

Honor Rolls:

Norton and Northern Valley scholars are named.

Pages 5 & 7

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THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Sports:

Northern Valley's boys and girls in league action. Norton Blue Jay's basketball teams play Trego.

Pages 8 & 10

Tuesday
January 25, 2005

County rings East Campus bells

By VERONICA MONIER

How much would 104 years of back rent on a block of real estate in the middle of Norton come to?

No one knows and luckily Norton County isn't asking the Norton School District to pay any.

Although no one realized it, for more than 100 years East Campus has belonged to the county, not to the school district.

A title search initiated by the school board turned up the odd land problem.

At its December meeting, the Norton School Board found the district didn't own the East Campus buildings, including the wrestling room.

The board was going to use the property as collateral to get \$600,000 of Qualified Zone Academic Bonds money, which it was going to use to fix some of its roofs.

To use property as collateral it is necessary that the owner have clear title. Thus a title search was made and the district found it had a landlord it didn't know about.

In the end, the board decided to use Eisenhower Elementary as collateral instead.

But, Superintendent Greg Mann also asked the county if it could please give the

district its school.

When County Clerk Robert Wyatt brought it up at the Norton County Commissioners meeting yesterday, everyone was a bit baffled.

Are you serious? Assistant County Attorney Doug Sebelius said when he heard the news.

Mr. Wyatt said the county owns the (Continued on Page 5)

Norton, Kansas Home of June Keiswetter

Briefly

Norton donates \$700 to victims

Norton County residents raised \$700 to aid the refugees in Sri Lanka, one of 12 countries hit by a tsunami on Dec. 26.

The relief effort was coordinated through Dinesh Kumarajeeva, former American Field Service student in Norton.

He is living in the Boston area but his sister, Dinusha, still lives in Sri Lanka. The donations were received by the United Northwest Federal Credit Union in Norton and wired to Dinusha. She is working with a team of doctors to distribute immediate relief, focusing on children in refugee camps.

Other relief efforts also are raising money here for the tsunami victims.

School paper available today

Norton Community High School's *The Nugget* will be in today's edition of *The Telegram* for those subscribers who get their paper delivered by carrier. People who want a copy, but don't get one with their paper, can stop by the high school to pick one up.

Norton High School students will get a copy of *The Nugget* at the school.

Blue Jay boosters to meet Wednesday

The Norton Blue Jay Booster Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday in the high school cafeteria.

Speakers will be Norton wrestling coach Bill Johnson, girls basketball coach Kevin Jilka and boys basketball coach Doug Reusink.

They will update the fans on the latest Blue Jay competition and preview upcoming contests.

Refreshments will be served. All fans of Norton Community High School sports are invited.

Weather

Forecast:

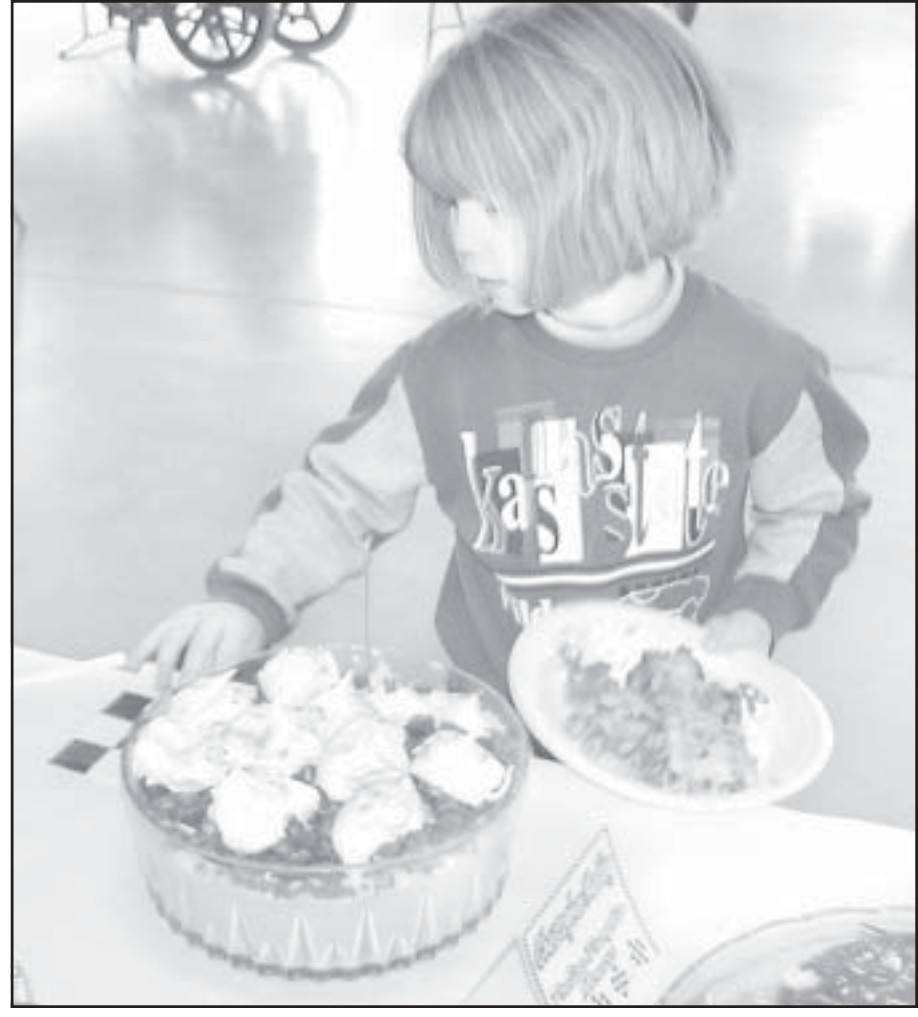
Tonight — Increasing clouds with lows in the upper 20s. **Wednesday** — Cloudy with highs in the middle 40s.

Howell report:

Friday High 62, Low 18
Saturday High 30, Low 19
Sunday High 50, Low 36
Monday High 69, Low 37
Week ago High 30, Low 21
Month ago High 41, Low 30
Year ago High 40, Low 26
January precipitation50 inches
Year-to-date precipitation50 inches
(Readings taken at the Paul and Pat Howell farm 10 Miles North and 1/3 Mile East of Norton)

Prayer

God, help us to remember that we need your help and guidance every day. Teach us to rely on your wisdom. Amen



Jade Braun (left) put the final touches on her tablescapes before the judge came to her table in Saturday's 4-H Favorite Food Show. Miss Braun won the top place in Level II with her version of Creamy Cinnamon Rolls. Molly Maddy, little sister of two of the entrants, helped herself to samples during the tasting portion of the show. Pictured is Praline Pumpkin Mousse, prepared by Christopher Maddy.

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

4-H'ers offer favorite foods during show

What do "Sweet Treat Tortillas", "Creamy Cinnamon Rolls", "Cherry Celebration" and "Holiday Game Hens" have in common?

They are the recipes submitted, prepared and presented by the top purple ribbon winners in Saturday's annual 4-H Favorite Food Show held at the 4-H Building in Norton.

Twenty-five 4-H'ers, 10 boys and 15 girls, set a decorated table, prepared a dish

and then presented it to a judge who critiqued them on nutrition, knowledge, creativity and, of course, taste.

The top winners in each level received a Pillsbury cookbook. All other entrants received a covered Pyrex mixing bowl.

Level I: Bailey Ambrosier, purple; Carson Montgomery, Rebecca Wentz, Kenzie Esslinger and Marissa Maddy, blue; and Travis Cressler, red.

Level II: Jade Braun, Megan Wentz,

Wyatt Wentz and Sarah Whitney, purple, and Morgan Baumann, Shelbi McKenna, David Cressler, Tyler Montgomery, and Jade Cressler, blue.

Level III: Kyra Fulton, Alison Cole, Bryce Lofgreen, Josh Gallentine, Matt Miller and Christopher Maddy, purple, and Carissa Wentz, and Justin Chandler, blue.

Level IV: Katrina Wentz and Dana Hillebrand, purple.

Committee members who helped organize the show were Elaine and Bryce Lofgreen, Mary and Katrina Wentz, Lois Wentz, Jamie Wentz, Monica and Megan Cole, Staci Montgomery, Kathy and Keesha Holste and Stacy Whitney.

Judges were Janelle VanKooten, a Family Nutrition Program assistant from Hays; Amy Taylor, Trego County Extension Director and Susan Schlichting, 4-H agent from Ellis County.

County looks to sell old property

By VERONICA MONIER

Some folks see it as storage, others consider it an eyesore. Either way it's gotta go.

The Almena PRIDE Committee has asked the Norton County commissioners to clean up a piece of property the county owns.

The county uses the land, which has an abandoned church on it, to store a motor-grader blade. It also stores two snow plows on the property in the summer, said Road and Bridge Supervisor Tom Brannan.

The property is on Pratt Ave. just west of Northern Valley High School.

But, the county isn't the only one to use the property for storage.

Mr. Brannan said that Jerry Laurin stores stuff inside the old church. Mr. Brannan said that Mr. Laurin told him that he had gotten permission from a previous road and bridge supervisor to do so.

On the outside, Dan Engelhardt, who lives across the street, also uses the area to store old tractors and lawn mowing equipment.

The county bought the property in Au-



An abandoned church, which is used for storage, it sits on are owned by the county, which is looking to sell the property at auction. The church and the lot

— Telegram photos by Veronica Monier

gust, 1979, from the Elders of the Main Street Church of Christ of Milan, Tenn. for \$2,500 and is now trying to decide whether or not to sell it.

Mr. Brannan said he talked to the Kansas Department of Transportation, which told him the county could park its equipment on the state's right-of-way when needed.

He said the county doesn't really need the property and recommended to the

commissioners that they sell it. He said the church is in poor condition and couldn't really be restored.

Commissioner Dean Kruse said the county will probably auction off the property. But, he said, it won't be doing anything with the stuff inside or outside of the building for the moment.

During their weekly meeting on Monday the commissioners discussed the problem.

"I think we ought to get rid of it," Commission John Miller said.

"For me it doesn't matter either way," Mr. Brannan said "I just have to have a place to park a blade and that's been taken care of."

Assistant County Attorney Doug Sebelius suggested scheduling the building and lot for public auction.

The commissioners asked Mr. Sebelius to see how an auction could be done.

(Continued from Page 1)

entire block including school buildings and parking lot.

On the deed it says the property was sold to the county from the Lincoln Land Company of Nebraska for \$250. The land was to be used as a county school.

It was deeded to the county in October of 1901 and then the deed was filed in March of 1902.

"Everybody just assumed that the school owned it," Mr. Wyatt said.

Mr. Sebelius said the quit-claim was needed to convey the property title from the county to the school. He said in this case, no money is required.

The property was meant to be used as a school and is still used for school functions.

He said there were no legal problems with signing the property over to the school district.

"It makes sense to give it to them," he said. "It's just kind of an odd thing. The county has owned the property for over 100 years, but no one really thought about it until now."

"There has been a little levity over the situation."

Before signing the quit-claim deed Monday afternoon the commissioners did a little daydreaming on how they could use East Campus including looking at it as a really large economic development office and fun of having their own auditorium.

It was all in fun, however, and the commissioners quickly signed away their piece of the school system.

"It should have been done in 1905," said Commissioner John Miller.

"Well, it's 2005 now," said Commissioner Leroy Lang. "Let's get her done and not leave it for the next generation."



Norton County Girl Scouts are beginning cookie sales. Brownie Girl Scouts Shelby Mulford (left) and Morgan Griffey practiced their sales technique on Myron Veh. There are 46 Girl Scouts in Norton County and they will be selling cookies until Feb. 6. They will be delivered Feb. 22. Cookies for sale this year include: caramel delites, peanut butter patties, shortbread, thin mints, peanut butter sandwich, lemon pastry cremes, animal treasures and iced berry pinatas. Leaders are Lois Rostek, Tammy Ball and Donna Mulford.

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

State board explains supreme court ruling

VERONICA MONIER
Kansas school boards are not exactly upset that the state Supreme Court has ruled that the state isn't putting enough money into education.

Bill Curtis, the associate executive director of the Kansas Association of School Boards, said at a special meeting last Monday night in Norton that the state Supreme Court's decision validates what the association has been saying all along on school finance.

He said the Montoy vs. State of Kansas decision, in a suit filed by several larger school districts, so far, is a short one. A long decision will not be released until after April 13, giving the state Legislature time to change the law.

Mr. Curtis said the decision can't be appealed, because the court hasn't closed out the case. He said their decision was "per curiam," which means that it was a decision of the entire court, rather than the individual members.

He said the Supreme Court agreed with a District Court decision that the Legislature failed to meet its obligation to suitably finance education.

Mr. Curtis said the high court ruled in 1992 that school finance law was constitutionally suitable, but the law has changed since.

That is what makes the finance law unconstitutional, he added.

"Achievement and student progress has been a part of our finance law since 1992," he said. "Those are part of the basis for No Child Left Behind. We've been doing it since '92. Suitability cannot be just a list of classes. Not if we are going to maintain Kansas' high education standards."

He said in 2001, the Legislature hired Augenblick and Myers, a consulting firm, to do a study on what a suitable education would cost. When the Legislature didn't like the figures, he said, they shelved the problem.

The district court decision, which was upheld by the Supreme

Court, found a lot of changes since 1992 that affected school funding, he said. They fall into two categories — social and legal.

Socially, he said more students today live in poverty and more have limited English, there has been an increase in immigrants, and state universities are using more rigorous admissions standards.

He said on the legal side, education goals and the state oversight committee have been removed. There have been changes in enrollment and at-risk weighting. Reductions in taxes have reduced revenue. Money to pay for special education has been added to local option budgets while state aid has been reduced to 85 percent, and the limits on capital outlay have been removed.

Most of all, the Legislature cut state taxes and schools have been forced to raise local taxes.

"When school finance was first enacted in 1992, the state mill levy was 35," he said. "Today, it is 20. As taxes came down, local option budgets went up."

"Now there are too many school districts relying on local option budgets to pay for general education, rather than using the money for extra expenses, as was intended."

Mr. Curtis said the district court found the 1992 law to be unconstitutional. The Supreme Court agreed.

He said it was figured that the state would have to provide \$853 million to finance education, which is \$263 million more than it gives now.

Mr. Curtis said he didn't think enrollment weighting would be taken out of school finance, but schools will have to prove the costs.

He said the Supreme Court is aware that the decision raises questions about continuing the present financing formula until it can be fixed, and that the decision could have the potential to disrupt public schools.

Emergency farm loans available

Emergency loans are available to farmers in Norton, Decatur and Phillips counties who had crop or livestock losses because of drought last year.

Applications will be accepted by at the Farm Service Agency until Aug. 29.

Loans covering physical and/or production losses may be made at a 3.75 percent interest rate, said the agency's Farm Loan Manager John C. Vogt.

Loans for physical losses may be used to replace equipment, livestock or buildings, including

homes, lost through the disaster.

Loans for production losses may be used to buy feed, seed, fertilizer and livestock, or to make payments on real estate and chattel debts.

The money can also be used for other essential operating and living expenses, said Mr. Vogt.

To be eligible, an applicant must be operating a family-size farm or ranch and must be unable to get help elsewhere.

Farmers who suffered at least a 30 percent reduction to a crop may qualify. Emergency disaster pro-

duction loss loans cover 100 percent of qualifying losses.

Loan availability is limited to \$500,000, less the balance of all prior emergency loans.

Mr. Vogt said that those farmers, who need help and think they are eligible should apply at the Norton County Farm Service Agency Office.

The Norton office is at 11645 Pineview Dr. and is open 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The office can also be reached at 877-5156.

USD 212 NORTHERN VALLEY HONOR ROLL

NORTHERN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Second Nine Weeks

HIGHEST:

Freshmen: Hannah Ponstein, Stephanie Tubbs, Jessica Zillinger
Sophomores: Jessica Holmes, Ashley Kingham, Andrea Lowry, Abigail Ponstein
Juniors: Joey Copper, Clarke Nelson, Serena Woodside
Seniors: Janelle Fritz, Julie Griffin, Kristin Hardy, Thomas Ostmeyer

HONORS I

Freshmen: Joni Hilburn, Kelsey Kinderknecht, Jessica Largent, Bryce Marble
Sophomores: Kelli Cole, Henry Griffiths, Jena Jessup, Melody Miller

Juniors: Hope Hansen, Cody Lowry, Andrew Sheley, Avery Thalheim, Emily Zillinger

Seniors: Lindsey Graham, Mercedes Hays, Jesse Hilburn, Kelsey Stupka

HONORS II

Freshmen: Kylena Hager, Amanda Hopkins, Justin Lee, Amy Shearer, Amanda Turman

Sophomores: Jessica King, Jessica Wenzl

Juniors: Brynton Anderson, Tom Bartley, Casey Dole, Cole Kinderknecht, Johannes Laubscher

Seniors: Jayme Horacek, Lindsey Jessup, Chris Lee

NORTHERN VALLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Second Nine Weeks

HONOR ROLL

Eighth Grade: Drew Britt, Cody Callaway, Taylor Hammond, Hannah Hawks, Ethan Hays, Stanton Nelson

Seventh Grade: Christina Anderson, Alison Cole, Megan Cole, Samuel Field, Jordan Herman, Landon Schneider, Amber Sheley,

Karen Wenzl

HONORABLE MENTION

Eighth Grade: Brittney Braun, Drew Eagleburger, Nathaniel Graham, Derek Horacek, Chaim McMillin, Travis Redeker, Eric Woodside

Seventh Grade: Miriah Florence, Jacob Gallentine, Brandon Towery

These Businesses Congratulate all the Students for their Achievements:

Nelson Farms, Inc., Long Island

First National Bank & Trust

Long Island — Member FDIC

Long Island Grain Co., Inc., Long Island

Jessup Realty, LLC

Kim and Monte Jessup, Almena

NOVUS Windshield Repair

Frank and Pauline Kaiser - Shane Baird

Almena State Bank—Almena & Norton (Member FDIC)

Carver Truck Lines, Inc.

Dave & Julana Carver, Almena

Husky Hogs, LLC, Long Island

CONGRATULATIONS