

Tuesday,
May 4, 2004

Norton, Kansas
Home of Carol Gay

Briefly
Second half
of taxes is due

The second half of personal and real estate taxes are due at the Norton County Treasurer's office on Monday.

The Kansas Legislature changed the date that the second half of taxes are due from June 20 to May 10 last year in order to help the state budget crisis.

Taxes not paid by Monday will be charged interest at 8 percent annually and after July 31, delinquent real estate notices will be published in the paper.

Sheriff, police
giving away locks

The Norton County Sheriff's Office and the Norton Police Department are giving away free gun locks, no questions asked, to anyone who wants one as a part of the national Project ChildSafe initiative.

The sheriff's department has 500 large caliber and 100 small caliber locks, while the police department has 200 large caliber and 100 small caliber locks.

The locks may be picked up at the sheriff's office on the first floor of the Norton County Courthouse or at the police station on the east side of the city building and will be given out until they are gone.

Meals on Wheels
volunteers needed

Volunteers are needed to deliver meals for the Meals on Wheels program during the week of May 10-16.

If you or your organization could help, please call Alice Hawks in the Dietary Department at the Norton County Hospital, 877-3351.

Weather
Forecast:

Tonight — Mostly clear and not as cool. Lows in the mid 50s. **Wednesday** — Mostly sunny and warmer. Record highs in the upper 90s. **Wednesday Night** — Clear with lows around 60. **Thursday** — Mostly sunny with record highs in the mid 90s. **Thursday Night** — Mostly clear with lows in the upper 50s. **Friday** — Mostly sunny with highs in the lower 90s.

Howell report:

Friday	High 49, Low 41
Saturday	High 65, Low 37
Sunday	High 65, Low 37
Monday	High 78, Low 53
Week ago	High 87, Low 49
Month ago	High 74, Low 42
Year ago	High 78, Low 50
May precipitation	0.00 inches
Year-to-date precipitation	5.23 inches

(Readings taken at the Paul and Pat Howell farm 10 Miles North and 1/3 Mile East of Norton)

Prayer

God of all the world, teach us to celebrate our differences and to love each other the way you love us. Amen

Skateboarders want to expand area

By VERONICA MONIER

The skateboarders and rollerbladers who use the city's skate park want to expand the facility.

Tanya Temmel, who is organizing the group, and about half of the skaters who use the park were at Monday's Parks Committee meeting to talk about the improvements they hope to make.

Mrs. Temmel, who is the mother of several skaters, said they want to expand the concrete slab and put in several new

ramps. She said they didn't want any money from the city and had already raised \$250 since a story about the park was written in *The Norton Telegram*.

Todd Zink, a skateboarder, said they wanted to take out a section of the concrete and extend the slab toward the creek. They would also like to put in a chain link fence so they don't interfere with the Frisbee golf players and vice versa. They also would like to add half pipes, quarter pipes, a small bowl (which is like an

empty swimming pool) and some rails.

Mrs. Temmel said the park was a place for the youngsters to go have fun rather than doing things that would get them in trouble. She said they wanted to keep the park cleaned up and make it a place more youngsters would want to come and be proud of.

City Administrator Rob Lawson said the youngsters who cleaned at the park after a recent vandalism did a nice job.

Councilman Ron Briery said he thought

the plan was worthwhile, but wanted someone to draw up exactly what they (the skaters) want to do. He said they need a proposal so the other council members could see plans for improvement.

The skaters said they would have something drawn up by today so it could be presented at Wednesday's council meeting.

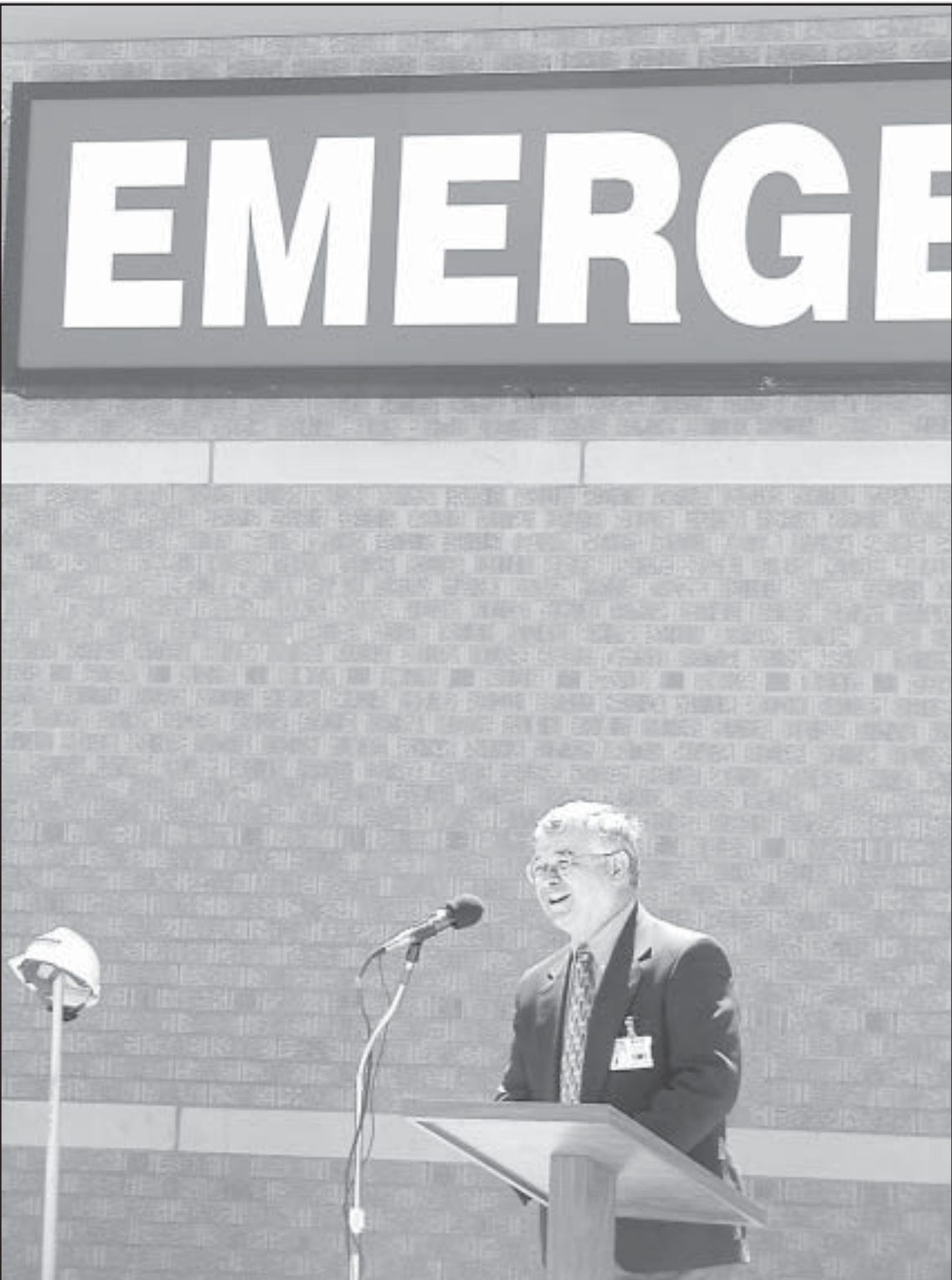
Mr. Lawson asked that the skaters not move the park's picnic tables from the

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Administrator Rich Miller (above right) gives the opening welcome at the Norton County Hospital's dedication celebration and open house commemorating the completion of its renovations Sunday afternoon. Following the welcome, Curt Archibald enjoyed some cookies before going on a guided tour.

— Telegram photo by Cynthia Haynes



Hospital shows off new face
Crowd attends dedication and tour, gets cookies, coffee

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Norton County residents turned out in droves to attend the hospital renovation dedication on Sunday and get a guided tour through the new facilities.

Hospital Administrator Richard Miller served as the master of ceremonies introducing the seven speakers, who each spoke for about five minutes.

Kathy Holste, president of the hospital board of trustees, gave the welcome.

Steve Poage, vice president of finance for the Kansas Hospital Association, congratulated the hospital administration for the unique way it is paying

for the \$4.3 million renovation.

While Mr. Poage lives in Topeka he is originally from Norton.

Steven Hupf, an architect with Davis Design of Lincoln, Neb., spoke for his firm, congratulating the hospital and reminding the crowd that the cool, windy weather on Sunday was a lot different than when the project got started.

"Twenty-two months ago we were in the same place," he said recalling the ground breaking ceremony. "I think it was about 112 degrees that day."

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Trash truck
back in action
after accident

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Merril Tibbetts' truck will be picking up trash again this week, Norton County Commissioners heard at their meeting Monday.

The Tibbetts trailer was destroyed a little over a week ago during a windstorm in Hill City. Since then the county has been hauling trash to Phillipsburg in the county dump trucks although commissioners had discussed using Darren Wentz out of Norcatur, but it didn't work out.

Solid Waste Supervisor Curt Archibald said that the hauling company is getting a

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School board rehires
teachers, staff for next year

The Norton School Board held a special meeting Friday to deal with personnel matters.

President Anna Foley called for a 30-minute closed session, followed by a 20-minute extension; and then five more minutes to discuss non-elected personnel.

When the meeting re-convened the board decided to:

- Accept the resignation of Mrs. Jennie Patterson as assistant sponsor of the KAYS program.
- Reduce the number of kindergarten sections from three to two due to anticipated lower enrollment.

- Approve the expansion of the K+ program from one semester program to a full year.
- Postpone action on whether or not to offer art at Eisenhower Elementary until the next board meeting to allow members to receive more community input.
- Offered teaching contracts to all certified staff and work agreements to all classified staff, who have not resigned. Salary and benefits will be determined later.

The next meeting of the board will be at 7:30 p.m., Monday in the meeting room of the Alice Tweed Center.

County sells
surplus trucks

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Road and Bridge Supervisor Tom Brannan said that he had a lot of people looking at three trucks the county is selling but only received three bids.

Mr. Brannan said that he told people that he would accept bids by fax on Monday up to 11 a.m., when the bids were to be opened at the county commission meeting.

While the commissioners received, what they considered, good bids on two of the trucks, a 1972 International only got two bids — one for \$125 and one for \$500. It is old, Mr. Brannan said, and the frame isn't good but it does run and he didn't feel either of the bids were enough.

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The new laboratory was just one of the places visitors got a chance to see on the guided tours of the newly renovated Norton County Hospital Sunday afternoon following the dedication ceremony commemorating the completion of the 22 month project.

— Telegram photo by Cynthia Haynes

Hundreds attend dedication, take tours of updated hospital

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Looking over his shoulder at a pair of shovels with hard hats on them, which were used for the groundbreaking, he said he thought they were there so that the hospital can get someone to plant some bushes.

Mr. Miller said that the hospital board interviewed seven firms before choosing a firm. He said that Davis was able to take the old part of the hospital and figured out how to tie the addition into it so that it looks like a single unit.

Ty Bruton, engineering supervisor for the hospital, said that he was impressed by the increase in safety in the hospital including the new fire prevention systems, nurse call system, emergency power, and temperature and air exchange controls.

There is more insulation and a lot of the plumbing pipes have been replaced.

Stevan Bennett, the project manager for Murray Company, the general contractor for the hos-

pital, arrived a little late. He had just driven in from Kansas City and gotten caught in a detour.

He thanked everyone for their help.

Mr. Miller said that the hospital board felt that a project manager was needed when they decided to do the renovation and knew that they couldn't afford to shut the facility down while doing so.

Mr. Bennett and his company did a great job, he said.

Dr. Glenda Maurer said that this was the biggest project she and most of the rest of the doctors have ever been through. She said she was proud of everyone who worked on the project and at the hospital.

Chuck Barnes, state director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development, said he was happy that his department could help with financing for the renovations.

He said that Rural Development is the economic development arm of the agriculture department.

"This is your taxpayer dollars coming back to help you and your community," he said, pointing out that without good health care young people will not move back into small towns.

Mr. Miller ended the program thanking the community, hospital staff, patients, hospital board members past and present, county commissioners, those who helped with financing for the project, the contractors and subcontractors and the radio station and newspapers in the area.

While taking tours, 270 people signed the guest book.

The invocation was given by Mary Schoen and the benediction by pastor Kathy Aeillo. Larry Henderson provided the sound system and the Jay Singers sang the "Star Spangled Banner".

The Chamber of Commerce had a ribbon-cutting ceremony and volunteers and hospital personnel provided cookies, coffee and tea for the visitors.

Trash truck going back to work

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The new trailer, which is supposed to be larger than the old one and Mr. Tibbetts has said he would need more money for hauling.

The contract, Mr. Archibald said, is for \$150/load, which is about eight tons.

Commissioner Dean Kruse asked why the contract isn't by the ton since the Phillipsburg landfill charges by the ton and the trash trucks are weighed. He suggested that when a new contract is done it be by the ton.

The old contract expires this month. Last year only Tibbetts bid on the contract and Commissioner John Miller said that County Attorney Doug Sebelius should be contacted to see if the county needs to take bids for a new contract.

Mr. Archibald said that the county had sold 12.91 tons of re-

cycled paper at \$45/ton for \$581 and 19.23 tons of recycled cardboard at \$95/ton for \$1,827 to Tamko in Phillipsburg.

He said that he has had more calls on recycling since an article on the subject came out in *The Norton Telegram* on April 16 than he has ever had.

He said that he has the number of homes and businesses that have trash picked up in the county as part of his work to get more recycling.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Held a public meeting on a building project planned by Natoma Corp. Gail Boller, president and owner of the company, was the only attendee.
- Talked to Sheriff Troy Thomson about the purchase of a new patrol car.
- Discussed the problems of in-

creased fuel expenses with not only the sheriff but all county departments.

- Learned that the landfill is now open on Saturdays from 8 a.m.-noon.
- Heard from County Weed Supervisor Reggie Beckman that his crews have sprayed around 85 bridges and around the county shops and done some work for the state. The wind, however, has caused a slowdown of the spraying, he said.

Norton County sells trucks to highest bidder

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The commissioners, however, said that he should scrap the truck, sell it or use it for parts since the state has said that it can't be used on the highway.

The other two trucks were a high mileage 1989 Ford LTA 900 and a somewhat lower mileage 1989 Ford LTA 900.

C. Kasson, Norcat, bought the two trucks with bids of \$2,975 for the higher mileage vehicle and \$3,615 for the one with lower mileage.

Hostetler Ranches, Seibert, Colo. also bid on the vehicles.

Maupin, Dodge City, bid \$500 for the 1972 International.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Heard that the county road crews have been blading some roads after the rain last week
- Told Mr. Brannan that he

should see if he can get some more asphalt millings as the state does roadwork on U.S. 36 over the next few years.

- Said that they thought the mowing crews should get started right away.
- Learned that work is being started on the OS 11 bridge, which is at W14 on Road Q. This week trees and the old bridge will be removed.

Young skaters ask council for permission to improve park

(Continued from Page 1)

shelter anymore. He said the city would be moving old tables to the skate park soon.

In other business, the committee:

- Heard from Jay Holste that approval needs to be given for the proposed net pole replacement at the Norton tennis courts.
- Mr. Holste said all the money needed for the project has been raised, including the additional money needed for the new poles.
- Mr. Holste said the man doing the repairs will be here Thursday and the project will take about five days. He said the new poles will make the courts safer.
- Talked about a proposed plan to improve the Norton Cemetery. The plan, said Cemetery Advisory

Board member Mark Klein, has seven phases with the first being installation of electricity, which will cost just under \$5,000.

He said the board has the money to pay for the installation and would like to see it done before Memorial Day, so there would be electricity at the flag pole for the annual celebration.

Advisory Board member Charles Worden asked the city to look into giving cemetery maintenance a mill from property taxes. He said the largest donors to cemetery improvement said they wanted to see the city put in some money before they contributed more.

Mr. Briery wanted to know if the city did establish a mill levy, how much of it the board would want

for the project and how much would go towards maintenance.

Mr. Worden said the city would decide what money went where.

"We hope it will be a joint effort of the whole community (to pay for cemetery improvements,)" said Advisory board member Bev Klein. "It has been looking none too whoopee for the past few years. We've been getting comments from people who don't even live in Norton."

Mr. Briery said the committee members would take the plan before the council and would talk to the city attorney about the mill levy. He said it could probably be passed without the finances being approved.

Green pastures are misleading

About ag
Brian Olson,
K-State
agronomist



With the moisture the area has received these past couple of weeks, pastures have greened-up which is nice to see, but it can be misleading.

Dry conditions over the last few years have decreased plant vigor by decreasing the ability of the plant to store nutrients for spring growth next year. Last fall was especially hard on the crown of the native pasture grasses because most of the area never received a good soaking rain to promote good fall growth which decreased the ability of the plant to make carbohydrates. Less carbohydrates made reduces the amount the plant can store in its crown and roots during the fall. Therefore, there is an overall reduction in stored building blocks the grass has available to produce growth this spring and to withstand adverse weather conditions. This reduced grass fitness could allow the plant to degrade even more which will continue a spiral down in fitness until there are very few healthy plants left in the pasture. So, the next question is, how can this problem be managed?

Many producers have started to intensively manage supplemental feed alternatives. For those producers with a center pivot, the planting of alfalfa, forage sorghum, grazing wheat, or developing the pivot into an irrigated pasture are some of the options they are using to provide some grazing flexibility. For

those producers who have all dryland acres, utilizing an intensively managed rotational grazing system along with supplemental forage can decrease grazing pressure and improve pasture health.

Paul Ohlenbusch, former grazing specialist with K-State Research and Extension, said native pastures may take three years of normal precipitation, growing conditions, and reduced stocking rates before obtaining normal forage production. Moisture and growing conditions are out of our control, but producers can manage stocking rates. Stocking rates vary across our area, but Ohlenbusch suggests at least a 50 percent reduction in stocking rates. In addition, stocking rates should allow the grazing height to average around 2 inches. A lower height will impede grass recovery.

The next question is how much are the pastures worth when paying rent? According to Dan O'Brien, former Northwest Area Ag Economist, "From an economic value perspective, flexibility on rental rates should occur on damaged pasture; otherwise, long-term productivity

could be hurt which will decrease the long-term value of the land".

Since most landlords count on a fixed amount, reducing the amount of rent for pastures will be unpopular. However, to ensure the value of their land for years to come, landlords should actually insist on the reduction in stocking. So how should rental rates be set? A rule of thumb is if the stocking rate is going to be reduced by 60 percent, then the rent should also be reduced by 60 percent.

Both parties need to realize that the pastures need to be managed in a way that will allow them to recover from these dry conditions and to regain full production.

For further information on forage alternatives and grazing view the publication "Summer Annual Forages" and "Stocking Rate and Grazing Management", or for more information on how native grasses grow view the paper entitled "Pasture Management - Before, During, and After a Drought" by visiting the Web site: www.oznet.ksu.edu/agronomy-block2/ and clicking on the Pest and Production icon or visit your local county extension office to pick-up a copy.

Please e-mail me at bolson@oznet.ksu.edu if you have any questions or would like to see a newspaper article on a specific crop production topic.

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"I will be in Norton EVERY WEDNESDAY"

— NOTICE —

The City of Norton would like to remind residents, according to City Ordinance, it is unlawful for any owner, agent, lessee or tenant of any premises to permit weeds or grasses to exceed 8 inches in height. All weeds and grasses which exceed 8 inches in height shall be declared a nuisance and are subject to abatement.

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