



MATTERS OF OPINION



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Director

It's a good bet that many lifelong North Dakotans under age 50 will remember an elementary school art project that involved drawing a poster to remind people not to litter.

I write this because every year for the last 40 years, an organization called Keep North Dakota Clean has sponsored an elementary school poster contest that has attracted entries from tens of thousands of young North Dakotans. This year alone, about 8,000 students participated. That's 8,000 kids drawing thoughts about an idea on paper and

is to promote keeping our state beautiful and litter-free. Recent partnerships with natural resources agencies have broadened KNDC's scope, to include not only picking up litter, but also keeping natural areas clean and pristine for wildlife and people.

KNDC is run by volunteers who get a great deal of satisfaction by helping promote a cleaner state, from road ditches to waterways. North Dakota's outdoors, and ultimately all of us, benefits immensely from these efforts. Every time someone routinely picks up after themselves, without even thinking that it's



Sample of grade-level KNDC contest winners for 2008. For more information on KNDC, or to see all winning entries, visit the following website: <http://www.dot.nd.gov/public/kndc.htm>.



starting to develop an awareness of the need to take care of our environment and not litter.

To keep anything going for 40 years requires a great deal of commitment, and on behalf of the Game and Fish Department I want to thank all the volunteers who have kept this worthy effort going strong. I also want to thank the many organizations and businesses that help sponsor the contest awards luncheon and provide savings bonds to the winners.

KNDC got its start in the late 1960s at a time when recycling of bottles and cans was a big issue. And it still is. A national anti-litter campaign called Keep America Beautiful, which started in the 1950s, was also at work.

Litter control has always been at the forefront of KNDC efforts, and its mission

the right thing to do, it's a product of the KNDC message reinforced over time.

But their work is not finished. You don't need to spend too much time outdoors to discover that some people still aren't quite convinced.

All of us can help try to change that by setting a good example for our children and our peers. North Dakota is a great place to live with its open spaces, clean air, and great resources, and we want to keep it that way. It's a simple reminder, but when you're out and about fishing, camping, boating, hiking, biking and enjoying our great outdoors this summer, please remember to Keep North Dakota Clean.

Terry Steinwand