

# \$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



WEBSITE: [nwkansas.com](http://nwkansas.com)

8 PAGES

Tuesday

December 27, 2011

## Briefly

### Medical clinic to be closed Monday

The Norton Medical Clinic will be closed on Monday, Jan. 2 for New Year's.

### Telegram office to be closed Monday

The Norton Telegram office will be closed Monday, Jan. 2 for New Year's. The Tuesday, Jan. 3 edition of the newspaper will be published on Wednesday. The office will reopen at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 3.

### City offices to be closed for New Year's

The Norton City Office will be closed Monday, Jan. 2 for the New Year's Day Holiday. Monday's refuse route will be picked up Thursday, Dec. 29 and Thursday, Jan. 5.

### Library to host youth programs this week

The Norton Public Library will host a story time at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday. Children will also get to make take home treat bags of hot chocolate and marshmallows. Cookies and cocoa will also be served.

On Friday from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. a Girls Afternoon at the Library will be held. Come and learn about easy tips on doing nail art, secrets for great skin, and making scarves, necklaces, and bracelets out of t-shirts. End the afternoon with a chick flick, prize drawings, and yummy goodies. This event will be hosted by Amy Husted.

Also on Friday from 6 to 8:30 p.m. a video game night will be held. The library welcomes kids in grades 6 through 12. This event will be sponsored by Norton Friends of the Library and led by Northwest Kansas Library System Director George Seamon. Wii games like Mario Kart and Madden Football will be available, along with free pizza and refreshments will be served.

## Markets

Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2011

Wheat.....	\$6.34
Milo.....	\$5.82
Soybeans.....	\$11.11
Corn.....	\$6.15

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

## Weather

**THURSDAY:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 63. Breezy, with a west wind between 10 and 20 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph. **FRIDAY:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 59. West wind 5 to 10 mph becoming south. **SATURDAY:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 60. **SUNDAY:** Mostly sunny, with a high near 45. **MONDAY:** Sunny, with a high near 42.

## Kingham Report

Friday, Dec. 23..... Low 8, High 36  
 Saturday, Dec. 24..... Low 20, High 44  
 Sunday, Dec. 25..... Low 23, High 45  
 Monday, Dec. 26..... Low 23, High 48  
 (Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, help us to see situations as you see them. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

# Water and sewer rates to remain steady

By Carleen Bell  
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In an effort to control costs and expenses for Norton citizens, the Norton City Council approved Wednesday evening three resolutions that will keep water, sewer, and garbage service usage rates steady through 2012.

City officials reported that several years ago, the

city decided that water rates and sewer rates would increase by three percent each year. In addition, the solid waste collection rates are set to increase by six percent each year. Those increases, however, are subject to annual review and may or may not be implemented.

All three resolutions were passed unanimously Wednesday evening and city leaders took the oppor-

tunity to point out the reality of the decision.

"When we decided to implement automatic increases, we were told by many members of the public that there would never be a time when rates didn't increase," said Council member Toby Kuhn. "We're now in a position to keep the rates steady."

## Lights of the season



There was no white Christmas for Norton residents this year but that didn't dampen the holiday spirit. Homes like this one at 322 S. State Street were adorned this Christmas with bright lights and ornaments, assuring Santa Claus would find his way to deliver gifts for Christmas.

—Telegram photo by Mike Stephens

## Council agrees to cost of living allowance for city employees

By Carleen Bell  
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Despite some opposition from some members, the Norton City Council agreed Wednesday evening to offer a three percent cost of living allowance for city employees in 2012.

City officials reported that in the years of 2007-2009, the city offered three percent raises for city employees, then in 2010, merit raises were given to employees who had earned the salary increase based on work performance.

For 2012, the city budgeted a three percent cost of living increase for city employees, but some city council members spoke up against going ahead with the raise.

"Since 2007, salaries have gone up 33 percent if we count 2012," said Council member Toby Kuhn. "We have to consider economic factors and if we are really doing the right thing. I would be hard pressed to find any other local business or entities that are giving this much increase."

John Carlin, who works for the city of Norton, spoke up for himself and other employees, however, explaining why he likes his job.

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# Conservation district earns excellence award

The Norton County Conservation District, along with four other Kansas districts, was recently recognized by Kansas Governor Sam Brownback for its excellence in helping local farmers and ranchers implement conservation practices and encouraging conservation in their areas.

"Conservation districts should be proud of the level of acceptance of these practices and all of their other achievements," said Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Dale Rodman. "People involved in conservation districts are Kansas' true environmentalists. They recognize that quality soil and water are precious resources that require care in order to pass these resources on to future generations of agriculturists."

Five Kansas conservation districts received service recognition awards during the Kansas Association of Conservation District's annual convention in November.

The Governor's Conservation District Service award winners were:

- \* Norton County (Area 1)
- \* Grant County (Area 2)
- \* Harvey County (Area 3)
- \* Douglas County (Area 4)

\* Cherokee County (Area 5)

The Norton County Conservation District, like all conservation districts, helps local producers put the best conservation practices available on the ground to meet their needs.

Norton County accomplishments:  
 Activities of the conservation district

- Present conservation programs to local clubs
- Worked with high school students on science fair projects
- Held fifth grade field day
- Award producers each year for their consistent work to maintain conservation practices
- Worked with local county extension agent airing conservation trivia questions through radio spots
- Helped with girl scout day camp
- Held tours of local watershed
- Held town hall meetings to get input from local citizens
- Helped with water festivals
- Attended Ag in the Classroom training
- Assisted Farm Bureau with Ag in the Classroom
- Held lawn and garden show for lo-

cal citizens

·Created and maintained website for the Conservation District

·Held poster and essay contest for local school children

·Presented educational programs in local schools and pre-schools

·Worked with WRAPS project (Prairie Dog Creek/Sebelius Lake)

Though the district works with livestock waste systems, grazing, terraces, windbreaks, wells, pipelines, grass planting, etc. to help preserve natural resources, it also works with many other programs that benefit the local community. Working together with local citizens, the district is able to help educate, promote, and assist with projects that help protect the soil, water and air.

The conservation district is the primary local unit of government responsible for the conservation of soil, water

and related natural resources within each county. Kansas conservation districts are political subdivisions of state government charged with this vital role. Funding comes from county and state allocations, with some districts generating funds by providing conservation goods and services. The association is a voluntary, nongovernmental, non-profit organization established in 1944 for the purpose of establishing and supporting programs designed to advance the conservation and orderly development of Kansas land, water, and related resources. The Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation works closely with local conservation districts and the association.

For more information about conservation in Kansas, contact the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Conservation at 785-296-3600.

## City to offer safe rides home

In an effort to help keep everyone safe this New Year's holiday, the Norton City Council agreed Wednesday evening to offer a safe ride home program throughout the community.

Individuals who would like to take advantage of the program may call 871-7798, 202-1419 or 874-8870 before or after midnight during the night of Dec. 31 to request a ride home from local establishments serving alcohol on New Year's Eve. The rides will only be available to go home from local establishments. Patrons will not be transported to the

establishments. The city of Norton is partnering with local taxi companies to provide the free service.

Norton is one of many communities across the state to participate in safe ride home programs to help reduce drunk driving incidents and help keep everyone safe. As they do throughout the year, local law enforcement officers will be enforcing drunk driving laws for New Year's Eve and anyone partaking in alcohol consumption to celebrate a new year is encouraged to utilize the safe ride home program.

By Carleen Bell  
 cbell@nwkansas.com

In an effort to alleviate traffic pressure on State Street, a group of Norton citizens has requested that the city consider opening a small portion of Norton Avenue between Waverly and Lincoln Streets.

Speaking on behalf of a group of citizens dedicated to enhancing downtown Norton, Gloria Nelson approached the Norton City Council Wednesday evening to discuss the possibility of opening a half-block section of Norton Avenue so the street would extend all the way from Highway 36 south to the downtown courthouse square.

"Opening the street would take a lot

of pressure and traffic off State Street," Nelson said. "With all the changes to downtown, there's going to be a lot more traffic going that way. Opening the street would allow traffic to go downtown without having to take the main highway."

City officials explained at the meeting that the small section of street was originally closed to allow the railroad to pass through the area, but the railroad is now abandoned, so that is no longer an issue.

Though no decisions were made on the issue Wednesday, city officials agreed to look into the matter after the holiday season and decide whether or not opening the street is feasible.

