

Governor calls special session

In the interest of protecting public safety and in response to a request from Attorney General Derek Schmidt, Governor Sam Brownback will call the Legislature into special session at 8 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 3.

The Attorney General formally requested the special session on July 24, 2013 for the purpose of repairing Kansas' "Hard 50" sentence following the June 17, 2013 decision of the United States Supreme Court in *Alleyne v. United States*. Legal experts in the field agree that the *Alleyne* decision renders the current Kansas "Hard 50" law unconstitutional because the sentencing decision is made by a judge and not the jury. According to the Attorney General, the Legislature can cure the constitutional defect by adopting a relatively simple procedural fix allowing the jury to make the necessary factual findings before the "Hard 50" sentence is imposed.

"The 'Hard 50' sentence is a vital public safety tool that has been in place for more than 10 years," Brownback said. "It is intended to remove the most dan-

gerous and violent killers from society for at least 50 years. The sudden absence of the 'Hard 50' sentence poses a real and present danger to the public safety of all Kansans. I am confident the Legislature can and will act quickly, with resolve and narrow focus, to protect our citizens by restoring to prosecutors the immediate ability to seek the 'Hard 50' sentence for the worst offenders."

Broad bipartisan support exists among the leaders of this Legislature that this special session is necessary and is in the best interests of public safety. Additionally, law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies across the state have urged the Governor to adopt the Attorney General's recommendation.

"We must address this issue to protect all our citizens, but particularly out of concern for the victims of these crimes and their families," Brownback said. "I agree with the Attorney General's opinion that we face an 'extraordinary occasion' sufficient to justify this office exercising its authority to call the Legislature into special session

pursuant to Article 1, Section 5 of the Kansas Constitution."

Due to the constitutional and statutory requirement that the state bring criminal defendants to trial in a speedy manner, time is of the essence. After consulting with Attorney General Schmidt and legislative leaders, it was agreed a special session during the first week of September is optimal timing. According to the law enforcement community that time period effectively protects public safety while allowing the necessary time requested by the Attorney General for adequate preparation and planning to ensure a quick, focused and orderly session. According to the Attorney General, putting this issue off until next January will "virtually guarantee" an increase in "the number of convicted killers who will be eligible for parole after only 25 years instead of after 50 years."

"It is my hope after talking to legislative leaders that the special session can be completed by the close of business on Sept. 5," said Governor Brownback.

Results in for 45th Conservation Reserve

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced recently that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will accept 1.7 million acres offered under the 45th Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up. The Department received nearly 28,000 offers on more than 1.9 million acres of land, demonstrating CRP's continuing appeal as one of our nation's most successful voluntary programs for soil, water, and wildlife conservation. Under Vilsack's leadership, USDA has enrolled nearly 12 million acres in new CRP contracts since 2009. Currently, there are more than 26.9 million acres enrolled on 700,000 contracts.

"For 27 years, lands in CRP have helped to conserve our nation's resources and played a part in mitigating climate change," said Vilsack. "American farmers and ranchers continue to recognize the importance of protecting our nation's most environmentally sensitive land by enrolling in CRP. As the commodities produced by our farmers and ranchers continue to perform strongly in the marketplace - supporting one out of every twelve jobs here in the United States - it is no surprise that American producers continue to recognize the importance of protecting our nation's most

environmentally sensitive land by enrolling in CRP."

In addition to today's announcement, over the last four years, USDA has set aside significant acreage under CRP's Continuous Enrollment Programs to target habitat conservation on especially important lands. For example, in March, 2012, President Obama dedicated 1 million acres of CRP to Continuous Enrollment Programs to conserve wetlands, grasslands and wildlife. This year, farmers and ranchers have already offered more than 370,000 acres under Continuous CRP sign-up, a figure that is impressive given that the lack of a Farm Bill extension last fall meant that CRP enrollment only reopened this spring in May. Lack of a comprehensive Farm Bill this year has resulted in uncertainty for achieving further enrollment objectives under continuous CRP.

CRP is a voluntary program that allows eligible landowners to receive annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource-conserving covers on eligible farmland throughout the duration of their 10 to 15 year contracts.

Under CRP, farmers and ranchers plant grasses and trees in fields and along streams or rivers. The plantings prevent

soil and nutrients from washing into waterways, reduce soil erosion that may otherwise contribute to poor air and water quality, and provide valuable habitat for wildlife. In 2012, CRP helped to reduce nitrogen and phosphorous losses from farm fields by 605 million pounds and 121 million pounds respectively. CRP has restored more than two million acres of wetlands and associated buffers and reduces soil erosion by more than 300 million tons per year. CRP also provides \$2.0 billion annually to landowners-dollars that make their way into local economies, supporting small businesses and creating jobs.

In addition, CRP sequesters more carbon dioxide than any other conservation program in the country, and also reduces both fuel and fertilizer use. Yearly, CRP results in carbon sequestration equal to taking almost 10 million cars off the road.

USDA selected offers for enrollment based on an Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) comprised of five environmental factors plus cost. The five environmental factors are: (1) wildlife enhancement, (2) water quality, (3) soil erosion, (4) enduring benefits, and (5) air quality.

"Creamy goes to heaven"



A local Norton County author held a book signing at Moffet Drug Store on July 22. Deb Jackson is seen here with Vesta Dougherty as Jennie Goldsby inquires about her book titled "Creamy Goes to Heaven". This book helps children and families cope with sadness and grief and accept death as a natural part of life. Look for more of Deb's work coming out this year and next.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

PUBLIC RECORD

Municipal Court

These transactions were taken from the records of filings in the offices of the Norton Municipal Court. These cases were given to the paper with the date of the hearings.

June 20

May 8-Fayth Davenport, Norton; Charge: Furnishing tobacco to a minor; Plea: No contest; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$200, costs \$76, total \$276.

May 20-Robert Solano, Holdrege, Neb.; Charge: Driving while license revoked; Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$250, costs \$76, total \$326.

June 3-Cole Renner, Norton; Charge: No seat belt (14-17 years of age); Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$60.

April 29-Kasey Slate, Norton; Charge: Disorderly conduct; Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$200, costs \$76, plus attorney fees.

June 2-Jennifer Vohs, Norton; Charge: 1. No proof of insurance, 2. No seat belt, 3. Driving in violation of restrictions; Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: 1. \$300, 2. \$10, 3. \$50, costs \$76, total \$436.

June 27

June 10-Sharon Thompson, Norton; Charge: 1. DUI, 2. Leaving scene of accident; Other action: 2. Dismissed, 1. Diversion with city prosecutor; Sentence: 1-year diversion and probation, costs \$76, assessment \$500, diversion fee \$200, total \$776. ADSAP evaluation and follow all recommendations.

June 13-Brook Hayenga, Emmetsburg, Iowa; Charge: Speeding 45 in 35; Plea: No contest; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$30, costs \$76, total \$106.

May 3-Brian Ulmer, Norton; Charge: Stop sign violation; Plea: No contest; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$60, costs \$76, total \$136.

July 11

May 9-Jeremy Ulmer, Norton; Charge: MIP-tobacco; Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Community service, pick-up all trash along railroad from Archer to State St., July 11, 2013-July 11, 2014.

June 27-Jeremy Ulmer, Norton; Charge: Curfew violation; Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Community service, pick-up all trash along railroad from Archer to State St., July 11, 2013-July 11, 2014.

June 27-Christopher Davis, Norton; Charge: Curfew violation; Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Community service.

June 25-April Fortner, Norton; Charge: Dog at-large; Plea: Guilty; Found: Guilty; Sentence: \$25 fine, costs waived-pen fixed, ordered to register dog with city.

There is going to be an

End of the Summer Bash at The Rock on Saturday, August 3 from 7:00-10:00 p.m.

All High School and Junior High Students are Invited

Free food, games, music and iPod Touch Raffles!!

STUDENT NEWS

Baron Green, a senior at Decatur Community High School, has been named an All-American Scholar by the United States Achievement Academy.

To qualify, scholars must earn a 3.3 or higher grade average

and be nominated by an instructor, counselor or other sponsor. Baron was nominated by teacher Patricia Dorshorst.

He will appear in the All American Scholar Yearbook, which is published nationally.

He is the son of Bill and Gail Cathcart of Oberlin and Dave Green of Herndon. Grandparents are Bernie and JoAnn Bowen of Norton and Joe and Nadine Green of Herndon.

COLLEGE NOTES

These area students have accepted scholarships from Fort Hays State University for the 2013-2014 academic year.

Austin Duscher, Norton, a 2013 Norton Community High School graduate, accepted a \$900 Academic Opportunity

Award in the College of Business and Entrepreneurship and an \$800 Hays City Silver Academic Award. Duscher is the son of Joel and Lori Dusher, Norton. He plans to major in accounting.

Julia Kent, Norton, a 2013

12 credit hours and must have between a 3.5 and a 4.0 GPA.

Norton
Keiswetter, Landon

Norton Community High School graduate, accepted a \$500 Academic Opportunity Award in art and design and a \$500 Copper Academic Award. Kent is the daughter of Ron and Nancy Kent, Norton. She plans to major in art.

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CORRECTION

Due to incorrect information given to the paper for the USD 211 Back To School page that ran on Monday, July 29 enrollment times for the freshmen and junior students were wrong. The correct time for junior enrollment is Wednesday, August 7, from 1 to 4 p.m. and the correct time for the freshmen enrollment is Thursday, August 8, from 1 to 4 p.m.

The Norton Telegram will correct or clarify any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at 877-3361 to report errors.

We believe that news stories should be fair and factual and appreciate your calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.