

THE NORTON TELEGRAM



WEBSITE: nwkansas.com

8 PAGES

Tuesday

December 16, 2008

Norton, Kansas
Home of Sharon Leiker

Briefly

Christmas on Us finale Thursday

The drawing for the grand prize Christmas on Us \$1,000 in scrip money will be held Thursday night at 7:00 at the Washington Street Park. In case of inclement weather, the drawing will be moved to the Senior Center with a 7:30 p.m. start. In addition to the \$1,000 there will also be two \$100 winners. And if there are any \$50 instant winners left from the four-week retail promotion they, too, will be drawn Thursday night. The money is good only at the participating businesses.

Please see Page 3 today for more \$50 instant winners.

Rock closed here for remodeling

The Rock in Norton is temporarily closed until Jan. 2, 2009. Reason for the closing is due to remodeling.

City council to meet Wednesday

The Norton City Council will meet on Wednesday. On the agenda will be a demolition permit for Ag Valley for the old elevator at 306 W. Washington Street; Mapes and Miller will present the 2007 audit report; City Administrator Rob Lawson will discuss the 2009 Cost of Living adjustment and will give his city administrator's report; Elaine Mann will give a report of the utility committee meeting; Ron Briery will give a report on the finance committee; Cereal Malt Beverage Licenses for 2009 will be approved; and the city will recess the meeting, to reconvene later in the month to conduct year-end business. The meeting is open to the public.

Weather

Forecast:

Tonight - A 50 percent chance of snow after midnight. Mostly cloudy with a low around 1. Wind chill values as low as -18. Total night time snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible. Tuesday - A 40 percent chance of snow, mainly before noon. Mostly cloudy with a high near 20. Wind chill values as low as -19. New snow accumulation of less than a half inch possible. Tuesday Night - Mostly cloudy with a low around 3. Wednesday - Mostly cloudy with a high near 23.

Kingham report:

Friday Low 19, High 46
Saturday Low 23, High 56
Sunday Low -1, High 8
Trace of Snow
Monday Low -8, High 7
(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

Prayer

Lord, thank you for choosing us to be part of your family and giving us the privilege of worshipping you.

Amen

Seventy-four short



How many trombones led the big parade? Travis Cressler, left, on the baritone, Austin Duscher, middle, on the trombone, and Dylan Sprigg, right, also on the trombone, were part of the junior high band that performed their Winter Band Concert for the public last week. The band played a wide variety of holiday and non-holiday musical numbers. — Telegram photo by Brandy Leroux

Debate for high school baseball continues

By BRANDY LEROUX
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Joe Durham is the driving force behind adding baseball and softball to the Norton Community High School extra-curricular activities.

Mr. Durham and other residents of Norton met with the Norton School Board to discuss the issue at the November meeting. Rich Miller, who was there in support of baseball, was given 10 minutes to speak. At the end of the 10 minutes, the board tabled all discussion until December's meeting.

Mr. Durham and other supporters and one who opposed the addition of more sports returned to the December school board meeting. There, towards the beginning of the meeting, the board asked for comments from the public. No one spoke. The board moved on to other business, until it came time to discuss baseball and softball. The board discussed adding baseball among themselves, but ultimately made no decision, and went on to other business. Before going into an executive session, Mr. Durham asked when

he and the others there would be able to speak with the board about adding the sport. Mr. Durham was told the time to speak would have been when the board asked for comments from the public, and he'd have to get on the agenda again to bring it up before the board.

"We have perfect ball fields to use, a new softball field and new baseball score boards," said Mr. Durham. "I received a letter from Francine Marting, from the Kansas State High School Activities Association. In her letter she said we would be allowed to use the league baseball and softball equipment for high school, so we don't have to buy any new equipment."

The district would have to pay to transport the players to games, umpire fees, field upkeep and to rent the fields from the city, according to Mr. Durham.

"One of the most disappointing things is Steve Jeltz, who was a major league baseball player for 10 years, and I agreed to coach for a salary of \$1," said Mr. Durham. "We aren't looking

to make money off this. We're doing this for the kids."

Mr. Durham said another concern is a new rule passed this year that allows coaches to have students in other high school sports practice from May 23 to July 18.

"That will kill the summer baseball and softball program," said Mr. Durham.

A public petition was circulated through Norton, and Mr. Durham said there are more than 1,000 signatures on it to add baseball and softball to the high school sports program.

"We have fantastic coaches in Norton," he said. "Bill Manning coaches pitching, Kevin Jilka holds every record at Fort Hays State University, Louis Keiswetter used to coach K-18 League baseball, Fig Millen took over coaching K-18 ball, Dr. Shirk and the Foley brothers, Craig, Ward and Duaine."

"Also, there is nothing in the rule book about students playing two sports if they want to," said Mr. Durham. "It doesn't have to be a choice between

two things. It can be both."

One of the things that concerned the board is the cost of adding another sport, especially with the shape the economy's in.

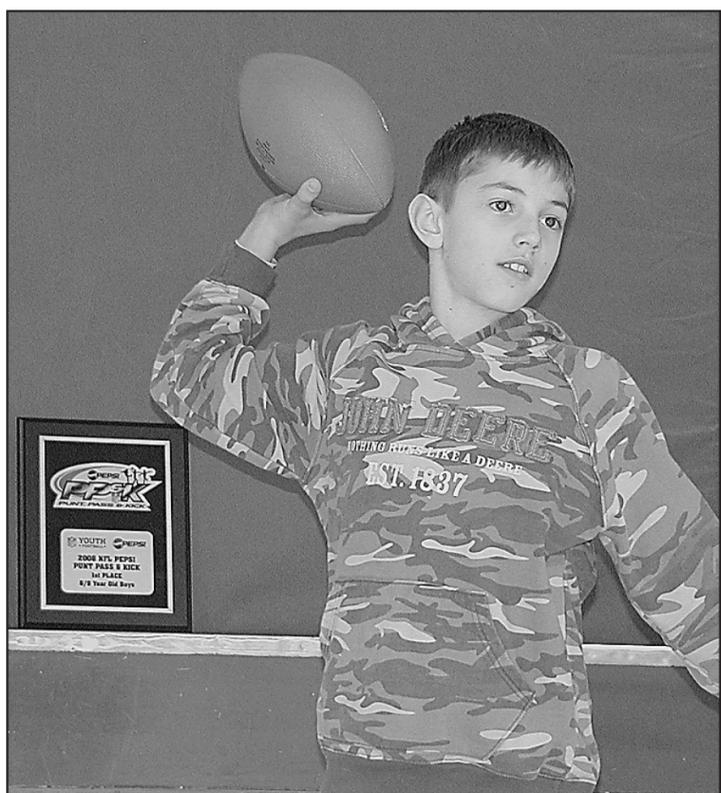
"People are worried about the economy, but the school is here for the kids," said Mr. Durham. "We aren't giving all the kids a chance to play sports. Not every kid is good at or wants to play football or basketball."

Mr. Durham also pointed out that Colby, Goodland and Scott city are starting a new league, and they all have high school baseball and softball.

"We can't join that league if we don't have the same high school sports they do," said Mr. Durham.

According to Mr. Durham, there are only 20 games in the regular high school season, half of which will be home games, unless the players go on to tournaments. Mr. Durham said he isn't going to give up.

"We're going to try again," said Mr. Durham. "We're going to ask for a discussion with the school board next month."



Jace Ruder tossed a football around with his physical education teacher, Joan Bolt on Monday afternoon. Jace went to compete in the Punt Pass and Kick competition held before a Kansas City Chiefs game on Sunday afternoon. Jace is the son of Jennifer and John Ruder, Norton. — Telegram photo by Brandy Leroux

Student performs in front of Chiefs crowd

By BRANDY LEROUX
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Jace Ruder, 9, from Norton, has done something that few kids his age get to do. He was part of the pre-game show for the Kansas City Chiefs/San Diego Chargers game on Sunday afternoon as part of the National Football League and Pepsi Punt, Pass and Kick competition.

"It was fun," said Jace. "I wasn't nervous, and I had a good time."

Eisenhower Elementary held a punt, pass and kick competition in September. Jace placed first in the 8- and 9-year old boy's division with 175 feet, 2 inches. The highest scorer in each age group went to compete at the sectionals in Scott City in October, where Jace got 217 total feet. The top five distances in each age group got a chance to go compete in the Punt, Pass and Kick being held before a Kansas City Chiefs game.

The scores are based on distance and accuracy.

"He had such a good time," said Jennifer Ruder, his mother. "It was really neat for him to be out on the playing field and so close to the [Kansas City] players he has cards of."

Forty kids were participating in the competition in Kansas City, ranging in age from 8 to 13 years.

"Eisenhower Elementary is extremely proud of Jace," said Joan Bolt, Eisenhower Elementary physical education teacher and local Punt, Pass and Kick Coordinator. "He went out there and did really well."

The kids only got one shot for a punt, pass and kick.

Jace's overall score in Kansas City was 207.

All of the competitors went out onto the game field, and the top eight went into the end zone to receive their plaque and to have their picture on the Jumbo-Tron, said Mrs. Ruder.

Mrs. Ruder said she does not know if Jace has a high enough score to go on to the next level held in Arizona, the top scorers of which will be in a national competition held as part of the Super Bowl XLIII pre-game show.

There will be three all-expenses paid tickets for the winners from Kansas City to go to the Super Bowl.

"They said we'd receive a letter in the mail if he scored high enough to go," said Mrs. Ruder.