

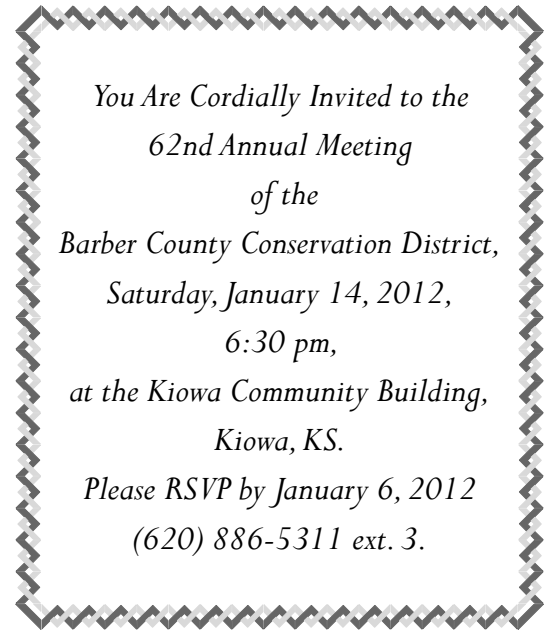
CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE BARBER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

VOLUME 24, ISSUE 3

John Farney Memorial Scholarship

The John Farney Memorial Scholarship is a \$1000 scholarship sponsored by the Barber County Conservation District. The scholarship is awarded annually to a student who is entering at least his/her second year of college. Applicants must be pursuing a college degree in a conservation-related field. The applicant must also be a resident of Barber County. The deadline for applications will be **March 15, 2012**. You may call (620) 886-5311 ext 3 for more information. Applications are available at the conservation office, 800 W. 3rd Avenue, Medicine Lodge, Kansas or on our website: www.barbercountyconservationdistrict.com on the Youth & Education tab.



***Look for the EQIP initiative sign up around March 30.**

Poster Contest Winners

This year's poster contest was an exciting one! This year's theme of Forests For People: More Than You Can Imagine encouraged 283 hopeful kids to participate in this year's poster contest. The competition was fierce this year. All of the posters were excellent in content and quality, but we could only have one winner in each category to move on to state. And the winner's are.....

K - 1st

1st - Brooke Boyce

2nd - Mylee Gerber

3rd - Easton Hrencher

2nd - 3rd

1st - Bryce Kimball

2nd Madison Pilkington

3rd - Shiloh Carr

4th - 6th

1st - Jaycee Patton

2nd - Cason Liebst

3rd Danielle Bedwell

7th - 9th

1st - Hannah Eck

2nd - Trevor Thompson

3rd - Molly Miller

10th - 12th

1st - Carlos Medina

2nd - Emily Kimball

3rd - Savannah Brees

Carlos Medina placed third in his division at the state level and Brooke Boyce received honorable mention in her division. Join us at the Barber County Conservation District Annual meeting on January 14, 2012 to congratulate the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners at the county & state levels!!!!

5th Grade Field Day

On October 13, 2011, the conservation district held a Conservation Field Day for the 5th graders of Barber County at the Z Bar Ranch at Aetna, KS. The day started with 49 students and teachers from both North Barber and South Barber meeting at the pens where everyone got to see how the buffalo are sorted. A trip through the pens was necessary for a first hand perspective of how sorting works. After that everyone loaded up on the buses and we were off on a tour of the ranch.

After a brief tour through the ranch, we stopped at a prairie dog town. The kids were able to walk around the town and watch the prairie dogs pop up and run from hole to hole. During the excitement of the prairie dogs, the buffalo were called in. Like something from an old western the buffalo came across the prairie by the hundreds. How absolutely breathtaking to be surrounded by hundreds and hundreds of buffalo in this once in a lifetime experience for these kids!

Then it was time to load up and head to the guest house for lunch. After a sack lunch, sponsored by Corona Hoch, Farm Bureau, everyone broke up in to four groups for a nature walk to the Salt Fork. The dry Salt Fork River bed provided an excellent place for a sand art contest. The kids had a lot of fun in the sand! Some drew pictures and some dug holes big enough for several kids to fit into and others still buried each other in the sand. A couple of groups of kids decided they would like to know how far they would need to dig to find water. They finally found water, but found out they had to dig pretty deep to find it after such a dry year. After walking back to the guest house Charlie Swank with Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) brought out snakes for the kids to see and feel. They even got to see one snake snack on a mouse. Jarred Kneisel concluded the day with Edible Soil. The kids all enjoyed their soil layers (Oreo's and pudding) before loading up and going back to the school.

The day was a great success and we are already looking forward to next year's field day! Special THANKS goes out to Keith & Eva Yearout and Trent Humphries of the Z Bar Ranch for hosting our event & Corona Hoch and Farm Bureau for sponsoring our meal and water bottles this year!!

* To see more pictures from this year's field day please visit our website: www.barbercountyconservationdistrict.com and click on the Youth & Education tab.



Eva Yearout explaining their tracking system for the buffalo and how the buffalo are sorted.

Scholarship Recipient

Congratulations to Calandria Jarboe, daughter of Carl and Mariann Jarboe, as the recipient of the John Farney Memorial Scholarship for the 2010-2011 school year. Calandria is pursuing a degree in Agriculture Education and Horticulture Business at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln. Her school activities include Treasurer of Sigma Alpha, being a member of the Ag Ed Club, Horticulture Club and Phi Alpha Xi. Calandria also enjoys being an active member of the community including helping with Agriculture in the Classroom, an activity teaching elementary students about agriculture, and helped with the planting and care of the flowers around the Medicine Lodge community for the 2011 Peace Treaty. Calandria enjoys working with plants, reading books, riding horses, and running half-marathons. We wish you the best of luck in obtaining your degree, Calandria!



You would have to have been sleeping the last year not to have noticed the increased activity in land leasing for power lines as well oil and gas exploration/production in Barber County – a welcome boost to the economy! However, landowners are wise to take into account the impact on their land due to the construction of roads. The conservation office has information available to landowners who are interested in learning how to design, locate and install efficient drainage features so that damage caused by runoff is minimized and the need for road maintenance is reduced. You can also learn about techniques for recognizing water harvesting opportunities, an especially attractive concept when considering that an acre of impermeable road surface can yield about 25,000 gallons of water from a one-inch rainfall event. When working out the details of your lease agreement, consider the long-term effects of using best management practices on the land.

Source: A Good Road Lies Easy on the Land...Water Harvesting from Low-Standard Rural Roads

Cleaning Out Ponds

By Jarred Kneisel

With the exceptional drought we went through this summer (which is hopefully behind us, but we'd better buckle up for a prolonged period), many of you were thinking of cleaning out those old ponds that have silted in over the years and have gone dry. We have fielded many of the same questions, so I thought this would be a good opportunity to address many of those, as well as some words of caution.

Before we talk about any repair tips, be aware that there may be some regulations that need to be OK'd through the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), or the Department of Water Resources (DWR), especially in larger drainages. You'll need to consider Wetland Compliance as well, but as a rough rule of thumb, if you are returning the depth back to the original depth, you should be fine. If you have any concerns, though, be sure to ask the appropriate people.

It can be tempting to deepen the pond to hold even more water than it originally did, but that can be risky due to the nature of the soils in our area. Unless you're confident that you will still be in good tight material (clay or bedrock) that you also cored the dam to, you may run the risk of punching through your liner, and your pond will effectively be drained. My number one concern for ponds in this area – adequate soils for ponds are difficult to come by (for surface water, not necessarily ground water), and it can be altogether too easy to go through that layer and expose a sandy layer that will drain what water you had.

So if I can't go further down with the pond, how about raising the pipe and building the dam up more? Again, be aware of regulations that may affect this. Also, increasing the height of the dam requires a significant amount of dirtwork, since you will need to maintain the slope on the back toe of the dam in order for the dam to maintain its strength. As an example, on a dam with a 2.5:1 back slope, if you raise the top of the dam 5', you'll need to extend the back toe of the dam by 17.5'. Just adding height to the top of the dam but not the toe will weaken the structure when full.

Cleaning out silted-in ponds is a good management and maintenance item, but should be done with careful planning. Because of the reasons noted above, I would hesitate recommending that you make any changes to your pond's structure, but would rather just see them cleaned out back to their original depth. Of course, there are caveats to every scenario, so if you do have questions, please feel free to call or stop by. Also, a great publication on pond design (and maintenance) can be found at: <http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/pdf%20files/PONDS.PDF>.

**BARBER COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CONSERVATION PRACTICES AND AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS, VISIT THESE WEB SITES:

WWW.BARBERCOUNTYCONSERVATIONDISTRICT.COM

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NOTICE: WHEN YOU CALL THE BARBER COUNTY USDA SERVICE CENTER AT (620) 886-5311 AN AUTO ATTENDANT WILL ANSWER THE PHONE. YOU MAY ENTER ANY OF THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS DURING THE MESSAGE:

2 - FARM SERVICE AGENCY

3 - NRCS AND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

IF YOU HAVE A ROTARY PHONE, PLEASE STAY ON THE LINE AND A PERSON WILL ASSIST YOU.

**BARBER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

CHAIRMAN TED ALEXANDER
VICE CHAIRMAN SAM BAIER
TREASURER GEORGI DAWSON
MEMBER CALVIN BOYD
MEMBER MATT CANTRELL

THE BOARD MEETS ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT THE BARBER COUNTY USDA SERVICE CENTER. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, OR SUGGESTIONS FOR THIS NEWSLETTER, PLEASE CALL (620) 886-5311.

THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION IN ALL ITS PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, GENDER, RELIGION, AGE, DISABILITY, POLITICAL BELIEFS, SELF-ORIENTATION, OR MARITAL OR FAMILY STATUS. (NOT ALL PROHIBITED BASES APPLY TO ALL PROGRAMS.) PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES WHO REQUIRE ALTERNATIVE MEANS FOR COMMUNICATION OF PROGRAM INFORMATION (BRAILLE, LARGE PRINT, AUDIOTAPE, ETC.) SHOULD CONTACT USDA'S TARGET CENTER AT (202) 720-2600 (VOICE AND TDD).

TO FILE A COMPLAINT OF DISCRIMINATION, WRITE USDA, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS, ROOM 326 W. WHITTEN BUILDING, 1400 INDEPENDENCE AVE., SW WASHINGTON D.C., 20250-9410 OR CALL (202) 720-5964