

'And to all a good night'



'Twas the Night Before Christmas, was the theme for this year's Andbe Home Christmas Party. Here, Levina Ingram reads the story as the youth volunteers at the Home gathered around her during the Andbe Home's Christmas Party, held on Wednesday evening. The residents also taught their family members how to play a game on the Nintendo Wii system.

— Telegram photo by Vicki Henderson

Winter solstice nears

With an unfolding recession and now the cold, dark winter days setting in, some people may be wondering if there are any bright spots ahead.

One day to look forward to is Dec. 21, said State of Kansas Climatologist Mary Knapp. It marks this year's winter solstice, which means that for several months after Dec. 21, the sun will gradually climb higher and the days will get longer.

The word "solstice" comes from Latin and means "sun standing still," said Ms. Knapp, who is in charge of the Kansas Weather Data Library, based in Kansas State University

Research and Extension. The event got this name because for several days before and after the solstice, the sun's noontime position appears to be the same.

"In fact," said Ms. Knapp, "as we move from the summer solstice in late June to the winter solstice in December, the sun appears lower in the sky each day. Now the pattern will reverse, with the sun climbing higher each day."

"Even so, our cold winter weather has just begun. In Kansas, the coldest weather usually occurs in late January and early February." Brrr!

Oberlin board forced to take another vote

The Oberlin School Board was scheduled to revisit acceptance of the superintendent's resignation during a special meeting Thursday night at the district office. A tie vote during the meeting last Monday, although taken as an approval of the resignation, apparently wasn't adequate.

Dr. Pat Cullen turned in his letter of resignation at the meeting. Members Dan Grafel, Dan Nedland and Monte Moore voted in favor of accepting it, while Chris Bailey, Barb Olson and board President Dewayne Jackson abstained. Member Jerry Chambers wasn't at the meeting.

At the time, Dr. Cullen said that was enough to approve the resignation. However, under state law, four votes are needed to accept the resignation, according to the state statute. The matter is the first item on the agenda for tonight.

State law says, "Any member who abstains from voting shall be counted as having voted against the motion or resolution. If a member announces a conflict of interest with regard to the issue, the member may leave the meeting until the voting on the issue is concluded and the member who abstains from voting thereby shall not be counted as having voted."

None of the three members who abstained from voting said it was because of a conflict of interest.

The same statute also says that, "A majority of full membership of the board shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting any business of the school district and the vote of a majority of the full membership of the board shall be required for the passage of any motion or resolution."

Business notes

Nex-Tech is conducting negotiations with broadcasters who own the following area stations: ABC, CBS, CW, FOX, MyTV and NBC. During these discussions, station owners have asked for monthly fees in order to grant Nex-Tech the right to continue carrying their channels. Nex-Tech has been negotiating aggressively to keep cable rates low and continue to deliver the channels its customers have come to expect.

"In the past, these stations have always been provided free and, now, many broadcasters are demanding what we consider to be an unreasonable amount of money to carry their stations. It has always been our commitment to our customers to provide the best possible services at an affordable rate," said Scott Roe, Video Solutions Manager.

"We will continue to work with them to ensure continued access to these stations at reasonable rates. We understand that, unfortunately, this is where the industry is heading. The Federal Communications Commission is allowing the off-air broadcasters to ask for retransmission money that everyone knows will ultimately have to be paid for

by individual cable subscribers. We are working extremely hard to keep prices at a reasonable level."

Smoky Hills Public Television is now accepting donations for its 2009 Signature Auction, according to Jayne Heller, the station's director of development. Smoky Hills' 2009 Signature Auction will be held April 17-19 at The Mall at Hays with all of the festivities broadcast live. All proceeds from the Auction go to benefit the station.

"The theme for the 2009 Signature Auction is 'It's A Celebration,'" Heller said. "And that's exactly what we want it to be. We want this Auction to be a celebration of the best of Kansas."

Donations to the Smoky Hills Public Television 2009 Signature Auction can be made by calling Judy Satchell at (800) 337-4788 or (785) 483-6990, by going to the station's Web site www.shptv.org and clicking on the Auction icon, or by email to: jsatchell@shptv.org. The deadline for donations to be included in the Auction catalog is Jan. 31.

Send any items to tom.d@nwkansas.com

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Nurse completes workshop

Jennifer Wildeman, a registered nurse with the Norton County Hospital, recently completed a three day workshop on clinical breast-feeding assistance in Topeka. In addition to participating in the workshop which addressed the normal course of lactation, she completed an assessment and problem solving practicum, and an examination addressing usual circumstances and common challenges with breast-feeding. She was awarded a certification as a breast-feeding educator. Certification is an added credential that recognizes increased clinical competence in the field of breast-feeding assistance.

"Jennifer did very well," said Julie Campbell, Director of Nursing at the Norton County Hospital. "She's already had several opportunities to use her training."

The Norton County Hospital, the Doctor's Clinic, and the Norton

County Health Department together have four Certified Breast-feeding Educators — Charla Sprigg, Gina Frack, Joan Streck and now Jennifer Wildeman. Today, most mothers breast-feed. Employed mothers, mothers at home, mothers of premature or ill infants, and mothers in a variety of special situations choose breast-feeding because of its numerous benefits.

Scientific investigations have recently identified significant benefits of breast-feeding which include increased intelligence, protection against childhood infections, diabetes, liver disease, certain types of cancers, allergies, immune system disorders, and sudden infant death syndrome. Mothers who breast-feed have a reduced incidence of breast cancer and osteoporosis.

Mothers often explain that they initiate breast-feeding because of the benefits for their baby, but they

continue breast-feeding because they enjoy a special closeness with their breast-fed babies.

As breast-feeding becomes more popular, mothers look to health care providers for assistance. Traditional mother-to-daughter teaching and assistance is less available since there is a generation of grandmothers who primarily bottle-fed their babies. Increased geographic mobility among extended families further decreases assistance available to new mothers.

The conference was developed and presented by Debi Leslie Bocar, RN, PhD. Dr. Bocar, who is a certified lactation consultant, noted that families who would benefit most from breast-feeding, breast-feed least often. She shared strategies to encourage mothers to breast-feed and assist them in a variety of special family circumstances.

Time to start thinking about walking

For many in Kansas, participating in Walk Kansas — a Kansas State University Research and Extension health challenge — signals spring, said Walk Kansas coordinator Sharolyn Jackson. The 2009 program will begin March 8 and continue to May 2.

Over the eight-year history of the program, it has grown to more than 20,000 participants, said Jackson, who is Extension's northeast area specialist in family and consumer sciences. Each year, the participants form teams of six to log 423 miles, the equivalent of walking across Kansas.

This year, she said, some adjustments and additions to the program are expected to keep it

fresh and in line with changes in recommendations for health.

The goal in the past has been 30 minutes of aerobic activity each day. But, updated recommendations now call for a total of 2-1/2 hours (150 minutes) of heart-healthy aerobic exercise per week.

"The change in the recommendations offers flexibility in scheduling activities. This includes your taking time off for strength training to build and tone muscles twice a week — which we'll be encouraging this year," Jackson said.

Participants also are encouraged to tally health-promoting fruits, vegetables and whole grains on their menu each

week. "The focus of this eight-week program continues to be fitness and health. Incorporating healthy habits can be helpful in managing weight, hypertension and diabetes, as well as in preventing some cancers and reducing stress," Jackson said.

The cost to enroll is \$7 to cover registration and program materials, which include a weekly newsletter with nutrition and health tips and recipes.

More information about Walk Kansas is available at county and district K-State Research and Extension offices and in early 2009 will be on the Walk Kansas Web site: www.walk-kansas.org.

HANSEN MUSEUM

By SHIRLEY HENRICKSON
Hansen Museum Director

We will be holding our first Dance Class on Sunday, Jan. 11. The instructor, Kerry Ferguson, Kensington, has instructed dance classes for several years. Instruction may include: Waltz, 2 Step, Swing & Polka, Texas 2 Step, Cha Cha and lots of new fun steps.

The class will meet every Sunday afternoon through March 1. The Beginners Class will run from 2-3:30 p.m. and the Advanced Class will run from 3:30-5 p.m.

There's still time to sign up if you are interested! Please call 785-689-4846!

Our December Artist of the month is Gale Lohrmeyer from Logan. Gale has several wooden

cars, trucks, graders, doll cradle and shelves on display.

Come in and do your Christmas shopping!

The exhibits "Brain Teasers" and "Brain Teasers 2" from the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry out of Portland, Oregon are still on display.

"Brain Teasers" and "Brain Teasers 2" are both a collection of puzzles ranging from giant jigsaws to rope tricks to the mysterious "Tower of Brahma" and are sure to challenge the most accomplished problem-solver.

This brightly colored exhibit appeals to museum visitors of all ages and encourages parent-child interaction as families team up to solve these puzzles. To solve the puzzles, visitors must use creative thinking and

problem solving strategies, such as looking at problems from different perspectives.

These two exhibits will be on display until Jan. 4. If you would like to schedule a class field trip, or a family outing, please call in and schedule ahead of time! We will be glad to work with you!

Museum hours are: Monday-Friday from 9-12 & 1-4; Saturday 9-12 & 1-5; Sunday & holidays 1-5. We are handicapped accessible, there is never an admission fee and we have a free Wi-Fi Hotspot in the Community Room.

For more information about this and other exhibits, contact Shirley at 785-689-4846 or check out our web at www.hansenmuseum.org.

Club notes

By TYSON GILL
Busy Beavers 4-H Club

Talk about Busy Beavers! This 4-H club had a very busy month in November. Members started the month out with the Awards Night.

The next weekend, club members cleaned up after the Arts Council craft fairs and held a monthly meeting.

On Nov. 11, members paid re-

spect to our nation's veterans and rode a float in the parade.

Saturday, Nov. 15, members and parents helped cook and serve at the annual Denver Trip Benefit Meal.

And, to finish up the month, members helped decorate the Andbe Home for the Christmas holidays!

Keep your eyes open — you may see the busy youth of this club.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year From The Telegram Staff

Congratulations

To The Winners Of The Norton Telegram Coloring Contest

1st Place - Hailey Branek
2nd Place - Nicholas Stutsman
Honorable Mention
 Nathan Branek
 Erika Miller
 Audrie Burge

Prizes have been donated by the Almena State Bank, The Mystic Moonstone, Twice Sold Treasures, Bella Solé, Dairy Queen, and The Norton Telegram

All contestants will receive a prize for participating. Please stop in at The Norton Telegram office no later than December 31st to pick up your picture and prize.