

Friday  
March 12, 2004

Norton, Kansas  
Home of Jim Danielson

## Briefly Weight room will be closed

The Norton school district's weightlifting room will be closed next week while students and coaches take a week off between sports.

## Third mitigation meeting planned

The third Mitigation 20/20 meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday in the City Hall Basement.

Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Alvin Mapes asks all mitigation members to attend. He will also discuss plans for a tornado exercise tentatively planned for March 29.

## Voters need to register now

Voters may register during regular hours at Norton City Office, Alma City Office, Clayton City Library, Lenora City Office, County Health Department, Norton Social and Rehabilitative Services office and the Norton County Clerk's Office.

Books will close on Tuesday, March 23, and will remain closed until Wednesday, April 7.

Citizens, 18 or older, must register before he or she can vote. Registration closes 14 days prior to every election.

When a registered voter changes residence from one precinct to another, they must re-register.

Voters may apply in person, by telephone or mail to the county election officer to be registered.

## Weather Forecast:

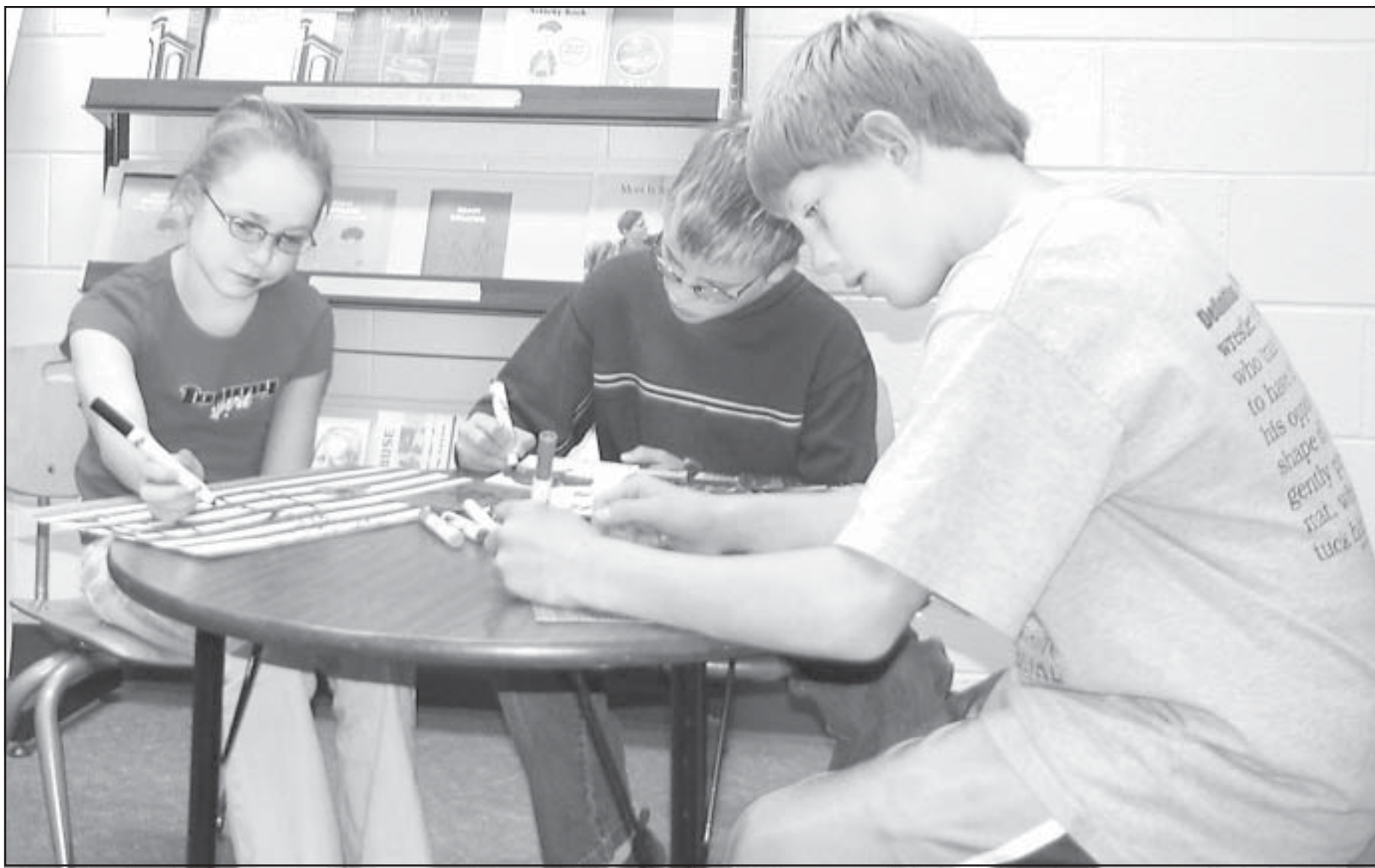
**Tonight** — Partly cloudy and warmer with highs in the mid 60s. **Tonight** — Partly cloudy with areas of fog after midnight, breezy and not as cool. Lows in the lower 40s. **Saturday** — Partly cloudy with areas of fog in the morning. Highs in the lower 60s. **Saturday Night** — Partly cloudy with lows in the lower 30s. **Sunday** — Partly cloudy and breezy with highs in the upper 40s. **Sunday Night** — Partly cloudy with lows in the lower 20s.

## Howell report:

Tuesday ..... High 68, Low 40  
Wednesday ..... High 58, Low 27  
Thursday ..... High 53, Low 24  
Week ago ..... High 36, Low 33  
Month ago ..... High 37, Low 6  
Year ago ..... High 72, Low 41  
March precipitation ..... .32 inches  
Year-to-date precipitation ..... 2.42 inches  
(Readings taken at the Paul and Pat Howell farm 10 Miles North and 1/3 Mile East of Norton)

## Prayer

God, thank you for caring for us and for claiming us as your own. Help us to be faithful and obedient servants.  
Amen



Eisenhower fifth graders (from left) Kaylen Rossi, Billy Broeckelman and Jeremy Sproul were the winners of this year's Norton American Legion Auxiliary poppy poster contest. Kaylen took first place, Billy

placed second, and Jeremy took third. Their posters will be sent to the state competition. Winning poster pictures are on Page 5.

— Telegram photo by Veronica Monier

# Students make up winning poppy posters

Eisenhower Elementary fifth-grade students had a chance to show their patriotism and have some fun when they entered the annual Norton American Legion Auxiliary's poppy poster contest.

Each student got to draw a poster in Vicki Robison's art class, after Ms.

Robison explained spacing, color combinations, and what makes a good poster.

The winners of the contest were Kaylen Rossi, daughter of George and Sue Rossi, first place, \$10; Billy Broeckelman, son of Jim and Tami Broeckelman, second place, \$5; and Jeremy Sproul, son of

Tracey Sproul and Greg Sproul, third place, \$3.

Posters were judged by member of the auxiliary and teachers. Marcia Wiltfong and Margaret Wetter were the poster chairpersons.

The winning posters will be entered in

state competition. The posters drawn by Norton's fifth-grade students will be displayed at local businesses later.

Poppy Day will be held just before Memorial Day in May and to celebrate the American Legion and Legion Auxiliary will be passing out red poppies.

# County may get lawyer to deal with contract

By VERONICA MONIER

Norton County may get a lawyer to help solve a dispute over jail and communication services with the City of Norton.

The sheriff and city manager have been working to hammer out an agreement that will work for both the county and city but there are still several sticking points.

The city wants some changes before signing an agreement with the sheriff's office to provide jail and dispatch services. An old contract, which expires in December, said the city would pay 40 percent of the dispatch expense up to \$44,000. However, because the cost of dispatching has increased over the last couple of years, the county wants to remove the cap.

In 2002 when the expense was more than the cap, the city paid. However, last year it refused to pay more than \$44,000 when it got a bill for \$67,000.

On Monday commissioners met with City Administrator Rob Lawson in the morning and they reconvened in the afternoon to discuss the problem.

"We're getting whickered," Commission Chairman Leroy Lang said. "I think they should pay the \$23,000 that they owe us. They created a change in the contract when they paid over the cap before and I think they should have to pay it now."

Commissioner John Miller said the city wasn't going to pay the money and asked

## City leader, commissioners worried about same things

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson and the Norton County Commissioners agreed that the airport board has gone out on a limb when it decided to have a bid letting on replacing the apron at the airport.

Both Mr. Lawson and the commissioners received the minutes of the board's March 1 meeting on Monday and were surprised to find that the board has gone from looking at engineering on the apron project to advertising for contractors to do it.

Last year both the city and county agreed to put \$3,000 each into an engineering study to see how much it would cost to replace an apron at the airport. Neither, however, have seen

the study nor authorized money for the project.

According to the minutes the airport board has not only hired an engineer, B&G Consulting, for the project but has already OK'd the plans and is looking for contractors to build the apron, which Mr. Lawson estimated to cost about \$25,000.

However, both Mr. Lawson and the commissioners say that building the apron and paying for it are two different stories.

"Until they make a proposal here we're going to veto everything," County Commission Chairman Leroy Lang said. "We can't be part of a run-

(Continued on Page 5)

if Mr. Lang really wanted to hire outside council to take the city to court over \$23,000.

Since the city attorney Karen Griffiths and the county attorney Keith Sebelius are

in practice together they could not represent the two entities in a lawsuit.

Commissioner Dean Kruse said he thought they should hire outside council to look at the city's contract. Mr. Miller

agreed and said the commissioners needed to study it themselves.

Sheriff Troy Thomson said what the city was asking for is reasonable and he thought the commissioners should agree to it.

He said the city would use the estimated budget that he gave them in June as the cap on what they would pay. So if he gave the city council an estimated budget of \$80,000, that would be the most the city would be expected to pay for that year.

"What's wrong with that?" said Mr. Kruse.

Sheriff Thomson said there was nothing wrong with it and the city seems willing to go along with that idea.

Mr. Lang said he still felt they had voided the contract by paying over the cap for the past three years and that he wasn't going to sign the agreement until they paid the other \$23,000.

"The reason the cap is there is because we and the city failed to renegotiate the contract," Sheriff Thomson said. "We are not any less at fault than they are."

Sheriff Thomson told the commissioners that if they didn't sign the contract it would be bad for taxpayers because the county would still have to employ five dispatchers and would still have to have 24-hour service. So would the city.

"If this agreement isn't worked out and (Continued on Page 5)

# Almena works on water

By KRISTEN BRANDS

Representatives of an engineering firm visited with the Almena City Council last week about new water lines and wells.

Alan Luttrell and Kevin Kirkpatrick with Evans-Bierly and Hutchinson and Associates of Pratt told Almena council members that the city has received \$50,000 to pay for engineering fees to design the new lines and wells.

He explained that the city has until Oct. 15 to resubmit an application for grant money that would cover the construction costs of the new water system. The city will apply for a \$400,000 grant, and will submit an environmental review and proof of publication to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. A public hearing will be held during the April 12 council meeting.

Between now and then, Mr. Luttrell said test holes will need to be dug and water results verified. He said that everything would be great if they could find good quality drinking water and that it needs to be drawn from the Ogallala Aquifer and not the Prairie Dog Aquifer.

The council moved to sign a contract with the engineering firm pending Mayor Gerald Wilson's return.

Jon Boxler, with Boxler Insurance Agency, presented new quotes for the city's insurance. President Monte Mont-

(Continued on Page 5)

# School plans 'Wall of Fame'

The Northern Valley school district is launching a new teacher and staff "Wall of Fame" and needs nominations for possible honorees.

There will be an employee award. The nominee must have had 30 years of service in education with 20 years at Northern Valley.

There will also be a Northern Valley Hall of Fame award. The nominee must have demonstrated a life-time commitment to education.

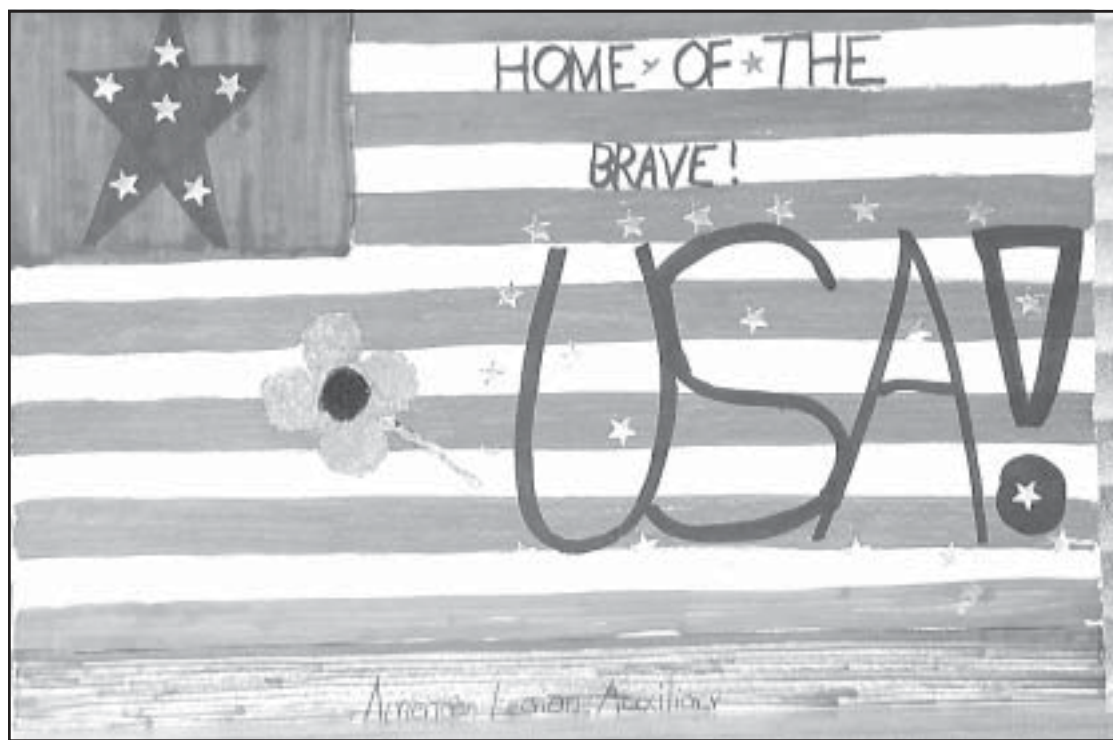
The "wall" is proposed for the east wall of the lunch room. It will display pictures and plaques of the recipients. "This is something we will do annu-

ally," said Superintendent Bill Lowry. "The number of awards given out each year, will depend on the number of applications we receive."

To nominate someone you must fill out a nomination form, available in the high school office, and submit a one-page letter explaining why the nominee deserves to be honored. Both sheets must be returned to the office by April 1.

The Northern Valley Site Council will review the nominees and select the recipients, which will be announced at the annual Northern Valley High School Awards Banquet held Thursday, April 29.





# Accident raises questions

After a Colby basketball player put his hand through a window in a door in the Norton gym during a game three weeks ago, the Norton School District is asking questions about the structure and placement of doors and windows in the gym.

Norton Superintendent Greg Mann said he contacted the district's architect and the state fire marshal after Shane Stover put his arm through a window in one of the interior gym doors.

The school hasn't heard back from the fire marshal yet and won't know what will be done with the doors until it has. Mr. Mann said if the doors are there for fire and smoke control, then they will look into what other kinds of doors are available. If not, he said, the district's options are almost unlimited.

# Students make winning posters

The winning poppy posters are (above) first place by Kaylen Rossi, (above right) second place by Billy Broeckelman and (below right) third place by Jeremy Sproul. The posters will be sent to the state competition. — Telegram photos by Veronica Monier

# City administrator, commissioners work together

(Continued from Page 1) away thing like this. We have to account to the taxpayers." Mr. Lawson said that he was just as surprised as the commissioners were to find out that the board was planning to go ahead with the project without either city or county approval.

thought I was on top of it until I read this (the minutes) today. I can't make their meetings because of conflicts." Mr. Lang had no sympathy for the project. "There're no checks going to be signed by me," he said. "We're not doing it this way." Commissioner John Miller agreed. "We're not going to give them

our \$12,500 without more information," he said. Mr. Lawson agreed. "All they have approved is \$3,000 on each side," he said. Mr. Lawson also talked with the commissioners about the city-county dispatch agreement, about which the two entities are disagreeing. He said that the city understands that it will have to pay more than

the old \$44,000 cap for dispatch and jail services but needs a firm price each year for budgeting purposes. The city has suggested that the sheriff give them his best estimate of their share of the cost each year and they will use that as a cap. He agreed that the city and county need to work together on the problem since neither will benefit from the city looking else-

where for its services. The commissioners also asked Mr. Lawson to give some thought to a county-city economic development person. "All the county seat cities around here have a function (in economic development)," Commissioner Dean Kruse said. "Right now we really have nothing on the city side or on the county side."

He said the school feels bad about what happened, but doesn't believe the district is responsible. "It was a highly unusual thing that happened," he said. "I think it's odd that both sides of the glass broke and the window had a hole in it. Normally only one side will shatter." He said the doors were put in in 1976 and this is only the second accident in that time. The first happened in the '80s in a physical education class. That time the glass just cracked on one side like it was supposed to.

# Man elected to foundation board

Robert B. Hartman, Logan, has been elected, by the Hansen Foundation Trustees, to serve on the foundation board. Mr. Hartman, the son of Dr. Roger and Ruth Hartman, was raised in Norton and attended the University of Kansas and is a certified public accountant. He and his wife Staci have two



R. Hartman

daughters, Anne and Kathryn. Mr. Hartman oversees the accounting department of Baird Oil Company and is also the production foreman and contract supervisor. He is co-manager of the agricultural aspects of the family

business. Active in the Logan community, Mr. Hartman is serving his fifth year on the Logan Manor and Assisted Living Board. He was elected to Logan's City Council in 2003.

# Almena City Council works on water system

(Continued from Page 1) gomery said that the rates for the trash truck are wrong, as it was listed as a dump truck. Visitor Fleta Hanlon was present to discuss the newly proposed bathroom at the roadside park. She would like to have the project completed by June 1, and is looking into the potential help of prison inmates. In other business, the council:

- Declined a deed from the Kansas Department of Transportation for the land and tanks that are in the roadside park area.
- Agreed with the County Department of Solid Waste that all recyclable must be put into clear, plastic bags.
- Signed an emergency snow

route ordinance.

- Discussed several options to contain the stray cats near the school.
- Discussed new voting rules and regulations to be put into effect by 2006. Changes will include making one bathroom handicapped accessible.
- Proposed having a benefit pancake feed for the Pride committee on Saturday to help pay project expenses.
- Approved a beer license to the Almena Market for both inside consumption and carry out. All licenses will be renewable in December of each year.
- Looked into purchasing a new dump truck, but tabled the issue as prices are too high right now.

# County may get outside help

(Continued from Page 1) signed," he said, "nobody is going to win. Without this contract, we'll be making the city/county taxpayers pay more for a service that overlaps. "I think we should agree to this. We'll get our money's worth, unless I screw up. It's all on the sheriff's department because I will be the one telling them what the budget is. "You're losing money this year because nobody paid attention to what the contract said. We're not giving anything up with this contract."

Mr. Kruse said with the extra money the city paid in the past, it would probably even out. Mr. Miller asked Sheriff Thomson, County Clerk Robert Wyatt and Mr. Sebelius to get together and work out any problems. He also said they would send a copy to an outside attorney to review. "Let's see if we can get this thing worked out," he said.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Visited with Cynthia Schemper about the ambulance director position. Ms. Schemper asked if the commissioners were still advertising or pursuing an individual to be the director of the Norton County Emergency Medical Service. The commissioners said they weren't, because people have just not been applying.

Ms. Schemper suggested the commissioners look at the register from two years ago to see who had volunteered at that time and if they would be willing to come back and be volunteers with the service again, helping to fill a few of the vacancies on the schedule.

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