

# A Fresh Look At Nebraska



# -Isms

By LuAnn Schindler

I think Scott has lost his mind.

In the midst of the holiday blizzard, I found him in the garage, fishing pole in hand, removing the pink neon gel worm from the line.

"The jig is up, Scott. What're you doing?"

Silence.

"You aren't thinking about heading to Goose Lake, are you?"

Additional awkward silence. Eyes concentrate on the shiny spoon he's adding to the nylon string. A slight curl rounds his lips.

"No, but once the storm clears . . ."

I'm not biting.

Unlike my husband and multiple members of both our clans, I don't relish dragging a toboggan loaded with shelter and supplies from a lake's bank, drilling a hole through frozen water, and dropping a line into frigid blue lake ice to catch Flipper.

No, when those sub-zero temperatures teeter on the thermometer and the grey-lined horizon shows no signs of a sunny disposition, I retreat into hibernation. I'm content sitting in my office chair, writing about faraway lands or food or football, and sipping hot cocoa.

Wi-Fi is not available at Goose Lake.

It's true. I'm a warm-weather girl. Ask me to go fishing in the sweltering July heat and I'll grab the poles.

Combining the words "ice" and "fishing" reminds me of scenes from the "Grumpy Old Men" movies. I envision us becoming like the Minnesotans or North Dakotans who move everything but the kitchen sink to the ice shanty and reside there until they're skating on thin ice.

I know you're thinking: LuAnn, you've probably never stepped foot on the ice.

Wrong.

I went once with Scott and his dad.

I lasted an hour. The minimalist wind break and cotton-thin gloves may have hindered my enthusiasm for the sport.

Or my fervor for frosty fishing may have declined because I was the lone female in the man cave a.k.a. an ice shanty.

But for every single person who possesses the same beliefs I have about ice fishing, there are a thousand other Nebraskans who can't wait for the icy buildup on our state's waterways.

There's something about the simplicity of it all that draws both novice and experienced anglers to the channels seeking blue gill or yellow perch for a midwinter's feast.

There's something about the nature of the ice fisherman, the patient mindset that realizes the catch of the day may be the one that gets away.

There's something about spending time outdoors on a calm and mild Nebraska winter's day.

Nebraska is home for a plentitude of great ice fishing spots, and most of these sites sponsor ice fishing tournaments.

One of my cousins ventures to Grove Lake every January for the annual tourney. He's won the event several times.

For him, it's a family hobby, a bond bigger than a Master Angler blue gill.

Oh, I'm positive when the temperature rises to a balmy 20-something and the wind barely whispers through the trees, you'll find me at the lake, notebook in one hand, bobber in the other, chilling with Scott.

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