

Take advantage of the best local guide to what's on TV next week with The Telegram's handy schedule of programming.

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Tuesday
January 17, 2006

Norton, Kansas
Home of Wanda Stephenson

Briefly Boosters to meet Wednesday

The Norton Blue Jay Booster Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday in the high school cafeteria.
Norton wrestling coach Bill Johnson, girls basketball coach Kevin Jilka and boys basketball coach Doug Reusink will update fans on the latest competition by the Blue Jays as well as preview upcoming contests.
Free refreshments will be served.
All fans of Norton Community High School sports are invited.

Filing deadline is in one week

Those who want to run for city council in Norton and Lenora have a week to file.
The filing deadline for the April elections is noon on Tuesday, Jan. 24. Potential candidates in Norton can file at the Norton City Office, while Lenora's potential candidates can file at the Lenora City Office.

Activities program set for Friday

An educational program will be held at 3:30 p.m. Friday to teach activities that promote fun and physical activity for older adults.
The activities take about 20 to 30 minutes a day and will increase flexibility, strength and balance. Most of the activities are done sitting in a chair.
The program will be taught by Cathy Musick, the Gove County extension director at the Norton Senior Citizens Center, 208 W. Main.
For more information, call the Norton County Extension Office at 877-5755.



Forecast:
Tonight — Partly cloudy with lows in the lower 20s. West winds 5 to 15 mph.
Wednesday Night — Partly cloudy with lows in the mid 20s.
Thursday — Partly cloudy with highs in the upper 40s.
Thursday Night — Mostly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of snow after midnight. Lows in the lower 20s.
Friday — Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of snow. Highs in the upper 30s.

Prayer
Eternal God, may our lives be a constant rhythm of time spent with you, so that we never forget from whom our guidance comes. Amen



Loren Mordecai, 8, (right) reads a book while she waits her turn in the judging Saturday during the annual 4-H Favorite Foods Show. Loren made no-bake cookies. Tyson Gill, 7, (left) is ready to serve

4-H'ers create favorite concoctions for show

One of the highlights of the 4-H calendar year is the Favorite Food Show.
Saturday, 24 entries were displayed at the Norton County 4-H Building by 4-H'ers in four different levels of competition.
The 4-H'er prepared a food dish and displayed it, along with a table setting and decorations. Judges discussed food preparation, nutrition and food safety with each entrant.
Judges this year were Mary Kay Warner, Extension Educator in Red Willow County, Neb., Amy Terrill, Family Consumer sciences agent
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cherry-topped, black forest parfaits during the show. Both are members of the Busy Beavers 4-H Club.

— Telegram photos by Veronica Monier

Sunday's weather pokes fun at winter

By TOM DREILING
There they were, in their shorts and pullovers, washing vehicles in their driveways, shooting hoops, walking, running, probably golfing — doing all those things reserved for the warm days of summer.
But this was Jan. 15 in Norton, Kan. Weather experts had predicted a very agreeable weekend, especially for Sunday. And they were right on target.
Unofficial temperatures within the community of Norton ranged from 68 to 72. Officially, the National Weather Service at Goodland didn't have anything official for Norton. But just a hop,

skip and jump south of here, at Hill City — where weather equipment is maintained and numbers provided to the weather office at Goodland — the mercury rose to 71 degrees and that was a record-breaker. Hill City's previous Jan. 15 high was 70 set in 2000.
Northwest of Norton, at McCook, the high was 68, smashing the old record of 66 set in 1943.
The weather forecasters also called for a winter storm watch overnight Sunday and into Monday, but that didn't materialize.
"There were a few snow flakes re-
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Board to see what projects are at the top of the class

By VERONICA MONIER
The Norton School Board has to decide which of 16 capital outlay projects the district could benefit from the most.
Superintendent Greg Mann asked the board to rank the projects in order of importance. This year, he said, he didn't put costs in with the projects, so that the board could pick the projects it thought it needed to do and then from there would narrow the choices down to what it could afford to do.
This year's proposed projects are:
• Concrete replacement in the junior/senior high parking lot, junior high driveway, high school sidewalks, and grade school and junior/senior high curbs. Mr. Mann said he would have a priority list available later, because there is too much work that needs to be done to do all at once.
• Replace the windows at the weight room and wrestling room. He said they were the original windows.
• Replace the windows on the south side of the 1966 junior high addition. Mr. Mann said parts aren't available to fix these anymore, nor can replacement screens be found.
• Air condition the vocal office. This would require extensive work, he said, as it is part of the old building. A window unit wouldn't work either, because there are no windows in the office.
• Replace the asphalt hard top play area
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New study could mean less money for rural schools

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
A cost study order by the Kansas Legislature released last week could mean less money in the general fund for the Norton School District but possibly more for at-risk students.
The proposal would slash low-enrollment subsidies that Norton and other small districts depend on, officials say, shifting the money to urban schools with more "at-risk" students.
The change could mean more cutbacks for Norton schools, though nothing is certain yet.
The study by the Division of Post Audit, the research arm of the state Legislature, calls for the state to spend \$316 million to \$399.3 million more on schools to make sure each meets requirements set by the state Board of Education. Although it is being referred to by many as the "post-audit report," its formal name is "Elementary and Secondary Education in Kansas: Estimating the Costs of K-12 Education using Two Approaches."
Although the additional money is laid out in the documents, a 30-page summary

and 264 pages of the report, rural districts like Norton could lose money in the general fund, while possibly gaining some for at-risk kids.
Basically the "low-enrollment" rate is lower in the proposed model than in the current formula, and that affects smaller districts. The at-risk weighting is higher, especially in the urban areas, where there is higher poverty. The report says that the estimated at-risk weighting should be .484 per free lunch student in most districts, but the current plan is a weight of .193 per free lunch student.
Instead of counting each "at-risk" student as 1.2 enrolled, schools will count them as nearly 1.5 students, and that could tip the budget scale away from rural schools.
Raising the at-risk and urban-poverty weights will cost the state at least \$350 million for the one approach budget and \$361 million for the other.
Under the current formula, at-risk funding would cost \$112 million for next year, so the proposed plan would cost \$238 million to \$249 million more.
The state defines "at-risk" usually by economic status, indicated by whether a student qualifies under federal rules.
This isn't the first go-around over state school financing. Last year, the Legislature spent many hours discussing what to do. During the regular session, the elected members OK'd \$141.1 million in new money for public schools for this school year.
June 3, the Kansas Supreme Court ordered the Legislature to increase school funding by \$285 million beyond that, based on a study by the Denver-area consulting firm Augenblick and Myers.
During the regular session, the Legislature asked the Division of Post Audit to
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Norton school budget might suffer

By VERONICA MONIER
A new post audit cost study, if approved by the Kansas Legislature, could reduce the Norton School District's budget authority by a significant amount.
Superintendent Greg Mann told the school board that the study had two approaches. Both approaches deal with the cost of education. The input has to do with the "things" of providing a suitable education, including instructional costs, insurance, utilities, etc., and uses the required classes and mandated programs of the KSDE and Board of Regents as the guide.



Carissa Wentz of the Prairie Dog 4-H Club answers questions from judge Mary Kay Warner of McCook, Neb. Carissa made her famous barbecue muffins for the 4-H

Favorite Food Show held Saturday at the 4-H Building. — Telegram photo by Veronica Monier

Proposal could cause schools some trouble

(Continued from Page 1) conduct the latest study Part of the report talks about decreasing transportation money by 18 percent, which will hurt the rural schools, where buses sometimes travel 50 miles to pick up five or six kids.

The report talks about adding money for at-risk students, but taking away low enrollment weighting which helps support smaller schools.

Part of the post audit proposal includes a hold-harmless clause which says that if a district has the same number of students, then the district will get the same amount of money next year.

That would cost anywhere from \$9.4 million to \$35.1 million a year, however, and the Legislature might decide it's too expensive.

The hold-harmless clause doesn't take into account declining enrollment though.

Norton schools might see loss of money

(Continued from Page 1) 20 students per class — the Norton School District will have diminished budget authority.

The problem, he said, is Norton isn't in or around an urban area. Larger schools in urban areas will see more money with the study, while rural schools will see less. Basically, he said, the funding for regular education will decrease, while that for special programs will increase. Every one of the scenarios gives fewer dollars for general education, he said.

Mr. Mann said of the three input scenarios, as well as the output approach, the base state aid per pupil will increase, but low enrollment weighting, as well as other weightings transportation and vocational weighting, will decrease. In every scenario except one —

20 students per class — the Norton School District will have diminished budget authority.

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In other business, the board: • Heard a curriculum report on the fine arts department from Band Instructor David Will. Mr. Will talked about how his students sight read music.

• Appointed Board member Jeff Nielsen to the Calendar Committee, which will develop the 2006-07 school calendar.

• Accepted the high bids for the surplus woods equipment. Bids accepted were \$50 from Mr. Mann for a radial arm saw, \$401 from the Jewell School District for a shaper and bits, and \$201.99 from Darrell Kellerman for the Lathe model 90.

• Went into four closed sessions totaling one hour and ten minutes to discuss non-elected personnel.

• Accepted the resignations of Cindy McKenna as the high school dance team coach, effective at the end of the 2005-06 basketball season; Kelly Goss as a junior/senior high cook, effective Jan. 18; Jeannie Down as a crossing guard, effective Jan. 27; and Bruce Poage as K-8 counselor for the purpose of retirement, effective at the end of the 2005-06 school year.

• Extended Mr. Mann's contract as superintendent through the 2007-08 school year with salary and benefits to be determined later.

4-H'ers create delicious delicacies for show

(Continued from Page 1) and Nadine Holmes, Extension Secretary, both from Smith County.

Mary Wentz and Elaine Lofgreen co-chaired the event.

Other committee members were Bryce Lofgreen, Katrina Wentz, Staci Montgomery, Lois Wentz and Monica Cole.

Norton County Extension agent, Keith VanSike, said the

food show is one of the early food projects that gives 4-H'ers a chance to prepare foods and practice before the county fair. Mr. VanSike said copies of all the recipes used in the food show are

available at the Extension Office. The four overall winners were: Level I, Molly Maddy; Level II, Wyatt Wentz; Level III, Carissa Wentz; and Level IV, Kyra Fulton.

Sunday's weather in Norton pokes fun at winter

(Continued from Page 1) ported here and there and that was about all," said Meteorologist Mick McGuire at Goodland on Monday afternoon, explaining the storm track was more southerly.

Mr. McGuire said there is a chance, perhaps a 40 percent chance, of moisture taking aim for some parts of western Kansas late Thursday night and Friday morning. He said right now there is some question as to

what track the winter storm will take, but if everything goes right it could include an area in a line stretching from Tribune to Norton.

Temperatures fell dramatically in northwest Kansas on Monday, with some thermometers recording highs only in the upper 30s to the lower 40s with winds 20-25 miles per hour with higher gusts. The winds did make it feel cooler than the mercury showed.

Projects have to make the grade

(Continued from Page 1) at Eisenhower Elementary with concrete and add an "unloading" sidewalk along Eisenhower Drive. Mr. Mann said something is going to have to be done with the play area, whether its replacing the asphalt with new asphalt or concrete. As for the unloading sidewalk, he said a sidewalk and an entrance through the middle of the grass would be installed.

Eisenhower Principal Corey Roy said it would help to relieve congestion and would give students some place to get through snow drifts in the winter.

- New weight equipment for the weight room.
- New electric planer and knives for the wood shop.
- Replace vo-ag pick-up. Mr. Mann said the pick-up would be replaced with a 3/4 ton and could be used to haul trailers and students. Now, the vo-ag department

has a Ford F-150, which is smaller and doesn't have much power. If the new truck was purchased, the F-150 would probably go to the maintenance department.

- Replace milk coolers, toaster and ovens at the junior/senior high and stack ovens at the grade school. He said all of the equipment could stand to be replaced and had been repaired more than once.
- Buy an aluminum wire tig welder and replace six arch welders for the ag shop.
- Buy Chorale shells. The shells can be used for band and vocal concerts to amplify the sound.
- Resurface the track.
- Buy a new riding mower and attachments to replace the old one.
- Re-do the football playing surface. This would include re-

crowning and re-sodding the field and raising the sprinkler systems. Athletic Director Larry Mills said this would improve the safety of the field, as the field is no longer even.

- Pad the walls of the grade school gym. Mr. Roy said the pads are 5 to 6 feet tall and would give the students something softer to run into than the concrete walls.
- Buy new tables for the junior high science room. The tables would be a hexagon shape and wouldn't need water, gas or electric attachments.

Mr. Mann asked that the board members rate the projects, so that they can go over them at the February meeting.



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- **Wednesday, February 1**
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Almena, Kansas
10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- **Thursday, February 2**
Super 8 Motel Conf. Room
Holdrege, Nebraska
4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Please RSVP by Tuesday, January 24 for the free meal by calling Central Valley Irrigation at 308-995-6583

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PROPERTY TAX REPORT

At Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech, we aim to be good corporate citizens of the region. We understand the need for property taxes to help support our schools and other public resources. For the year 2005, we paid **OVER \$1.6 MILLION** in property taxes in the following counties.

Barton.....	\$28,581	Rawlins.....	\$7,180
Decatur.....	\$14,516	Rooks.....	\$106,452
Ellis.....	\$240,854	Rush.....	\$435
Ford.....	\$781	Russell.....	\$3,601
Gove.....	\$74,614	Saline.....	\$81
Graham.....	\$199,401	Scott.....	\$15
Jewell.....	\$750	Sheridan.....	\$22,212
Logan.....	\$5,079	Smith.....	\$87,955
Neosho.....	\$17	Thomas.....	\$7,401
Ness.....	\$24	Trego.....	\$125,176
Norton.....	\$438,070	Wallace.....	\$27
Osborne.....	\$146,096	Total.....	\$1,631,663
Phillips.....	\$122,345		

These property taxes together with the dollars we spend on services, payroll and upgrading our plant facilities help support the local economy.

We'd like to thank those of you who continue to put your trust and hard-earned dollars into products and services from Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech. We realize you have a choice when making purchases such as directory yellow page advertising and other telecommunication products and services. When you choose Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech, you're keeping your dollars in the local economy supporting **YOUR SCHOOLS** and **YOUR PUBLIC RESOURCES**.

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