

Paper looks to provide fairness for all candidates

We've done something a little different in today's *Telegram* to make things more fair and equitable as the election nears. We received two letters to the editor which were critical of candidates for county commissioner.

The paper welcomes letters and appreciates people taking the time to write out their thoughts and feelings. We want to be a community forum, with ideas coming from a lot of different people.

We don't necessarily agree with everyone whose letter we print. We certainly don't agree with those people who don't like what we have to say or how we say it. But we feel it's our duty and place to put in any letter from a local person about issues that are important to our town.

This week we had a dilemma. We had these two letters by sincere individuals trying to tell why they felt one candidate was better than another. But the election is Tuesday, and this is the last paper before everyone goes to vote.

It didn't seem fair that the candidates wouldn't have a chance to answer the letters if they wanted before we all went to the polls. Many papers have a policy not to run letters with new charges or argument when there is not time to reply.

So we made a few phone calls.

First we called the authors and told them what we were doing and why. Then we called the candidates and told them that they could come to the office and read the letters and reply if they chose.

One candidate took us up on the offer. He wrote a reply that we are publishing along with the letter. The other candidate said that, while he didn't agree with the letter writer, he didn't want to cause more divisiveness and declined the opportunity.

We thank both these men for taking the time to read the letters and come to a decision as to whether they wanted to respond or not.

We thank everyone who takes the time to put their thoughts and ideas on paper, especially the two people who allowed their letters to be read in advance and their opposition the opportunity to answer.

There are two other letters in today's paper.

One is by a local person about the national election. We decided it would probably not do any good to call Mr. Kerry for a rebuttal. The second letter is in answer to an earlier letter, and we felt that since it was a response, it could stand.

We had a two other letters which did not make the paper. The first was an endorsement by a commissioner from a county which is not even in northwest Kansas, and the second included a personal attack on an individual not running for public office. Our lawyer might have been happy if we had run that one.

We're not saying who's right or who's wrong; we just want to try our best to be fair to all. — *Cynthia Haynes*

ELECTED OFFICIALS:

- ★ **Governor Kathleen Sebelius**, 300 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-2332
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts**, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774; fax (202) 224-3514
- ★ **U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521
- ★ **U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 1519 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715
- ★ **State Sen. Stan Clark**, State Capitol Building, Room 449-N, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7399
- ★ **State Rep. John Faber**, 181 W. Capitol Building, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7500

Office hours:
8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mon.-Fri.
Phone: (785) 877-3361
Fax: (785) 877-3732
E-mail: telegram@nwkansas.com

STAFF
Cynthia Haynes editor and publisher
Veronica Monier staff reporter
Dick Boyd Blue Jay sports
Carolyn Plotts society editor
Sherry Hickman circulation
Carol Erlenbusch advertising rep.
Vicki Henderson computer production
Susie Marble computer production
Sonya Montgomery bookkeeping

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

ISSN 1063-701X
215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654

Published each Wednesday and Friday by Haynes Publishing Co., 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, Kan. 67654. Periodicals mail postage paid at Norton, Kan. 67654.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Norton Telegram, Norton, Kan. 67654
Official newspaper of Norton and Norton County. Member of the Kansas Press Association, National Newspaper Association, and the Nebraska Press Association

Nor'West Newspapers

Dick and Mary Beth Boyd
Publishers, 1970-2002
Incorporating the Norton County Champion
Marion R. Krehbiel, editor



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Businessman disagrees commissioners stance

This letter is being written only after much encouragement from friends and even a competitor.

I have been in business here in Norton since 1963 and never have I seen the time the county and city have so many problems. I would like to address one in particular.

In *The Norton Telegram* August 1, 2003, was an article "Airport is headache for county, city". *The Telegram* article states "Norton County commissioners learned earlier this year that, not only did they have no insurance on the airport land and buildings, they couldn't get any through their carrier".

"We couldn't see leaving Norton County at risk with no insurance if something happened out there," Commission Chairman John Miller said at a meeting on Monday.

The airport has had insurance long be-

fore John Miller became a commissioner. Why would commissioner Miller make such statements? The Boxler Insurance Agency, of which I am a co-owner has been the agency providing the insurance coverage long before this became a jointly operated facility.

In March of 2003 Commissioner Dean Kruse was the county representative on the airport board and was given a summary of the insurance coverage. During 2003 John Miller took over the position on the board held by Kruse. In March of 2004 I made my annual visit to the board to review the insurance coverage.

Who was not at the March 2004 airport board meeting when I went to review the insurance coverage for the 2004-2005 term? None other than Commissioner John Miller. Why wasn't Commissioner Miller at the March meeting as insurance was on the agenda for discussion. What

really was Commissioner John Miller's motive?

It is my understanding that Commissioner Miller only attended the Sept. 8, 2003, airport board meeting after being the county representative on the old board. Why now does the county want two commissioners on the board? Should any reader want more information, give me a call at 877-5128.

The electorate of the 3rd district has the opportunity to elect a man that is interested in working for the betterment of Norton County. Mr. Clydesdale is a man of high principles and has no personal agenda. Mr. Clydesdale only wants to make the county government better for the people served. I hope the people will go to the poles and vote for Robert Clydesdale.

Jon Boxler
Boxler Insurance Agency, Norton

Candidate replies to letter on insurance coverage

To the Editor:

In response to the letter written by Jon Boxler, some items should be cleared up. In the fall of 2002, the board of county commissioners asked its insurance carrier to review all of Norton County's insurance policies so that if any updates were needed or changed, they could be done.

The county's insurance carrier informed Norton County that they were not a named insured on the airport policy. Notification was given to Mr. Boxler that the county should be added as a named insured on the policy. (The policy was not clear that the interests of Norton County

would be protected.)

The county did not cancel the policy or try to re-write it. The county just needed a statement that the county would be protected.

A review was made of insurance coverage in the March of 2004 and that time, the county was still not a named insured on the policy.

On April 12, 2004, the county received notification that the county was added as a named insured with an endorsement effective April 1, 2004.

Mr. Boxler questions the motives of myself as to the issue of insurance cover-

age. The only motive was protecting the county and its citizens to ensure that proper coverage was provided to the county as to the insurance needs of the joint city/county airport.

I have no personal motive as to the issue of insurance coverage. My only agenda was, and is, to assure that the needs and privileges of the citizens of Norton County are protected.

Should any citizen have any questions, I invite you to contact me or to attend any Norton County commission meeting.

John Miller
Norton County commissioner

Writer feels hog operations hurt environment

To the Editor:

In the past several weeks I have received two anonymous letters — both badmouthing our County Commissioners. My first impulse is to dismiss this letter writer as an out and out crackpot. However, this person(s) claims to be concerned for our environment, so I am giving them the benefit of the doubt. And because of their professed concern, I know they will be interested in these facts:

1. The Ogallala Aquifer groundwater level in Western Kansas has been declining since the 1950s.
2. I believe one hog operator in Norton County has five operations. The one south of Norton has a 16,000 head capacity. The one north of me also has 16,000. There are three north of Alma which have 16,000; 16,000; and 14,000 hogs. There has been a permit request to change one of these 16,000 head operations to a total of 52,000 head. With just the existing operations, there are a total of 78,000 hogs.
3. One hog uses approximately 25 gallons of water per day. That means 1,950,000 gallons of water per day is being used.
4. One hog excretes from 2.5 to 10 times the amount of fecal matter as a person. Using the smaller figure, 78,000 hogs are creating as much waste as a city of

195,000 people. (Just imagine that many people in our county.) This waste is flushed into uncovered lagoons as raw sewage.

5. The same operator has applied for a permit to install a grinder to dispose of dead pigs and hogs. These dead animals will be ground up and then the oozing material will be transported approximately one-half mile to a composting site. This "site" is a 2 1/2 acre open air clay lined "pad". This matter will be covered or mixed with straw for "curing". Dead animals from sites in Phillips County will be processed at this location also. Using normal mortality rates, around 50 animals per day will be processed. Assuming that the grinder will not be operating on weekends, a lot of those animals are already going to be putrid by the time they are put into the grinder. Among the many concerns from this are the obvious stench, insects and coyotes and other garbage eaters, and runoff from washing the transporting vehicles and runoff of ooze during rainstorms.

6. According to a number of studies, mega-hog farms are responsible for a variety of illnesses and diseases.

Your present county commissioners are aware of this information and are making every effort to protect our county from

all types of pollution.

I am sure that Mr. Clydesdale and Mr. Kingham are hardworking and well-intentioned individuals. However, I have been waiting for several weeks now for both of them to dis-associate themselves from these anonymous letter writers. To my knowledge, they have not done so — and that worries me a lot.

Please vote on Tuesday and keep Leroy Lang and John Miller in office.

If anyone is interested in the sources of my information, I will be happy to make it available.

Ada Arford, Norton

Re-elect the president

To the Editor:

Americans must re-elect President Bush. Our country might not survive the other choice.

We don't need a millionaire Eastern big government, welfare state, soft on terrorism, U.N. pandering, anti U.S. sovereignty, liberal socialist as president, a trial lawyer as vice president, and a foreigner as first lady.

After they got through walking all over our spineless elected Republicans, there would be no America left.

R.W. Yeager, Norton