

# Residents Long for Lake Freak Leak Leaves Business High, Dry

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CEDAR LAKE People here apparently still believe they'll find their "Lost Cedar Lake."

But local grocer Jimmie Cranor, obviously unaware of the pun, said of business: "We're just trying to keep our noses above water."

The "lost" jokingly has been added to the name since more than a year ago when a rare geological accident caused the lake a clear pool that for 30 years had been the heart of the central Oklahoma resort village to suddenly drain, leaving a 75-acre canyon surrounded by cute houses and high, dry boat docks.

Residents say it looks especially gloomy on warm holidays because of the absence of the many stockholding "weekenders."

But resident Dale Phenis said he and most of the other 600 stockholders who own the lake plan to keep their homes and vacation cabins here and wait about two years for the reservoir to refill, despite the expected total cost of about \$500,000 to repair the leak.

"People have high hopes, and they're willing to do what they have to do to get the lake back," he said, adding that there hasn't been an obvious exit of property owners "in fact, we've had a few buy in."

Dr. Raymond Cook, a Hinton chiropractor, said he formerly owned a resort home on the lake and now is having another home built here, and said he believes the lake, "when it's filled again ... is going to be better than ever."

Residents also say some nearby road construction will help matters by shortening the driving distance between here and Interstate 40 at El Reno.

Richard Woodring, who operates an auto repair garage, said he's optimistic, even though the lake loss hurt both his business and local property values.

"I've got one car out there now, and he's (the customer) working on his," he said while seated at a cluttered table in his shop, drawing laughs from his several visitors who were joining him for midday chili and coffee.

"Real estate went ... ," he said, turning a fist over so his thumb pointed downward. "We had \$40,000 and \$50,000 homes sell for \$15,000."

Cranor, whose store is nearby, said he plans to stay until the lake is full again, but he hopes it's soon. BIOG: NAME:

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