

# KEITH SEBELIUS Reservoir News

FRIDAY,  
May 7, 2004  
FISHING — HUNTING  
CAMPING — RECREATION  
The Norton  
Telegram

## THEY'RE BACK...

Longtime hosts come back for eighth season of greeting campers

By VERONICA MONIER

The coming of April brought the beginning of Ray and Leta Koel's eighth season as camp hosts for Prairie Dog State Park.

As the park's camp hosts, one of the Koel's main duties is keeping campers apprised of weather conditions and, in the event of high winds or a tornado, direct them to shelter in the bath house.

They also give directions and answer questions, clean the park area and near-by bath house, and care for the lawn, flowers and trees in the campground area. The flowers were donated by Norton Flowers, Gifts and Greenhouse, which the Koels really appreciate.

Another big duty is to assist campers in any way they can. They have Kansas maps and travel and event guides on hand for visitors, as well as recent issues of the Reservoir News.

Occasionally, the Koels can be seen giving a camper a lift in their golf cart to another campsite or to the park office to use the phone. They work closely with the park rangers as well as other park personnel.

Leta said the one thing they aren't doing this year that they have done in the past is selling park permits. She said it's all going to be done through the park office or the self pay station.

"The park is in the process of computerizing the permit system, which is why we aren't selling the permits down here," she said. "But they (the campers) can leave them with us."

"We'll still be checking to make sure everyone has a permit though," said Ray.

Leta said they were still going to keep a record of who parks where, so that the rangers or family members could find the campers in case of an emergency.

They are also selling ice again this year to keep the campers and their beverages cold.

Ray and Leta would like to remind everyone to please put out their fires before leaving. With the high winds, fire can spread very easily.

With spacious camper pads, colorful flow-

ers, beautiful scenery and nice bathrooms, the Prairie Dog State Park is a good place to spend the summer.

Ray and Leta, and their dog Jasmine, will

reside at campsite number eight until Oct. 15.



Ray and Leta Koel, along with their dog Jasmine, began their eighth season as the camp hosts of Prairie Dog State Park last month. The Koels can be found at campsite eight, giving whatever help is needed to the spring and summer campers until Oct. 15.

— Telegram photo by Veronica Monier