

# KANSAS

*Wildlife & Parks*

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2015

\$2.75



**The Photo Issue**  
*Seeing the Big Picture*

# KANSAS *View*

by Robin Jennison



## KDWPT PARTNERS FOR SUCCESS

Whenever I talk about Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) accomplishments, whether the topic is conservation, recruitment, wildlife management, state parks, or tourism, there is a common theme: partners. We could not do what we do without conservation partners, and there are many. In fact, I take certain risks writing this, because there are so many conservation partners, I know I'll leave some out. If I do, please accept my apologies in advance.

KDWPT partners come in many forms, but perhaps the most recognizable are the conservation organizations. Most of you have heard of Ducks Unlimited (DU), Pheasants Forever (PF), Quail Forever (QF), National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF), Kansas Wildlife Federation (KWF), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation (QUWF), Kansas Alliance of Wetlands and Streams (KAWS), Kansas Wildscape (KW), Kansas Bowhunters Association (KBA), Kansas Muzzleloaders Association (KMA), Safari Club (SC) and Audubon of Kansas, to name a few. Most of these organizations are affiliated with a national group, and many have multiple local chapters throughout Kansas. Members have common conservation goals; some focusing on specific species and some with broad conservation priorities. They all work with our agency on conservation projects that may otherwise not be completed.


The conservation organizations listed above have goals similar to those of our agency and we work with them on many different levels. However, the most visible collaborations may be those that include major public land renovations and land acquisition projects. And for some large renovation projects, such as one completed at Jamestown Marsh in 2010, a variety of organizations may be involved, including DU, TNC, KAWS, PF, KWF, as well as local governments. NWTf and PF/QF assisted the department recently in obtaining a parcel of land adjacent to the Tuttle Creek Wildlife Area. The nearly 500-acre tract provides additional public hunting acres and improves access to a portion of the existing wildlife area. These are just a couple of examples of projects that may not have been

possible without partners.

Nearly all of our state parks have "friends" groups. These volunteer organizations form to further the mission of the parks they support. And this support can be in the form of volunteer labor or fundraising to pay for enhancements not possible under budget constraints. For example, the Friends of Cheney State Park and Friends of El Dorado State Park raised funding to build the first rental cabins at those two parks. The Friends of Crawford State Park operate the marina, and the Friends of Fancy Creek Shooting Range help operate the range located on Tuttle Creek State Park. There are similar stories for all of our state parks.

Most hunter and angler recruitment events are the result of collaborations with partner groups including local chapters of the conservation organizations listed on the left but also local fishing and gun clubs, civic groups and hunter education instructors. Many local groups provide mentors and instructors for the events. Members may also provide access to private land, and it's common for local partners to provide youth with meals and snacks during events.

Many of the programs supported by conservation and friends organizations impact tourism by making Kansas a more attractive outdoor destination. However, KDWPT's Tourism Division works directly with many local partners, including convention and visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce, and civic groups to promote Kansas tourism.

KDWPT is a unique state agency in that we are funded by our constituents and that those constituents are so dedicated to our programs. Hunters, anglers, campers, hikers, bikers, and outdoor enthusiasts believe strongly in programs that conserve and enhance Kansas' natural resources and associated outdoor recreation. And because of those beliefs, many are involved beyond the price of a permit or license. Our partners are critical to the conservation successes we've enjoyed over the past 30 years and are why our outdoor opportunities today are better than they've ever been. 

## “Seeing the Big Picture”

In photography, as in life, we sometimes focus so much on the details that we forget to see the beauty in the big picture.

In light of this theme, I have compiled a collection of photos, each spanning two pages, that paint us incredible “big pictures.”

From thousands of red-winged blackbirds engulfing daylight, to the calming blues of a Cheyenne Bottoms sunset – let this photo issue serve as a reminder to us all to never stop searching for the delight in chaos; to find value in simplicity; and to most importantly, always widen our focus so we can appreciate the big picture.

– Nadia Marji  
Associate Editor



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Editor Mike Miller

Associate Editor Nadia Marji

Graphic Designer Dustin Teasley

Staff Writer Marc Murrell

Circulation Teri Simpson

KANSAS WILDLIFE & PARKS (ISSN 0898-6975) is published bimonthly (every other month) by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism 512 SE 25th Ave., Pratt, KS 67124. Address editorial correspondence to Kansas Wildlife & Parks Magazine, 512 SE 25th Ave., Pratt, KS 67124 (620) 672-5911. Send subscription requests to Kansas Wildlife & Parks Magazine, 512 SE 25th Ave., Pratt, KS 67124. Subscription rate: one year \$12; two years \$20; and three years \$29. Articles in the magazine may be reprinted with permission. Periodical postage paid at Pratt, KS and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Kansas Wildlife & Parks Magazine, PO Box 16325, North Hollywood, CA 91615. For subscription inquiries call toll-free 1-866-672-214.

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

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation, and military or veteran status. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, 1020 S Kansas Ave., Topeka, KS 66612-1327.



**Front Cover:** Photographer and outdoorsman, Danny Brown, captures a female red fox standing alert.

**Inside Front Cover:** Take a stroll with Kansas' most iconic prairie species in this Bob Gress photo.

Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism Website: [ksoutdoors.com](http://ksoutdoors.com)

Magazine E-mail — [mike.miller@ksoutdoors.com](mailto:mike.miller@ksoutdoors.com)





EASTERN TURKEYS  
MATT MILES



*LEAST FLYCATCHER*  
JAY MILLER

.....

“WHEN YOU HAVE  
SEEN ONE ANT, ONE  
BIRD, ONE TREE,  
YOU HAVE NOT  
SEEN THEM ALL.”

[E. O. WILSON]



CHEYENNE BOTTOMS SUNSET  
KAROLE ERIKSON









PRAYING MANTIS  
KAROLE ERIKSON



*WHITE-FACED IBISES*  
KAROLE ERIKSON

.....  
“IN ALL THINGS OF  
NATURE THERE IS  
SOMETHING OF THE  
MARVELOUS.”

[ARISTOTLE]





**WHITETAIL BUCK**  
**MATT MILES**



CHEYENNE BOTTOMS MOONGLOW

KAROLE ERIKSON

.....

“PEACE IS ALWAYS  
BEAUTIFUL.”

[WALT WHITMAN]







NORTHERN BOBWHITE QUAIL  
MATT MILES







*BULL ELK*  
**BOB GRESS**





*PAINTED BUNTING*  
**BOB GRESS**

.....  
"NATURE ALWAYS  
WEARS THE COLORS  
OF THE SPIRIT."

[RALPH WALDO  
EMERSON]









*RED-WINGED BLACKBIRDS*  
*DAVID SEIBEL*





*BURROWING OWLS*  
JAY MILLER









*MULE DEER*  
MATT MILES

.....

**“WILDERNESS IS NOT  
A LUXURY, BUT A  
NECESSITY OF THE  
HUMAN SPIRIT.”**

**[MARK TWAIN]**



**SANDHILL CRANES**  
**JAY MILLER**

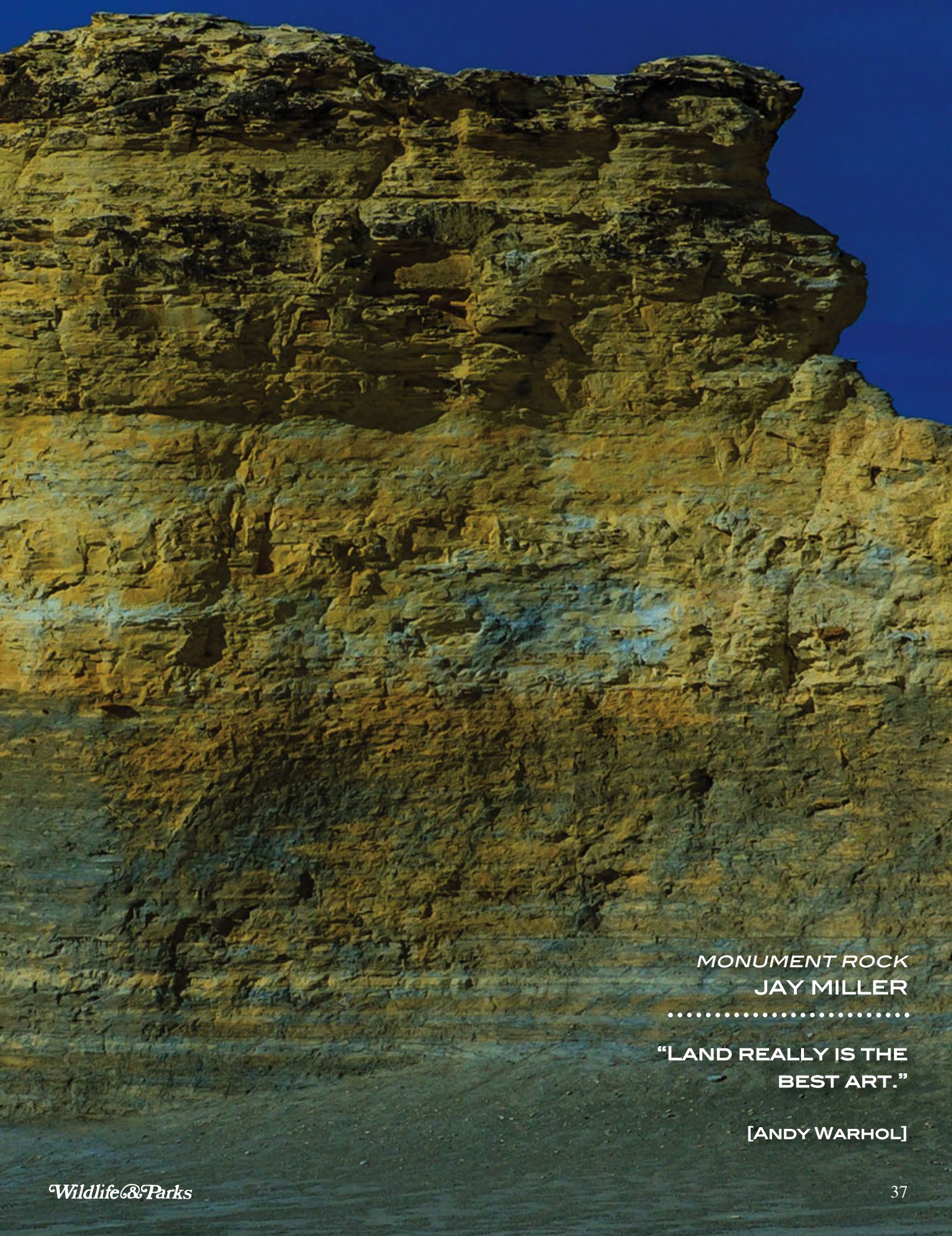




COYOTES  
JESSICA MOUNTS







MONUMENT ROCK  
JAY MILLER

.....

“LAND REALLY IS THE  
BEST ART.”

[ANDY WARHOL]





*RING-NECKED PHEASANTS*  
JAY MILLER



# WILD ABOUT KANSAS

## JUNIOR PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

THIS SPECIAL SECTION FEATURES WINNING ENTRIES FROM THE 2014 “WILD ABOUT KANSAS” JUNIOR PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST. PHOTOS WERE JUDGED BASED ON CREATIVITY, COMPOSITION, SUBJECT MATTER, LIGHTING, AND THE OVERALL SHARPNESS OF THE PHOTO.

2014 WINNERS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

### LANDSCAPE [PG. 42]

**1ST PLACE** - NATHAN JONES (18), LOUISBURG: “SUNSET ON THE FENCE”  
**2ND PLACE** - NATHAN JONES (18), LOUISBURG: “A SHOOTING STAR”  
**3RD PLACE** - AARON AVELAR (18), GOODLAND: “CLOUDY RAILROAD”  
**HONORABLE MENTION** - CHRISTINA CRAIG (16), LAWRENCE: “GRAY KANSAS”

### WILDLIFE [PG. 43]

**1ST PLACE** - CHRISTINA CRAIG (16), LAWRENCE: “BABY ROBIN”  
**2ND PLACE** - CHANCE THOMAN (17), KANSAS CITY: “RED-TAILED HAWK”  
**3RD PLACE** - GENTRY SHAPLAND (14), DIGHTON: “FIELD MOUSE”  
**HONORABLE MENTION** - GENTRY SHAPLAND (14), DIGHTON: “WASP”

### OUTDOOR RECREATION [PG. 44]

**1ST PLACE** - CHANCE THOMAN (17), KANSAS CITY: “RYAN’S WHEELIE”  
**2ND PLACE** - KLAIRE SARVER (15), LAWRENCE: “END OF THE RIDE”  
**3RD PLACE** - CHEYENNE PASSMORE (12), DODGE CITY: “KEEPER OF THE PLAINS”

## NEW FOR 2015: ADULT CATEGORY

PHOTOGRAPHERS AGE 19 AND OLDER MAY ENTER THE CONTEST IN AN ALL-NEW ADULT CATEGORY BEGINNING JANUARY 2015. SEE ENTRY FORM ON RIGHT.

FOR MORE DETAILS ON THE 2015 CONTEST, SEE THE MARCH/APRIL ISSUE OF *KANSAS WILDLIFE & PARKS* MAGAZINE, OR VISIT [KSOUTDOORS.COM](http://KSOUTDOORS.COM).



Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism  
2015 "Wild About Kansas" Photo Contest  
PARTICIPANT ENTRY FROM



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zipcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     )     -     

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Participants will receive e-mail confirmation upon successful submission.*

ENTRY INFORMATION

Total # of entries: 1 2 3

**Entry 1:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

File name (as attached to e-mail): \_\_\_\_\_

Category (*please choose one*): Landscape Wildlife Recreation

**Entry 2:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

File name (as attached to e-mail): \_\_\_\_\_

Category (*please choose one*): Landscape Wildlife Recreation

**Entry 3:**

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

File name (as attached to e-mail): \_\_\_\_\_

Category (*please choose one*): Landscape Wildlife Recreation

*I attest that the submitted photos are my original work, and were taken in the state of Kansas. I give KDWP a royalty free, irrevocable, non-exclusive, and perpetual license to use the photographs for advertising, promotional, or educational purpose.*

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature (if under 18): \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Entries must be e-mailed to [nadia.marji@ksoutdoors.com](mailto:nadia.marji@ksoutdoors.com) no later than 5 p.m. on Oct. 23, 2015. **Format: JPEG, file size 1mb to 5mb.**



## LANDSCAPE

**1ST: NATHAN JONES [TOP]**

**2ND: NATHAN JONES [UPPER LEFT]**

**3RD: AARON AVELAR [UPPER RIGHT]**

**HONORABLE MENTION:  
CHRISTINA CRAIG [RIGHT]**





## **WILDLIFE**

**1ST: CHRISTINA CRAIG [TOP]**

**2ND: CHANCE THOMAN [UPPER LEFT]**

**3RD: GENTRY SHAPLAND [UPPER RIGHT]**

**HONORABLE MENTION:**

**GENTRY SHAPLAND [LEFT]**



## OUTDOOR RECREATION

1ST: CHANCE THOMAN  
[TOP]

2ND: KLAIRE SARVER  
[LEFT]

3RD: CHEYENNE  
PASSMORE [RIGHT]



.....  
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOUR PHOTO FEATURED IN THE 2016 JANUARY/FEBRUARY PHOTO ISSUE OF *KANSAS WILDLIFE & PARKS* MAGAZINE, VISIT [KSOUTDOORS.COM](http://KSOUTDOORS.COM) AND CLICK "SERVICES," THEN "WILD ABOUT KANSAS."



# Backlash

by Mike Miller

## TAKING STOCK OF 2014

It's tradition to look back before the new year begins. Although I don't usually spend a lot of time thinking about the previous year, I think it's a good idea for those of us who enjoy the outdoors to take stock of how fortunate we are, ensuring we don't take our amazing outdoor opportunities for granted.

"The only constant in life is change," is a quote attributed to Greek philosopher Heraclitus. We spend an amazing amount of energy trying to prevent change when things are good, and the same amount of energy causing change when things aren't the way we want. Unfortunately, most change is beyond our control.

This past year, we hoped for change in our precipitation patterns. After seemingly breaking the three-year drought a year ago last summer, we experienced one of our driest springs on record in 2014. However June, July and August brought rains and improved wildlife habitat conditions dramatically over much of the state.

Now, we're hoping the pattern doesn't change and the rains continue in 2015, so we don't lose what we gained. That could make things right for wildlife populations.

All in all, there is reason for optimism going into 2015. Waterfowl numbers continue to be strong and most of our marshes had good water this fall, providing good duck and goose hunting. In fact, the early teal season was a record-setter at Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area. After being dry for two years, Cheyenne Bottoms filled in 2013,

and hunting was very good. In 2014, water levels were again optimal, and the early teal season at the Bottoms was beyond good. During the 16-day September season, 2,500 hunters killed more than 10,000 teal.

There is still room for positive change. Wilson Reservoir in Russell County is at a near-record low level. Rains never fell in the right location for the normally stable Wilson to get a big influx of water, and the level has continued to drop. Other western-Kansas lakes such as Cedar Bluff, Webster and Sebelius are also low. The silver lining is that when the rains come and water levels rise, fish will respond and we'll be just a few short years away from great fishing.

Personally, 2014 was a pretty good year. In April, I took delivery on a new fishing boat, which is the best way to start the fishing season. But better yet, Dad and I put the boat to good use in May and had an epic day on Cheney catching whites and wipers. Dad capped the day with a 23-inch walleye. Then Dad, Aunt Barbara and I spent a week together fishing in Canada. Spending time outdoors with family and friends is a sure recipe for a good year.

The fall started out with a couple of fantastic teal hunts with Marc and Jim at the Bottoms. In late September, Lisa and I enjoyed the aspen color near Creede, Colo., and even though I missed Creede the black Lab this year, I had a couple of outstanding mornings catching brown trout on the Rio Grande. Cousin Brad and I continued our



tradition of opening the pheasant season in southern Kiowa County on Rex and Janie's land. Pheasant numbers were still low, but we had some great duck hunts, witnessed amazing sunsets and enjoyed our company and the land we've grown so attached to. A couple of bonus duck hunts in December, one with Gary and one with Jon and Nadia where Nadia's pup Kota retrieved her first duck, topped off 2014 in a grand way.

Yep, 2014 was a pretty good year when I look back at the good stuff. As with any year, there were some not so good things, but right now, I'm focusing on the good and hoping 2015 brings more of the same. ♡

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2420 NW Button Road

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(785) 233-4400

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George Ivey/TNC

