

\$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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School districts told to replace doors

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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School districts across the state may have to replace doors and windows in classrooms to meet standards for a one-hour fire corridor— just in case.

Norton and Oberlin school districts were informed by the state fire inspector of the changes needed to bring the school buildings into compliance.

Superintendent Duane Dorshorst told the Oberlin School Board at its February meeting that a state fire inspector had checked the school buildings and said, at both the grade and high school, that the windows next to doors and doors with windows would need to be replaced.

Another option, instead of getting rid of the windows, he said, is putting smoke alarms in the hallways. These aren't the smoke alarms you buy at the store, Mr. Dorshorst said. The commercial-grade alarms would have to be wired to a central box.

The Oberlin School District, said Mr. Dorshorst, has had the same inspector for the past nine years and he's never said anything about the doors or windows. No one could say why the rule is being enforced now.

He said he'd been told the old fire code allowed windows in or next to doors. These were banned after 1987, he said, and the code apparently was re-written in 2007. The way he understands what the inspector said is that the 1987 code contained language that "grandfathered" older buildings, but that was left out of the 2007 code.

When the inspector came to the district at the beginning of February, this is what the district was told, said Mr. Dorshorst, although now nobody seems to know about the code change. The state fire marshal's office, he said, claims it doesn't know anything about a change.

Nothing has been said about any of these changes until now, he said.

"This could cost the district tens of thousands of dollars," said board member Dan Grafel.

Doug Jorgensen, acting state fire marshal, said Monday the requirements have been in the code for a while.

Recently, he said, the state legislators asked that the fire marshal's office do some more training for the inspectors so they could be more familiar with the codes.

Most of the complaints the office has received have been about the school corridors and smoke separation, said Mr. Jorgensen. While the one-hour fire corridor isn't new to the code, he said, this is probably an issue about lack of knowledge with the inspectors. With the increase in training that the legislators wanted, he said, building owners are being cited.

The older buildings, said Mr. Jorgensen, weren't grandfathered in on this, adding that there may have been some misinformation from the inspectors to the school districts.

The doors and windows aren't the only problem the inspector saw, said Mr. Dorshorst. There has to be a two-hour "fire box" for each of the science rooms and the

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Briefly

Lawmakers plan town hall meeting

There will be a town hall meeting with Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer and Rep. Ward Cassidy on Saturday at the Town and Country Kitchen starting at 9:45 a.m. Come meet with your representatives and let your voice be heard.

Horse Council to hold barbecue

The Norton County Horse Council will hold their third annual BBQ and Boogie this Saturday at the Norton Eagles Club starting at 6 p.m. There will be a Texas Hold'em Tourney at noon and then starting at 6 p.m. there will be a hog roast followed by a silent auction and dance. All proceeds will go toward the equine facility at Elmwood Park for an announcer's booth, handicap access and general maintenance and upkeep.

Daylight Savings begins on March 13

It's almost time to "spring forward". DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME starts at 2 a.m. on Sunday, March 13.

Junior High choir to perform March 8

The Norton Junior High will have a band and vocal concert Tuesday, March 8 at the Junior High Gym at 7:30 p.m. Be sure to attend and show your support for all of their hard work.

State tornado drill planned this month

It's that time of year to get prepared for rough weather. On Tuesday, March 8, there will be a state wide tornado drill.

Markets

Friday, March 4, 2011

Wheat	\$7.82
Milo	\$6.33
Soybeans	\$13.16
Corn	\$6.72

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

Weather

Tonight - Mostly cloudy with a low around 18. Blustery with a north wind between 10 and 20 mph with gusts as high as 30 mph.
Saturday - Mostly sunny with a high near 48.
Saturday Night - Mostly cloudy with a low around 21.
Sunday - Partly sunny with a high near 54.
Sunday Night - Mostly cloudy with a low around 26.
Monday - Mostly cloudy with a high near 47.
Monday Night - A chance of rain and snow.

Kingham Report

Tuesday, March 1 Low 22, High 64
Wed., March 2 Low 10, High 35
Thursday, March 3 Low 19, High 64
(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

Prayer

Dear Lord, help us to read your word and to remember what you have to say about the problems we face. Amen



Few voters turn out for primary

By HARRIETT GILL
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The turnout was a little dismal for the City of Norton's Mayoral primary election that was held on Tuesday. Four persons had filed for the position of Mayor and when more than three persons file for an open position, the city is required to hold a primary election to reduce the number to three.

As a central point for the city, the election was held in the lobby of the Norton County Courthouse. Ward 1, Ward 2, and Ward 3, were eligible to vote to determine the candidates that would appear on the ballot for the April 5 general election. Three hundred seventy three eligible voters came out in near perfect weather to cast their votes. The polls opened at 7 a.m. and closed at 7 p.m.

Robert Wyatt, Norton County Election



The primary Mayoral election was held on Tuesday in the lobby of the Norton County Courthouse. Election judges, left to right, Carol Olliff, Anise Gill, and Georgie Rorabaugh, were prepared to take care of registered voters that would cast their ballots.

Officer, released the voting totals early on Wednesday. Incumbent Mayor, David Corns received 229 votes; Ronnie Briery, 78 votes; Sarah Durham, 60 votes; and

Allan Taylor, 6 votes. Corns, Briery, and Durham will be placed on the ballot for the general election. The general election for the City of

Norton will be April 5 at the American Legion. The city will vote for Mayor and three City Council positions.

-Telegram photo by Harriett Gill

Colby College Board votes to raise tuition

By ANDY HEINTZ
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The Colby Community College board agreed last week to raise tuition for the 2011-2012 year from \$52 per credit hour to \$57 for in-state students, hoping to help close a \$400,000 budget gap.

The hike was recommended by Alan Waites, vice president of business affairs, and Keegan Nichols, vice president of student affairs, at a regular board meeting at Thomas Hall. In-state students will pay an extra \$5 per credit hour; out of state, an extra \$8; and international students, \$12, they said.

For in state students taking 15 hours a semester, this would increase tuition costs by \$75.

Waites said at the meeting Feb. 21 that the college is increasing tuition to help make up for a revenue shortfall expected next year. The gap stems from a 7.5 percent decline in credit hours students took in the fall and having 50 fewer students living in dorms than expected this year, he said.

Board member Arlen Leiker asked if the increase would discourage students from lower-income areas, such as Rawlins and Wallace counties, from attending the college. Nichols said the majority of students receive some sort of scholarship. In an interview the next day, she said 85 percent are on scholarship.

She said these students should have no obstacles when it comes to registering for class. She also said lower-income students can get federal Pell Grants to help pay

for college, as well as loans.

On a positive note, Waites said students had enrolled enough credit hours this spring to keep the shortfall from getting any worse. Nichols said students enrolled in 12,402 credit hours this spring, adding that the college needed at least 12,400 to keep the budget stable. She said the college will add credit hours from the spring eight-week courses to the total when they are counted in mid-March.

Waites said the board would have to resolve some financial issues and address problems over the next two months, adding that it may have to hold some special meetings focused on the budget.

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Talking Books program not closing down at Library

By HARRIETT GILL
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The Norton City Council has been discussing the closing of the room in the Norton Public Library that houses the Talking Books Program. This has prompted anxiety among patrons of the program.

"I get calls and questions asking, where am I going to get my books if the program closes," said Mary Boller, Sub-Regional Director of the Western Kansas Talking Books, "I tell them we are not closing down; there will be no change for them. Books and digital machines will still be available."

"The physical location of the books will be in Emporia. We will keep a small collection and digital machines here but the majority of books will be in the state location at Emporia, I will still be here," said Boller.

The Western Kansas Talking Books is a division of the Kansas State Library Talking Book Program in Emporia and has partnered with the Northwest Kansas Library System for many years.

Mary Boller, the current Western Kansas Talking books Librarian, has an MLS and will continue in the newly formed consultant position for Northwest Kansas Library System and Southwest Kansas Library System. She will carry on the relationships with patrons and organizations she has developed with Western Kansas Talking Books.

"Many people think that the Talking Books Program is only for the visually impaired, but we serve the physically handicapped or reading disabled," said Boller.

Boller said that with the changes, she will be available to work with facilities currently serving the physical and visual handicapped, speak to community organizations, contact physicians and therapists and further the outreach of the Talking Books Program. The Northwest Kansas Library System Talking Books Program and Outreach Service in cooperation with the State Library will ensure that every qualifying entity is made aware of the program's attributes through a personal and professional connection to a quality library service.



Entrance to the Talking Book room that is currently in service for the time being.

- photo by Harriett Gill