

Church:

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75 cents

THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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Friday

July 28, 2006

Norton, Kansas
Home of Georgia Goeken

Briefly

Merchants to go crazy Saturday

Norton merchants are going "Crazy" Saturday for their annual "Crazy Days" promotion. Shoppers will find lots of crazy prices as merchants mark down merchandise.

Always held the last day of the Norton County Fair, Crazy Days is sponsored by the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce.

Appraisers set to gather information

Employees of the Norton County Appraiser's Office will be working throughout the county for the next month measuring property and verifying information. If you have any questions about their data collection, call 877-5700.

Class reunions coming up

All classes from Norton Community High School are invited to a reunion to be held Sept. 1 and 2.

Friday events include a hamburger feed at 5 p.m. at Elmwood Park with the Blue Jay Booster Club. The first game of the high school football season will follow and all alumni are encouraged to attend.

An open house will be held in the high school cafeteria from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday. The class of 1946 is also planning an open house from 1 to 4 p.m. at the Norton Senior Center.

Saturday evening will find those with reservations for dinner at 6:30 p.m. at the Norton American Legion.

To make reservations for the weekend activities, send \$30 per person to Sonya Montgomery, 713 Van Horn, Alma, Kan. 67622 on or before Aug. 15.

Alumni, former teachers, former classmates and of course their spouses or guests are invited to attend all activities. All that is needed to attend is your reservation.

Weather

Forecast:

Tonight — Mostly clear and mild with lows in the 60s. **Saturday** — Mostly sunny and windy and very hot. High 102, Low 67. **Sunday** — Mostly sunny, breezy and very hot.

Kingham report:

Friday Low 62, High 81, .55 Precip.
Saturday Low 65, High 84
Sunday Low 64, High 87
Monday Low 68, High 97
Tuesday Low 70, High 101
Wednesday Low 71, High 95
Thursday Low 67, High 98, .05 Prec.
(Readings taken at the Fred and Karolyn Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you for the good things that give us pleasure. But help us to remember that relationship with Christ is the most important thing in life, and help us to see our opportunities to tell others about you, enthusiastically. **Amen**

Fair days at the fair



These 4-H'ers maneuvered their hogs around the ring as they took part in a swine showmanship competition. From left to right they are, Kolton Harting, Molly Maddy, Carson McKenna and Marisa Maddy. — Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

Fire leaves smoking rubble in its wake

By VERONICA MONIER

Smoke can still be seen wafting from the pile of rubble that was, a mere five days ago, U.S. 36 Collectables and the Norton Archery Club on the corner of State and Washington.

The fire, which could be seen from several miles away, started Monday afternoon and completely destroyed the two buildings, plus caused damage to several others.

Fire Chief Mitch Jones said the cause of the fire is undetermined; it is believed to have started somewhere in the rear of the archery club's building. But, he said, there's no reason to believe that the cause was arson.

Once started, the fire quickly spread to the rest of the club's building and then moved into the building holding U.S. 36 Collectables, an antique shop, he said. It quickly turned into a defensive effort.

The buildings, which date back to the late 1800s or early 1900s, had wooden supports that were dry with age and tarred roofs, making the spread of fire easy.

"The fire accelerated so rapidly, we didn't have the time or water supply at that time to stop it," said Chief Jones. "It moved faster than we could keep up with."

The fire was called in at 3:51 p.m. by John McClymont, an attorney with offices nearby. Chief Jones said firemen were at the scene by 3:55 p.m. and he

called for mutual aid from the surrounding area by 4:05 p.m.

He said they evacuated the buildings downtown as a precaution.

When fire fighters first arrived, he said, smoke and flames were coming out of the rear of the archery club. They made their initial attack there, he said. After the fire spread to the antique shop, it was all they could do to keep it from spreading further, he said.

"We're extremely fortunate that it didn't burn the entire center of downtown," he said. "It very easily could have."

Chief Jones said they had people on top of the nearby downtown businesses

watching for conflagration fires from wind-blown embers. Further away, people were also watching from the roof of First State Bank to prevent it from spreading.

"We've had reports of ash and embers falling as far away as two blocks north of U.S. 36 Highway," he said. "Several times, the smoke was so thick downtown that there was zero visibility for close to two blocks."

By 11:15 p.m., they had the fire out. But, he said, they left a unit overnight to watch for flare-ups. Tuesday was much the same with someone watching the charred rubble day and night. Finally, he

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Owners deciding what to do

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

The debris was still smoking Tuesday when insurance adjusters began sifting through the ashes trying to determine the value of what was lost in the fire that wiped out two Norton businesses Monday.

Presumably the fire began in the building owned by the Archery Club. The organization is a not-for-profit, limited liability corporation. The building was insured, but not the contents.

Randy West, president of the Archery Club, said there were no estimates yet on the dollar amount of their loss. He said, "We lost every bit of 4-H equipment stored there and over \$1,500 worth of material the club had just purchased for covering indoor targets."

All the recurve bows that John Baker had accumulated for the club over the years were a total loss, too.

Mr. West said they got out some of the 3-D animals and compound bows

The club will have a meeting Monday night at Mr. West's. He said, "A lot of us" (Continued on Page 5)



Fire fighters and volunteers watched helplessly as part of the west wall of U.S. 36 Collectables collapsed, showing the interior of the building completely engulfed in flames. — Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts