

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1984

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REMARKS OF SENATOR BOB DOLE

JOHNSON COUNTY PARK DEDICATION

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1984

THANK YOU COMMISSIONER LINGLE. I APPRECIATE THAT WARM INTRODUCTION. IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE TODAY TO SHARE IN THE DEDICATION OF THIS WONDERFUL NEW FACILITY IN JOHNSON COUNTY. AS YOU KNOW, THE HISTORY OF THIS PROJECT TAKES MANY TURNS, SOME OF THEM FRUSTRATING DETOURS THAT SEEMED CERTAIN TO SNUFF OUT THE VISION THIS COMMUNITY FORMULATED A GOOD 13 YEARS AGO. HOWEVER, DESPITE THE BUREAUCRATIC HURDLES, LACK OF FUNDS AND OTHER UNCERTAINTIES, WE SEE WHAT IS POSSIBLE IF PEOPLE IN ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT WORK TOGETHER.

I AM PROUD TO HAVE PLAYED SOME ROLE IN SAVING THIS PARK PROJECT, ALONG WITH THE MANY DEDICATED PEOPLE WHO ARE REPRESENTED HERE. ALTHOUGH THE PARK IS OFFICIALLY CALLED THE SUNFLOWER NATURE PARK, I SUGGEST WE COULD ALSO CALL IT THE SUNFLOWER "COOPERATION" PARK, FOR THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT IT TOOK TO COMPLETE THE LOVELY 60-ACRE SITE WE DEDICATE TODAY. WITHOUT THE HELP OF CONCERNED CITIZENS, DEDICATED OFFICIALS AT THE STATE, COUNTY AND LOCAL LEVELS, THE PARK WOULD NEVER HAVE COME INTO BEING. YOU ARE TO BE SALUTED FOR YOUR PERSISTENCE IN MAKING IT HAPPEN.

THE COMBINATION OF NATURE TRAILS, BALL FIELDS, PICNIC TABLES, WILDLIFE HABITAT AND A PLANNED TALL GRASS PRAIRIE EXHIBIT MAKES THE SUNFLOWER NATURE PARK A TRUE MULTI-PURPOSE FACILITY. I AM ESPECIALLY PLEASED THAT A PORTION OF THE PARK WILL BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE HANDICAPPED. AS A NATION, WE ARE FINALLY KNOCKING DOWN SOME OF THE BARRIERS -- PSYCHOLOGICAL AS WELL AS PHYSICAL -- THAT HAVE PREVENTED MILLIONS OF DISABLED AMERICANS FROM ENJOYING THE SIMPLE PLEASURES MANY TAKE FOR GRANTED. YOU ARE TO BE CONGRATULATED FOR OPENING THE PARK TO EVERYONE.

LET ME SAY THAT IT IS ALWAYS GOOD TO COME HOME, AND TO HEAR SOME GOOD OLD KANSAS COMMON SENSE. LAST WEEK, ELIZABETH AND I WERE AT THE STATE FAIR IN HUTCHINSON WHERE WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT WITH SCORES OF KANSANS. IN OUR FRIENDLY TALKS, THERE SEEMED TO BE A COMMON COMPLAINT ABOUT WASHINGTON, A COMPLAINT I HEARD LOUD AND CLEAR: THE PEOPLE DON'T WANT ANYMORE RUNAWAY FEDERAL SPENDING. WELL, I BELIEVE THIS PROJECT IN JOHNSON COUNTY EXEMPLIFIES THAT ATTITUDE: FEDERAL FUNDS WERE RESPONSIBLY DIRECTED TO THE PARK, IN CONJUNCTION WITH FUNDING FROM MANY OTHER SOURCES; AND, ABOVE ALL, WASHINGTON DID NOT HAVE THE FINAL WORD ON YOUR PROJECT.

LOCAL CONTROL, COST SHARING AND COOPERATION ARE THE KEYS, AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU HAVE HERE IN THE SUNFLOWER NATURE PARK. YOUR COMMUNITY LEADERS DIDN'T COME RUNNING TO WASHINGTON, ASKING FOR FEDERAL HANDOUTS. THEY JUST WANTED HELP IN LINING UP THE PROPERTY AND CUTTING THROUGH RED TAPE. YES, THERE WAS FEDERAL FUNDING, BUT THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS WORTHWHILE PROJECT WERE SHARED ACROSS THE BOARD. ABOVE ALL, THE DECISION MAKERS ON THE LOCAL LEVEL PREVAILED -- AND THE RESULTS ARE OBVIOUS.

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