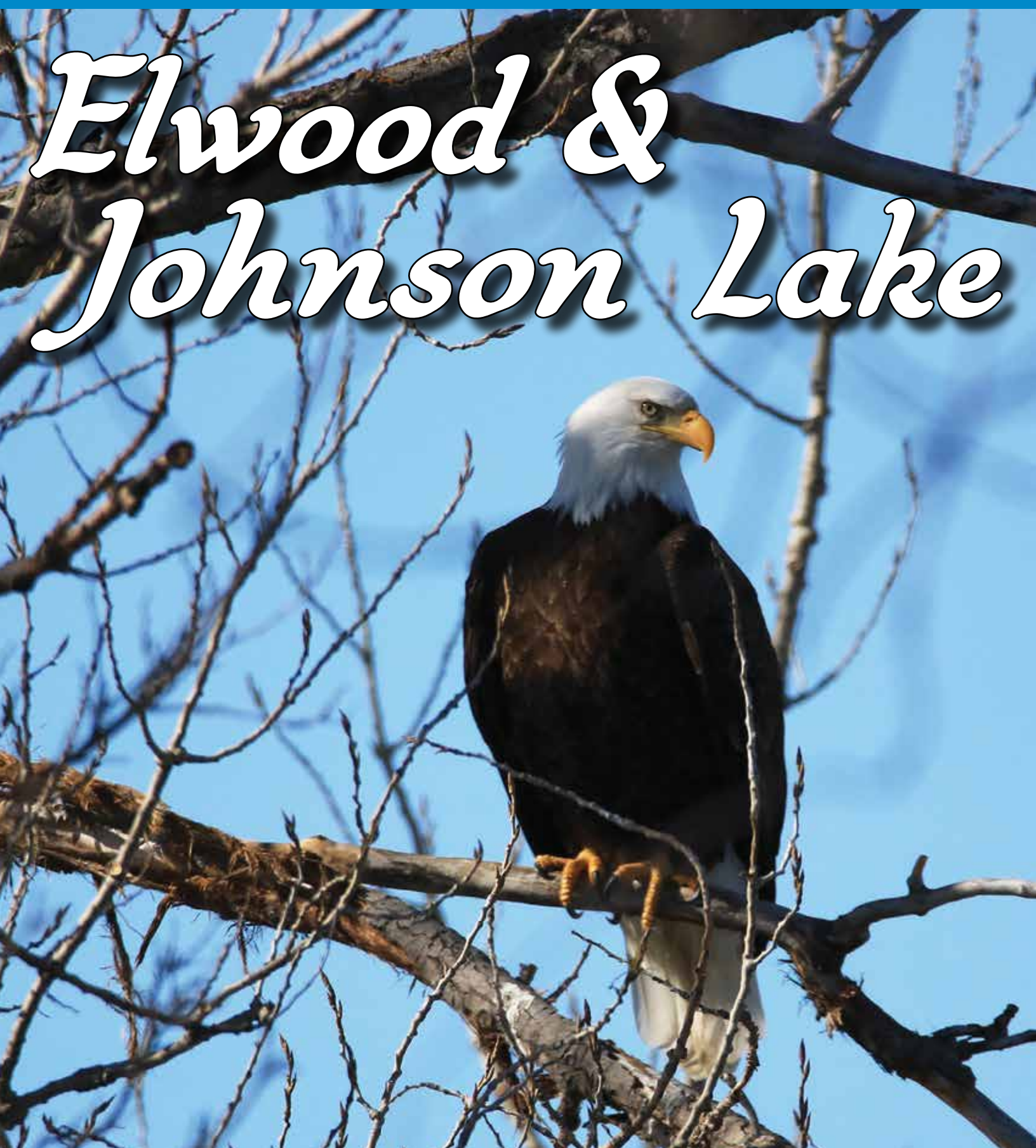


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Table of Contents **3**

Elwood's History	4
Johnson Lake's History.....	6
Johnson Lake Trails.....	9
Chapel of the Lake	10
CraZy Marv's RV & Cabin Retreat	11
State Recreation Area	12
Johnson Lake Community Playground.....	13
Attractions	14
Fun & Entertainment.....	18
Education	19
Ad Contents.....	20
Business Directory Elwood.....	21
Business Directory Johnson Lake	24
Church Directory	26

Official publication of the Lexington Clipper-Herald in cooperation with the Elwood Chamber of Commerce and the Johnson Lake Chamber of Commerce.



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4 *Elwood's History*

The town of Elwood, the Gosper County seat and home to Johnson Lake and the Elwood Reservoir, is surrounded by lush pastures filled with cattle and table-like irrigated fields full of grain. It is hard to imagine how the area appeared in May 1885 when the railroad and land company decided to start a town at this location.

Elwood became a terminal for the railroad when a roundhouse was built on the west edge of the town. People flocked to the area and began to build

homes and businesses. Soon, a clamor rose to move the Gosper County seat away from the "current" community of Homerville, an inland town that had been by-passed by the railroad, to the up-and-coming village of Elwood. Ultimately, Elwood was selected as the Gosper County seat. The buildings and homes in Homerville were moved nine miles north, across the hills to Elwood. The population of Elwood steadily rose, and then took a jump in 1940 when the town was filled with construction workers

building Johnson Lake and the irrigation canal system that is now Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District. Irrigation brought with it the ability to weather droughts. Agriculture income remains the primary base of the community.

Downtown Elwood was and still is the hub of the community. From the cooperative grocery store, banks, and gas stations, to the medical clinic and insurance businesses, there is always something going on. Elwood



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6 *Johnson Lake's History*

An Abridged History of Johnson Lake by Jeff Buettner, Government & Public Relations Manager, The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District

The area now covered by Johnson Lake was once a low-lying basin surrounded by gently sloping hills. The land, used mostly for pasturing livestock, was dotted with a few structures, including a rural school house (known as the Antelope School) and a couple farmsteads.

The construction of The Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's huge irrigation and hydroelectric project -- anchored by Kingsley Dam and Lake McConaughy and spanning Nebraska from Keith County to Adams County-- began in 1936 and would change the landscape in the area.

During the surveying process that preceded construction, Central's engineers determined that a site southeast of Lexington was ideally suited for construction of a regulating reservoir and two hydroplants. Construction of the dam on the south

side of the basin began in 1939 and was completed in 1940. Soon after, water from Lake McConaughy was diverted from the Platte River below the city of North Platte into Central's 75.6-mile-long Supply Canal and the process of filling Johnson Lake for the first time began. When full, the lake covered 2,230 surface acres within 13 miles of shoreline and held almost 50,000 acre-feet of water (enough water to cover 50,000 acres with 12 inches of water). In places, the water reached depths of more than 50 feet.

The lake was named for George E. Johnson, Central's chief engineer. Johnson played a vital role in the promotion and design of the project from 1915 until its approval in 1935. He then became chief engineer and general manager of the project during its construction and subsequent operation.

The lake that bears his name is an important component of Central's project. As a regulating reservoir for the Johnson No. 1 and Johnson No. 2 (J-1 and J-2) Hydroplants, the lake converts the uniform flow in the canal above the reservoir into the variable flow

required by the hydroplants. A.C. Tilley, who succeeded Johnson as Central's general manager in 1947, said the lake also serves as a secondary source of water in case of a "calamity" along the Supply Canal that might interrupt the flow of water to the hydroplants as well as a ready source of irrigation water for almost 50,000 acres of farmland along the Phelps Canal when irrigation demand suddenly increases. Tilley added that the lake can also serve as a "catch basin" for flows in the Supply Canal when rain storms temporarily halt demand for irrigation water.

Development of that potential started slowly. The large body of water that gradually appeared in the lake turned the minds of many in neighboring towns to the possibility of recreational development. A number of area sportsmen, including Neil Shreck of Bertrand, Claude Smith and Judge J.S. Fitzsimmons of Elwood (Smith and Fitzsimmons were original members of Central's board of directors) and a Mr. Bracken from Lexington, formed a wildlife preservation committee to make Johnson Lake "a spot to be enjoyed



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by everyone who desires to use it." Included in the committee's plans were a public boat dock and beautification plans for the shoreline that would include tree and shrub planting.

By 1950, boats were common on the lake, but almost all were small wooden or aluminum fishing boats powered by five- and ten-horsepower motors. By the early '60's, larger crafts constructed of fiberglass with 50- and 60-hp motors were seen much more frequently on the lake. The experience of owning a cabin at the lake was simply not complete without a boat, and the number of boats swelled rapidly during the 1960's. As evidence, a group of cabin-owners from Grand Island cooperated on construction of a boat dock that extended two blocks out into the lake and could accommodate as many as 32 boats.

During the first several years of the lake's existence, Central permitted only one "concession stand" at the lake, an establishment operated by a Mr. Remmenga from Elwood. The business was located on the east side of the lake on the site of what is now known

as Medo's Resort. Butch and Ellen Stevens later acquired the lease and operated Stevens Cabins until selling it to Allen and Naomi Hudson in 1957. The Hudsons operated the business as Johnson Lake Resort until 1963 when Harry and Reba Collins acquired and operated the facility as Collins Resort. The Collins in turn sold the resort to Clinton and Roesetha Mutchie in 1968. Ownership then passed to Elmer Bergman (Bergman's Resort), Greg Medo, and then Shannon and Stafford Thompson, before returning to Medo in 2002.

The Nebraska State Game, Forestation and Parks Commission (now known as the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission) first stocked the lake with game fish in 1941, although fishing was prohibited for the first year to allow the fish to grow and reproduce. Fishing became instantly popular when it was first permitted on July 1, 1942.

The first true "cabin" on the lake was reportedly constructed by S.E. Salisbury in 1942. It was described as a one-room, wood-frame building on Sandy Point. Cliff Hurliss and Dr.

G.V. Reynolds of Overton claimed in a 1965 newspaper article to have placed the second permanent structure at the lake in the early 1940's. The home was moved from Overton to a site adjacent to what is now Crappie Corner. "A mighty deserted-looking area then," according to Dr. Reynolds. "No trees, no water, no plumbing, just a simple cabin on a sandy knoll."

More cabins soon followed, their owners coming from longer distances despite the difficulties posed by gasoline rationing. After the war ended and resources again became available, the pace of development increased. The boom in cabin-building was said to have started in about 1950 and a cabin sprung up on almost every available and suitable lot. By 1964 there were 548 cabins on the lake's shore, ranging from one-room structures to more elaborate homes costing as much as \$15,000. The number of cabins surpassed 600 by 1966 and another 36 lots in the North Cove, North Shore and Perch Bay areas were ready for development in 1969. Interest was unabated as more than 400 applications were entered into a



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lottery for the three dozen lots. By 1971 the number of cabins exceeded 700 and many cabin-owners had taken up year-round residence at the lake. Today homes and cabins entirely encircle the lake and number above 900.

Development of the cabin areas was overseen by the Johnson Lake Development, Inc., which was formed in 1941. Central -- its agenda dominated by the task of operating its fledgling power and irrigation project, facing an exploding demand for irrigation water and electricity, and hampered by a shortage of manpower and recreational expertise -- leased Johnson, Plum Creek and Gallagher Canyon lakes for development of recreational assets. The aim of the group was to appoint directors from every city in the area that might be interested in the water recreation available at the lakes.

Johnson Lake soon became the

destination of many fishermen, campers, boaters, swimmers and picnickers seeking relief from their cares. In 1945, Central leased 50 acres of land to the Nebraska Game, Forestations and Parks Commission for what would become the Johnson Lake State Recreation Area. The treeless landscape became the site of one of the state agency's first endeavors into tree-planting and the construction of its first recreation access road. A second camping area was added on the west side of the lake in the 1950's.

Water sports, particularly water skiing, began to become popular in the late 1950s and continued through the next three decades. Lake residents reported that it seemed like everyone at the lake was learning to ski in the 1960's.

A project to create additional lakefront property began in 1970 with a dredging operation in the northwest corner of the lake. The result was the Lakeview Acres subdivision surrounding Mahaffie Bay. Developers led by Virgil Eihusen of Grand Island created 169 residential and six commercial lots in the area. Subsequently, George and Delores Harder of Grand Island opened the Lakeview Marina in 1971, offering groceries, bait and tackle, as well as a cafe, laundromat, boat slips and boat rental.

During the same time period, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission was also improving its facilities. The NGPC added three modern restrooms, six shelter houses and two change rooms to its campground on the east side of the lake in 1969 at a cost of \$25,000. Also that year, the lake was

completely encircled with a paved road for the first time when 4.3 miles of asphalt was laid. Several other stretches of road around the lake had previously been paved, mostly by cabin-owners who agreed to fund construction through paving assessments.

A couple of other noteworthy events in the early 1960's included the opening of a nine-hole golf course -- then known as the Lexington Golf Club -- below the dam in 1963. The owners of the Lexington golf course sold the land on which the course was situated because of construction of Interstate 80. With the money from the sale, they purchased land at Johnson Lake and built a new course. Nine more holes were added to the course in 1990.

Over the years, cabin-owners and thousands upon thousands of campers and daily visitors have enjoyed their leisure time at Johnson Lake. From the earliest days, newspapers ran photos of fishermen with their stringers straining under the weight of the day's catch. The stories that accompanied the photos either told of the fight to land the huge catch, or recounted the inevitable story of "the big one that got away." Other photos showed sailboat regattas, water skiers, campers, picnickers, swimmers and sunbathers, all brought together by the lure of the water.

Johnson Lake continues to be one of the most popular destinations for recreation in Nebraska and a key component in the operation of Central's hydro-irrigation project. Its construction and development are a testament not only to the men who designed and built the project, but to those who realized and cultivated its potential for recreation.

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Walk-ins Welcome

The Johnson Lake Trail project was first talked about in the early 2000's and the dream took shape in the years that followed. The first segment was built in 2005 and additional trail added as funding and easements were acquired. Today the trail has over 8 miles of off-road concrete pathway. The 10.3 mile circle around the lake includes segments of shared roadway on the dam and near the inlet to the lake.

The trail is designed to allow users to experience some of the various environs around the lake. There are segments that pass through shady tree stands, follow the edge of farm fields, follow canals, or pass through nature areas. The ultimate goal is to complete the trail forming a safe and accessible circle for non-

motorized recreation and transportation.

The Johnson Lake Trail is much more than just a concrete pathway. Spaced along the trail are gazebos, pergolas, and rest areas for users to enjoy. There are three Little Free Libraries and two bike repair stations along the trail. Trees, shrubs, a pollinator habitat area, and flowers have been added to provide shade and color to the trail corridor. In 2020, the trail was recognized for the diversity of trees and shrubs as an affiliate to the Nebraska State Arboretum. Trailhead signs and parking areas provide access and directions for visitors to the lake. The trail connects many of the amenities around the lake. In the spring of 2023, there will be community playgrounds added along the

trail.

The trail is open to walkers, runners, and cyclists of all ages. Pets on leashes are welcome and bags are provided for cleaning up after your pet. Motorized wheelchairs and electric

assist bikes are welcome.

All other forms of motorized vehicles are not allowed. The trail provides an opportunity for residents and visitors to enjoy the beauty of Johnson Lake.



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- Cabins, 3 restaurants, swimming beach, chapel, labyrinth, playground and golf course.

10 *Chapel of the Lake*

The Chapel of the Lake is an interdenominational ministry at Johnson Lake. In the summer of 1962, the idea of a church to service the people who come to the lake to enjoy its many recreational activities was discussed among several cabin owners. Fourteen persons gathered at a cabin on Sandy Point one Sunday morning for an informal service with a Methodist minister preaching from a rocking chair. As others heard of the services the interest and enthusiasm grew. For the remainder of

that summer, services were held in the former Camp Fire Girls cabin on Mallard Beach with between 80 and 85 attending. Realizing the need for a permanent meeting place, a committee was formed. They purchased the original chapel building from the Latter Day Saints in Eustis. It was moved to the present location in 1963. The bell, pews and reed organ were also added that year.

The first service in the little chapel at its present location was on June 2, 1963 and was attended by

83 persons. Since that day, services have been held every summer beginning Memorial Day weekend and continuing through the Labor Day weekend. To date, the total attendance for 59 years has reached 143,919 worshipers representing many denominations.

Worshipers come from all over Nebraska, numerous states and occasionally from countries outside the United States. Visitors are asked to register once each season and share where they reside.

Services begin at 8:30

a.m. Sunday with a guest minister bringing the message each week. In addition to the regular Sunday morning services, the Chapel is used for weddings and funerals plus numerous lake related meetings from mid-May through mid-September. The Chapel of the Lake is supervised by the Chapel Committee whose members have included volunteers from both permanent and summer residents of the lake. Anyone wishing to use the Chapel can contact the present chairman at 308-785-2287 to discuss any rent fees and availability of the chapel. The Chapel is self-supporting through generous weekly collections, donations and memorials.

The Chapel Committee wishes to thank all persons who have given of their gifts, time and talents to this ministry through the years. A special THANKS goes to the ushers, the presiding laymen, the organists and those providing special music each Sunday.

Come to a service and return again to worship and enjoy the fellowship at the beautiful lake setting. After attending you will leave with a prayer in your heart thanking God for the many blessings he has bestowed upon us.



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CraZy Marv's RV & Cabin Retreat, LLC was born when Marvin and Grace Cochrane purchased Sundy's, in July 2020. It is conveniently located across from the inlet, on the southwest side of beautiful Johnson Lake.

- Plans for an RV park ensued with water, electric and sewer to all 20 sites; with two additional (water & electric only) just north of blacktop and mailboxes.
- Rentals include: two renovated cabins, which have a twin bunk bed and a double bottom/twin top bunk bed (sleeps three adults and two top bunk bed climbers). Both cabins have microwave, fridge, TV, A/C, heater, ceiling fans, shower and a large covered patio with tables and chairs. For an RV experience, we rent a permanent 5th-wheel, which is located just south of the cabins. It has a queen bed and a pull-out twin sofa sleeper. Also includes coffee pot, toaster, blender, cooking items, TV with DVD player and small patio with table and chairs. Our lake house at CraZy Marv's is a three bedroom/ two bath that will sleep nine and has a full kitchen. Three recliners and a full couch will give you some TV with DVD down-time after a fun-filled day on Johnson Lake.
- The old bar and



grill was completely gutted and gave way to Restless Waters ~ Event Hall with patio connected to the south. An inside capacity of 150, with tables and chairs, has already gathered plenty of family reunions, birthday parties for various ages, wedding receptions, baby showers, meetings and hosts our annual Hydrocephalus Walk, the last weekend in August. We will also host our very first SLC6A1 fundraiser to bring awareness to this rare genetic mutation that our two year old granddaughter is currently fighting.

- Our bait and tackle at the inlet will offer minnows, tackle, ice, beer, firewood

and various items. A propane exchange and outside pop machine are in the works. Snow cones will be sold on the weekends starting Memorial Day weekend.

- Bike rentals will give young, and young at heart, the opportunity to enjoy Johnson Lake's 10.2 miles of hike and bike trail, around the entire lake, or a simple bike ride from CraZy Marv's to the gazebo near the dam and back...where ever your pedaling takes you! Reasonable rates are offered with roughly 50 bikes of all sizes. E-bikes rent at a higher rate but are also enjoyable.
- In 2021, Marvin and his brother, Doug

Cochrane, purchased land north of Cottonwood Realty and Nautical Rose to establish another RV park. Northern Lights Campground currently has 14 sites with water, electric and sewer. Construction on 8-10 additional full hook-up sites will begin soon and we are looking forward to the possibilities of additions to come.

Call 308-325-0760 to book reservations or stop by to take a look around CraZy Marv's RV & Cabin Retreat or the newly developed Northern Lights Campground.

See you in May, when our bait shop opens!

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Johnson Lake State Recreation Area, located off of U.S. Highway 283 south of Lexington, offers guests excellent camping, fishing, water sports, and more.

The area has 112 pad camping sites with 20, 30, and 50-amp electrical hookups, modern restrooms, a shower house and dump station. All campers must register and reservations are accepted. There are 61 non-pad sites without electricity for basic camping.

Anglers will find a variety of fish, including walleye, white bass and wipers. Recent angler access improvements provide great habitat for quality fishing. Two handicap-accessible fishing piers are available, one on the north side of the inlet and another on the south side along with two fishing

cleaning stations.

A public swim beach provides a place for families to enjoy the water close to amenities and grills for family barbecues.

New amenities at the lake include a playground at the main campground and a public archery range, which is located on the north side of the Inlet. The range is open daylight hours only and available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Johnson Lake is joined with nearby Gallagher Canyon State Recreation Area, Elwood Reservoir Wildlife Management Area, Plum Creek and Phillips Canyon, which are part of the Central Irrigation District Supply Canal and all link together for great recreational opportunities.

Gallagher Canyon

State Recreation Area is located south of Cozad off of Nebraska Highway 21, is a 400-acre irrigation impoundment with 24 acres of recreation land in a secluded and beautiful setting.

Gallagher Canyon offers good crappie fishing in the coves, as well as channel and flathead catfish, walleye, sauger, and white bass.

Gallagher Canyon has water access to more than 10 miles of the canal and is open to all boats but is in a no-wake zone. There is one boat ramp and one dock are available along with a heavily wooded campground offering 24 non-pad campsites with no electricity. Vault toilets are available. There are no showers, water or dump stations.

Elwood Reservoir Wildlife

Management Area, south of Johnson Lake on U.S. Highway 283, is a hot spot for catching walleye, sauger, saugeye, wiper, white bass, catfish, and northern pike. It is open year-round for fishing and many hunters have great success with waterfowl. There is no camping at Elwood Reservoir. Amenities include a vault toilet and one boat ramp and dock. The reservoir has a 5 mph, no-wake restriction for boats. Habitat consists of a 1,330-acre reservoir and 724 adjacent acres of grassland with some wooded sites.

Visitors and residents are strongly encouraged to read and follow the Nebraska boater regulations, available at www.outdoornebraska.gov/boatingregulations/






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The Johnson Lake Community Playground Committee is excited to announce that our playground equipment has arrived. Thank you to everyone that has helped make this project a success. As the ground warms up this Spring we will be pouring concrete and installing the playground equipment. We are continuing to accept donations to complete the Picnic Shelter area which will include four picnic tables. When you drive by East Shore, Drive 1 you will notice the trees that were planted at the site this fall. The Johnson Lake Community Playground project was a recipient of ten trees from the Free Trees for Fall Planting program, an effort of the Nebraska Forest Service and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum. Community volunteers worked with Jeremy Koch of Natural Escapes of



Cozad to plant a total of twenty-two trees in this area. The playground project is a collaborative effort between lake community members, Lexington

Community Foundation, Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation, Johnson Lake Development, Inc., and Crouch Recreation.

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There is so much to do and see in the Elwood/Johnson Lake Area! For those who love the great outdoors, Elwood boasts a fantastic Village Park. There are attractions for all ages – playground equipment for little kids and big kids, picnic shelters and grills, restrooms, the municipal swimming pool, disc golf, horseshoe pits, and sand volleyball courts. The ball fields and rodeo arena sit just adjacent to the Park. The Annual Easter Egg Hunt is one local event that takes place in the Village Park. Hundreds of eggs are stuffed full of goodies, and area children are invited to gather up as many as they can carry.

Other year-round attractions and events going on in Gosper County: The Annual Elwood Spring Gala, hosted by the Elwood Area Foundation, takes place in late March every year. This elegant affair is a community fundraiser disguised as a fantastic night out. Each year, a sold-out crowd is treated to an incredible dinner, complimentary beverages, and live entertainment. Proceeds from the Gala auction are used for youth grants and grants for community projects. The House on the Hill Bed & Breakfast & Catering holds classes

ranging from crafting to cooking to gardening.

In July, Gosper County increases in size as alumni, family members, and folks from neighboring communities come to Elwood to celebrate the world-famous Gosper County Fair and Rodeo. Our home-town operated, family-friendly carnival is open Thursday-Friday-Saturday from 7 p.m. to midnight, and the Rodeo is held on Thursday and Friday evenings. The carnival is full of rides and games for all ages, and includes a full concession stand. Other fair-time events include a golf scramble, sand volleyball tournament, horseshoe tournament, 4-H events and displays, free entertainment at the Civic Center bandstand, and a parade every other year on “odd” years.

Fall and winter months in Gosper County are full of sporting events, Husker parties and good food. The Great Elwood Chili Cook-off is a bi-annual event, held on election years. The general public is invited to show off their best chili or soup; or, if you are more into eating than cooking, we invite you to come out and try all the offerings and vote on your favorite.

In December, the Elwood Chamber hosts

Old Fashioned Christmas, where businesses and organizations invite the public to attend their open houses in beautiful downtown Elwood. Attendees can talk to Santa at the Gosper County Senior Center, ride on a fire truck at the Fire Hall, and be treated to endless amounts of delicious food at each stop, all while entering drawings for door prizes and Chamber Bucks. Be sure to check out the Elwood Chamber's Facebook Page or website www.elwoodnebraska.org, for the latest news on attractions in Gosper County, as well as the dates for Old Fashioned Christmas and other upcoming events.

The Johnson Lake State Recreation Area is another favorite of outdoor lovers. Ten minutes north of Elwood, Johnson Lake SRA offers excellent camping, fishing (including ice fishing) and water sports. This recreation area packs a lot of outdoor fun in 68 acres and provides three access points to the 2,068-acre lake. It is the heart of a complex of lakes on the Tri-County Canal south of I-80 between Lexington and Cozad. It provides fine outdoor recreation opportunities, especially when joined with the nearby Gallagher Canyon SRA, Elwood Reservoir WMA, Plum Creek and Phillips Canyon.

Two Johnson Lake attractions that provide entertainment, such as karaoke and live bands, are Nautical Rose and Canyon Lakes Brewing Company. Both venues offer entertainment, craft fairs, a farmer's market, and great food and beverages. Medo's Resort is another Johnson Lake restaurant, lounge, along with a pool table and dart board for friendly competition. In addition, Medo's Resort has lakeside cabins for rent, a public boat ramp, dock, and swimming beach.

CraZy Marv's RV & Cabin Retreat offers RV pull-throughs with full hook-ups, two remodeled cabins, a spacious three bedroom/two bath house rental, bike rentals for every age, and a rental hall for events. Call CraZy Marv's at 308-325-0760.

Price's Rentals is in the business of renting FUN! They rent out lake houses, boats, jet-skis, paddle boards, kayaks, electric scooters, bicycles, and party buses! They also sell live bait and tackle, water sports equipment, boating and camping supplies, lake-themed apparel, yard games, unique gifts, beverages, and snacks. Price's Rentals is famous for axe throwing and a cool place to hang out

while playing games with family or friends. Come join in the FUN by boat or vehicle, located next to Lakeshore Marina. New for 2022 is property management and indoor boat storage.

Another outdoor attraction is Lakeside Golf Club located at the southeast corner of beautiful Johnson Lake. The par 72 course offers a tee for all players with four tee locations on each hole. The course provides an exciting experience with every round of golf for all level of players with some of the best greens statewide that meets the needs of all golfers. Before or after your round you can enjoy a cold beverage and a picturesque view of the course and surrounding area. Call 308-785-2818 or visit www.playlakeside.com for a tee time at a superior course at the lake.

Bald Eagle and American White Pelican viewing

Johnson Lake is a birder's paradise. Bald Eagles winter at Johnson Lake and surrounding areas and White Pelicans begin to arrive in the early spring when the ice is breaking up into areas of open water.

Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District's Eagle Viewing facilities will be open to the public at

Johnson No. 2 Hydroplant the first weekend of January and continue to be open every weekend through the end of February. Hours are 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the J-2 site. You can also view many bald eagles on and around Johnson Lake during the winter months. The eagles are looking for fish and other food sources. They can be seen in the trees around the lake, as well as standing on the ice near areas of open water. The bald eagles and the white pelicans are a spectacular sight to behold!

Lighthouses at Johnson Lake

Johnson Lake is fortunate to have two Lighthouses: One at the Mallard Beach jetty and one at the Lakeview Acres jetty. The Lakeview Acres Lighthouse was dedicated on July 4th, 2021 at a special ribbon-cutting ceremony. A dedication speech was written and delivered by Cinde Wendell, who was instrumental in organizing and collecting funds for the lighthouse.

"Our Lighthouse began by forming a committee at the Lakeview Acres annual meeting in 2019 and grew to be an entire Johnson Lake project. All the planning, fundraising and installation happened during the

pandemic.

The Lighthouse design is a replica of the Bodie Island Lighthouse currently standing in the vicinity of Bodie Island on the Outer Banks in North Carolina. Our black and white lighthouse is the second lighthouse at Johnson Lake with the first red and white one on Mallard Beach. The Mallard Beach Lighthouse is a replica of Montauk Lighthouse in New York. The Mallard Bay light house organizers were extremely helpful with blazing a trail for this lighthouse as well as their unending support. The Lighthouse Digest, a national publication, plans to do a story on the Johnson Lake lighthouses.

Thank you to Johnson Lake Chamber of Commerce, Central Nebraska Irrigation

& Public Power District, Lexington Community Foundation, the Mallard Bay Lighthouse Committee, JLDI, Lakeshore Marina & Nautical Rose for allowing access, Lakeview Acres, and all the support from all around the lake with donations, letters and encouragement.

This lighthouse quote seems fitting for today... *"Don't forget that maybe you are the lighthouse in someone's storm."* --Unknown author

Finally, this project has turned out to be a positive beacon during a dark, pandemic time. May the lighthouse always serve as a shining example of hope for all of us.

God Bless America!"

Delivered by Cinde Wendell on July 4th, 2021





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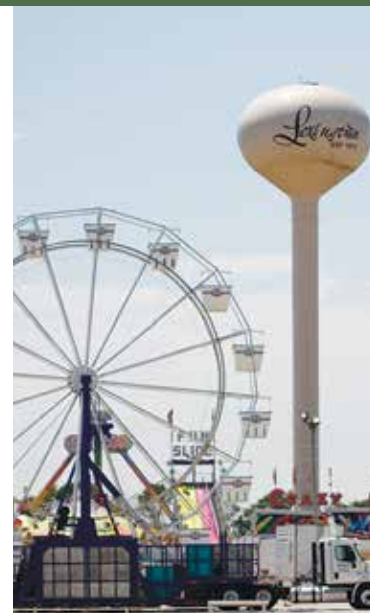
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The 4th of July is the highlight of the summer at Johnson Lake and anticipation grows as the holiday approaches. The campgrounds are packed and residences are overflowing with friends and family visiting to enjoy the festivities. The Fireworks Committee has been working for months to raise funds for the fireworks and plan the big display. The Johnson Lake Chamber of Commerce has been busy organizing the

Boat Parade.

As darkness falls on the evening of the 3rd of July, people gather from surrounding areas, campgrounds and neighborhoods and watch as hundreds of boats make their way to the dam area where the fireworks are displayed. The beautiful fireworks and their reflection in the lake is a sight to behold.

Mid-morning on the 4th, the creativity of many boat owners comes to life as the

decorated boats gather at the Marina Bay. The parade then makes its way around the lake for all to see as the crowd on shore clap and wave their flags with appreciation. Every year decorated boats are over the top with creative and clever themes. At the conclusion of the parade prizes are awarded by the Johnson Lake Chamber.

As the day continues, you can see many boats anchor in the shallow water by the

island as people enjoy music, wading, swimming and merriment!

The aroma of hamburgers on the grills, sounds of firecrackers, laughter, speeding watercraft and splashing of the wakes on the shoreline combine to make yet another year of 4th of July cherished memories with family and friends. Even Norman Rockwell would be envious of this special celebration at Johnson Lake.

2023 Gosper County Fair

The best little hometown, family friendly fair around.
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volunteer run carnival is fun for kids and affordable for parents.
July 27-29 • FFA and 4-H events all

days.
Rodeo: Thursday & Friday.
Carnival: Thursday, Friday, & Saturday.

2023 Calendar of Events • Elwood

April 8 • Easter Egg Hunt

May • Chamber Golf Outing/Banquet

Memorial Day - Labor Day • Yard of the Week

June 2-3 • Community Garage Sales

July 4 • Fourth of July Fireworks

July 27-29 • Gosper County Fair & Rodeo. FFA and 4-H events all days.
Rodeo: Thursday & Friday.
Carnival: Thursday, Friday, & Saturday.

August • Farmers Market - Sundays

September • Team Jack Radiothon

November, TBA • Chili Cook-off
November, TBA • Give Big Elwood

December • Old Fashioned Christmas. See Santa, ride the Fire Truck, and enjoy business open houses and holiday events throughout beautiful Downtown Elwood.

2023 Calendar of Events • Johnson Lake

Memorial Day Weekend • Garage Sales around the lake, EMS 5-K Walk/Run and lunch, Chamber BBQ at Community Park Dedication

June • Craft Fairs, Farmers Markets

July • Annual Chamber of Commerce Outdoor Concert Event, Craft Fairs, Farmers Markets

July 3 • Light-Up-the-Lake Fireworks 10 p.m.

July 4 • 4th of July Boat Parade 10 a.m.
Register at the Marina boat dock 9-10 a.m.

Summer Events

- Peace Love & Lavender Watch Peace Love & Lavender Facebook Page for schedule
- Canyon Lake Brewery Watch Canyon Lake Facebook Page for schedule
- Nautical Rose Watch Nautical Rose Facebook Page for schedule

WATCH FOR CHAMBER UPDATES AT JOHNSONLAKE.ORG & ON FACEBOOK AT JOHNSON LAKE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Elwood Public School is located in central Nebraska 15 miles south of Lexington, Ne. The Elwood School is a PreK-12 facility serving approximately 205 students. The elementary contains around 110 students and the 7-12 population is around 95. Students can participate in athletic activities which include cross country, football, volleyball,



basketball, wrestling, golf and track. These activities are in cooperation with Eustis-Farnam. This co-op is referred to as the Hi-Line Bulls. Other activities students are involved in are Speech, One Act, journalism, FCCLA, FFA, choir, band, student council, quiz bowl, Future Problem Solvers, Math Counts, National Honor Society, county government day, conference music

contest, district music contest, honor band and choir clinics, state FCCLA convention, livestock judging competitions, and science fair. Class sizes range from a low of 10 to a high of 20. A PreK program was added in 2016-2017. This program serves mostly four year old students. It consistently averages 12-18 students. The list of school employees includes the Superintendent, Principal, 25 certified staff

Mission Statement

The mission of Elwood Public Schools is to provide a safe environment that fosters continuous learning and prepares students for an evolving global society.

Governing Values

We Believe:

1. All students can learn and are given the opportunity to reach their full potential.
2. Our school provides a positive, challenging and safe environment that promotes 21st century skills.
3. Community, family and schools support is vital to student success.
4. Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect.

members and 20 non-certified employees.

The current district land valuation is around \$500,000,000. The current total levy .7285 cents per \$100 of valuation. The district just completed an


addition to the east side of the school. The addition includes restrooms, a concession area, custodial storage and food service storage. This addition was completed and opened in August of 2020.

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Avanti Salon & Boutique.....	21	Johnson Lake Trail Fund	9
BHA Real Estate	28	Lakeside Golf Club.....	6
Byrns Floorcovering	4	Lawn in Order.....	13
Buzz's Marine	16	Lexington Clipper-Herald	23
Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District....	25	Lexington Regional Health Center	26
CraZy Marv's RV & Cabin Retreat, LLC.....	11	Levander's Body Shop	7
Dan's Sanitation	7	Majestic Theatre	15
Dawson County Agri Society.....	17	Medo's Resort.....	19
Dawson County Historical Museum	8	Natural Escapes	19
DC Express	3	Nautical Rose	11
Docks Unlimited	6	O'Hanlon Seed, Inc.	17
Elwood Auto Detailing	13	Paulsen, Inc.....	15
Elwood Chamber of Commerce	27	Pony Express Chevrolet	3
Eustis Body Shop	12	Price's Rentals	13
Family Physical Therapy.....	8	Primary Electric	5
FRAE, Inc.....	10	Rustic & Red.....	17
Gosper County Senior Center	4	Security First Bank.....	5
Gothenburg Realty, Inc./Cottonwood Realty	16	The Home Agency.....	2
Graczyk Lawn & Landscape	17	United Country Real Estate	20
Heartland Museum of Military Vehicles	12	Wild Horse Golf Club.....	10
Johnson Lake Chamber of Commerce	27		



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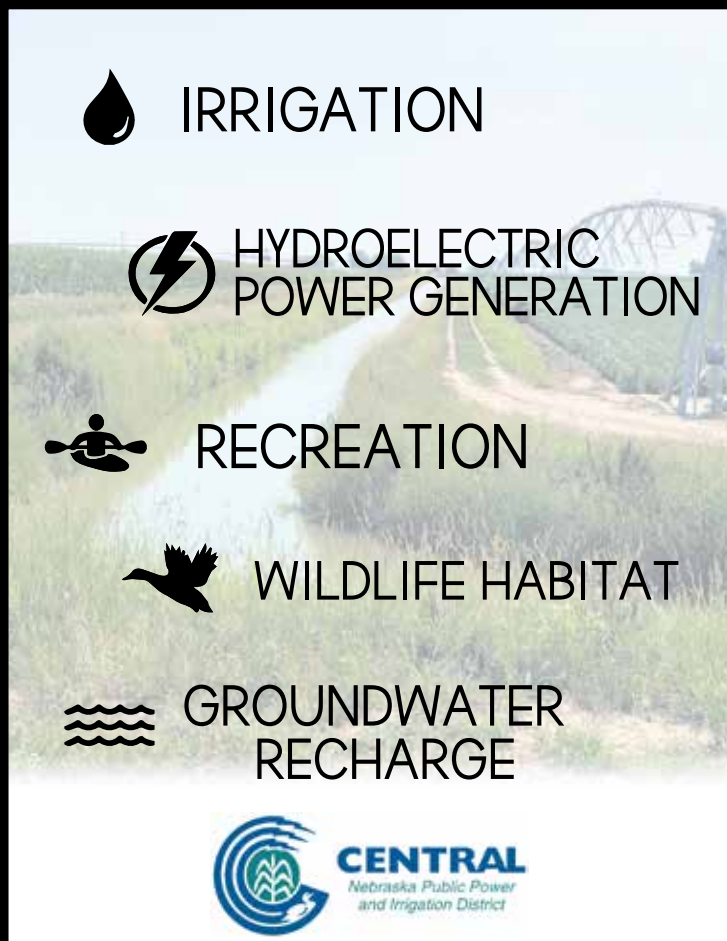
Tom's Midwest Liquor


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Interdenominational services, 8:30
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10:30 a.m. Sundays

First United Methodist Church

Elwood

(308) 785-2315

9:30 a.m. Sundays

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Elwood

(308) 785-2875

10 a.m. Sundays

St. John's Catholic Church

Smithfield

(308) 995-4590 (Holdrege Office)

8:30 a.m. Sundays



BARB FOSS, NP



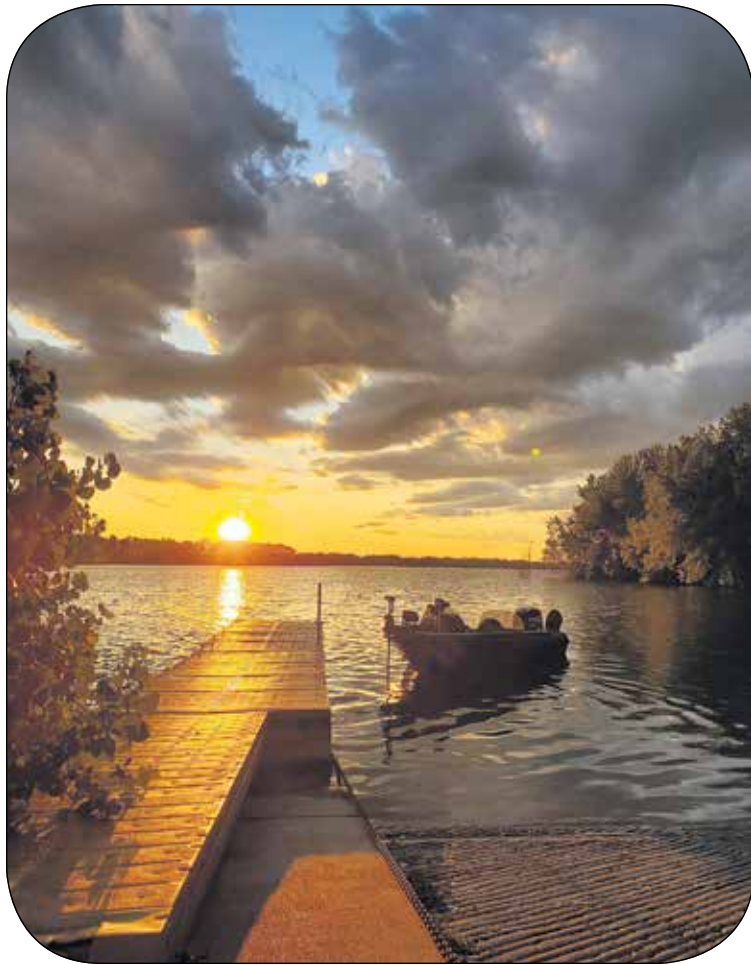
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