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THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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Pages 8 & 9

Friday,
August 27, 2004

Commission hears report from Kansas agency

By VERONICA MONIER

The Norton County Commissioners went over the annual report for Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas with services Chairman Jim Bloom.

Mr. Bloom said the agency's budget still isn't balanced and that they are \$370,000 short.

He told the commissioner he is retiring, but will be staying on for the legislative session. He said his goal is to give his predecessor a balanced budget.

Right now, the agency has 89 people waiting for services and are in contact

with 147.

He said things have changed a lot in the 30 years he's worked for the agency. Right now, they are serving nearly 500 people, when they started they were serving 13.

"This county has been so supportive," he said. "Especially working through the closure of the state hospital. The county was also very supportive during this last legislative session."

The agency served 19 people in Norton County during 2003, at a cost of \$1.2 million.

He said the county contributed \$54,000 in 2004.

For 2005, he said they had a couple of counties that gave a small increase also, they'll get a small increase from the state. Norton County is again giving \$54,000.

Mr. Bloom said last year they opened two new homes in Hays for violent sex offenders. They also just opened up a new home in Atwood.

He said he'll be back once more before retiring to speak with the commissioners.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Adopted the proposed 2005 budget,

which is 7 mills lower than last years.

• Spoke with Kathy Zimmerman and Renee Spresser with Bridges Insurance Agency about insurance benefits for county employees. The commission held an employee meeting which gave all the employees the opportunity to ask questions

Commissioner Dean Kruse said they would like to have a comparison of the county's current plan versus the proposed plan from Bridges/Starmark.

Ms. Spresser said if they continue to (Continued on Page 5)

Norton, Kansas Home of Keith VanSike

Briefly

Boosters to meet on Wednesday

The first meeting of the 2004-'05 sports season for the Norton Blue Jay Booster Club will be at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday in the high school cafeteria.

Election of officers will be held and plans will be made for the tailgate party. Voting will be done for last season's "Booster of the Year".

All parents and community members are invited.

Coaches for football, volleyball, tennis and cross country will report on their teams, their members and any new rules.

Road Rally set for Sept. 4

The second annual Phillips County Red Cross Road Rally is set for noon, Sept. 4 at the Phillipsburg High School parking lot. Registration begins at 10 a.m.

This will be a "Mystery Trip" through Phillips County with clues to guide you to your destination.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Fees for adults are \$10; \$5 for children 3-12; and children 2 and under are free. The fee includes an evening meal at 6 p.m. at the Phillips County 4-H Building.

Anyone can come for the meal. Cost is \$5 per person. Children 2 and under eat free.

For additional information call Chris Hugunin at 785-543-5311 or Diana Hanchett at 785-543-2680.

Weather

Forecast:

Tonight — Partly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of thunderstorms in the evening. Lows in the lower 50s with north winds 10 to 20 mph. **Saturday**

— Partly cloudy with highs in the mid 70s. North winds 5 to 10 mph. **Saturday Night** — Clear with lows around 50. Northeast winds around 5 mph

shifting to the south 5 to 10 mph after midnight. **Sunday** — Sunny with highs in the mid 80s. South winds 5 to 10 mph. **Sunday Night** — Partly cloudy with lows in the mid 50s. **Monday** — Mostly sunny with highs in the mid 80s.

Monday Night — Mostly clear with lows around 60. **Tuesday** — Mostly sunny with highs in the mid 80s. **Tuesday Night** — 20 percent chance of precipitation.

Howell report:

Thursday	High 92, Low 61
Week ago	High 90, Low 55
Month ago	High 76, Low 56
Year ago	High 93, Low 67
August precipitation	15 inches
Year-to-date precipitation	16.58 inches

(Readings taken at the Paul and Pat Howell farm 10 Miles North and 1/3 Mile East of Norton)

Prayer

Gracious God, who is ever willing to forgive us, grant us a gentle spirit and a forgiving heart, that we may extend to others the mercy you show us. Amen



Republicans gather at Old Fashioned Picnic

Republicans meet and greet (right) at the 24th Annual Old Fashioned Republican Picnic held on the Hansen Plaza lawn in Logan on Aug. 21. Attendees stand (above) and salute the flag and listen to special entertainment by the Norton United Methodist Church Choir (below). David Will, Norton Community High School music instructor, opened the program with a patriotic solo.

—Photos by Janene Schneider



Options are being considered for new barn

By VERONICA MONIER

The Norton County Commissioners went over the pros and cons of using the old City Motors building as the new ambulance barn with Acting Ambulance Director Andy Nielsen.

Commissioner Leroy Lang said it would cost a lot to fix the south wall of the building and thought it might be better to just start with a new building.

Commissioner Dean Kruse said he has reservations about the proposed location of a new building. He said there is no place to park and many people turn around there

after going to the post office.

He said there would be people driving by all the time dropping off mail, which could cause an accident. The only good thing about it, he said, is that the county owns it.

Mr. Lang agreed with Mr. Kruse and said he didn't know if it's a good idea that the ambulance barn be downtown.

Mr. Nielsen said the lot was really the only thing available within city limits if the county decided to build a new structure.

Mr. Nielsen said it would be best to have

the ambulance barn in town to cut down on response time.

Natoma, New Age, Roy's, and Whispering Pines are all in the county, but were close to the city limits, said Mr. Lang.

Mr. Nielsen said he talked to the grant writer, who needs to know whether the commissioners want to build or renovate, so she can write the grant and get it turned in. He said the deadline is Oct. 1, but the county has to hold a public hearing 15 days before that.

Mr. Lang said he didn't know if they (Continued on Page 5)

Nominations needed for local committee

Local producers have until next Friday to nominate candidates to run for the Norton County Farm Service Agency county committee.

Vesta Hobbs, Norton County Farm Service Agency director, said producers can nominate candidates on form FSA-669A, which is available at the county office or on the Internet. Only one candidate can be nominated on a form.

Eligible voters may circulate or sign nominations for as many candidates as they choose. Nominees must sign the

form certifying they will serve if elected.

Nominees and voters must be 18 or older. They must be an owner, operator, tenant or sharecropper of farmland, or be eligible to participate in any Farm Service Agency program. Spouses may vote and serve on the committee.

"The county committee is a grassroots democracy at its finest, where local producers have a say in how federal programs affect their communities and their individual operations," Mrs. Hobbs said.

The committee oversees the work of the

county office and its executive director and advises the farm loan manager.

"I encourage all eligible producers, especially women and minorities, to participate in the county committee election process," Mrs. Hobbs said.

For information on the county committee election visit the Farm Service Agency county office at 113 N. Norton or call 877-5156.

Nomination forms are available at the office or on the Internet at www.fsa.usda.gov.

Names wanted for soil award

The Kansas Bankers Soil Conservation Awards Program is looking for people, who have done a good job of stewardship of the land.

"We look forward to public nominations of the awards," said Keith P. VanSike, Norton County Extension director. "We are asking for nominations to be submitted by Sept. 20."

The program is to stimulate interest in the conservation of agricultural resources by giving recognizing farmers and landowners, who have made outstanding progress in the establishment of soil and water conservation.

Included in the program are a soil conservation award, a windbreak award and a wildlife award.

Considerations for the awards are: use of land according to its capabilities; completeness of farm plan applied; balance of farm enterprise; quality of conservation work done and maintenance of practices; and special practices unique to the farming operation.

(Continued on Page 5)

Norcatur native is baseball legend

By DR. RODNEY D. and JEANNE MERKLE

Norcatur native Elden Leroy Auker had an illustrious sports career in college and as a professional athlete and is in the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame.

But, only by chance. He almost went to Nebraska.

Auker was born September 21, 1910 in Norcatur.

His high school football coach Pete Peterson, a Nebraska alum, suggested that he attend the University of Nebraska.

However, in a high school championship basketball game, a referee Charley Corsault, the basketball and baseball coach at Kansas State, convinced him to go to Kansas State College instead.

Coach Corsault said that he thought that since Auker grew up in Kansas, it would not be loyal to go to school in Nebraska.

Auker did not attend college to be an athlete. He wanted to become a doctor, but did not have money for tuition.

Overcoming a high school neck injury, Auker, a 6-foot, 2-inch, 194 pound right-hander, was one of the greatest athletes in Kansas State University history.

He was inducted into the Kansas Sports Hall of Fame and in 1990 he was inaugurated into the Kansas State University Sports Hall of Fame.

In 2000 he was nominated for the Kansas State University Baseball All Century Team.

He earned varsity letters in basketball in 1930, 1931 and 1932, captaining the squad in 1931-'32.

He played also baseball in 1930, 1931 (Continued on Page 5)



Nellie Shearer and Kathy Thibedeau, members of the Crimson Cuties of Norton, a chapter of the Red Hat Society, study the "Hats and Headdresses From Around the World" during the group's tour of the Hansen Museum. — Photo by Anise Gill

'Cuties' tour museum to see hats

The color of the day is always red and purple if you're a member of The Crimson Cuties of Norton, a chapter of the Red Hat Society.

Saturday, 19 members of the local chapter met in Logan at the Trojan Cafe for lunch. Red hats and purple outfits were worn by all the members unless a mem-

ber had a birthday that month and then the role is reversed: purple hat and red outfit.

Members claim that part of the fun of going places en masse is the looks and questions they receive from those around.

A tour of the mansions in Abilene is in the planning stages for a future outing.

Three new members joined the club. They are Janice Beale, Polly Bales and Joyce Howell.

Following lunch the "Cuties" toured the "Hats and Headdresses" display at the Dane G. Hansen Museum.

To learn more about joining the society, call Ruby Pflieger at 874-4766 or Anise Gill, 877-5170.

Commissioners question location of barn

(Continued from Page 1)

were going to be able to get this done this year. He said he's just not satisfied and that he has some serious reservations about the old building.

Mr. Nielsen said he would really like to get this in this year.

Mr. Kruse suggested local real estate agents be asked if they know of any land or building that would be suitable.

Mr. Nielsen said there is a building near the National Guard Armory that's for sale. The building is about the same price as the one downtown.

"That's another possibility," said Mr. Lang. "It's a newer building."

County Clerk Robert Wyatt said there is also a vacant lot south of the American Legion that isn't on the market, but the owner might be willing to sell.

"Both are better ideas than building it downtown," said Mr. Kruse.

Mr. Nielsen said he would check out these ideas and see what

the square footage on the building was.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Received two bids on a laptop computer. The bids were from Mortensen Computers for \$1,393 and from Computer Pro for \$1,425. The commissioner went with the lower bid.
- Heard from Emergency Technician Ruth Schillig that three students dropped out of the first responders class. Mr. Nielsen said before class started, they had the students sign an agreement saying if they dropped out they would

have to pay for the tuition fees and books. He said he didn't want to be mean, but they all read the agreement and they all signed it. He said they would be billed \$317 apiece.

There are 10 students remaining in the class.

- Learned from Mr. Nielsen that he filled out an application for reimbursement for the first responder class from the state. He said he can get about \$2,300 back.
- Held a 10-minute closed session to discuss non-election personnel with Mr. Nielsen. No action was taken.

Nominations due September 20

(Continued from Page 1)

The windbreak award considers windbreaks which provide protection for residences or other structures, areas, livestock, or fields. Windbreaks should be a minimum of 3-years old.

Wildlife habitat awards recognize individuals for establishment

and maintenance of areas to encourage and protect wildlife.

Nominations can be made by anyone in the county. Nomination forms can be picked up at the Norton County Extension Office or Norton County Conservation District. The nominations should be returned by Monday, Sept. 20.

County discusses insurance meeting

(Continued from Page 1)

educate the employees, things should work out. She said she was glad that the employees started to open up and ask questions.

Mrs. Zimmerman said she and Ms. Spresser were both pleased with the meeting. She said she heard a lot of the employees say how glad they were the commissioners were including them in the decision making process. She said there are commissioners in other counties who don't discuss this kind of thing with their employees.

"If we want to keep them happy," said Commissioner Leroy Lang, "we have to include them in the discussion. This is their health

care and they can't afford to have things go bad and get really expensive. We also have to keep the tax payers happy.

"We need to come up with a happy medium here."

Ms. Spresser and Mrs. Zimmerman will meet with the commissioners again on Sept. 13, hopefully with some hard figures. The county is also waiting on Blue Cross Blue Shield for their figures.

- Heard from Carol Harshbarger from the county appraiser's office. She said they have most of the rural addresses done for the new 911 mapping system and are about ready to take them to the post office. She said she would like to

have some kind of approval from the commissioners before doing this.

Mr. Kruse asked where final approval will be from, who was going to say "Ok, you're done."

Ms. Harshbarger said she talked to the postmaster, who said she was going to have the rural carriers check things out.

Mr. Lang said he didn't want to pass anything until he found out who was in charge. Commissioner Kruse agreed.

County Attorney Doug Sebelius said he thought the county was only responsible for getting a mapping system for emergency calls.

Ball hero tells about playing at park naming

(Continued from Page 3)

Lou Gehrig a few days before he was diagnosed with the disease that eventually took his life and his name.

It was 1939, Mr. Auker said, and he saw Mr. Gehrig at a game and went over to give him the usual greeting. Mr. Gehrig winced, he said, when he put his arm around his neck.

"Lou was the kind of guy that could lift you off the ground," he said, "but he was so weak."

Mr. Auker said coming back to Norcat, with a population then of around 400, was always a humbling experience.

The first time he returned home with his wife Mildred, Mr. Auker said, he remembers telling her: "Let's just act like regular people, and not the big shots that we really are."

He said they wanted to arrive late to miss the band, but Mr. Auker said not trumpets or drums greeted them as they drove into town.

The next day, he said, he took a walk around town and bumped into a friend of the family named John Holland.

They talked awhile, he said, until Mr. Holland finally asked, "Where have you been? I haven't seen you all summer."

As a baseball player's wife, Mrs. Auker said, each game her husband pitched affected her as much as it did him.

"I'd sit at the ball games and al-

most die for him," she said, "but you had to be careful up in the stands with the other wives.

"I couldn't say 'Why don't they give him any runs?'," she said, "because I'd be sitting next to the second and third basemen's wives.

Even after he retired in 1942 and went into business with a bonded abrasive company, Mr. Auker said, people would sometimes recognize him.

That's how he met California Gov. Ronald Reagan for the second time.

Gov. Reagan spoke at a National Association of Manufacturers banquet while Mr. Auker was vice president of the group. During his speech, the future president recognized the former ball player and then spoke to him afterwards.

"I'll never forget you in the 1935 World Series," Gov. Reagan told him, and then asked if he remembered him.

Mr. Reagan, then a sports announcer, had interviewed Mr. Auker before and after he pitched a winning game against the Chicago Cubs.

"The young announcer did such a good job," Mr. Auker said, "they made him the official announcer for the World Series. It was his first break in the entertainment world."

Mr. Auker said sometimes it's hard to see the baseball buddies he remembers as young and athletic growing older.

"So many have died," he said, "or

have something wrong with them."

When asked how he's managed to stay in good health, he said, "It's good genes I guess, and being raised in Norcat."

"I grew up strong out here facing this wind."

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TAX IS INCLUDED

Baseball legend comes from area

(Continued from Page 1)

and 1932 leading the Wildcats to the Big Six Conference Championship in 1930 as a pitcher.

Hereceived first team All-America honors in 1932 from the American Baseball Coaches Association.

He starred for Kansas State as a defensive back/half-back on the football field and was a letter winner in 1929, 1930 and 1931 garnering All Conference honors in 1931.

At the end of his college career he was offered a \$6,000 contract to

play football for the Chicago Bears (\$500 per game).

Instead, he chose to join the most popular sport of the era, baseball, and embarked on a ten-year major league career.

Auker has been the only Kansas State (College) University baseball player to compete in the World Series.

He is one of only 54 players from the Big Six, Big Seven, Big Eight, and Big 12 Conferences to play college baseball and participate in the major league World Series.

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