

Vaccinations required



Norton Animal Health Center Veterinarian Aaron White examined one of his patients during the annual rabies clinic. Only 37 people took their pets in for rabies shots. A yearly rabies vaccination and city tag are required for every dog living in the city limits.

—Telegram photo by Sherry Hickman

County Commission comments on budget

(Editor's note) As budgets continue to tighten at all levels, it is even more important for Norton County to actively communicate to the public. The "Norton County Comment" is our collaborative solution to disseminate public information about what is happening at the county level. Each month this column will feature activities of a particular department.

This introductory article from the Norton County Commission focuses on the county budget situation and explains how the reduction in revenue will affect the community.

Norton County runs a lean operation, as evidenced by the county rankings for total tax levies in 2009. Norton County is ranked 92 out of 105 counties in the total tax dollars collected, \$2,912,374. Tax payers in Norton County pay \$950 per capita in comparison to \$2,783 in Graham County, \$1,415 in Decatur County and \$1,245 in Phillips County.

This level of efficiency is a remarkable accomplishment, but it compounds the challenges associated with tightening budgets. The current reduction of revenue to Norton County is a result of state budget cuts to local government, decreasing property valuation and declining local sales tax receipts.

In fiscal year 2009, examples of state funding reductions to local government are the nearly \$33 million to cut machinery and equipment slider payments and the \$10 million cut to the Special City/County Highway Fund allocation. At the local level, the total valuation of Norton County decreased nearly \$2 million over the past year from \$40,929,814 in

November 2008 to \$38,980,437 in November 2009. Furthermore, Norton County sales tax receipts have decreased an average of 21 percent over the past five months.

What do these cuts mean to you? As departments are faced with declining revenues, they are forced to make difficult decisions that will ultimately affect the quantity and quality of services offered to the public. We face the same lean budgets as state and federal offices do.

For example, the number of Road and Bridge Department employees decreased from 14 to eight in response to the over \$400,000 in cuts to their annual budget over the past three years. The mower operator positions no longer exist, leaving the task to the grader operators. On top of these new duties, the district size per grader operator increased from 90 miles to 320 miles. Naturally, public expectations about the

level of road maintenance must be adjusted to reflect this dramatic change in resources.

Across all departments, the Norton County Commission initiated a hiring freeze, suspended raises to employees, decreased health insurance benefits and eliminated four paid holidays. Department budgets were cut an average of 10 percent in 2010. More cost cutting measures will be required in this fiscal year and one budget-balancing option under consideration is employee furloughs.

As we face these unprecedented times, we ask for your understanding and continuous communication.

We may not be able to offer the same level services on this considerably smaller budget, yet one guarantee we can make is that we will strive each day to serve the public to the best of our abilities as your employees.

Emergency loans available

Emergency loans are available for farmers in several northwest Kansas counties who suffered crop or livestock losses.

"Farmers in Rawlins, Decatur, Norton and Phillips Counties, who suffered crop or livestock losses due to severe winter storms and snowstorms occurring December 22, 2009 through January 8, 2010 may now apply for Farm Service Agency emergency loans," Farm Service Agency Farm Loan Manager, John C. Vogt said.

"Loans covering physical and/or production losses may be made at a 3.75 percent interest rate and are scheduled for repayment as rapidly as feasible, consistent with the applicant's reasonable ability to pay," said Vogt.

Farm Service Agency's Farm Loan Programs staff is committed to new and existing customers. Farm Service Agency customer goals and our rural communities. Farm Service Agency's service

extends beyond the typical loan, offering Farm Service Agency customers ongoing consultation, advice and creative ways to make your farm business thrive. At the Farm Service Agency, we want to be your lender of first opportunity to overcome these adverse weather conditions and rebuild your operation to get back on track.

Farm Service Agency's loan staff can refer customers to other public and commercial financing sources that can serve as a blend with Farm Service Agency's farm loan programs.

Farm Service Agency loans covering physical losses may be used to replace installations, equipment, livestock, or buildings (including homes), lost through this disaster.

Farm Service Agency loans covering production losses may be used to buy feed, seed, fertilizer, livestock or to make pay-

ments on real estate and chattel debts.

"Funds can also be used for other essential operating and living expenses," Vogt said.

To be eligible for an emergency disaster loan, an applicant must be operating a family size farm or ranch, must be unable to get credit elsewhere, and must have suffered a qualifying physical and/or production loss from the disaster.

Farmers who suffered at least a 30 percent reduction to at least one cropping enterprise, may have a qualifying production loss. Farmers and ranchers that think they may be eligible should contact the Norton County Farm Service Agency Office at PO Box 365, 11506 Pineview Dr., Norton, Kansas 67654 or call 785-877-5156 for additional information and how to apply. USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

Public Record

District Court

These transactions were taken from the records of filings in the offices of the District Court clerk at the Norton County Courthouse. Traffic, criminal and wildlife parks cases are given to the paper when the fines are paid. Limited action and small claim cases are reported only after the defendant is served.

Traffic

Feb. 18 — Michael L. Bainter, Grainfield, speeding 77 in a 65 mph zone, fine \$42, court cost \$86.

Feb. 18 — Charles Kent Clawley, Colorado Springs, Colo., expired registration, fine \$60, court cost \$86.

Feb. 18 — William F. Gwin, Loveland, Colo., speeding 76 in a 65 mph zone, fine \$36, court cost \$86.

Feb. 18 — Rodney D. Hager, Lenora, speeding 78 in a 65 mph

zone, fine \$48, court cost \$86.

Feb. 18 — Mark F. Kenney, Parker, Colo., speeding 75 in a 65 mph zone, fine \$30, court cost \$86.

Feb. 18 — Brad D. Long, Norcat, speeding 99 in a 65 mph zone and failure to wear seat belt, fine \$270, court cost \$86.

Feb. 18 — Dorothy M. Stapp, Burlington, Colo., speeding 82 in a 65 mph zone, fine \$72, court cost \$86.

Feb. 25 — Ross R. Cranston, Colby, failure to have permit for oversize load, fine \$100, court cost \$86.

Feb. 25 — Dillion L. Grieve, Russell, speeding 78 in a 65 mph zone, fine \$48, court cost \$86.

Feb. 25 — Christopher R. Madly, Norton, passing on the left with insufficient clearance, fine \$60, court cost \$86.

Feb. 25 — Ricky S. McChesney, Norton, transporting an open con-

tainer and failure to wear seat belt, fine \$230, court cost \$86.

Feb. 25 — David M. Seifert, Flag Staff, Ariz., speeding 74 in a 65 mph zone, fine \$42, court cost \$86.

Feb. 25 — Juan A. Urdiales, Hayden, Colo., speeding 74 in a 65 mph zone, fine \$30, court cost \$86.

Wildlife & Parks
Feb. 25 — William H. Hergenader, Lakewood, Colo., failure to have personal flotation devices on board and operating boat under outboard power between hours of sunset and sunrise without navigation lights, fine \$229, court cost \$86.

Animal Shelter
For Adoption
King Charles Spaniel, male, 2 to 3 years old.
Corgi, male 2 to 3 years.

COUNTRY SMOKERS
SMOKIN' GRILLS
Series 3

The Country Smoker Series 3 line of pellet smokers offers:

- * High Heat Powder Coat Finish **NEW!**
- * Metal Auger Feed System **NEW!**
- * Variety of sizes
- * Texas barrel smoker styling
- * Fully automatic ignition
- * Heavy 14 gauge construction
- * Optional side shelving
- * Smoke, Bake, Grill, Sear any food
- * Even Convection Cooking

CS-570
* shown with optional enclosure kit, side shelf, and front shelf

Winchells Inc.
S. Hwy. 183, Phillipsburg, Kansas
Phone: 785-543-2118

For help with your advertising needs please give Dana a call 877-3361

American Legion
Post 63 - Norton, Kansas

Birthday Party and Wild Game Feed
Sunday, March 28
American Legion

— FREE WILL DONATION —
Pheasant, Deer, Elk, Turkey and Ham Available

Members and Guest Welcome

Take the Bite Out of Tax Day

10% Off All Small Animal Services

CALL 785-877-2411 FOR APPOINTMENT

Norton Animal Health Center
801 W. HOLME, NORTON, KS

— BRING THIS COUPON IN FOR YOUR SAVINGS —

A BASKETFUL OF SAVINGS AT KELLIE'S INC

Specials Good Through April 5, 2010

- 🐰 Buy 1 Accessory, Get 1 **FREE**
- 🐰 Select Model of Phones **FREE**
- 🐰 10% Off Office Products
- 🐰 Discounts on LCD or LED Televisions
- 🐰 10% Off Fashion Accessories
- 🐰 \$5.00 Off U.S. or Kansas Flag

Kellie's INC.

NORTON
107 E. Main, Norton
785-874-4718
HILL CITY
101 E. Main, Hill City
785-421-6245

dish NETWORK **verizon wireless**
Authorized Agent