



Gail Boller, left, President of Natoma Corporation, and Joe Leroux, Safety Director, unfurl a flag awarded at a ceremony in Norton. The flag recognizes Natoma as qualifying for the OSHA Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program, known as SHARP in the industry.

— Telegram photo by Christie Anderson

## State officials travel to Norton to recognize, honor company

By TOM DREILING  
tom.d@nwks.com

April 15 was a big day for all the people at the Natoma Corporation of Norton. Two high profile people from the Kansas Department of Labor, Topeka, were on hand to make presentations recognizing Natoma as one of a just a few such companies to be honored for its health and safety standards in the state of Kansas.

Both Ken Bieker and Terri Sanchez, SHARP (Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program) coordinators, presented plaques to Gail Boller, Natoma's President, as well as a flag to be flown above the facility denoting its achievement.

Mr. Bieker said in Kansas less than one-tenth of one percent of companies have earned this recognition, and that on the national level it's fewer than that.

The program is administered through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration and is designed to recognize employers who operate outstanding safety and health management systems.

The awards didn't just happen. Management at Natoma took it upon themselves to apply for certification, which included an in-depth inspection by a certified industrial hygienist, and several safety inspections by Mr. Bieker. Recommendations and suggestions were made and carried out. "Being able to be one of the very few companies to earn certification, gives us a distinction that is not common at all," said Joe Leroux, Natoma's Safety Director. "That says some good things about the men and women who come to work here each day and work safely."

Mr. Leroux was appreciative of Mark Griffey for, what he called, "the firm foundation he helped build for some of our safety programs in the beginning of this qualification process."

He also had praise for the company's facility maintenance team. "They did everything asked of them to help our company qualify for the SHARP award," he said.

"Finally," said Mr. Leroux, "we want to thank Ken Bieker for his

guidance during the qualification process...we would not have been able to do what we did without him."

Mr. Leroux called OSHA's Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program, run through the Kansas Department of Labor "a wonderful program."

On behalf of the company, Mr. Leroux expressed appreciation for those who were able to attend the awards ceremony. "Everyone we invited to share the award presentation with, were people that represent, in some way or another, this community. We enjoyed the opportunity to have them here with us," he said.

Among those attending was Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer of the 40th Senatorial District.

In addition to Mr. Boller and Mr. Leroux, the company's leadership also includes Todd Boller, Vice President; Darin Campbell, General Manager; and Mark Griffey, Sales Manager.

The 60+ employees work at a 40,000 square foot facility on Highway 36 just east of Norton.

## 800 bikers to invade Norton in June

By DICK BOYD

nortontelegram@nwks.com

Biking Across Kansas, the annual bicycle tour which crosses the state of Kansas from west to east in eight days, will be held this year from June 7 to 14 and the city of Norton will be one of the overnight stops.

Biking Across Kansas is a recreational and social rally for cyclists of all ages. It is not an endurance contest, a race or a test of stamina. Each rider sets a pace agreeable to his or her own degree of expertise and all capable riders are welcome.

Each year, BAK attracts riders from all over the United States who wish to cross what they think is a flat state but they soon discover that there are many hills in Kansas and amazing scenery from waving wheat fields to the magnificent Flint Hills.

The last time BAK stopped in Norton, there were three routes of 350 riders each. This year will be different. All riders will be on the same route with a limit of 800 riders who will be accompanied by support staff and non-riding family members.

The bikers will leave from the Colorado-Kansas state line on Saturday morning, June 7 and ride to Atwood for the first overnight stop. On Sunday they will cycle

to Norton. The other overnight stops will be Smith Center, Beloit, Washington, Sabetha and Horton. A celebration dinner will be held on Saturday in Atchison after the bikers reach the Kansas-Missouri border.

As of Monday, there were 750 registered for this year's tour. The deadline to register is May 7. Cost is \$165 per person, \$145 for those staying in tents or motels, \$130 for those 6 to 18 years of age and \$135 for seniors (65 and over). After May 7, if the tour is not filled, a \$30 late fee will be added for registration.

The fee pays for overnight accommodations in school gymnasiums and several meals along the way. Bikers will be responsible to feed themselves most of the time.

The fee also pays for a t-shirt, embroidered patch, route guide, celebration dinner at the finish, fresh fruit each day and a truck which carries your gear from town-to-town so all you have to do is bicycle.

BAK will have several support vehicles on the routes daily to provide water and fruit as well as assistance with minor medical and mechanical problems.

Each participant is responsible for transportation to the starting point at the Colorado state line

## Identity theft seminar scheduled

Identity theft is a serious crime and First State Bank of Norton is doing something to educate area residents.

The bank is hosting a free seminar at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 29 in the basement meeting room of Prairie Land Electric.

The free seminar will cover issues like legal rights, what to watch out for and other specific problems.

A booklet will be provided to everyone who attends. There is no need to register, but if you have any questions, call Sabrina Richards at First State Bank, 877-3341.

Telegram: 877-3361, or 877-6908

# Lenora books Tate Stevens

The Lenora Jubilee Association has booked up-and-coming country music singer, Tate Stevens, as the main act on Saturday, June 14.

His newest album is set to be released soon and will feature the fun-loving single, "Redneck Rich and Hillbilly Happy."

Jubilee Association secretary Deborah Anderson said, "I almost missed seeing Tate Stevens perform in January. It had been a long day and I was tempted to just take a nap."

"What a blessing that I stayed awake! After only about 20 seconds into his rendition of 'International Harvester' I was already on my feet and cheering."

"His performance and crystal clear voice fed energy to everyone in the room. I cannot wait to see him at the Jubilee."



Joining Tate on Saturday will be two favorite local bands: Wahly and the Bassbones of Jennings and Carbon Cowboys of Norton, said association treasurer Gayle James.

Get the full story on Tate Ste-

vens and hear "Redneck Rich and Hillbilly Happy" on his website at [www.tatestevensmusic.com](http://www.tatestevensmusic.com) and be sure to visit [www.lenorajubilee.com](http://www.lenorajubilee.com) to get the latest news on the Lenora Jubilee held on June 13-14.



## Area couples eye new license tag

By Jan Katz Ackerman  
Free Press Reporter  
jkackerman@gmail.com

Two Colby couples' efforts, artwork and faith will be displayed in about a 12 inch by 6 inch space. Francis and Geri Landry, along with John and Betty Bremenkamp, wanted a cartag to let others know they are Christians and are not afraid to show it.

"It seems like everyone is taking God out of our country," Francis Landry said. "We thought this would put him back in and stand up for what we believe in."

While visiting their son, Keith Landry of Greencastle, Ind., late last year, the couple noticed Indiana vehicle tags with the words "In God We Trust" on them.

Upon returning to Colby, Francis Landry went to the Thomas County treasurer's office and asked about getting a similar tag for his cars. He said he was told it took Legislative action to get a tag approved in Kansas and he would need to talk to his local representative.

Which he did. "I was requested to introduce legislation by my neighbor," said

Rep. Jim Morrison, R-Colby. "We have many different types of personalized plates expressing support for or providing information about various causes. This allows one to express a belief in God and God's leading in one's life, just like on our money."

Morrison said the Landry and Bremenkamp families worked tirelessly to get the legislation passed in only three months, unlike most legislation which takes years to complete.

"I'm proud to have been of assistance and a part of the process resulting in successful passage into law of this special plate," Morrison said.

"The plate will be available in January 2009 as the state gears up for what is believed to be the most popular personalized plate ever sold in Kansas."

While the final design has yet to be approved by the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Kansas Highway Patrol, the one submitted by the Landrys and Bremen-

kamps will have shafts of wheat in the lower left-hand corner with the words "In God We Trust."

Unlike many other Kansas license plates, the "In God We Trust" plate will not have leading zeros, but will be issued with the first number being the number 1.

"We'll have number 1 and number 2," Francis Landry said. "Jim (Morrison) has reserved the first 400 tags for those of us in his district."

"He did a good job on this project," Geri Landry said. "He's a good legislator."

The plates, like other specialty plates in Kansas, will cost \$40 over and above standard taxes and fees and the number will need to be renewed every year at that cost.

Bonnie Brown, public information officer with the Kansas Director of Vehicles Office, said while the House Bill 2704 was signed into law by Gov. Kathleen Sebelius on Monday, there are many steps that must happen before plates will be sold.

**COLBY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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Saturday, May 3 . . . . . 8:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

CONTACT ANGIE MELVIN BY  
MONDAY, APRIL 28 - PHONE 877-3518

## Youth Forum

### Thursday, May 1

#### For Students Who Are 5th and 6th Graders

Meet at 5:30 p.m. at  
Catholic Parish Center  
for Youth Forum and Pizza

Schedule: 5:30 p.m. Youth Forum and Pizza  
7:00 p.m. Free Movie at Theatre (G rated movie)  
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