

Another opportunity to help fund Honor Flights

Honor Flights, something we hear much about these days, is an undertaking by which Word War II veterans are taken by air to Washington, D.C., to visit their memorial. The memorial became a reality because of people like former Sen. Bob Dole and a few others who insisted this tribute to those who fought and died and sustained injuries and perhaps were among the fortunate to return home in relatively good health, are appropriately remembered. A picture of the World War II Memorial appeared in The Telegram several months back, along with photos of three local/area vets who took the trip, and what a trip it was, according to their comments accompanying the photos.

That all said, a *BBQ Benefit* is planned in Norton to again secure some funding to help fly a few more local WWII veterans to see the memorial. The first BBQ will take place on June 17 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the parking lot at Pamida. The second, also on June 17, will be held at the Norton American Legion from 5-7 p.m. The menu at both places will be hamburgers, porkburgers, polish sausage. Donations will be accepted and all proceeds will go towards the *Honor Flights* program. Do keep in mind that you can partake of the menu during the noontime at Pamida, and then make it your evening meal at the Legion building.

In additional to seeing their World War II Memorial, the veterans will visit other national sites while in Washington.

Norton American Legion Post 63 is sponsoring this worthwhile fund raiser as a thank you to those veterans who served and in the process preserved those most precious freedoms we all endear. As a post-Korean War veteran of four years in the United States Air Force — a cold war tracker/Misawa, Japan — I, too, salute those veterans for their service and I salute Post 63 for their efforts in this fine program.

One of our popular columnists, Liza Deines, sent me the following note: “At 5 minutes and 6 seconds after 4 a.m. on the 8th of July this year, the time and date will be 04:05:06:07:08:09. This will not happen again until the year 3009. I had a deep feeling that you just needed to know this. Aren’t you glad you are in my address book?”

I have circled 3009 on my calendar and decided I’d hang around just to see if it really happens. Care to join me?

I do want to acknowledge Mary Beth Boyd for the outstanding job she did tracking the Norton Public Library’s life from inception to its forthcoming 100th Anniversary. The last of her three-part series appears on Page 1 today. The three articles certainly deserve cutting from the newspaper and including in your personal book of historic events in the City of Norton.

Reaction to President Obama’s speech in Egypt this week went like this: CNN was favorable; FOX wasn’t; and I don’t know what MSNBC added to the cause because my cable supplier, Nex-Tech doesn’t have MSNBC on its roster. I can only guess it was probably more like that of a cheerleader. I was watching “Everybody Loves Raymond.”

Little Johnny’s kindergarten class was on a field trip to their local police station where they saw pictures tacked to a bulletin board of the 10 most wanted criminals. One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person. “Yes,” said the policeman. “The detectives want very badly to capture him.” Little Johnny asked, “Why didn’t you keep him when you took his picture?”

Without going into any details, I’m going to cite a few figures contained in a letter to the editor in the Colby Free Press. It has to do with salaries — those of their sheriff and undersheriff. The sheriff’s gross monthly salary is \$4,273. The undersheriff’s gross monthly pay for January was \$6,224; February, \$6,129; March, \$9,427; April, \$7,702; May, \$5,486 — five month total, \$34,969. The time turned in for March was slightly more than 343 hours, or 86 hours per week. The sheriff is of the opinion he needs more money in his budget. With that excess in his undersheriff’s pocket, I wonder if he’s ever thought of perhaps hiring some more help.

Little Johnny said he wants to be an undersheriff when he grows up.

As far as the weather goes, I would rather these cool mornings hold off until we really need them — about the middle of July.

Conan O’Brien is now the big man on *The Tonight Show*. I wasn’t sure about that when the announcement was made many months ago that he would replace Jay Leno. But after a few evenings I think he’ll fit the bill well. Jay will return to NBC in September for a five night a week comedy show (9 p.m. (CT). Jay was host for 17 years, succeeding Johnny Carson. And at that time there were reservations whether Jay would be able to handle it. He did very well.

Have a good evening! And as you prepare to attend the church of your choice this weekend, let this be the beginning of your *once a week* attendance.

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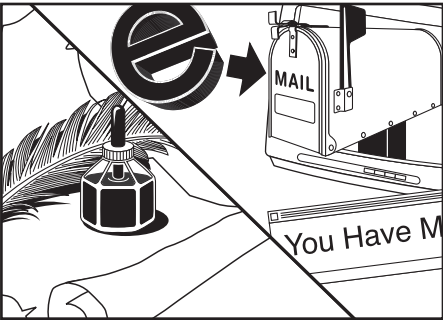
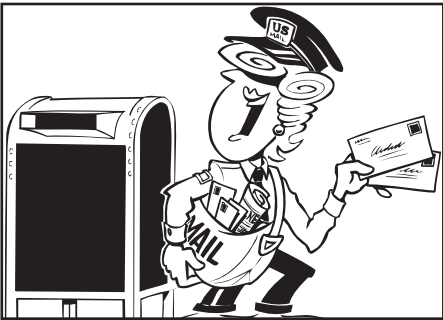
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Can you imagine this happening?

The near unthinkable is about to become a reality in Norton this summer. With summer in full bloom, the 2009 baseball season for the American Legion team is in doubt.

With the new rules the Kansas State High School Activities Association introduced this year where the winter and fall sports of football, basketball and volleyball can now practice all summer, the time a young man or woman has during the summer is now limited.

Not only is this rule affecting the Legion’s baseball team but other projects the Legion has had for years. Boys and Girls State, the oratorical program for freshmen through seniors and Cadet Law Enforcement Academy have all been affected.

Some Legion posts are now in the process of contacting their representative to get this new rule abolished as coaches are not willing to compromise. Towns with great baseball tradition will, for the first time, not have a summer team.

With baseball not being a sanctioned high school sport in Norton, the outlook for any teams in the future looks just as bleak. I tried for four years to introduce

baseball and softball as a high school sport but was stonewalled by the superintendent and the Norton School Board.

The most disturbing part to me about the whole thing is that Norton could be a very good team if we could get the players out. Norton has one of the best facilities in the state in John Ryan Field, a state of the art scoreboard, a city council and administrators who support the team, a recreation commission who supports the team and the American Legion Post 63 which has financially supported this team for the last five years.

How many players in any sport can say that they were coached by a professional player? Steve Jeltz, who will be the head coach this year, moved to Norton a couple of years ago. He played professional baseball for both the Philadelphia Phillies and the Kansas City Royals and has been my assistant coach. He is as confused as I am about the current situation.

“For the past three years, this was the year that you and I had talked about being a good one,” he told me. This group of players had the pitching, fielding and hitting abilities that the other groups had

lacked. I put together a schedule for this year with the assumption that we would have all the freshmen, sophomores, juniors and the seniors who no longer had to do summer sports available to play this summer.

Injuries in other sports have slowed down some players as they recover but the lack of players who are healthy and available to play who don’t play is something I have tried to address.

People seem to think that I have an agenda about baseball in Norton. Anyone who has ever talked to me and knows me knows that I am one of the most politically incorrect people you will ever meet. I have no agenda other than to see young men and women have fun playing ball.

We will cancel our first week of games to start the season and see if we can get some of these athletes to come out and have fun and play ball this summer but, unless something happens between now and then, Norton will not have a 2009 American Legion Baseball Team.

Joe Durham
Legion Team
Manager

Something ignored along Highway 36

Highway 36 travelers might be interested to know that the Doll and Indian Museum in Marysville has been open for about 12 years now. It has actual, original, Otoe-Missouria Indian artifacts that came from the tribe dating back to the early 1800s.

This group of Indians lived in this area from 1855 to 1881 when they left for Indian Territory in Red Rock, Okla. Most of the Indian items were donated by tribal members.

Also, the dolls and their history date back to the early 1700s. There are about 1500 items on display in this museum. And, the best part is that of all the Marshall County sites that were noted by Highway 36, the Doll and Indian Museum is the only one that is actually on 36 Highway, but is never mentioned.

People are very impressed by a tour of the Doll and Indian Museum and they comment that the history is in detail and the displays are very professionally done.

I should also mention that it is the only Doll Museum in Kansas, and it has more Otoe Missouria Indian artifacts than any other Kansas museum, especially along 36 Highway.

Please call (785) 562-3029 for a private tour.

Lois Cohorst
Director

P.S. The museum is housed in a 100+ year-old store building and still has its original tin ceilings.

Daffodil Days result was exceptional

This year was an exceptional year for the Daffodil Days that the American Cancer Society puts on for another fund raising event to find cures for cancer. The goal for this year was \$3000. Thanks for the hard working volunteers, we raised a little more than \$2950. Outstanding efforts. With this kind of reaction, we will soon find a way to beat cancer.

I would like to thank the following volunteers: Jane Kersenbrock, Mary Byler, Ella Mae Schulze, Cynthia Glennemier, Lynn Nelson, Karen Glenn, Bev Wilkens, Laura Leidig, Susan Anthony and Rachel Gonzales.

If I inadvertently left anyone unmentioned, please forgive me.

I would also like to thank Jennifer Van

Eaton, who is the American Cancer Society staff person for Norton County. Her guidance is very much appreciated so that Norton can continue to fight for cures.

I’m looking forward to seeing you at Elmwood Park the night of June 26 for the Relay for Life.

Sarah Durham
Norton

Gitmo gang to Kansas? Why not!

President Barack Obama seems to be adamant that the Guantanamo Bay detention facility be closed. Set aside that it is an obvious public relations maneuver (it’s not as though we are releasing them) and focus on the reaction in Congress.

Before the announcement, there was widespread clamor among citizens and lawmakers to close this facility where, it had come to light, the detainees had been mistreated. Since the announcement, our elected representatives are falling all over themselves to keep the detainees out of their particular state. Understandable, if silly, but Kansas, and really any state with a little vision, is missing an opportunity here.

Bring them here. Bring the detainees to Kansas. There are several reasons to do this. First, the detainees are not your ordinary prisoners. They are not housed communally and they are not allowed contact with the outside world. These would not be the kind of prisoner that local residents would see out on a work detail or on a prison firefighting team. Also, since they are mainly international citizens, there would not be many families moving here to live closer during a prison sentence, as sometimes happens with

Another View

Kevin Bottrell



American inmates.

Another reason is to trumpet the Kansas Corrections System. We’ve all heard many of our small-government-minded legislators say, “States can do it better than the federal government.” So this is our opportunity. Shout it to the rafters of the United States Capitol Building that Kansas can do it better than the Department of Defense. We can provide a facility that will securely house these people (they are still prisoners after all) with a minimum of risk, a respectable standard of living and a tough but fair attitude. We can provide a staff that will not let them lounge about on our dime, but also will not infringe on the rights that we all hold dear. We can show the detainees, our fellow citizens and the world that this how we can and should treat our prisoners, as human beings who have done wrong, not as animals.

After all, the courts have ruled that they are entitled to the minimum protections of our justice system. Kansas can handle that no problem.

And while all the talk is about bringing them to Fort Leavenworth, that’s not the only option. Don’t forget there are maximum security facilities in El Dorado, Ellsworth and Lansing. After all, the Department of Defense contracts out many different things, why not detainees?

We could even build them a new facility, since we might as well create a few jobs while we’re at it. A prison can bring a big economic boost to a town, bringing in people to build it and people to staff it and their family members, some of whom will need jobs or would want to start businesses. Why not go further? Make it an environmentally friendly building: wind or solar powered, carbon neutral and all electric vehicles.

In any case, why should we not be the first to say: “Kansas can put an end to the shadowy malpractices that have plagued Gitmo, can bring the detainee process into the light of day, and improve it so that it is no longer objectionable.” After all, if we can handle the BTK Killer and Michael Vick, what’s a few terrorists?

—Kevin Bottrell, Colby Free Press



To... Jessica Reeves, congratulations on being selected for the 2nd year to the State FFA Choir. (e-mail)

To... all of our teachers in Norton County, thanks! for a job again well done. (e-mail)

To... what sounds like a great group of young men and women who are lifeguards at the Norton pool. (called in)