a feedlot to catch the manure and allow for easy cleaning. The flow distribution device is necessary at the upper end of the strip. This device can be gated irrigation pipe, a concrete or timber weir, or similar device used to establish a shallow, uniform flow over the strip and help prevent channeling and erosion.



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SHERMAN COUNTY
Farm Bureau

Poker poster wins first at state contest

By Pat Schiefen

The Goodland Star-News

A Christmas gift turned out to be a state-award winning idea for a Goodland boys' conservation poster.

Holton Witman, 10, won the the state award in division 2 for third and fourth graders last year. He will receive his plaque at the Sherman County Conservation Banquet on Monday.

Holdon said he made his poster last year when he was in Debbie Bantam's third grade class at Central Elementary School. Teachers give poster board to everyone who wants to enter, he said.

The youth said he got a Texas Hold 'Em game, a version of poker popularized on television in recent years, for Christmas that year. When he and his parents, Travis and Angie Witman, brainstormed an idea for the poster, he said, they came up with an idea using the card game to describe irrigation practices.

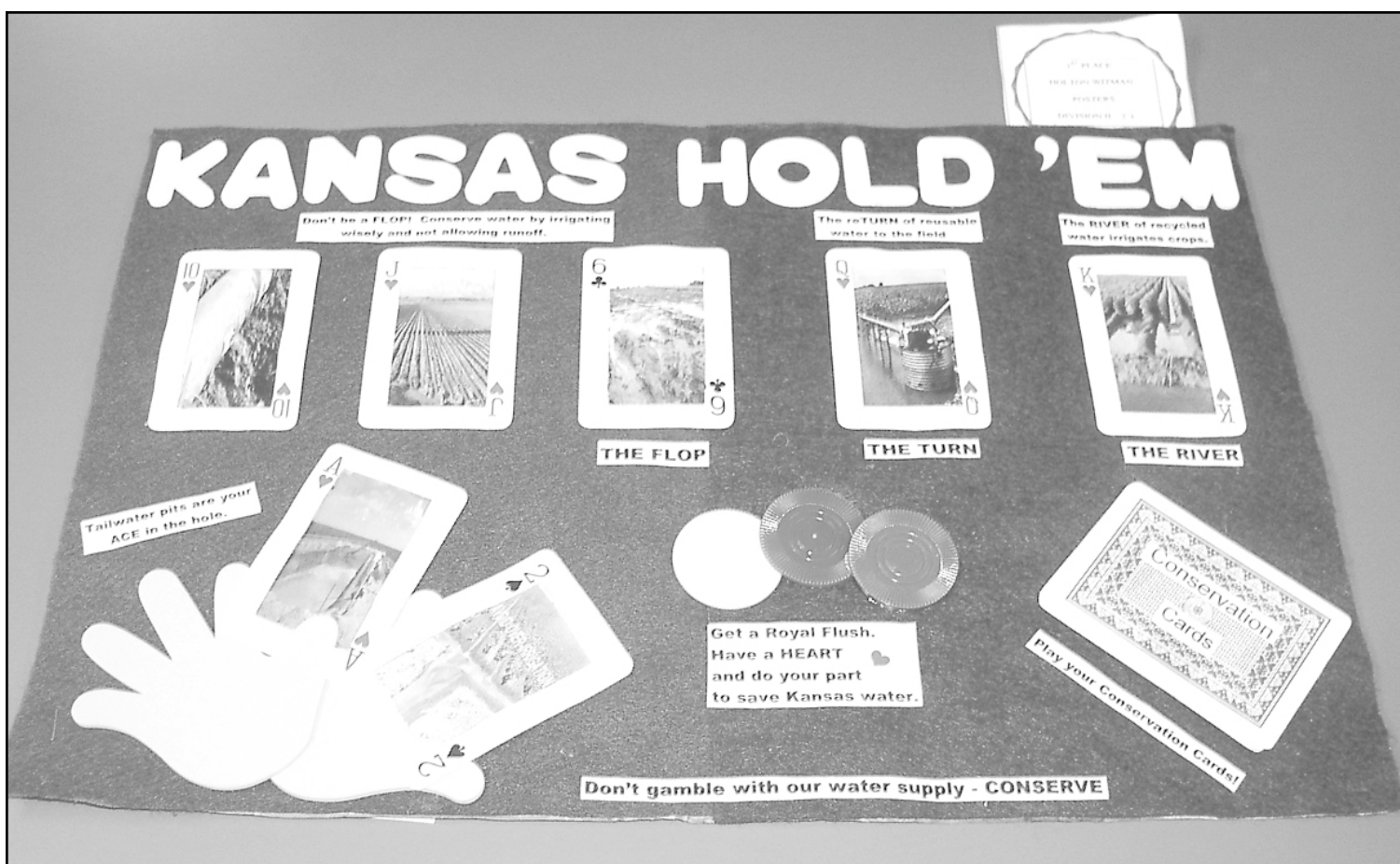
The poster, called Kansas Hold 'Em, says, "Don't be a flop, conserve water by irrigating wisely and not allowing run off." A flop in the card game, Witman's mother said, is three face up community cards.

The turn, another community face up card after a round of betting, is the return of reusable water to the field, the poster says. A final community face up card is called the river. The river on the poster is recycled water irrigating crops.

The cards on the poster have pictures of irrigation practices on them. On the bottom of the poster it says, "Don't gamble with our water supply."



Whitman



Kansas Hold 'em poster that won Holton Whitman First Place in Division Two of the state competition.

Travis has a younger sister Rachel, 4. This year he is in Virginia Palmgren's fourth-grade class at Central Elementary School.

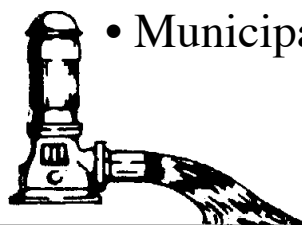
Congratulations to all the winners! It is a pleasure each year to have the privilege of interviewing these people. They are examples of the best in Sherman County.

*Tom Betz, Editor
Goodland Star-News*

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GOOD DEALS...AND A GOOD DEAL MORE

Successful camps link girls to the land

By Darla J. Juhl

Coordinator, Stockton

Lessons on trees, turtles, and tornadoes were just a few of the activities held at the first ever Kansas Linking Girls to the Land at northwest Kansas day camps. The camps were held at four sites during the first two weeks in June and drew nearly 140 participants.

The Solomon Valley, Smoky Hills, and Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development councils teamed up with the Kansas Girl Scouts of Sunflower Council in Hays, Kansas, to direct the event. Linking Girls to the Land is an interagency partnership between the Girl Scouts of the USA's Elliott Wildlife Values Project and federal natural resource conservation agencies, initiatives, and partner organizations. The program encourages partnerships among the agencies in order to provide more conservation and outdoor programs to Girl Scout members across the country. Linking Girls to the Land provides environmental education programs, outdoor recreation skills, volunteer service, and career awareness.

The camps were offered to girls in first through third grades at sites in Oberlin, Hays, St. Francis, and Stockton. Participants rotated through a series of workshops that featured a 30-



A speckled kingsnake, handled by Lorrie Beck of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, gets up close with campers at the Linking Girls to the Land Day Camp at Lakeview Christian Camp.

minute lesson on topics such as weather, trees, animals, soils, and history of the land. Presenters and agencies included Jim Strine, Kansas Forest

Service; Bob Tricks, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Cindy Fay, Priscilla Parnham, and Jennifer Ritterling, National Weather Service; Lorrie Beck, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Phyllis Howard, Reggie Murray, and Sherda Williams, Nicodemus National Historic Site. Staff members from the Kansas Natural Resources Foundation, K-State Research and Extension, Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance, and Sternberg Museum were also on hand to provide activities for the campers.

Monica Legleiter, communications director for Girl Scouts of Sunflower Council, called the camps "amazing."

"From the support of the local, state, and federal agencies involved from planning through implementation of the workshops to the smiles on girls' faces, the camps were absolutely amazing," Legleiter said.

Plans are underway for a second installment of Linking Girls camps to be held next spring. The spring camps will be for girls in grades 6 through 12 and focus on agricultural and environmental careers and entrepreneurship.

Compliance an important issue

By Alan R. Boerger,

Resource Conservationist, Manhattan

It has been 20 years since the Food Security Act of 1985 was signed into law. Since then, many farmers have realized that conservation planning and practice applications are very important parts of their overall operation.

In some cases, maintaining compliance with the conservation requirements of the Act determined whether a farmer can continue to farm or must make a decision to quit all together. Not much has been released lately about conservation compliance; however, it is still one of the major requirements of which farmers must be aware to protect their eligibility for most Department of Agriculture programs.

Each year, land tracts are randomly selected for review by the Farm Service Agency and provided to the Natural Resources Conservation Service

for county field office staff members to evaluate.

After the evaluation period, the Conservation Service will make a determination on whether compliance is being maintained on all "Highly Erodible" cropland on the tract. That determination will impact whether a farmer is in compliance and maintain their program eligibility.

All farmers should be conscious of wetland compliance. Many have found out the hard way that compliance with the wetland protection provisions of the 1985 Farm Bill is still important. Violation of wetland provisions can mean a farmer could lose their eligibility for department programs and benefits until the violations are corrected or mitigated. Farmers who wish to remove trees for fill in low areas need to check with their conservation field office prior to doing these activities to protect themselves from violations and interruption of their benefits.

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A Salute to Area Farmers



It starts with pride. Pride in himself and the way he farms. The American farmer knows he can expect a season full of long hours and hard work. But he's up to the challenge. In fact, he wouldn't have it any other way. A good farmer is a good neighbor, too. Involved in his community and committed to the land. He's a family man. Passing knowledge on to his children so they'll be ready when it's their turn to farm. A good farmer runs a tight operation. But his eyes

are always open; looking for new ideas and tools that can make his business a little more efficient; a little more productive. He listens hard when other people talk farming. But mainly, he takes a long look at his own program and decides things for himself.

Throwing out what didn't work and sticking with the things that did. Upgrading his system until his goals are reached and then upgrading some more. He's hard to please, but he's fair. A good farmer, in short, is one of America's greatest natural resources.

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