

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

If this story had been written last week, it would be entirely different.

But rain changes things. It changes frowns to smiles. It changes markets from down to up and it changes a farmer's timing.

Farmers who were trying to drill wheat had to wait until fields dried out a little.

Ones who had finished drilling sat back and relaxed.

Marvin Slabaugh from the Norton Co-operative said, "This rain was probably a life-saver. We have just a little bit of dry corn coming in.

"Now guys are trying to get their milo and wheat done. It all comes at the same time."

Almena Agri Service's assistant office manager, Claudette Graham, said, "We haven't had any corn come in yet. It's been mostly



John Mapes, Norton, took the opportunity to harvest corn on a field owned by his wife, Lee Mapes. The field soybeans and milo."

Almena and some are already finished. She said that some farmers have started their wheat planting near

"It's too muddy," Norcatur

was four miles south of Norcatur, on the west side of the Norton/Decatur county line.

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts Grain Manager Cody Richards said. "We have had a little corn brought in before the rain, but not

much. Right now everybody's trying to drill wheat. Corn harvest is on hold."

# Teachers give talks to board

By KRISTEN BRANDS

The Northern Valley School Board heard talks by new first-grade teacher Ken Tharman and junior high math teacher James Springer at its Sept. 13 meeting.

Mr. Tharman showed the board an exercise his class does each morning. The students touch their heads, shoulders, knees, toes, eyes, ears, mouths and noses while listening to music.

Mr. Springer said that his algebra classes are doing well. He said that he is looking at a Renaissance Math Program, which has personalized math assignments. He said that Accelerated and Star Math Projects were also available with this program.

District goals were discussed and revised

The district will market the school, advance technology; improve instruction; promote foundation/grant writing; encourage professional development for board members; and promote and providing ethics and character values while encouraging positive living for the students.

Superintendent Bill Lowry said the reverse osmosis drinking water system in the Almena lunchroom quit working at the beginning of the school year. Culligan installed a new system last week.

Science instructor George Griffith asked the board's approval to pursue a technology grant for the junior high.

The board discussed errors in the new yearbook. Mr. Lowry said that his staff was working with Jostens, which publishes the yearbook, regarding errors and said that steps are being taken to improve the proof-reading process by the school's yearbook staff.

In other business, the board:

- Approved a request for Norton schools to enter the district to pick up Brady and Desiray Skrdlant at the intersection of county roads E6 and F.

- Accepted non-resident student applications from Landon Schneider, Libby Schneider and Jennifer Ortiz.

- Approved the purchase of the Fast ForWord Program to train the students' to process information on a higher level.

- Approved a list of requests for transportation of students living 1.5 miles or closer to an attendance center.

- Hired Kirk Kasson as a gifted mentor and scholar bowl coach.

- Discussed practice times for sporting activities.

# Geneologists meet at library

Researching the Kan-San papers of the state sanitarium for patients names and obituaries is the Norton County Genealogical Society's latest project.

The group decided to take on the project during its Sept. 7 meeting.

President Fleta Hanlon conducted the meeting and presented a program on, "The Fight at the Forks of Beaver Creek, July 24, 1853".

Anyone is interested in genealogy is invited to attend the next meeting, Monday, Oct. 4, at the Norton Public Library in the Genealogy Room.

# Paper wins two national editorial awards

The Norton Telegram posted a one-two punch at the National Newspaper Association's annual Better Newspapers Contest this month as editor Cynthia Haynes took second place and her husband, Steve Haynes, first, in the editorial writing competition for small non-daily papers.

The contest winners were announced during the association's annual convention in Denver. First-place winners were posted on boards throughout the convention area.

With barely a year of regular editorial pages under its belt, The Telegram beat out the efforts of small newspapers across the country.

Mr. Haynes, the president of Nor'West Newspapers, which owns The Telegram, has won editorial-writing awards in state and national contests over the last 25 years. His editorial, which said that people who shop at big box stores, such as Wal-Mart, may be the real reason that small towns are dying, was hailed as the best in the division.

The editorial was picked up by several other newspapers in Kansas when it ran back in December. Editors from across the country have asked for permission to rerun the piece, which hits home in small towns everywhere.

The judge wrote, "A courageous editorial that likely prompted as much reflection as ire. Excellently presented in easy-to-follow words that explain a self-inflicted macro-economic ill."

Mrs. Haynes, who has only been writing editorials for a short time, said she was amazed that she took second in the contest.

Her editorial was a plea for the city and county of Norton to work together on the airport.

Since the editorial was published last August, the city and county have come together and formed a joint board to govern the facility and have worked together to get the taxiway and apron redone.

"It wasn't my editorial that made the commissioners and council members work together for the airport," Mrs. Haynes said.

"They did it because it was the right thing to do. I just added my two cents worth and, with a lot of other people, urged them forward."

Still, the contest judge was impressed.

"A great use of imagery to capture readers, followed by actual suggestions for improvement," the judge wrote. "Well done."

John Montgomery of The Hays Daily News took second in the edi-

## Airport needs someone to take care of her

Second place editorial by Cynthia Haynes

The Norton Airport is like a pretty girl — all dressed up for the prom and no date.

It's not that no one wants to take her.

The city wants to take care of her and cherish her, but doesn't have the money to keep her up and take her out.

The county has the money but can't get parental permission from its insurance company.

Poor airport. And she just had her runway redone.

We're not sure what the answer to this sad scenario is. One thing for sure, Prince Charming is not going to come charging into town and rescue her.

If the problem is going to be solved, it will be here, at home, between those most interested in seeing the airport and the communities of Norton County prosper.

It behooves the city and the county to get together with the airport board and look at options.

Perhaps an airport authority, which <would have?> a tax levy and a budget, is the answer. Perhaps not.

Maybe the city can get help from other sources. The only income the airport gets now is

from the city, the county and from leasing some farm ground.

Would some sort of fee be reasonable for those who use the airport?

Could a fund be started to help finance improvements with money coming from donations and bequests? There might be a lot of people out there who are thankful that the airport was so well maintained when they or their loved ones had to be flown out for medical treatment.

How could expenses be lowered without affecting service?

The airport is important to both the hospital and industry in the county.

It is also important to the many private pilots, who enjoy flying and provide help to those in need to get to something right now — like a lift to a funeral or deathbed.

Kansas Secretary of Transportation Deb Miller says that airports are not a luxury in rural America. They're a necessity. We think she's right.

So let's get together and make sure the Norton Airport isn't left out in the cold. Let's find a way to make her special and keep her well outfitted and up-to-date.

Sometimes, after all, it takes more ingenuity than money to get things done.

— Cynthia Haynes

torial contest in the medium-size daily division.

The Goodland Star-News, also a member of Nor'West Newspapers, took first place in the non-daily division for Community Service. The paper ran stories and even held an election last year, asking voters if they wanted to stay on Mountain Time or switch to the Central Time zone. The vote was overwhelmingly in favor of staying on Mountain Time.

The judge wrote, "Paper did a good job covering a gee whiz story by involving readers, letters, an election and historical coverage —

nice package."

During the convention, Mr. Haynes was named to the association's executive committee. That committee, comprising the four officers and two other directors, governs the group between meetings of its board.

Mr. Haynes is the regional director representing newspapers in Kansas, Nebraska and Missouri. The association represents about 2,600 community newspapers across the country, mostly weeklies and smaller dailies in rural and suburban areas.

soldiers in time for the holidays.

Oct. 23 is Make a Difference Day. It will kick-off with 3.88 (in honor of the 388th Med Log BN) mile run/walk in Hays to raise money to help pay for shipping. After the race, volunteers will stuff and seal the boxes at the Hays Medical Center, Wellness Center, 2500 Canterbury Dr.

Support is being sought to help. Donations of money or non-perishable items are needed. Contributors of \$100 or more in goods, services or money can have their name added to event flyers, T-shirts and posters.

Anyone knowing a soldier to

add to the mailing list should send their name to: Melanie Elliott, Box 267, Kensington, Kan., 66951; call (785) 476-2840; or e-mail: melanie@hercemer.dyndns.org.

Pamida in Norton will have a drop-box available. Items needed include: sunscreen, insect repellent, bar soap, disposable razors, toothbrushes, Chapstick, heat and eat foods, powdered drink mix, canned snack food, puzzle books, licorice, snack crackers, cheese in a can, tuna salad mixes, jerky, salsa (in plastic bottles), dried fruit, small cans of fruit with pop top lids, snack-size pudding, gum, Tootsie Rolls (the only chocolate

## We're what's killing rural America

First place editorial by Steve Haynes

If rural America is dying, what's killing it?

Though it's popular to blame Wal-Mart, I don't think that's it. Wal-Mart is a symptom, not a disease.

What's killing rural America is rural Americans.

We don't realize how good we have things, and we don't invest in our own, wonderful way of life.

We teach our kids that they need to go off to the university and get a good job in the city. We don't make jobs for them back at home like we used to.

We do our shopping out of town or with some big, faceless corporation. We don't support the hometown grocery or the mom-and-pop stores on Main Street.

We're hooked on the excitement of going to the big stores and buying big-brand merchandise. A trip to the next-bigger town becomes a social outing, not just treason to the local economy.

But it's more complicated than that.

Wal-Mart exists because it does what people want.

It has low prices, if you don't mind hiking through a jammed up, ding-and-dent parking lot. It's open all day so people can shop when they have time.

One retail expert notes that in an era when everyone works, a store that's open 9 to 5 must be catering to the retired and the unemployed. That's not the most profitable demographic, is it?

Go to any Wal-Mart at night or on Sunday, or 9 p.m. on a Wednesday, and you'll find cars from all the surrounding towns. Go downtown in those same towns, and you'll find most of the stores locked and shuttered.

Maybe the owners are home complaining. Maybe they're over shopping at Wal-Mart along with all their customers.

that won't melt), white tube socks, batteries (AA and AAA), seasonings, nuts, instant oatmeal and hot chocolate mix.

Other things that are needed to pack items for shipping include: quart and gallon size zip-type freezer bags, plastic spoons and forks, small plastic cups and Styrofoam cups.

Since these are to be holiday boxes some holiday decorations would be nice. Items to send include: garland type decorations, short strings of lights and extension cords, power strips, Christmas music CDs and blank Christmas cards.

Most of our towns have places to buy the things we need. These businesses provide jobs that keep our towns going. They are the building blocks of our communities. But we drive right by them on our way out of town.

Then we get together and complain about the declining population and the ever-lower enrollment in our schools. We gripe that it's tough to attract new businesses. We complain that no one wants to live "out here."

We'd all be a lot better off if we learned to invest in our own towns and the businesses that support them. Instead of hitting the highway to buy a car or a coat, we ought to look downtown. Out on the highway. Or worst come to worse, in the next county over.

Not in the city. Not at some chain store that sucks profits out of our town and sends them to five of the wealthiest people in the world.

We don't, though. We think we're going to save money on the road. We're mad at the town grocer or the Ford dealer. We want to have some fun.

Hey, nobody spends all his money at home. There are things you can't get here. There are things we want in the city.

That's not the point. If we want rural America to survive, rural Americans have to start investing in our own back yards.

We need to spend most of our money at home. We need to shop at the town grocery and support the downtown stores. We need to spend our money where it supports jobs and taxes and profits at home, not in Arkansas.

Even if it costs a few cents more. Because if we don't, we're all going to have to move to the city.

And while it's a nice place to visit, I don't want to live there.

— Steve Haynes

# Operation SOS to help servicemen overseas

Norton residents will have a chance to do something for service people in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Two years ago three women in Northwest Kansas decided to make a difference in the lives of service men and women serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. They formed Operation SOS (Supporting Our Soldiers).

The founders are Melanie Elliott, Kensington; Doris Sorg, Medicine Lodge; and JoAnn Reesman, Derby.

Mrs. Elliott said Operation SOS, in partnership with National Make a Difference Day, is planning to pack 500 boxes to send to

## Norton County Weather for Sep 28<sup>th</sup> - Oct 4<sup>th</sup>

Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon
63/43	74/50	76/45	58/39	65/44	70/46	75/48
Normal High 74	Normal Low 46	Sunrise 7:33 to 7:39am	Sunset 7:16 to 7:26pm			

High pressure will settle in behind a cool front that brought the area some scattered showers over the past two days. The high will provide us with a couple dry and mild days before a second cold front brings rain chances on Friday. This front appears to be a quick mover with a good punch of colder air. Temperatures will quickly rebound over the weekend and our extended range computer models suggest that next week will be dry and mild. September will finish with precipitation 1" to 2" above normal.

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