

# KANSAS

*Wildlife & Parks*

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013

\$2.75



# KANSAS *View*

by Robin Jennison



## BECOMING A SELF-SUFFICIENT AGENCY

As times change, it's inevitable that federal and state priorities will shift, and the amount of general tax revenues going to non-essential services will be impacted. For the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT), that means we must become self-sufficient.

KDWPT, for the most part, is a fee-funded agency, meaning our funding comes from license and permit sales, as well as matching Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) dollars that come from excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment. In my last column, I outlined how the agency is broadening its funding base of hunters and anglers by changing the senior exemption, while also capturing more WSFR funding in the process.

We're striving to maintain current programs and services without major fee increases. Even the change in senior license requirements could only be considered a modest fee increase. Under the new law, anyone 65 or older qualifies for a lifetime hunting/fishing combination license for \$42.50 or an annual hunting or fishing license for \$11.50. Those 75 and older are still exempt. Fees for general hunting and fishing licenses haven't increased since 2002. The price of a resident deer permit hasn't increased since 1983. And yet, the hunting and fishing opportunities available in Kansas today are better than ever.

Wildlife and fish programs in Kansas receive

no state general revenue, while state park and Tourism programs that do have seen significant reductions. We know we need to make state parks self-sufficient. That's why we introduced the State Parks Passport this year. The annual vehicle permit will be available when you renew your vehicle registration, and at \$15, it will save you \$10 compared to the regular annual state park vehicle permit. We hope that,

**The changes in funding we are implementing should give us a more predictable revenue stream and enhance our ability to maintain and make modifications to our facilities to meet the needs of our constituents.**

as this program has shown in other states, more people will purchase the passport because of the convenience and savings, and park revenues will increase. A similar program in Michigan sold park permits to 27 percent of the vehicles registered. If we sell Park Passports to 10 per-

cent of our vehicle owners in Kansas, we'll increase revenues.

We did secure funding last year to pay off the loans taken out through Wildscape to build cabins. Cabins in our state parks are extremely popular, but most of the money going into the Cabin Fee Fund was being used to pay off loans. With those paid off, cabin receipts will help park operating budgets.

The changes in funding we are implementing should give us a more predictable revenue stream and enhance our ability to maintain and make modifications to our facilities to meet the needs of our constituents. Times are changing, and as a fee-funded state agency, KDWPT has had to evolve and change, as well. ♡

## 2013 Photo Issue

This is the 17th photo issue we've produced, but it might be the most unique. In the past, we've sprinkled the pages of each photo issue with contributions from talented Kansas photographers, and those images have definitely spiced up the magazine's look. However, we knew there were other talented photographers out there, so we asked for more. Boy did we get it. This issue will feature seven skilled image makers from around the state, each with a different background, but all have a common love of wildlife and the outdoors. And while most have traveled to exotic locations in pursuit of spectacular photographs, they love Kansas and its wildlife, and this passion shows in their work.

We hope you enjoy this photographic issue and appreciate not only the amazing images, but also the effort, experience, skill and knowledge required of those behind the camera.



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**Front Cover:** Bob Gress snapped this amazing image of a flying bald eagle just as the bird's head came into a rich ray of light. Lucky or good? **Back Cover:** Nothing extraordinary about this photo by Mike Miller, unless you appreciate the fact that native prairie is visible for as far as you can see; means more than gold to some.



**Editorial Creed:** To promote the conservation and wise use of our natural resources, to instill an understanding of our responsibilities to the land.

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# KANSAS PHOTO ALL STARS



Judd Patterson was born in Kansas and completed a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in geography at Kansas State University. He currently works as a biologist for the National Park Service with the South Florida/Caribbean Inventory & Monitoring Network in Miami. He continues to pursue nature photography to promote environmental education/conservation and for the sheer joy of being outside. This is Patterson's first contributions to *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine, and we hope there will be more in the future.



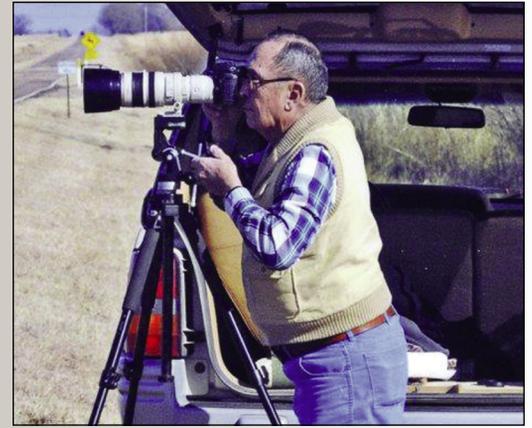
Bob Gress has photographed wildlife for more than 30 years. Nearly 4,000 of his photos have appeared in books, magazines, posters, postcards, and interpretive signs. He has coauthored several books including: *Birds of Kansas*, *The Guide to Kansas Birds and Birding Hot Spots*, *Faces of the Great Plains: Prairie Wildlife*, *Watching Kansas Wildlife: A Guide to 101 Sites*, *Kansas Wetlands: A Wildlife Treasury*, and *Kansas Wildlife*. Bob is the former director of the Great Plains Nature Center (GPNC) and is editor for the popular pocket guide series (10 titles) published by the GPNC. See more of his photos at [www.BirdsInFocus.com](http://www.BirdsInFocus.com).



photo by SusanMcSpadden/JCCC

Dr. David Seibel is a native Kansan who has been fascinated with birds since his earliest memory. He has taught biology, anatomy, physiology, and zoology at Johnson County Community College for 21 years. Seibel served two terms as president of the Kansas Ornithological Society and has authored or coauthored more than 35 scientific articles and three books. He has photographed birds in North, Central, and South America and has hundreds of photo credits in books, magazines, and scientific journals, with clients that include The Nature Conservancy, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, National Geographic Society, and many others.

Jim Glynn was raised in central Missouri and was hunting rabbits and squirrels by the time he was 10 years old. He moved to Ellinwood in 1951 and went into the Army in 1953 where he served in Panama as a radio operator. While in Panama, Glynn spent his time off exploring the jungle, observing birds, snakes, and lizards 5 feet long. He didn't have a camera then, but it sparked his interest. He got serious about photography in 1988 and has photographed in Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, and Nebraska.



Dan Witt was born and raised in Groom, Tex. He grew up hunting and fishing and has continued to enjoy the outdoors throughout his life. In 1990, he moved to Hoisington from Kansas City. He retired from his urology practice one year ago. He got serious about photography four years ago, and he claims to have more fun than anyone you know. His work has appeared in *Kansas Wildlife & Parks* magazine for several years, often featuring the abundant wildlife found around Cheyenne Bottoms.



Marc Murrell is as comfortable with a camera as he is with a shotgun or spinning rod. He spends his spare time hunting, fishing, trapping and camping. Murrell has been writing about and photographing these adventures for more than two decades, and his work has appeared in local, regional and national newspapers, magazines and websites. His photographs chronicle his experiences in the great outdoors, but readers are probably most familiar with his children. His biggest outdoor thrills these days are passing on his passion for the outdoors to daughter Ashley and twin sons Brandon and Cody.



Jon Blumb has been documenting outdoor subjects since completing graduate school at KU's Department of Design in 1981. His subjects include Kansas hunting, fishing, hunting dogs, camping, and scenic landscapes.

At his Lawrence studio, Blumb maintains his archive of outdoor images and produces indoor photography, which is often related to outdoor themes. His favorite studio subjects are collectable firearms and portraits of dogs with their owners.

Driven by his interest in sweeping landscapes, Blumb started making black and white panoramas in 2002. Recently, he has been creating color panoramas and large composite photos by merging multiple digital photographs.



# BOB GRESS

*greater prairie chicken*





*Virginia opossum*



*American bittern*

*Great Plains toad*



*barred owl*





*coyote*

# BOB GRESS



*black-tailed jackrabbit*

*snowy egret*



# BOB GRESS



*blue-winged teal*



*ornate box turtle*

# DAN WITT





*green heron*



*bobcat*



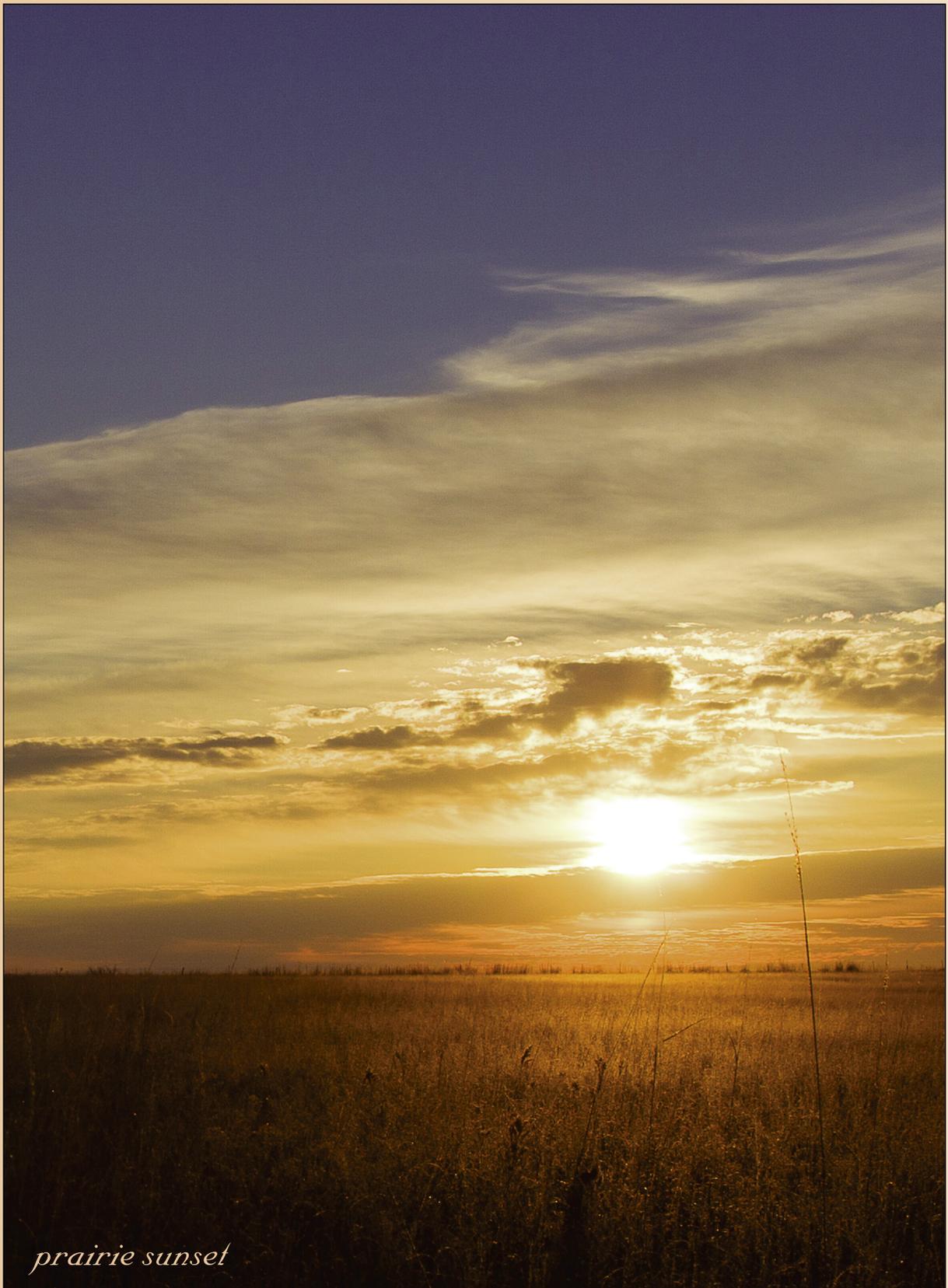
# DAN WITT

# DAVID SEIBEL





*snowy owl*

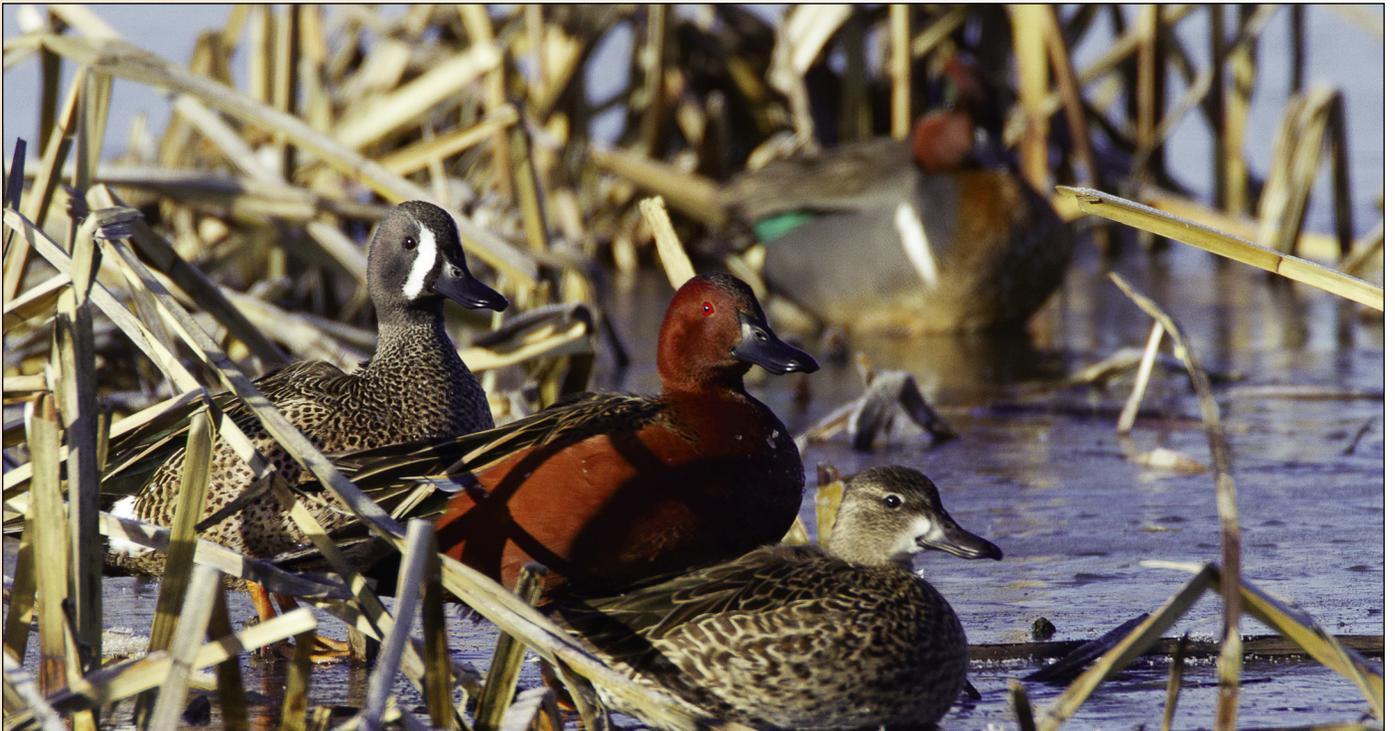


*prairie sunset*



*cedar waxwing*

# DAVID SEIBEL



*cinnamon, blue-winged and green-winged teal*

*massasauga rattlesnake*



*red-winged blackbird*



# DAVID SEIBEL





*eastern screech owl*



*dark-eyed junco*

# DAVID SEIBEL

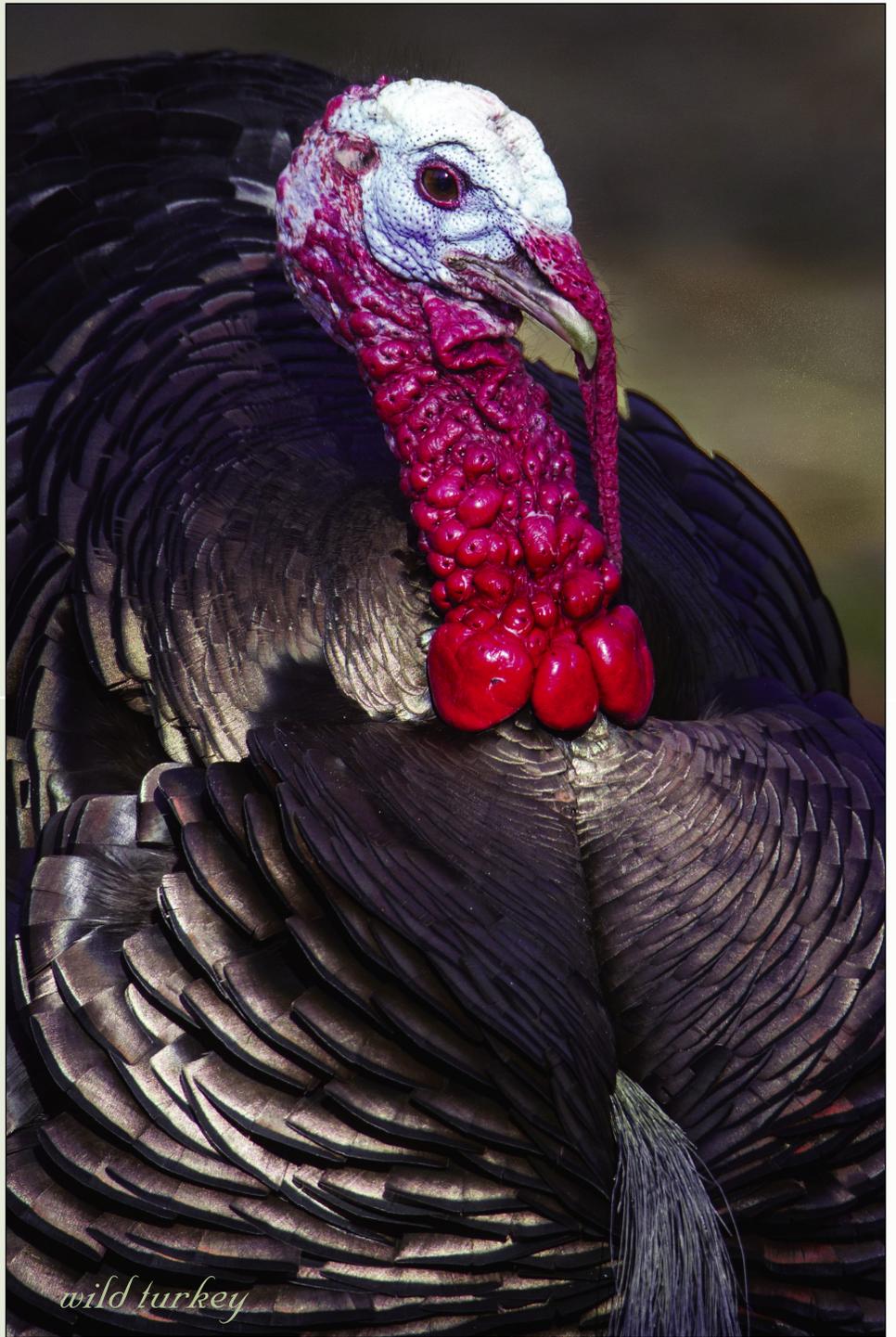


*wild turkey*

# JUDD PATTERSON



*white-tailed deer*





*sandhill crane*

# JUDD PATTERSON



*badger*



*burrowing owl*



*plains sunset*



*Wilson Lake*

# JUDD PATTERSON



*European starlings at dusk*



*Hlinthills sunrise*



*least terns*

# JUDD PATTERSON



*beagles truck*



*Great Bend panorama*



# JON BLUMB





*fall woods*



*Konza*

# JON BLUMB





*wirehair*



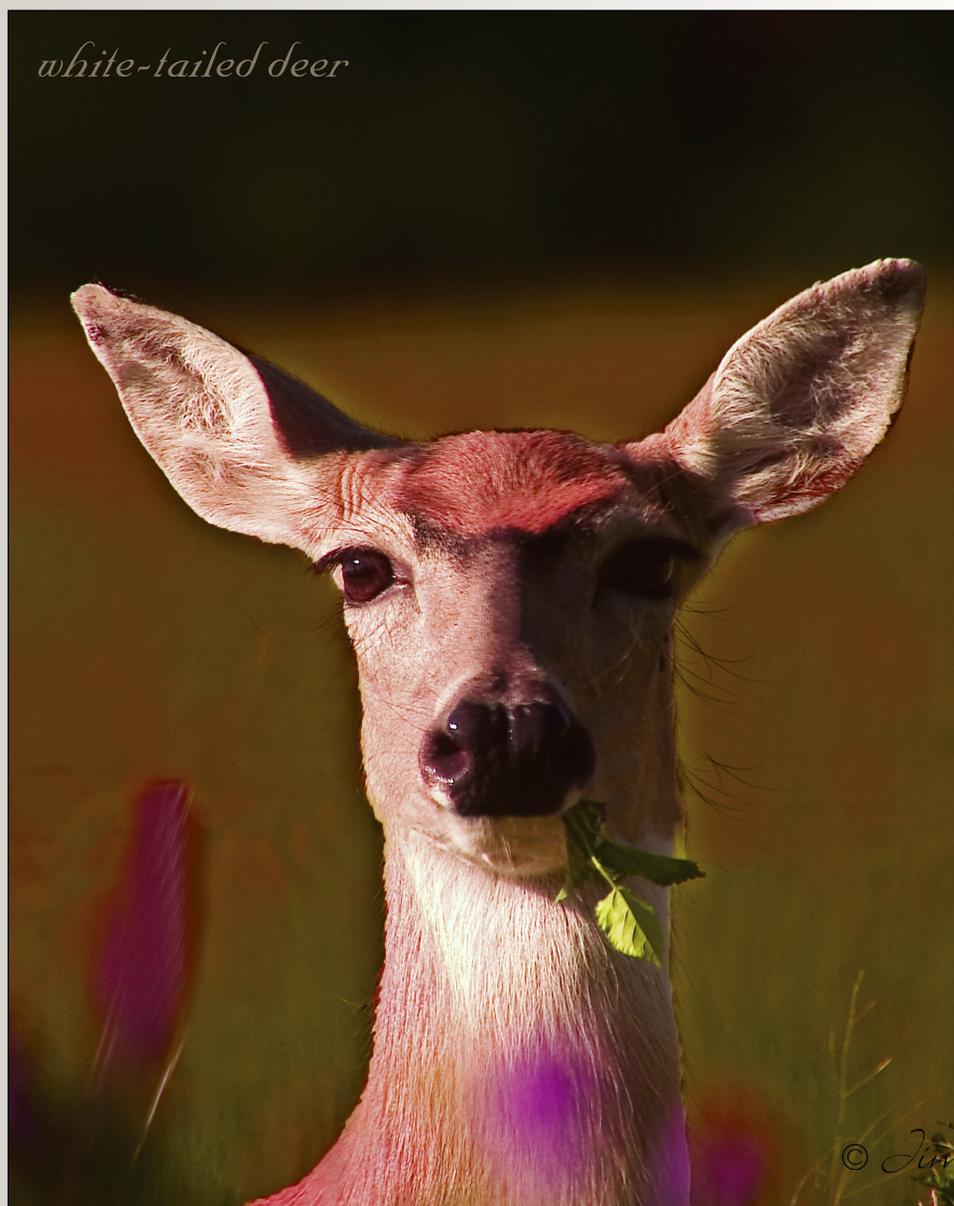
*tallgrass prairie*

# JON BLUMB

# JIM GLYNN



*coyote*





*beaver*

# JIM GLYNN



*black-necked stilt*

# MARC MURRELL



*Jim and Trav*

*youth deer hunt*



*McPherson Valley Wetlands*



*night cat*

# MARC MURRELL



*Marion Lake cats*





*Thayne*

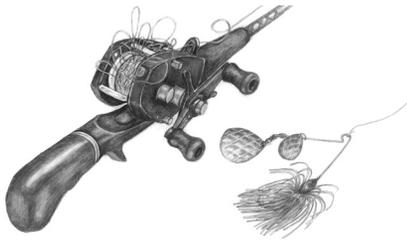


*Brittany reward*



*Russell County limit*

# MARC MURRELL



# Backlash

by Mike Miller

## Xorbie

**H**is name was Xorbie (zorbie). That's what those close to my grandfather called him. His full name was Francis Xorbie Miller. When he was a boy, his young friends had trouble pronouncing Xorbie, so they just called him "Soap," and that nickname stuck with him through grade school. He told me that story one blustery winter day as we drove from one field to another while pheasant hunting.

Whenever I reminisce about hunting and fishing in my youth, Granddad nearly always finds his way into my thoughts. He was just a man who loved his family, loved to laugh, and really enjoyed getting a good deal. However, in my mind, he's a hero, not because he was supernatural or because he did anything extraordinary, but because he enjoyed spending time with his grandkids. My time with him was far too short, but his impact on my life was immeasurable.

He was born in Wellsford, Kan. in 1912 and grew up during hard times, living when he was very young with his uncle's family. His uncle was 13 and the man of the house at the time. They scratched out a meager living farming in the Wellsford area. When I was a boy, I didn't understand Granddad's frugal ways, his drive to get a good deal on an item he purchased, and his refusal to waste anything, especially food. I used to cringe when he poured the juice from the green beans bowl into a glass and drank it. He would smack his lips and announce, "That's were all the vitamins are!" As I've learned more about life in southcentral Kansas during the 1920s and 1930s, I've come to understand where his frugality came from.

I felt special when I was with Granddad. He always had a twinkle in his eye, like he was up to something, and usually for good reason. My cousin and I learned at the dinner table that when Granddad passed mashed potatoes or gravy, we

didn't reach for the bowl with our thumb pointed toward him. If we did, he'd tip the bowl up so our thumb went in. He loved any practical joke, no matter how small.

My earliest memories of Granddad are camping and fishing in the Colorado mountains. I know now that those memories are why I love to stand knee-deep in a Rocky Mountain stream and cast for trout. I love to catch trout, but I'm really fishing for Granddad. When I was seven, we moved to another state, and I only saw Granddad on holidays. Christmas holidays with Granddad and Grandma, Aunt Barbara, Uncle Art, cousins Brad, Carrie, Mom, Dad and little sis Teri created some of my best childhood memories. We were a close family, and there's nothing as reassuring to a child than to be enveloped in that.

When we moved back to Kansas, back to the same county where Granddad was born and raised, he was closer and visited more often. I was fortunate to hunt pheasants with Granddad on the same fields he had farmed in the 1940s. I loved to hear his stories about the farm, Grandma, Dad, Aunt Barbara, their dog Smokey, and a palomino horse named Tarzan. Those stories became part of me, almost as if I had lived them.

Hunting pheasants will always keep Granddad's memory fresh in my mind. Those experiences have stayed with me, even though we only hunted together a few seasons and nothing we did would have made front-page news. We never killed a limit of pheasants between us on a hunt. And I don't think we ever caught more than a handful of trout or kokanee salmon on a fishing trip. It was the time we spent together that mattered, doing something we both loved on land that had meaning to us. It just goes to show how powerful passing it on can be. And by the way, I think Xorbie is a pretty cool name. ♡

**He always had a twinkle in his eye, like he was up to something, and usually for good reason.**

