

# \$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



WEBSITE: nwkansas.com 10 PAGES

## Friday

### January 3, 2014

### Briefly

#### Veterans get help with VA claims

Jody Tubbs of the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs will be in Norton from 10:45 until 11:45 a.m. at the Norton Public Library to assist Veterans and their dependents with VA claims on Tuesday, January 7. If you are unable to contact Ms. Tubbs at that time, you may contact her in Colby any Monday, Wednesday or Friday at 785-462-3572.

#### Activities at the Public Library

The chess club will resume on Monday, January 6 from 4 to 5 p.m. and then on Tuesday, January 7 "Mother Goose Moments will be held for babies through age two.

#### Norton Landfill to be open Saturdays

The Norton County Landfill will now be open from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturdays to better accommodate customers.

#### School will now be back in session

USD 211 schools will resume their regular school hours on Monday, January 6 with the high school holding its forensics night at 7 p.m.

#### ACT registration is drawing near

Friday, January 10 is the deadline to register for the February 8 ACT testing. AP at EOD@NCHS;EOD@NCHS.

#### Geography Bee to be held next week

Eisenhower Elementary school will hold its Geography Bee on Friday, January 10 at 2 p.m. in the band room.

### Markets

Thursday, January 2, 2014

Wheat .....	\$6.08
Milo .....	\$3.83
Soybeans .....	\$12.04
Corn .....	\$4.03

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

### Weather

Saturday - Overcast with a high of 29.  
 Saturday Night - Cloudy skies early will become partly cloudy later at night. Low of 12. Sunday - Partly cloudy skies during the morning hours then overcast in the afternoon. High of 27. Sunday Night - A few clouds with a low of -1. Monday - Sunny skies with a high of 22.

### Prayer

Loving God, we thank you for the grace that sometimes surprises us. Help us to trust that your grace is a gift you give us continually. Amen

## Fire ban still in effect...



At 8 a.m. Tuesday morning, a call came in about a fire at Natoma Corporation in Norton. Upon reaching the fire, Rural Fire Chief Steve Otter found that the pit behind Natoma was blazing and jumping out of its borders. The fire was quickly contained and extinguished.

Since he was not notified about the burn, Otter wants to remind everyone who plans to burn to first get permission from him. "We are still in a burn ban; it is still very dry out there," he said.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

## County denies request for road work

By Cynthia Haynes

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A Norton County man asked the commissioners to pave the road by his home but was told that that's not going to happen.

Doug Thraikill, who lives on the East Armory Road (Road L between Highway 283 and Road E1), visited with the Norton County commissioners during their meeting on Monday.

"The road condition is a challenge, to say the least," Mr. Thraikill said.

He noted that the road had had a counter on it a while back which showed that it was the busiest dirt road in the county.

Mr. Thraikill, who said that he is re-

tired from the Air Force and moved to Norton County in May, asked about the possibility of getting the road paved to help accommodate the traffic which comes from four large operations, including the landfill.

He said that County Road and Bridge Foreman Floyd Richard has gone out on the road with him and acknowledged that it is in bad condition.

After the trip, he said, the county put some millings on the slopes but there were such large chunks in the millings, it was almost impossible for him to drive his sedan on it. Now however, he said, most of the larger chunks have been pushed to the sides of the road.

Commissioner Richard Thompson

said that the millings would not work into the road until it rains. Likewise, he said, the road cannot be worked well by the grader without some moisture.

Commissioner R.A. Peterson agreed with him saying that the road crews have told him that they need rain to do their job.

"What is the plan for the road," Mr. Thraikill asked the commissioners.

Commissioner Peterson said that the county has looked at a calcium chloride solution but it was too expensive and doesn't do that good a job.

Commissioner Charles Posson said that the county crews can go out and grade the road and knock down the washboards but without moisture the

traffic would soon put it back in the same old shape.

Mr. Posson said that he doesn't like the millings because there are a lot of problems with them like the chunks plus it is hard to grade properly when there are millings on the roads.

Mr. Thraikill asked about the possibility of paving the road and was told no.

"The cost is astronomical and we're not going to do it," Commissioner Posson said.

Mr. Thraikill said that he just needs to have the road maintained and noted that while he has lived in seven states

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## Commissioners can't help woman with problem

By Cynthia Haynes

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A woman with a building in Almena is hoping for a tax abatement on her dilapidated property.

Betty Baker told the Norton County commissioners at their meeting on Monday that she had the old Antique Emporium in Almena but sold it to a guy who sold it to someone else. She moved into a building three doors down from there she said.

However, her "new" building col-

lapsed and the new owners of the old one offered to store her possessions, which they did.

Then, Ms. Baker said, there was a falling out and the new owners went to Florida leaving her with no access to her things.

She bought the old building back at a tax sale but didn't realize that there is \$500 in back taxes owed on it. The building is in bad condition, she said, with part of the roof missing.

Ms. Baker said that \$500 was about

what she paid in taxes when the building was in good condition and she doesn't even want the building, just her possessions.

"I know that that's in bad condition, but the board has no authority to rebate those taxes," County Attorney Doug Sebelius told Ms. Baker.

He suggested that she talk to Alan Hale, the county assessor, and that she might hopefully get the building sold before the taxes go delinquent again.

He said, most of time, people need

to pay their taxes then argue that they weren't right. However, a talk with the assessor might help.

Ms. Baker said that she appreciated the commissioners and Mr. Sebelius' time.

"The only reason I wanted it (the building) was to get my stuff out of it and now it's too cold to work there," she said.

## Christmas no more...



The Norton City workers were busy taking the Christmas decorations down on Thursday. Brian Hickman and Mike Coffey are seen here unloading the decorations into the city storage shed. They will be stored until next year.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

## New postage increase will be three times inflation

The Postal Regulatory Commission handed everyone who uses the mail a lump of coal on Christmas Eve: approval of the U.S. Postal Service's proposal to raise postage rates by more than triple today's inflation.

The new rates will likely go into effect Jan. 26 if USPS elects to accept the PRC's decision.

The PRC did disagree, however, with the Postal Service's justification for a proposed "exigency" rate increase that it lost more than 53 billion pieces of mail because of the Great Recession. Rather the PRC continues to blame Internet diversion as the principal reason for Postal Service losses. The PRC only credits the recession with less than half the USPS financial loss - but granted the increase anyway - noting USPS needs the money.

National Newspaper Association President Robert M. Williams Jr., publisher of the Blackshear (GA) Times, said NNA respectfully disagrees with the Postal Service's request as well as the commission's decision. He insists a lack of action by Congress to enact postal reform is at the root of the prob-

lem.

"We are whistling in the dark," said Williams. "We cannot avoid the fact the Postal Service is operating in a new world. We all are. The longer the Postal Service and lawmakers avoid reducing core costs for the delivery network, the more pain will be inflicted upon all who use the mail. Fewer and fewer customers will be paying more and more. This approved postage increase solves nothing."

The Postal Rate Commission said it expects USPS to wean itself of the increase over time. Although USPS said it expects the effects of the recession to go on for an unforeseeable period, the commission declined to allow the additional \$1.8 billion it expects USPS to receive in contributions to overhead to go on forever. The ruling requires USPS to provide a plan by May for eliminating the extraordinary increase over a two-year time period.

Unless USPS can achieve serious reductions in operating costs without critically diminishing services, Wil-

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