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Pages 6 & 7

Vol. 98, No. 19
75 cents

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Sports:

Wrapup and photos of Norton's state championship wrestling team; Norton players selected for all-league basketball team.

Pages 8 & 10

Friday
March 11, 2005

Norton, Kansas
Home of Dave Riemann

Briefly

Tornado sirens will sound in drill

As a part of Severe Weather Awareness Week, Norton will be sounding its tornado sirens on Tuesday in the afternoon. The drill is to make sure everything is working right.

Sheriff Troy Thomson, who is also the county's emergency preparedness coordinator, said people need to take the opportunity during the drill to familiarize themselves with the safest place to go in case of a tornado. He said people also need to make sure they have the right things on hand in the shelter, such as flashlights, batteries and a working radio.

Help available for veterans

A service representative from the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs will be at the Norton City Office from 1-2:30 p.m. on Monday to assist veterans and their families with matters pertaining to veterans' benefits.

Toy show set for next Saturday

Hundreds of collectors and hobby fans are expected in Norton Saturday, March 19, for the 17th Annual Toy and Sports Card Show, which will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the 4-H Building.

Supported by the Norton Chamber of Commerce, the event is sponsored by the Norton Methodist Men's organization. Dealers display everything from sports cards to automotive, farm, trucking, construction and other toys of all sizes both new and antique.

Proceeds from the show are used to pay for mission activities, student scholarships and public benefit contributions. Admission is \$1 for adults and free for children under 12, who are with an adult.

Weather

Forecast:

Tonight — Partly cloudy with lows in the mid 30s. **Saturday** — Breezy and partly cloudy with highs in the mid 60s. **Saturday Night** — Lows in the upper 20s. **Sunday** — 20 percent chance of rain or snow with highs in the mid 40s.

Howell report:

Tuesday High 58, Low 29
Wednesday High 58, Low 41
Thursday High 60, Low 27
Week ago High 67, Low 31
Month ago High 54, Low 23
Year ago High 58, Low 27
March precipitation 0.00 inches
Year-to-date precipitation 1.40 inches
(Readings taken at the Paul and Pat Howell farm 10 Miles North and 1/3 Mile East of Norton)

Prayer

Creator God, help us to be faithful in planting seeds of righteousness in the world around us. May others see your love in our daily living and seek your grace. Amen



Joan Knoll, Norma Rumford and Anthony Knoll (above) were just part of the team of volunteers who helped wrap and sort daffodils for Daffodil Days Wednesday, a fundraising event for the American Cancer Society. Lila Atwell (below) checked off the counted out bundles of bouquets, making sure they were going where they needed to be. — Telegram photos by Veronica Monier

Volunteers, flowers help cancer society

By BEVERLY KINDLER

Many homes, offices and businesses throughout Norton County were brightened with signs of spring this week when daffodils, often recognized as a sign of spring and a symbol of hope, were delivered Wednesday.

Volunteers take orders in February for daffodils and then return in March to deliver the flowers. For each bouquet, a donation is given to the American Cancer Society for cancer research, education and to support patient services.

This year, 825 bouquets of 8 to 10 flowers were ordered and delivered in Norton County, raising \$4,135 in donations.

Thirty volunteers made the 2005 campaign a success — Lila Atwell, Donna Bantam, Wilda Bowman, Claire Ann Eppinger, Shirley Farber, Lila Fisher, Karen Glenn, Cynthia Glennemeier, Mary Gnagy, Laverne Graham, Gloria Heikes, Evelyn McDiffett, Lynn Nelson, Vida Perrill, Vera Reusink, Ella Mae Schulze, Delores Stapp, Carol Voss, Bev Wilken, Jean Williams, Sandy Worden, Jamie Wentz, Joan Knoll, Anthony Knoll, Clair Rumford, Lavonne Juenemann, Norma Howarth, Jane Kersenbrock, Virginia Carlton and Charlene Weskamp.

Norma Rumford and Beverly Kindler were co-chairs for the drive in the Norton area. Laverne Graham was in charge of the drive in Alma, Gloria Heikes in Lenora, and Jamie Wentz in Norcatur.

Support was also provided by the Norton Senior Center and Norton Flowers, Gifts and Greenhouse.



County hires consultants to help out

By VERONICA MONIER

The Norton County Commissioners are going to get some help with health insurance from CBIZ Benefits and Insurance Services.

The company made a presentation last year and were at Monday's commission meeting to see if the county would like to make use of its services.

Development Director Dennis Lister and Senior Employee Benefits Consultant Janet Willis told the commissioners that according to Business Insurance Magazine, CBIZ is the largest benefits consultants in the nation.

Mr. Lister said the company has around 700 employees in Kansas and about 5,000 nationally. He said he has been with the company for 20 years, while Ms. Willis has been there for 10 years.

He said with all of the new laws regarding insurance, the company's clients were in good shape because of all of the lawyers and accountants on staff. He said the company was also the largest insurance broker in the state.

He said CBIZ has clients all over the state, including the cities of Kansas City, Mo., Olathe, and Overland Park, Leavenworth and Saline counties, and the Garden City, North Platte and Topeka school districts.

"We are local from the standpoint of the state," he said. "We're very familiar with what is going on around Kansas, especially with insurance. It doesn't matter if our clients have 5 employees or 5,000, we work with them all. We have a pretty good representation."

Mr. Lister said if the county decided to become a client, then a team from CBIZ would work with the commissioners. He said the company's goals are to control costs, assess and transfer liabilities, mini-

(Continued on Page 5)

Armory is getting a makeover

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

Over 23 tons of brick and concrete have been removed from the National Guard Armory in Norton during a renovation project that started in September.

Statewide, there are many armory buildings getting a facelift. One of the reasons Norton's armory was selected is the community support of the building.

Many events are held in the spacious building including auctions, the annual craft show and the toy show. Those events have all had to find other venues during the face lift.

Built about 1950, the armory was in need of updating, those who used it said. The renovation has included having the building replumbed and rewired. New

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City closer to getting wastewater plans finished

By VERONICA MONIER

The City of Norton is getting closer to a new sewer plant.

Thaniel Monaco, an engineer for Miller and Associates of McCook, told the Norton City Council Wednesday that the new plant could be built without affecting the present plant with the only conflict being the lab and administration building.

He said while that building is being constructed, the controls could be operated somewhere else and then moved to the new building when it was finished. The lab/administration building will take about two or three months to build, but can be functional before that.

He said the new facilities will be able

to handle a 50 percent increase in case the city wanted to expand and could be added to handle a larger increase.

The new plant will have an auxiliary generator and the area will be fenced.

Mr. Monaco expects the facility plans to be submitted to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for review in 30 days. It will probably take the state about six to eight weeks to review the plans, he said.

If all goes well, Mr. Monaco said he plans to advertise for bids in May and hopes to have the contractors starting dirt work in August. He said it will take nine months to a year to get the new plant built.

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Norton man among guard recruits in Iraq

Specialist Matthew Scheetz attended school at Norton Community High School. He joined the Army National Guard in 2001, and completed his basic training at Fort Sill, Okla., during his junior year of high school.

After high school he took his advanced individual training at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland.

He attended college at Barton County Community College and trans-

(Continued on Page 5)



Specialist Matthew Scheetz



Staff Sgt. Bill Neff, walks around construction debris and materials layed out on the floor of the Norton National Guard Armory that is being refurbished. The project began in September and is expected to be completed by April.
— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

Armory is in process of being remodeled

(Continued from Page 1) radiant heating and air conditioning systems will be much more energy efficient and will save on utilities. New windows and doors, new outlets and new bathroom facilities have also been installed. The 30 to 35 National Guard soldiers, who work out of the armory, will benefit from their new surroundings. Classrooms have been expanded, the kitchen updated and the floor in the shop has been stripped and resealed. Until the renovation began, soldiers were the ones responsible for upkeep and maintenance. Full-time employees of the National Guard in Norton are Supply Staff Sgt. Bill Neff, Sgt. Pat Hewitt and recruiter, Sgt. Joe Leroux. Rhodes Construction of Goodland and Dodge City is in charge of the project that should be completed in April. A ribbon cutting and open house is planned at the facility as soon as the construction is completed.

City wastewater plant plans almost finished

(Continued from Page 1) Mr. Monaco said the project is being paid for using state revolving loan funds and that the council may want to consider raising the sewer rates soon to start paying for the project. He said the loan payments begin in 2006. The council can wait until then to raise rates or it could raise them now and borrow less money. "The more money the city can put into the project without borrowing, the better," he said. Councilman Ron Briery said however the council decides to do it, it needs to make sure that it is explained to the public so they understand what's happening. Mayor David Corns asked the utility and finance committees to talk about this together and make a recommendation. As for the water plant, Mr. Monaco said he might have a solution to get the city's water in compliance. He said they have tested the water and tried several different agents to get the trihalomethane and haloacetic acid levels down. They need to reduce the pH of the water to about six, treat it and then bring the pH back up to the mid-seven area. The equipment to do this will cost about \$6,000 and most of it can be used in the new plant. The council authorized Mr. Monaco to work with the staff and agreed to the purchase of the equipment and necessary chemicals. In other business, the council: • Chose to pay interest owed to the state revolving loan fund as it accrues. City Administrator Rob Lawson said the city had the option of paying interest owed on the outstanding loan balance during the wastewater project construction period, or of capitalizing the interest amount into the loan balance and repay it as part of the loan. He said if the council decided to do it the second way, the city would be paying interest on the interest.



Commissioners get help with health insurance benefits

(Continued from Page 1) Commissioner John Miller said they were concerned about the plan the county has and if it would be available next year. He said the county is pooled with the Kansas Bankers Association, who is thinking about pulling out of the plan. If that happens, then there won't be enough people using the plan to continue. Mr. Lister said he would be meeting with Blue Cross Blue Shield in a couple weeks and he would know more then. Ms. Willis said it might be better for the county, because maybe a better plan was out there. Mr. Lister said there were probably a lot of national companies out there who would be interested in looking at the county's plan. Which, he said, might make Blue Cross Blue Shield a bit more proactive and cooperative. "Our goal is really not to change you from your current carrier," he said. "It is always best, in our minds for the employees, to stay with the same carrier. But we also want to get you the best plan available." He said the Garden City School District was able to keep the same provider and at the same time save money. But, he said, it took CBIZ a good six months of negotiating to accomplish that. "It's not an overnight thing," he said. "We're not really looking for the cheapest deal today, but rather the best deal in the long haul. That is really what we try to do—think in the long term." Mr. Miller said another concern was the networks available. "One of the biggest questions from our employees is dealing with the networks, knowing which can be used with their insurance and how much it will cost," he said. "To be truthful, a lot of our employees work for us because of the benefit package we have. That's why you guys are back." Mr. Lister said CBIZ's biggest goal was to try and get the county the best package it could with Blue Cross Blue Shield, so that people wouldn't have to switch doctors or hospitals. But, he said, the times have changed enough that the county could switch providers without having to change networks. "One of the reasons we do back-grounds on your current plan is so we know how many people go where and use which doctors," he said. "We're not just looking for numbers and a plan design. We're going to tell those providers, 'hey, we need these doctors'." "Changing carriers, changing doctors, changing hospitals is always our last resort." He said 80 to 85 percent of the time, they were able to keep the same provider for their clients. Road and Bridge Supervisor Tom Brannan said the general consensus was that the county needed to do this. "No one knows about insurance," he said. "So what's this going to cost us," asked Mr. Miller. Ms. Willis said it was the same price as last year — \$1,500 a month. The first two months would be paid for up front and the county has a 30-day cancellation ability. Mr. Lister said the consulting firm would cost about 2 to 3 percent of what the county was paying for insurance. Mr. Miller said he was in favor of signing the contract while the CBIZ representative were still there, since Assistant County Attorney Doug Sebelius has already looked at the contract. Commissioner Leroy Lang said he would prefer that Mr. Sebelius looked at the contract again before signing it, but that he was in favor of signing it after that. "We have got to do something for our employees," said Mr. Lang. "We have to be good to them. This is a large part of their pay. They are good employees."

Norton man serves country in Iraq

(Continued from Page 1) He is the son of Linda Scheetz, Norton, and Don Scheetz, Clyde. His great-grandmother is Olene Hillebrand, Norton. Specialist Scheetz is the brother of Kimberly Wilson, Garner, Iowa; John Scheetz, Colorado; and Mark Scheetz, Norton. Mail will reach him at BTRY E161 FA (TA), LSA ANACONDA, APO AE 09391. He was activated that same month and he went to Fort Sill until December. On Dec. 11, he was sent to Kuwait. In January he was deployed from Kuwait to Iraq where he is stationed at Camp Anaconda. He expects to be there for 12-18 months. He works as a generator repairman.

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