

THE NORTON TELEGRAM



Friday

July 15, 2011

Briefly

Alum for Athletes race planned July 24

A 5K and Kids Run will be held Saturday, July 23 for runners 12 and older. Starting at the Norton Community High School, the 5K will begin at 7 a.m., and Kids 1-mile run and 1-mile walk at 8 a.m. Don't forget to pre-register with Wendy at Sloan's Plumbing at 877-5427.

County pre-fair starts Monday

The Norton County Fair starts Monday, July 18 with the 4-H Pet, Dog, and Cat show at 6:30 p.m. at the Andbe Home. On Tuesday, July 19 at 1 p.m., the judging of the 4-H clothing construction and at 5:30 p.m. the judging of the 4-H clothing buymanship will be held.

Back to school packets going out

USD 211 is preparing to mail the back-to-school and enrollment packets the last week of July and we do not want to miss anyone! If you have moved since school was out last year or are new to Norton, please contact the USD 211 office at 877-3386 with your address.

Bass tournament planned for Saturday

Western Nebraska Bass Tournament will be Saturday and Sunday starting at 6 a.m. at the Sebelius Reservoir. Saturday's weigh-in starts at 3 p.m. and Sunday's at 2 p.m.

Andbe home to celebrate 50 years

The Andbe Home will celebrate 50 years next Sunday. Registration starts at noon. At 1:30 p.m. Poker Run Tours will begin. At 2:45 prizes will be awarded in the bird room by Sonya Montgomery, Andbe Home Board Member. Turtle races begin at 3 p.m. in the Gazebo Area. A special program will be conducted at 3:30 p.m. in the activity room. Don't miss punch and birthday cake at 4:45 p.m. Closing ceremony will start at 5:15 p.m.

Markets

Friday, July 15, 2011

Wheat	\$6.86
Milo	\$6.25
Soybeans	\$13.24
Corn	\$6.99

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

Weather

Tonight - Widely scattered showers or a thunderstorm this evening. Saturday - A few passing clouds, otherwise generally sunny and very hot. High 101. Sunday - Sunny and hot with a high of 102.

Kingham Report

Tuesday, July 13	Low 67, High 84
Wednesday, July 14	Low 54, High 90
	.05 Rain
Thursday, July 15	Low 68, High 97
Friday, July 15	Low 70, High 100

(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

Prayer

God of love and power, hold us up when life hits us hard, and give us courage and strength to find new life in the face of grief. Thank you for staying with us all our days. - Amen

Library features musician

By Carleen Bell
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As part of the Norton Public Library's summer reading program, a Norton native and musician performed at the Norton Public Library Thursday morning as part of the library's Summer Reading Program.

Randy Sauer grew up in Norton and graduated from Norton Community High School in 1985. Now a resident of Hays, the elementary music teacher spends his summers traveling around Nebraska and Kansas, sharing his original compositions intended to teach children about the technical aspects of music.

"I started writing music as an education tool to use in my classrooms," Sauer said. "The kids really enjoyed what I was writing and people told me I should start putting on shows to perform the music I was writing."

After deciding to take his show on the road, Sauer puts on music programs for children across Nebraska and Kansas. The shows include interactive music with motions and actions to help the children learn about musical elements like rhythm and notes.

"I write a lot of songs with actions and easy words for the kids to sing along

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(Above) Randy Sauer, former resident of Norton, sings and plays music with his guitar as children use buckets as drums to create beautiful music Thursday morning at the Norton Public Library. The program was one of three special programs this summer at the library.

- Telegram photo by Brandi Diederich

Superintendent joins Northern Valley schools

By Carleen Bell
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Leaders of the Northern Valley school district announced recently that the district has hired a new superintendent and high school principal for the district.

Steve Taylor joined the district on July 1, stepping into the administrative roles for the school. Prior to joining Northern Valley, Taylor was the Superintendent for the Ellis school district.

The administrator grew up in Jewell and graduated with a degree in Business Education from St. Mary of the Plains College in Dodge City. He obtained his master's in Administration from Northwest Missouri State University in Maryville, Mo. and completed his district-level leadership certification at Washburn University in Topeka.

Prior to becoming an administrator, Taylor taught business education at the



Steve Taylor

high school level for 15 years. He has also coached basketball, football and track and, before becoming a superintendent, served as a high school principal for four years.

Northern Valley is a district of about 200 students and as Superintendent, Taylor is responsible for overseeing the operation of the district, along with helping make decisions for the future of the district. As principal, he is responsible for the administration of the high school.

Taylor and his wife, Carol, have relocated to Alma and together, they have two daughters who live in Emporia.

"I've really enjoyed getting to work with all the people here," Taylor said. "The staff and board members have been very supportive and I'm enjoying the opportunity to get to know everyone here."

Health Dept. requests county funding increase

By Carleen Bell
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As part of the annual round of budget requests for county departments, Norton County Health Department Director Gina Frack requested a tax funding increase Monday morning for the 2012 fiscal year.

Frack reported to the Commissioners Monday morning that the Health Department's overall budget for 2012 is \$420,000, which includes county funding, grant funding and operating revenue.

Frack requested county funding in the amount of two mills, but the dollar amount of a mill is yet to be set. A mill, by definition, is 1/100th of the overall tax valuation in the county, or just over \$43,000 in 2011. Norton County commissioners will set the mill levy later this year for 2012.

Even with a potential funding increase from county money, Frack reported that taxpayer dollars are still only a small portion of the Health Department's overall budget.

"The county only funds 13 to 15 percent of the budget," she said. "We are very independent and self-sufficient compared to other departments in the county."

That funding is more important than ever, though, because public health agencies have seen a dramatic decrease in grant funding, but costs are not decreasing.

"We've had a 10 percent decrease in federal preparedness dollars," Frack said. "That reduction won't affect our operations much because we didn't add to our staff, but it's another indication of decreasing from our grant sources."

Frack reported to the Commissioners that the proposed budget for the 2012 year could fall short of the 2011 budget by as much as \$15,000. If the county budget doesn't cover that shortfall, she said, the department will need to operate partially on reserve funds for the year.

Over the next few months, the Norton County Commissioners will review budget requests from county departments, set a tax levy rate and decide how to distribute tax dollars across the county.

Norton school board sets budget hearing for Aug. 8

By Carleen Bell
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At their regular meeting Monday evening, the Norton USD 211 School Board set a public hearing to review and approve the district's budget for the 2011-2012 fiscal year. The hearing is scheduled for Monday, Aug. 8 at 7:30 p.m. at the Unified Office Board Room.

Norton Superintendent Greg Mann distributed an outline of the district's proposed budget Monday evening and explained some highlights of the proposal, including how the proposal will affect tax rates for landowners within the district.

"The (proposed) budget shows only the (Local Option Budget) authority necessary to raise the same (dollars) in 2012 as raised in 2011," the budget outline states. "As

such it is an increase in the mill levy. This is due entirely to the reduction in state aid and the further reduction in the amount of state aid to be funded."

The proposed mill levy for the school district for 2012 is 42.187 total mills. This equates to 20 for the general fund, 16.191 for the supplemental general fund, 3.000 for the capital outlay fund and 2.996 for the recreation commission.

Mann explained that the proposed mill levy will affect property owners in the district by as much as 6 cents per \$100 of fair market property value.

As an example of how the proposed mill levy will affect property taxes, a residential property with a fair market value of \$100,000 is assessed on a value of \$80,000. With those values, the total tax for 2011, the

district's levy totals \$415 and the 2012 proposed levy would increase the total to \$439, or 2.4 cents per \$1,000 of fair market value.

The same equation holds true for farmland and business properties, but with higher valuations. For farmland with fair market value of \$100,000, the proposed levy would increase taxes from \$1,203 to \$1,266 and for business properties, taxes would increase from \$1,002 to \$1,055.

All citizens of the Norton School District are encouraged to attend the Aug. 8 public hearing to raise concerns and ask questions about the proposed budget. A full copy of the proposed budget can also be obtained from the district's Unified Office.

Former motel to be leveled

By Carleen Bell
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After finalizing the purchase of the property in June, a local family is in the process of demolishing a former motel in Norton.

Linda Esslinger, along with her husband, Dean, of rural Norton, reported this week that in early June, they purchased the Motel 36 building and property on Highway 36. After the purchase, they decided to demolish the building and prepare the property for possible future development. Plans for development, however, have not been decided.

"For right now, it's just going to be

leveled," Esslinger said. "We don't really know what the future holds."

The Esslingers purchased the property from Vijay Vaput, who had been operating the motel but closed it to move to another state. Esslinger said she wouldn't be opposed to developing the property for another use or selling it for development but there is "nothing definite at this time."

The 36 Motel will be torn down this summer after the property was purchased by Linda and Dean Esslinger.

-Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

