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Friday
March 24, 2006

Norton, Kansas
Home of John Baker

Briefly

Safety course for young workers

A tractor safety training course will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 6 in Hill City at the Graham County 4-H Building.

The course is for 13-year-olds who will be turning 14 this summer or fall, 14-year-olds and 15-year-olds who are planning on working on a farm this summer.

The cost of the course will be \$12, which will cover materials and supplies plus lunch and refreshments. Pre-registration is requested to distribute the manual before the course so reading and completion of the homework can be completed before the training.

The course will cover general safety information, tractor safety information, livestock safety, safety around chemicals, safety on the road, farm safety, first on scene safety, and All-Terrain (ATV) vehicle safety.

Registration needs to be into the Norton County Extension Office in the courthouse no later than May 1. The office can be reached at 785-877-5755.

Members get into show for free

The Norton County Arts Council's sponsorship of Motown Mania, scheduled for Saturday at 7 p.m. in the East Campus auditorium in Norton, overlooked one aspect of admittance in earlier publicity. Arts council members need only show their membership card for free admittance. Those who are not members of the council will need to buy tickets, which are \$5 for adults and \$1 for students. Motown Mania will feature the singing and dancing of the Gardner Edgerton High School Blue Blazers.

4-H Club Day set for Saturday

The Norton County 4-H Club Day will begin at 9 a.m. Saturday at the Norton Junior High.

The event was scheduled for Monday evening, but because of bad weather, was postponed to Saturday.

Weather Forecast:

Tonight — Partly cloudy with patchy fog after midnight. Lows around 20 with northeast winds around 10 mph in the evening becoming light. **Saturday** — Partly cloudy with patchy fog in the morning. Highs in the lower 40s with southeast winds 10 to 15 mph. **Saturday Night** — Partly cloudy with patchy fog after midnight.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for knowing what our needs are and for sending us answers when we don't know where to look. **Amen**



Kyle Edgett, 16, is pictured taking aim during a practice in Phillipsburg on March 2. Kyle recently scored 548 and 543 out of 600 points during competition at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs. Sunflower Gun Club member Charli Lawson, who just turned 15, (above) is pictured during practice on March 2. During competition at the Olympic Training Center last month, Charli scored 373 points out of 400 during one round, and 350 out of 400 in a second round.

— Photos courtesy of Randy Moll

On target Precision rifle club provides challenge

Three Norton teenagers play a vital role in the Sunflower Gun Club — a precision air rifle shooting group — and one of them will soon be attending the Junior Olympics in Colorado Springs.

"Once the kids get the basics down, shooting is mostly mental," says precision air rifle shooting coach Bruce Williams. "Precision air rifle shooting teaches patience, discipline, responsibility, rules, and safety. There is no horseplay, and most of our shooting kids tend to also be some of the best in school academically. That falls into the discipline part of it."

Mr. Williams, who is formerly from Lenora and now resides in Agra, is a coach for the Sunflower Gun Club, a National Rifle Association Junior Rifle Club as well as a USA Shooting Rifle Club.

His team, which consists of three teens from Norton, as well as two from Phillipsburg, meets and formally practices for two hours once a week at the 4-H Building at the Phillips County Fairgrounds, and informally for untold more

hours at the 4-H Building in Norton as well as other area locations.

While Norton is widely renowned for its championship BB gun teams, a precision air rifle team moves a step beyond that sport, with two members of the local team heading for the Junior Olympics in Colorado Springs later this month, including Carson Braun, Norton, and Tyler Bohl, Phillipsburg.

Regarding NRA Junior Rifle shooting, the National Rifle Association holds matches by state or regions. These matches are not head-to-head competition. Instead, the scores and targets from the matches are mailed in and the competitors are ranked according to those results.

USA Shooting is different, in that head-to-head competitions are held, with premier competitions being held at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs (USA Shooting is the national governing body for Olympic shooting).

In in the different types of shooting, the

rifles become increasingly more expensive and sophisticated. For example, in competitive BB gun shooting the single shot rifle costs around \$80-85, and is used to shoot at a target five meters (16'4") away.

In 4-H shooting, the single pump pellet air rifle costs \$275, which is used to shoot at targets an Olympics-standard 10 meters (33") downrange, while a precision air rifle with a scope costs around \$2,500 and a small bore competition .22 rifle runs around \$3,000.

While two members of the Sunflower Gun Club own their own precision air rifles, to help defray the expense associated with them, the club possesses five team rifles for use by its members — including two rifles which belong to the club and three others that are on loan from the Kansas State Rifle Association.

"The Kansas State Rifle Association very generously provides them for newly starting clubs," said coach Williams.

A competitor also wears what are called

shooting leathers — which are made of leather and/or canvas — and which allow for very limited movement, which is beneficial in such a precision sport.

Leathers, at a minimum, generally run around \$1,000 in cost, and boots another \$300. All in all, after adding up the total expenses of the sport, when a shooter walks up to the line to compete he or she will likely be carrying and wearing up to \$6,000 worth of clothing and equipment.

The Sunflower Gun Club started in Stockton in 1999. Coach Williams and Coach Ed Braun, Norton, assumed its leadership the following year and kept it going, with its practice sessions being moved to Norton and Phillipsburg.

The precision air rifles can be quite powerful. They are charged with a scuba air tank, and hold as much as 2,000 pounds per square inch, allowing them to expel a pellet at 1,000-1,200 feet per second. In most competitions, however, that is turned down to 680-720 psi.

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Norton city's new sewer plant bids come in higher than engineer's estimate

By VERONICA MONIER

The city is one step closer to its dream of building a new sewer plant.

At the Norton City Council's last meeting, Thaniel Monaco of Miller and Associates Engineering said five bids were received and opened for the project on March 10.

The bids ranged from \$5,460,000 to \$6,858,000, he said, with BRB Contractors of Topeka as the low bidder.

"We had a pretty good group of contractors," Mr. Monaco said.

BRB Contractors inadvertently left off the last two of the six addendums in the contract, he said, but they were included in the price. He said they would provide an acknowledgment of that on company letterhead.

Another of the bidders didn't supply all of the documentation that was necessary.

As it is, he said, the completion date is 365 days.

Mr. Monaco said Miller and Associates estimated the cost of the project to be \$4,261,000 and the low bid was 28 percent above the estimate.

Because of this, he recommended that the council waive the irregularities and authorize the city staff to start negotiations with the low bidder. He said, in negotiations, the price might be brought down if time is a factor.

"We give them more time," he said, "and they charge us less. It's a possibility."

There could be other changes made to bring the price down as well, he said.

But, he said, any negotiations will not compromise the effectiveness of the treatment plant.

City Administrator Rob Lawson said the Kansas Department of Health and Environment said they will work with the city if more time is needed to complete the bid process and that they approve the city negotiating with the low bidder to try and reach a more acceptable price.

He said they would also help if the city needed a bigger loan to pay for the project.

Mr. Monaco said he wanted to have the negotiations finished and back to the council by the end of the month.

At the moment, the city's timeline is to initiate construction by June 1 and then have it completed by May 31, 2007. Then,

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Jennings school going to buses

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

A California bus company agreed to purchase the Jennings School last week from the City of Jennings and Heritage Associates of Jennings, Decatur County Commissioner Doyle Brown said.

The group met last Wednesday in Jennings to discuss the possible sale of the building, he said, and the company agreed to purchase the building for \$150,000. Mr. Brown said Connoisseur Worldwide Inc., operated by a firm named BCI in California, has purchased the building, although no money has changed hands yet as far as he knows.

Mr. Brown said the company first saw the building on the Internet auc-

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