

Almena Market has new owners

By Dana Paxton
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 After seven years Jeff and Janet Callaway have bought back the Almena Market. The Callaway's took over ownership as of Jan. 1, 2013. The couple previously owned the Almena Market for twelve years. Even after it burnt down in 2001 they rebuilt and continued to run it for another five years before selling it to Stan and Twila Cadwalader in 2006. Stan and Twila put in there time and were ready for something new and have had the

store on the market for a very long time. They had decided to sell it or close the doors come January first. Luckily, the Callaway's were ready to try again and not let the community lose a valuable business. Jeff will remain at his job at the feed mill and Janet will remain at her job at the Almena State Bank so they hired a young couple to manage it for them. Chris and Mandy Lee, originally from Long Island, have recently moved back to the area from Kearney, Neb., to manage the store. Michael Cal-

away, son of Jeff and Janet, is also working there. He grew up in the store and will stay on until he returns to school. Another familiar face back at the store is that of JoAnn Bowen who had worked there for some time. When asked why the family bought it back, Michael said, "We had a lot of blood, sweat, and tears in it. We decided to give it another shot. Almena really needs a store and the elderly enjoy it a lot." So be sure to stop in and meet the new managers and familiar faces.

A howling good time...



The last coyote calling contest of the season, sponsored by the Norton Archery Club was held on Saturday. There were 59 teams entered, coming from all over northwest Kansas and lower Nebraska. Overall there were 17 crows, one bobcat and 13 coyotes harvested. The team that took first place had seven crow and three coyotes and were out of Ellis, Kyle Pfannenstiel and Lonnie Pinkston. Second place went to Zack Sammons and Brady Jeffery of Logan with three coyotes and third went to Lafe Gillespie and Brock Mann of Quinter with two coyotes. Each contestant's name was put into a drawing to win a Bushmaster AR-15 .223 cal 5.56MM through S&S Gun Works. The winner of the rifle was Eric Woodside from the Prairieview area. The McChesney men, Brandon, Brett and Rick gather round as the first coyote brought in was weighed.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

Norcatour firefighters serve up pizza

By Carolyn Plotts
 With assembly line precision, Norcatour's volunteer firefighters produced a record number of pizzas for this year's fundraiser. "We made 620 pizzas," said Fire Chief, Carl Lyon. "That beat last year by a hundred." This was the twelfth year for the popular fundraiser. The firemen took orders for a few weeks before their deadline and then over the course of this last weekend, they prepared the ingredients, including about 330 pounds of hamburger and 220 pounds of sausage, assembled the pizzas and delivered them to households all over Norcatour and even into Oberlin and Norton. Some were delivered hot and ready-to-eat, but most were delivered wrapped in foil, ready for the freezer.

There is no set price, just whatever anyone wants to pay for them. Most people contribute more than what a franchise pizza would cost. Last year the department took in more than \$4,000. This year looks to be even better, although a final tally has not been made. Any money raised goes to purchase much needed equipment for the Norcatour Fire Department. Chief Lyon said, "We would like to add on to our firehouse. Especially a washroom so we could clean up after we come in from a fire. Right now, all we have is a hose." Norcatour boasts 15 volunteer fire fighters and the pizza sale is the only fundraiser they do all year.

Dinner theatre and music in Oberlin

Reservations are needed for Oberlin Arts and Humanities Commission's annual dinner theater to be held on Saturday, Feb. 23, at The Gateway. A surf and turf dinner and wine bar will be served at 6:30 p.m. with the concert to follow at 7:30 p.m. The concert will feature Acoustic Eidolon, with Joe Scott

on a double-neck guitjo (a 14-string banjo/guitar that sounds like a harp, and Hanna Alkire, cello. They have been playing together since 1998 and have traveled world-wide performing in places like London, Berlin, France, Australia, Hawaii, Canada, Washington D.C. and numerous places in the United States. They wow audiences

wherever they go with their entertaining and performing. This is a season ticket event or \$34/adults, \$17 children age 8 and under. Reservations are necessary for all who plan to attend. For reservations and/or information, call Ella Betts (785) 475-3557, or Mary Henzel (785) 470-0218.

COLLEGE NOTES

Area students named to Fort Hays State University's fall 2012 Deans Honor Roll
 Several area students are included on Fort Hays State University's Deans Honor Roll for the fall 2012 semester.
 Each student is listed by hometown. Majors are included for students who have declared majors.
Almena: Melissa Hawks, an elementary education major.
Lenora: Carson Kaiser, an art major.
Logan: Carri Brobst, a management major.
Norton: Andrew Ables, a biology (education)

major.
Norton: April Bashford, an elementary education (early childhood) major.
Norton: Charli Lawson, a nursing major.
Norton: David Mizell, an art major.
Norton: Jacob Mizell, an art major.
Norton: Amanda Ray, a biology (pre-physical therapy) major.
 The roll includes only full-time (12 credit hours or more) undergraduate students who earned at least a 3.60 grade-point average for the semester.



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Hospital

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The hospital has made a big push to update its patient care equipment, Mr. Miller said. Lately the facility has acquired a new chemistry analyzer, which has expanded the test that can be done and read in-house, a new ultrasound machine with a full-time technician, a fixed bone density scanner and the electronic health records system. Mr. Stover talked about the new records system, which has brought in extra cash from third-party payers but is costing a lot in time and money to implement. "It's very expensive to do this," he said. "I had no idea how long it would take. Not all the providers are loving it." Mr. Stover explained that providers have to know and use 13,000 record codes to diagnose and treat patients and that number is expected to expand to 70,000 in the future. "We'll be reporting on this for the next two to three years," he told the commissioners. The hospital also is working with all three companies, which provide Medicaid services to the state, Mr. Miller said. Each has a different set of rules and paperwork. It's a headache for the staff and many hospitals in other towns have only signed up with one insurance provider, he noted. But the Norton administration feels that all three are needed to serve the needs of all county residents using the state health system. The hospital is also looking

at renovating its upper level, he said, because it is starting to look dated and the hospital could use more space. There are two ideas on that. The hospital could just renovate that area, he said, or start from the bottom and work up. So far the best estimate for the work is about \$3.5 million but that could end up being more, he warned. However, once that work is done, the whole hospital will modernized. "This is a very challenging business," Mr. Miller said, adding that he thinks the staff is up to the future obstacles and that the hospital is an economic development engine for the area. "We bring business into the county," he said. Mr. Miller said the hospital is lucky to have a staff that has both younger people and those who are older, more experienced. The Norton County Hospital is in the black and way ahead of where it was this time last year or the year before. In the year between July 2011 and June 2012, the hospital showed a bottom line loss of \$47,754. In the first six months of this fiscal year (July through December), the hospital's bottom line is a \$442,712 profit. The same time last year, the profit was only \$14,165. In those six-month periods (July through December 2012 and 2011) the hospital brought in almost \$7.8 million as opposed to \$7.2 million in patient revenue.

However, after deductions for non-pays, write offs and lower insurance reimbursements, those numbers are \$5.7 million and \$5 million. Non-operating revenue from things like contributions, grants and interest income is up almost \$10,000. Expenses are also up a little with wages, purchased services, depreciation and professional fees costing more this year than last. However, the difference is enough to leave the hospital in a good position to pay its bills and look at updating its equipment and building and recruiting staff.

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