

# OBITUARIES

## Dennis Ian Sparks

March 6, 1960 - Nov. 30, 2012

Dennis Ian Sparks, son of Harold and Jane E. (Elliott) Sparks, was born March 6, 1960 in El Paso, Texas and passed away unexpectedly at his home in Logan on Nov. 30, 2012 at the age of 52.

Dennis served in the U.S. Army for six years. He worked for Bernard Pavelka Trucking in Hastings, Neb. for ten years. On Nov. 24, 2001 he married Barbara VanSant in Logan.

In his spare time he enjoyed hunting, reading, and collecting antiques.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Harold and Jane, and his brother, Robert Sparks.

Survivors include his wife, Barbara, of Logan; son, Ian, of Sparta, Mo.; stepson, David Hasselbach of Tucson, Ariz; stepdaughter, Sherry Halderman & husband, Shawn, of Littleton, Colo.; sister, Patti Jussel and husband, Jimmy, of Logan; Uncle Ian Elliott of Arvada, Colo., and Aunt Dorothy Hoffman of Hays; five grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, Dec. 4 at the Logan Funeral Home with Pastor Dean Gilbert officiating. Burial followed at Pleasant View Cemetery in Logan.

Arrangements were by Logan Funeral Home.

## Grandma and the Christmas goose

Dear Readers, you've heard the heart-warming tale of Grandma and the geese before. It was one of my earliest columns, written in 2004. But many of you love it and have asked to see it again and, as I have added a number of new readers to my e-mail list who've not read it . . . here it is again.

### GRANDMA AND THE CHRISTMAS GOOSE.

AGAIN  
This Christmas story was told to me by my husband's grandma many years ago. In her own words . . .

Six fuzzball goslings came home in a cardboard box on my lap. The children hung over the front seat and cooed and giggled and poked at them. The goslings gleebled. It was instant love.

I was envisioning financial success, for I planned to sell five geese by Christmas time with one left for a festive dinner. I could sell goose eggs all summer, make a pair of goose feather pillows and feed my family crispy roast goose with raisin cream stuffing and goose gravy.

We put the goslings in the milkhouse for the night until George could get a pen built. The goslings wept. The children wept and beseeched. At midnight the noisy goslings were brought into the kitchen to sleep near the still warm stove. In the morning the children were found all cuddled in their quilts on the floor sleeping peacefully beside snoozing goslings. George went out to build a pen and coop forthwith. The children helped until they almost sabotaged the entire project. I was forced to bake cookies to keep them out from under his feet.

Weeks went by and the goslings grew and traipsed happily about their pen, losing their fuzz and developing feathers, losing their baby gleeblings and devel-

### Pieces of life's puzzle

Liza Deines



oping penetrating "wonks". The children laughed with glee and grew and prospered with the geese.

The birds were named, of course. Wilhelmina in honor of a cousin; Fat Foot for a deformed paddler; Hoot with his raucous voice; Grace for no known reason; Minor was the little one and then there was Schwartzerschnoot, named for a black spot on his beak. He was everyone's favorite, large and loving with a habit of coming up and laying his face against my apron. He also ate off every geranium I planted.

Mrs. Van de Vere came to the house and offered five whole dollars for a young goose to roast for a special dinner. I sold Wilhelmina. The children wept. Every time we saw Mrs. Van de Vere at church she told us again how delicious that goose was and the children burst into tears. She was overheard to say that Sophie's children were certainly a strange brood.

Fat Foot and Grace met their demise one dark summer night when coyotes attacked, leaving a bloody mess in the pen. The children were inconsolable. They tied black bows on the pen posts and held a memorial. Minor was simply gone one morning and we never knew where or how. I told the children he had gone into the wide world to seek his fortune. My visions of fortune were fading fast. Still, Hoot brought a good price at Thanksgiving and provided cash for Christmas gifts. I, however, paid a high price in weeping children.

Christmas morning came and George was sent out early with a hatchet to kill Schwartzerschnoot so I could dress him and get him on to roast before we left for church. Amidst forlorn wailing and fervent pleas for mercy I put bread and raisins to soak for stuffing and baked a pie. No George. No Schwartzerschnoot. No mouth-watering smell of roasting goose. The children followed me outside to search. We found them at the old tree stump in the east yard. George was weeping and I swear to you, so was Schwartzerschnoot. The children wept. I wept.

We had chipped beef gravy on soaked dressing bread for Christmas dinner. The children laughed and talked and ate heartily. George and I smiled at them and each other and held hands under the table. It was the best Christmas dinner we ever had.

EPILOGUE: Schwartzerschnoot lived to a ripe old age and was buried in the east yard with due ceremony. He left as his legacy enough feathers for a pair of wonderful pillows. I planted geraniums on his grave.

Liza Deines  
1098 NE Independence Ave. #230  
Lee's Summit, MO 64086  
childofthe40s@gmail.com  
816-554-0398



## Rural Health Day



Leadership Norton County toured several health care facilities on Wednesday, Nov. 5, which was Rural Health Day. The leadership group took tours of the Andbe Home, Whispering Pines, the Norton County Health Department, Norton County Hospital, EMS and DSNWK and had informative talks with facility managers on the services they provide. (Pictured at the table from left to right) Dan Bainter, Chris Frack, Andrew Howart, Megan Walter, Tonya Stover, Dr. Janis Monier, Pat Pomeroy and Denise Schmitz. (Standing) Nancy McGinnis, Andbe Home Administrator and Joyce Rima, Director of Nursing.

—Telegram photo by Mike Stephens

## Give your trees a break from drought

With water as the single most important resource for tree survival and growth, the Kansas drought conditions the past couple years have been less than favorable for both young and mature trees throughout the state.

"More than 80 percent of variation in tree growth is related to water supply," said Bob Atchison with the Kansas Forest Service.

He said the most common signs of drought last summer appeared in foliage and included leaf drop, curling, wilting, discoloration and dead branches. Symptoms usually appear first in the top center portion of canopies, making it difficult to identify drought stress in tall, more mature trees.

Atchison recommended several practices to limit tree damage during drought, even in the winter months.

"Even though we have entered the winter season, it is still helpful to apply water when weather allows and the soil can absorb

moisture," he said.

While newly planted trees should be watered regularly for the first three years, established, mature trees should be watered every two to four weeks by soaking the top 12 inches of soil under the tree's canopy. Atchison recommended using a soaker hose, drip irrigation or slow drip bucket to spread water over the entire root area. As a general rule, he recommended two gallons of water be applied for every one inch of tree diameter.

He also warned against over

watering. "Too much water can kill a tree by eliminating the air from the soil and suffocating the roots," he said. "The soil should not stay saturated, but have time to dry out between waterings."

Atchison said pruning and fertilizing often have negative effects during drought as well. Both cause the tree to expend energy that could otherwise be spent on growth.

For other questions about tree care, contact the Kansas Forest Service at 785-532-3300 or visit [www.KansasForests.org](http://www.KansasForests.org).

## HANSEN MUSEUM

The Dane G. Hansen Memorial Museum presents Bobbi Kerth and Staci Hartman in a dual private showing in the gallery Dec. 7, 2012 through Feb. 3, 2013. This exhibit features two local artists of great skill and talent.

Bobbi Kerth lives in WaKeeney. She paints in her home studio in the mediums of oil and watercolor. Her love of nature is a great inspiration for her award winning paintings. Bobbi also enjoys creating whimsical and happy Santas, many of which have been "Art Search" Winners for the American Diabetes Association Gift of Hope catalog. She has received numerous awards for her paintings in area art shows and fairs. She has exhibited in One-Woman shows including Goodland Carnegie Art Center and the WaKeeney

and Hays Art Walks. Her paintings can be found throughout the United States in private and corporate collections, including Hays Medical Center, Hadley Foundation.

Staci Hartman has spent the majority of her life in north central Kansas in Logan. Her work shows typical scenes of rural life. She also loves to travel and extend her subject venue. Her creative work is done in oil and pastel. Staci has been privileged to study with well known national artists including Kaye Franklin, Howard Friedland and David Vollbracht. She continues to work with these artists annually. She became a member of Oil Painters of America in 2011. She has won honors at the Rohr Art Show in Russell. Staci also belongs to the Palco Art Club.

## Poetry contest open to all

The Christian Poets Society is sponsoring a free poetry contest open to everyone. There are 50 prizes totaling \$5,000 with a \$1,000 grand prize for the winner.

Poems of 21 lines or less on any subject and in any style will be judged by the contest director Dr. Jerome Cousins. "We love encouraging poets with cash prizes," he said. "We trust this contest will produce exciting results."

Send poem to: Free Poetry Contest, 106 Cambria Circle, Citrus Heights, CA 95621. Or enter at [www.freecontest.com](http://www.freecontest.com). Deadline for entering is Dec. 31, 2012.

Include your name and address on the same page as your poem. For a winners' list please enclose a stamped return envelope. It will be posted online also.

Join Us for our First  
**Mexican Dinner**  
Saturday, December 15  
5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.  
**Norton Community Center**  
208 West Main, Norton, Kansas  
**FREE WILL OFFERING**  
Take Out Orders  
\$5.00 Per Plate

Dec. 7-12

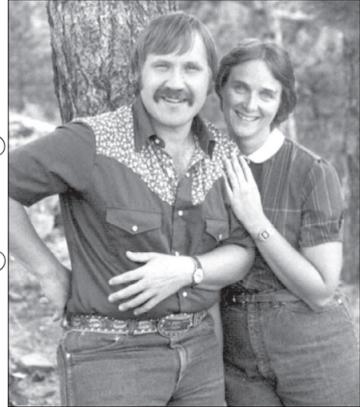
Showing at the  
**NORTON THEATRE**  
Hotel Transylvania  
(PG) 1 Hour and 1 Minute Showing in 3D  
FRIDAY AND SATURDAY: 8:00 P.M.  
SUNDAY: 5:00 P.M.  
MON., TUES., WED.: 7:00 P.M.  
**Skyfall**  
2 Hours, 32 Minutes,  
(PG-13)  
Only Premiere passes accepted for Hotel Transylvania and Skyfall  
Hotel Transylvania is Premiere Admission Price of \$7.00 and \$6.00 - \$3.00 on Sunday  
Skyfall is Premiere Admission Price of \$7.00 and \$6.00 - \$3.00 on Sunday  
**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14:**  
The Hobbit-in 3D (PG-13)  
**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25:**  
Parental Guidance (PG)

Let's Go to the Movie



This ad is brought to you by The Norton Telegram

## Keith and Katie 12/11/82 ~ Happy Anniversary



Our three boys - 2 weddings  
Our two great daughters - (Inlaws)  
4 pups; 2 alligators; countless critters;  
5 KSU degrees; 1 MCC; 1 NCC  
Countless fishing, hunting and camping trips  
Countless 4-Hers; trips; horse shows  
In God We Trust - Immanuel  
Remember How We Met and Why  
**Priceless!**

## You're Invited to Our Open House

Wednesday, December 19,  
Thursday, December 20, and  
Friday, December 21

AT BOTH LOCATIONS:  
500 MAIN - ALMENA  
202 E. WASHINGTON - NORTON

Serving Cookies and Cider

MERRY CHRISTMAS

FROM ALL OF US AT . . .

Almena State Bank

Member FDIC - Equal Opportunity Provider