

THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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10 PAGES

Friday

September 16, 2011

Poker Run aids needy families

Fall Sports Inside Today

FALL SPORTS
THE NORTON TELEGRAM
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Norton Blue Jays
Northern Valley Huskies
Logan Trojans

— TELEGRAM PHOTOS BY DICK BOYD —



By Carleen Bell
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The first annual Toys for Tots motorcycle run was held Saturday and stopped in Norton. The fund-raiser collected \$1,082 and 77 toys to help needy families for the coming holiday season.

According to event organizer Angie Hager, about 60 motorcyclists began in Plainville and rode through Stockton, Phillipsburg, Norton and ended the ride in Hill City.

At each stop, riders were awarded prizes, which were donated from each community on the ride route.

Hager explained that the inaugural event was successful and plans are already underway for next year's ride. The date has been set for Sept. 8, 2012 and will begin in Stockton and end in Plainville.

Hager reported that Graham County has been participating in Toys for Tots for about 10 years and the chapter has been trying to expand into neighboring counties. Each county has coordinators and the county leaders got

(Toys- Continued on Page 5)

Briefly

Eco. Devo. meeting moved to Tuesday

The meeting for the Norton Economic Development Board has been changed to Tuesday, Sept. 20 at 5:30 p.m. at the Norton County Economic Development Office at 205 S. State in Norton.

Norton Homecoming activities are planned

Norton's Homecoming will take place next week and several activities go on during the week. Monday is Favorite College Team Day. Tuesday is Hillbilly Day. Wednesday is Color Day. Thursday is Tacky Day and Friday is Blue and Yellow Day.

This year's Homecoming candidates are Brae Bigge, Alexis Henson, Kylie Nuzum, Erin Terrell, Dillon McConney, Tye Nickell, Mitchell Shelton and Jordan Wahlmeier.

This year's Crown bearers are Jenessa Ruder and Bodie Pfannenstiel.

US 36 Treasure Hunt set for this weekend

The US 36 Treasure Hunt starts today and runs through Sunday covering an area from the Colorado State line to the Missouri State line.

Markets

Friday, September 16, 2011

Wheat	\$6.99
Milo	\$6.17
Soybeans	\$12.37
Corn	\$6.69

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

Weather

Tonight - Cloudy with a 30 percent chance of thunderstorms. Saturday - Cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Areas of fog in the morning. Saturday Night - Cloudy with a chance of thunderstorms. Sunday - Mostly sunny with highs around 80.

Kingham Report

Tuesday, Sept. 13	Low 53, High 77
Wednesday, Sept. 14	Low 54, High 62
	.05 Rain
Thursday, Sept. 15	Low 41, High 45
	.30 Rain

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

Prayer

Dear God, help us give freely and not judge what others do. Bless all our gifts to the good of all your children. In Christ's name. Amen

City-wide cleanup days planned for Oct. 24-26

By Carleen Bell
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As a way to help citizens prepare for winter and dispose of extra stuff, the City of Norton will host the annual Fall Cleanup days this Oct. 24-26.

The dates for the cleanup were set at last Wednesday evening's city council meeting and City Administrator Rob Lawson reported that the three-day schedule is an opportunity for citizens of Norton to dispose of items that wouldn't ordinarily be accepted for

curbside garbage pickup, like furniture, large electronics and appliances.

Lawson said that anything containing freon, like air conditioners or refrigerators, need to be drained of the chemical before they are placed at the curb for pickup and if they aren't drained, the resident will be charged a fee.

There is no charge for the city-wide cleanup and regular garbage collection will continue during the three-day period.

Legislative visit highlights Norton County progress

By Carleen Bell
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In the second "Promoting Norton County" legislative visit Monday, the community of Norton played host Monday to several state government representatives to showcase the progress of the Norton area.

Coordinated through the Norton City/County Economic Development office, the day featured visits from Kansas Senator Jay Scott Emler, who serves as the Senate Majority Leader, along with Stephanie Mulholland, Chief of Staff for Sen. Emler; Joshua Lewis, Chief of Staff for Senate President Steve Morris; and Doug Smith of Pinegar, Smith, & Associates.

The guests had the opportunity to meet with several community leaders, including Economic Development

Director Scott Sproul, Norton County Hospital CEO Rich Miller, Norton USD 211 Superintendent Gregg Mann, Northern Valley USD 212 Superintendent Steve Taylor, Norton County Health Department Director Gina Frack and Kansas Department of Transportation District Three Assistant Engineer Travis Scott.

The local and state leaders also took a driving tour around the area which included a visit to the Norton Correctional Facility.

Sen. Emler remarked that he is impressed with the progress and growth of Norton County, even as a rural county in Northwest Kansas.

"Norton has a diversified economy and I can see how the community gets behind that viability," the Senator said. (Legislative - Continued on Page 5)

County approves equipment purchase

By Carleen Bell
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After a series of phone calls to determine warranties and interest rates, the Norton County Commissioners agreed Tuesday morning to purchase a new tractor to help the county with roadside mowing and maintenance.

East district road commissioner Floyd Richard reported Tuesday that the county's road and bridge department has been operating with outdated equipment and struggles to keep enough tractors up and running to keep the county's roadside ditches mowed. One mower deck in particular requires a large tractor to pull and a new tractor would fill that need.

The county collected numerous bids for the purchase of the new equipment and opted to purchase the tractor from Farm Supply in Plainville. The base amount for the purchase is \$116,500.

That figure does not account for warranty or delivery costs or maintenance agreements.

The commissioners agreed to immediately fund \$30,000 of the purchase and finance the remaining cost. After requesting quotes from several local banks, the commissioners agreed to finance through First Security Bank at 4.15 percent.

The funding for the purchase will come from the county's Special Machinery and Equipment account, which is entirely different from the county's regular road and bridge budget.

"This purchase will not take away from road and bridge maintenance in any way," said Commissioner Chairwoman Carolyn Applegate. "We need to get the ditches mowed before we can grade the roads, but we aren't spending the money from the road and bridge budget for the tractor."

Norton County agrees to new insurance contract

By Carleen Bell
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After hearing overwhelming objection from county employees against a change, the Norton County Commissioners approved a contract Tuesday morning to continue coverage with Blue Cross and Blue Shield for the county's employee insurance coverage, a decision that will cost the county an extra \$6,000 a month.

The commissioners have heard at least two proposals from other companies for health insurance quotes, but Commissioner Chairwoman Carolyn

Applegate reported that county employees are very happy with Blue Cross Blue Shield coverage and want to stay with that company.

The Commissioners approved a contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield for the 2012 year, which includes an increase in premiums for the county of about \$6,000 a month.

Norton County currently pays just under \$50,000 per month in insurance premiums, or just over \$592,000 per year. The new contract with Blue Cross Blue Shield represents an 11.6 percent increase in those premiums.



The legislative visit Monday included a visit to the Norton Correctional Facility. Pictured from left to right are Norton County Commissioner John Miller, Legislative Director Travis Lowe, Senator Jay Scott Emler and Doug Smith of Pinegar, Smith and Associates.

—Photo courtesy of Verla Grysch

City reports on pool season

By Carleen Bell
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After the conclusion of another summer season, city officials have released financial reports for the operation of the Norton Public Swimming Pool for the 2011 season, numbers that indicate a wide gap in revenue and operating costs for the facility.

Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson reported to the City Council Wednesday evening that total revenue for the facility this summer, including concessions revenue, was \$25,150. Total expenses, though, excluding utility usage, were calculated at \$40,302. Lawson explained that the swim-

ming pool is a service the city provides for the public, but can never expect to profit from, or even break even.

"We lose money on the pool every year," he said. "It's a service the city provides, just like our public parks, and the difference is made up out of the city's general fund."

The pool is open each summer from Memorial Day at the end of May to Labor Day at the beginning of September. Aside from utilities, operating costs include salaries for employees, maintenance costs for the facility and purchasing food items to sell at the facility's concession stand.

