

# Church:

Take advantage of the church listings to find out when and where to go.

Pages 6 & 7

Vol. 99, No. 16  
75 cents

# THE NORTON TELEGRAM



Page 10

## Friday

February 24, 2006

Norton, Kansas  
Home of Irene McFarland

### Briefly

## It's time to enroll preschoolers

The Norton County Head Start program is enrolling children ages 3 and 4 for the 2006-2007 school year. To learn more about the program, call the Head Start classroom at 877-2730 or any of the teachers: Angela Hager, 877-22537; Deb Helm, 693-4209; or Donna Nelson, 567-4465.

## Quilters to meet on March 6

The Heritage Quilt Club will meet at 7 p.m., March 6 at the Long Island Community Building. The program will feature "Round Robin" demonstrations on labeling quilts, freezer paper piecing, using thangles and triangles on a roll, quilted post-cards and embellishments. Hostesses will be Janice Beale, Joyce Trumbo, Irma Lee Gebhard and Regina Stark.

## Eisenhower to hold round-up

Eisenhower Elementary School will hold its annual Kindergarten Round-up from 4 to 6 p.m. on Monday, March 6. The roundup is for children who are 5 years old by Aug. 31. They are eligible to enter kindergarten next year. Parents and their children can pick up the needed information anytime during the round-up.

## Coach wants parents at meeting

Lucas Melvin, new head football coach at Norton Community High School, has scheduled a meeting for all parents of young men who are planning to play high school football in Norton this fall. The meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday in the high school band/vocal room.

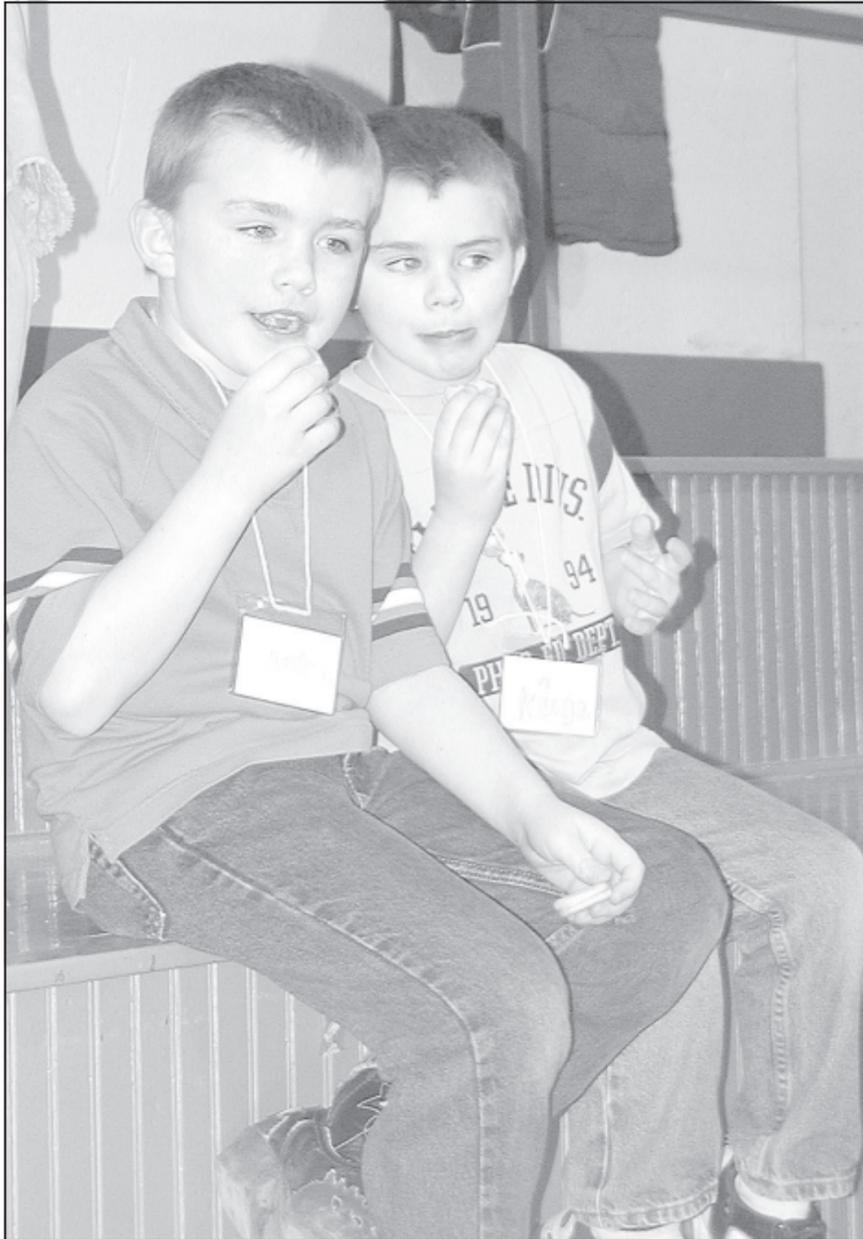
### Weather

#### Forecast:

**Tonight** — Mostly clear in the evening then becoming partly cloudy with lows around 19. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph. **Saturday** — Partly cloudy and much colder with highs in the lower 40s. Northeast winds around 10 mph shifting to the southeast in the afternoon. **Saturday Night** — Partly cloudy with lows around 18. **Sunday** — Partly cloudy and not as cool. Highs around 60 with southwest winds around 10 mph.

### Prayer

Dear God, thank you for your love. Help us to show others how much we love you by the way we act toward each other. **Amen**



It was snack time (above) for Dalton Smith, 8, left, and his little brother Keegan, 6, during the new after-school program in Almena.

## Organization gives youths a place to go

Thanks to Big Brothers Big Sisters, Norton County children have a place to go after school.

A grant from the Governor's Discretionary Portion of the Federal Safe and Drug Free School fund is making an after-school program possible in Norton and Almena. Director Mary Kay Woodyard said a program will be set up for Lenora children by the second week of March.

Children from kindergarten through seventh grade who are enrolled in Big Brothers Big Sisters, or who want to enroll, are invited to these programs.

The curriculum is designed to promote positive development and safe, drug-free living. Each week the children will hear different topics from area professionals. Parents are always welcome to view the curriculum.

In Norton, the program will be held every Thursday after school at the Recreation Center. Snacks, crafts and the program will be at God's (Continued on Page 5)



Ward Foley (right) helped 5-year old Tanis Lynch fill out a questionnaire. — Telegram photos by Carolyn Plotts

## Football field, track and concrete on school's list

By VERONICA MONIER

Concrete work, re-furbishing the football field and resurfacing the track are all on the list of capital outlay projects the Norton School Board chose to accomplish this year.

The top seven projects were to buy new kitchen equipment, resurface the track, pad the walls in the Eisenhower gym, redo the football playing surface, add an "unloading" sidewalk along Eisenhower Drive, replace the asphalt play area at Eisenhower with concrete and general

concrete replacement.

Of the seven, all were approved except replacing the asphalt play area at the grade school.

Superintendent Greg Mann said he recommended the district spend anywhere from \$160,000 to \$170,000 on the projects this year.

All of the concrete work that needs to be completed in the district would cost somewhere around a quarter of a million dollars, he said. So, only a couple of the projects can be done this year.

Mr. Mann recommended that about \$30,000 should be spent on concrete work this year. But, he said, he was just rough estimating the cost and would have to get actual estimates. Of the concrete work needing to be redone or repaired, he said the top priority areas were the curbing at East Campus, the new unloading sidewalk at Eisenhower, and the concrete southwest of the memorial gym, north of the junior high entrance, on Jones Street, and the junior high boiler room driveway. He said resurfacing the track will cost

around \$65,000, which was less than expected.

The estimate for the football field was around \$40,000, while the grade school gym's wall padding should cost about \$10,000 and the kitchen equipment is estimated to cost around \$16,000.

The projects, he said, total approximately \$161,000. He said \$92,000 will come from money budgeted in capital outlay; \$28,000 from the Blue Cross Blue Shield refund; and \$14,000 from the re- (Continued on Page 5)

## Youth ranch closing due to staff, security problems

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Officials of Clarence M. Kelley Detention and Youth Services told Oberlin city officials Thursday they planned to close the Sappa Valley Youth Ranch east of Oberlin by the middle of April.

In fact, most if not all of the 24 youths at the ranch last week were to be gone by today. At least 10 left by Friday. More than 40 staff members faced unemployment, as might some teachers assigned to the ranch.

The company, based in Topeka, has run the ranch for the last seven years in buildings and land owned by the city of Oberlin.

Last week, City Administrator Gary Shike said that Terry Campbell, vice president and chief operations officer for Kelley, delivered a letter stating that the firm would terminate its contact with the city on April 17.

Administrator Sue Glodt said the ranch has 42 staff members, which doesn't include the teachers employed by the Oberlin School District. She said they draw staff from the Oberlin, Norcat, Norton, McCook, Brewster and Danbury area. The ranch even has an employee from Oakley.

Some employees are talking about filing for unemployment and some will try to stay on with Kelley at other locations.

The Topeka-based firm blamed troubles finding qualified staff and security problems for the closing.

"Over the past seven years, we have

found it to be increasingly difficult to hire staff possessing the qualifications mandated by state regulations from the limited work force within the Oberlin area," wrote Mr. Campbell. "We are also experiencing a different level of youth being placed within our resident treatment program, therefore requiring more security than that available in a ranch-type setting."

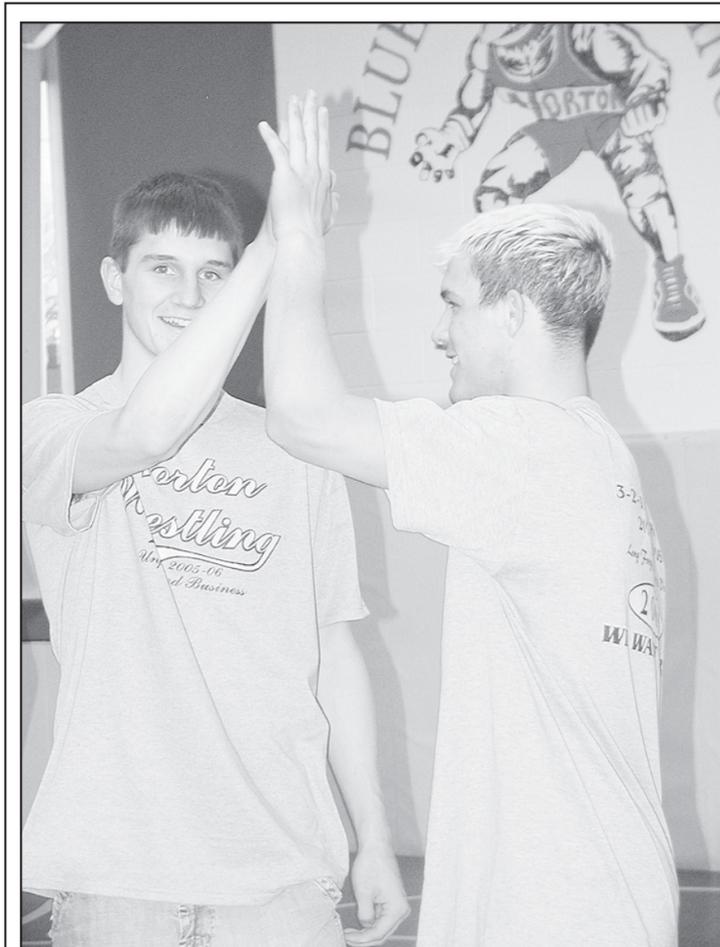
Mr. Campbell wrote that the ranch faced a possible loss of Medicaid money from the state after July 1.

Over the years, he wrote that the ranch has provided jobs with an annual payroll of over \$600,000.

Mike Deines, in the office of the secretary of Social and Rehabilitation Services in Topeka, said there are some changes coming that could mean a difference for the way facilities like the ranch are paid. There will be changes coming from the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and how they pay youth facilities, he said, and that could mean less money.

The closing of the ranch, said Mr. Deines, is purely Kelley's doing, not the state's. The department did have a few youths there, he said, but they didn't shut the ranch down. Primarily, said Mr. Deines, the ranch is a Juvenile Justice Authority facility, taking youths on court referral for a fee.

Peggy Pratt, director for northwest Kansas juvenile services, said she didn't (Continued on Page 5)



Luke Pfannenstiel and Lance Roe high-five each other after the pep assembly and send off Friday night. The Norton Blue Jays are back-to-back defending state wrestling champions. They headed to state in Hays last night. — Telegram photos by Carolyn Plotts