

# \$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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**Tuesday**  
March 8, 2011

## Lawmakers talk schools at town hall

By HARRIETT GILL  
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Kansas State Senator Ralph Ostmeyer and Representative Ward Cassidy met with residents of Norton County on Saturday in the meeting room at the Town and Country Kitchen.

"One thing about being a freshman is you can get away with being dumb," said Cassidy. "I didn't realize that you can't just walk in and hand the governor a proposal; there is procedure."

Cassidy sits on two education committees and one justice committee. He said he was not in agreement with the current lawsuit on school funding. He agreed that the state needs to look at school funding and take into consideration western Kansas.

"Johnson County has the largest population, and of course, it has more representation in Topeka. Too bad we don't determine representation by miles and area instead of people," said Cassidy. "Western Kansas guys are a minority."

With the 2010 census, there will be redistricting in the state to reflect population shifts and western Kansas will lose some representation. Norton County has lost 4.74 percent of its residents. In 2000, there were 5,953 residents, the 2010 census shows the population has dropped to 5,671, a loss of 282 people.

Senator Ostmeyer said, "Don't hurry to believe everything you read in the press and hear on radio. You have a question, get in touch with my office. Sometimes you hear before I do."

Ostmeyer said he had spoken to Norton Schools Superintendent Greg Mann about the fire marshal's report concerning repairs needed to bring the school up to fire code.

Pat Pomery, Norton County Emergency Medical Staff, asked about Senate Bill 216. He said if it passed with the current language, they would "lose a bunch of people." Norton County Commissioner, John Miller said the wording in the bill was



There were approximately forty-five area residents who attended the town hall meeting with Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer and Rep. Ward Cassidy on Saturday at the Town and Country Kitchen in Norton. Rep. Ward Cassidy addressed the crowd with legislation he is involved with.

-Telegram photo by Harriett Gill

fixed on Saturday. Both Miller and Ostmeyer agreed that when a bill is sent to the revision staff, there may be a difference in the language when it is released back to legislation.

Both legislators agreed on the fact that Kansas can spend no more money than it takes in.

Governor Brownback's proposal for

an income tax break to out of state people who would move into a Kansas county that has lost 10 percent or more of its population was supported by Ostmeyer and Cassidy. The amount of revenue brought into a county with the taxes on property, sales taxes and other local taxes, would offset any tax break that would be incurred.

The Governor's proposal also would allow those counties to help repay new residents' college loans, splitting the cost with the state. His plan is before the Kansas House and the Senate has already passed its own version.

Norton County Farm Bureau is the sponsor of the town hall meetings.

### Briefly

#### Reed benefit will be Saturday

There will be a benefit dinner at the Norton Eagles Club this coming Saturday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. for Karla Reed. All proceeds will go toward medical expenses she incurred while fighting cancer. Please come and help support this life long Norton resident. There will be a free will donation at the door and any other donations can be sent to Carol at the First State Bank P.O. Box 560, Norton, KS 67654

#### Supper, auction to benefit family

There will be a soup supper this Thursday from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Norton Senior Center for the Schmitz-Rossouw family. Proceeds will go toward the medical bills acquired since Paul was bitten by a poisonous spider while visiting his home country in South Africa. There will be a free will donation and silent bake sale auction. Additional donations can be sent to the Schmitz-Rossouw Medical Fund at the Northwest Federal Credit Union in Norton.

#### Orientation session March 24 at school

An orientation session for parents of eighth graders (freshmen next year) will be held in the Music room of the Junior/Senior High School on Thursday, March 24, at 7 p.m. Counselor Shane Miller will host the meeting which will cover such items as the New Kansas Board of Regents Qualified Admissions requirements, the enrollment process, school policies and expectations.

#### Norton board postpones meeting

Due to weather, the Norton City/County Economic Development regular board meeting will be rescheduled for Tuesday, March 15 at the Economic Development office, 113 N. Norton.

### Markets

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Wheat .....	\$7.62
Milo .....	\$6.14
Soybeans .....	\$12.99
Corn .....	\$6.53

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

### Weather

**Tonight** - A 20 percent chance of snow before midnight. **Wednesday** - Mostly sunny with a high near 36. **Wednesday Night** - Mostly clear with a low around 19. **Thursday** - Sunny with a high near 48. **Friday** - Sunny with a high near 52.

### Kingham Report

Friday, March 4 .....Low 28, High 44  
.08 rain/snow  
Saturday, March 5 .....Low 12, High 48  
Sunday, March 6 .....Low 20, High 55  
Monday, March 7 .....Low 17, High 35  
2" snow

(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

### Prayer

O Lord, help us to remember daily your great love for us and to proclaim it by our actions for all to see. Amen



## Norton County sees slow population decline

By TOM BETZ  
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The U.S. Census Bureau released more detailed Kansas 2010 Census population totals and demographic characteristics last week to the governor and leadership of the state legislature.

The data provides the first look at population counts for Kansas counties, and shows most of western Kansas lost population including Norton County, 5,671, with a drop of about 4.7 percent—a loss of 282 people over the 10 years.

The official 2010 Census Redistricting numbers will be used to redraw federal,

state and local legislative districts, taking into account population shifts since the 2000 Census.

Census data for Kansas showed the five most populous incorporated places and their Census counts are Wichita, 382,368; Overland Park, 173,372; Kansas City, 145,786; Topeka, 127,473; and Olathe, 125,872.

Wichita grew by 11.1 percent since the 2000 Census. Overland Park grew by 16.3 percent, Kansas City decreased by 0.7 percent, Topeka grew by 4.2 percent, and

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## Governor: 2010 Census data shows need for tax incentive

Topeka - Kansas Governor Sam Brownback reacted to population data released by the U.S. Census Bureau. The report shows overall Kansas population up 6.1 percent since 2000. However, many rural areas of the state saw a significant decline in population.

"It's always good to see growth but I'd like to see more balanced growth across more of the state," Governor Brownback said. "The census data shows the importance of creating Rural Opportunity Zones. We need to incentivize population growth in Kansas communities that are losing population."

The Governor's proposed Rural Opportunity Zones would focus on the areas of the state that have seen a substantial decline in population. The program would provide a 5 year income tax credit for anybody who moves from out of state into a qualified county.

"My number one priority is to get our state's economy growing again," Governor Brownback said. "Rural Opportunity Zones give rural communities economic tools to attract people and business. We need to make Kansas an attractive place to do business and raise a family."

## Telegram gets two awards from Kansas Press Association

The Norton Telegram won two first-place awards from the Kansas Press Association in the state group's annual news and advertising contest.

The contest was for stories, photos and advertising run in 2010. Awards will be presented during the Kansas Press Association Convention in April in Junction City.

Telegram Publisher Dana Paxton was informed last week that the newspaper had taken first in small non-daily publications for a feature photo and a series of stories.

The feature photo, taken by Paxton and run on Aug. 3, showed a young girl riding sheep during the Norton County Fair.

The judge said that the shot was an unusual action picture and that there was great intensity on the girl's face.

The paper also won a first place for a series of stories on area servicemen, who died in the Vietnam War. The stories, which were written by Carolyn Plotts and run on Sept. 10, 14, 17, 21 and 24, were part of the leadup to the Vietnam Moving Wall's arrival in Norton.

The judge said of the series, "Interesting series on servicemen who gave their lives for the country. Well researched and



The Norton Telegram won first place in the state for its feature series on fallen servicemen from this area. One story featured Glenn McCubbin (pictured), a pilot who died in 1968.

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