

Schools refigure budget

State audit helps find more cash from head count

By VERONICA MONIER
The Norton School Board will re-publish its general fund budget to include just a little bit more money.

Superintendent Greg Mann said the district predicted that it would have a full-time equivalency enrollment of 1,150.6 students last July. The district came up with that number using last year's enrollment figures to figure the budget.

But, Mr. Mann said, during an annual audit by the Kansas Department of Education, it was found that the district actually had an equivalency of 1,150.8. The 0.2 addition allows the district to claim \$773 more in general fund authority.

"I don't know if it's possible to get closer than that," Mr. Mann said. He said republishing the budget will not affect the mill levy or the amount of taxes being paid. He said if the Norton district doesn't claim the money someone else will.

The only cost to the district will be re-publishing the budget. The board set a budget hearing for 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 11, during the school board meeting. At that time, the public can comment on re-publishing the budget if it chooses.

In other business, the board:

- Continued participation in the Parents As Teachers program. This year the program is costing the district \$6,648, which is less than expected. The state pays 60 percent of the program's cost. Mr. Mann said the cost will probably go up some next year because of an increase in employees' salaries and benefits.

The vote passed 4-1 with Board member Elaine Lofgreen voting no.

- Heard that a by-pass on a leaking hot water heater storage tank at Eisenhower seems to be working. Mr. Mann said they decided to just pipe around the storage tank and, because they have not run out of hot water, decided to leave it the way it is. He said they are just going to leave the tank where it is because it would take a lot of unnecessary work and expense to remove it.

- Listened to a presentation on the social studies curriculum by Margaret Moore, a third-grade teacher and a member of the social studies curriculum committee. Mrs. Moore passed out a sample test that is given to the sixth-grade students to help with assessment tests.

- Kept the fee for driver's education at \$50 for in-district students and \$100 for out-of-district students. The Lenora students are considered in district.

- Approved a three-year audit contract with Mapes and Miller of Norton. The cost will increase \$100 each year up to \$5,350 in 2007.

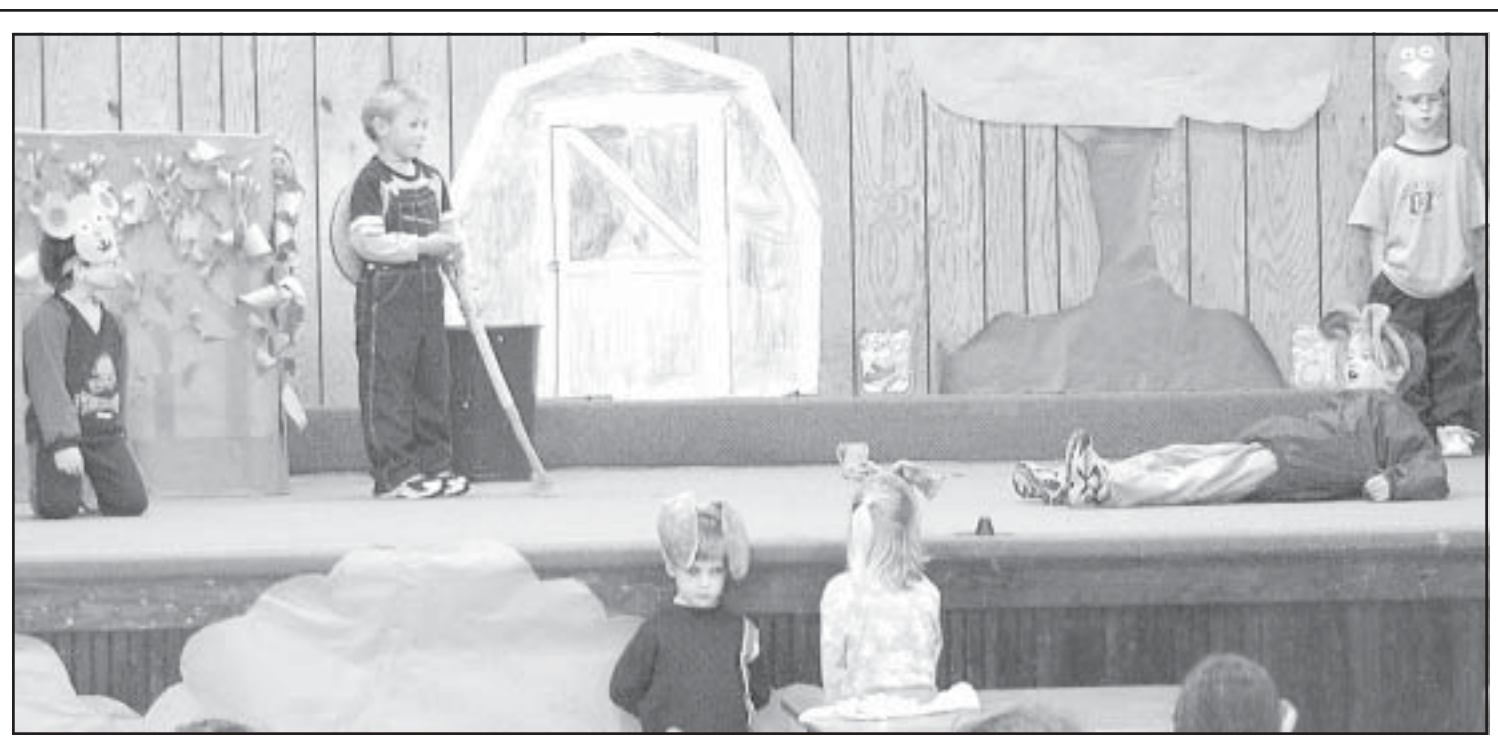
- Directed Mr. Mann to use the remaining Tansill construction money, estimated to be \$1,400, to buy technology for the board room. Mr. Mann said he would like to get a television/VCR unit, which will cost about \$200, and would also like to get a computer projector or an electronic whiteboard, which he's estimated will cost about \$1,200.

- Took no action on a contract with the Jennings School District. Mr. Mann said the Norton district is already enrolling a number of Jennings students who live close enough.

He said students who wanted to come to Norton will do so without the need of a contract.

- Went into three closed sessions lasting 50 minutes altogether to talk about non-elected personnel.

- Terminated Debra Jackson as the junior high/high school assistant cook because she wasn't able to perform the job, even with reasonable accommodations, and offer the job to Norma Archibald, who has been substituting in the kitchen since October.



Youngsters entertain with play

It wasn't quite Broadway, but when the Northern Valley kindergartners performed Peter Rabbit Thursday in Almena, parents and students had fun. Peter, played by Carson Wallace, (left) got directions from a mouse, played by Turner Linner, to get out of Mr. McGregor's garden. Others in the play were Kylie Kinderknecht, Kade Unterseher, Kendra Cadwalader, Drake Shearer and Johnathan Towery. Jennifer Ortiz, another kindergartner, was sick.

—Photos by Veronica Monier

Increase helps employees fight inflation

By VERONICA MONIER
The county recently gave most of its employees a cost of living increase in their salaries.

This is a common practice in many larger businesses and the county has about 69 employees, making it one of the larger employers in Norton County.

County Clerk Robert Wyatt said 59 full-time employees received the 5 percent increase, including

elected officials. Mr. Wyatt said the living adjustment will total \$71,915 for the year. The county's annual payroll budget is approximately \$1,635,000, while the total yearly budget is \$5,205,772.

An example of the 5 percent increase would be if an employee made \$15,000 a year, the increase would add up to \$750 for the year. At \$20,000, the increase would be

\$1,000 and at \$30,000 the increase would be \$1,500.

Usually, he said, the cost of living increase is 2 1/2 to 3 percent, but the commissioners felt that, due to inflation, a 5 percent increase was needed this year.

Mr. Wyatt said that the increase is based on the cost of living index.

He said cost of living increased more than 5 percent last year, but 5 percent was what the commissioners felt the county could afford.

The increase is not a raise, he

noted. The county doesn't have the step level in pay like the city and schools do. County employees do not automatically get raises at certain times and cost of living increases keep their buying power from decreasing.

Individual raises are made by the department supervisors and are based on the employees' individual merits, he said. The county has 16 departments including the sheriff's department, road and bridge, noxious weed and solid waste.

Hunting instructor class planned

Certified and guest hunter education instructors are asked to attend a training session on Saturday, April 2, at the Hays Recreation Center.

This will be an all-day workshop conducted by the Hunter Education Department of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks. The presenters will help instructors to improve their presentations.

There is no charge for the workshop and lunch will be provided.

Certified hunter education instructors who attend this workshop will have their certification extended four years from the expiration date.

To register, call Stacy at (620) 672-5911. This is the only hunter education instructor training that will be offered this year in north-west Kansas.

Easter Specials

NEW 2005 CHRYSLER 300L — Cool Vanilla, 5.7L Hemi, Sirius Radio, Heated Seats, Loaded! LIST \$36,400

NEW 2005 DODGE GRAND CARAVAN SXT—Butane Blue, Stow 'n Go Seating, 3.8L, V-6 LIST \$27,585

NEW 2005 DODGE RAM QUAD CAB — 3/4 Ton, Atlantic Blue, SLT Hd Cummins Diesel, Automatic Overdrive LIST \$39,805

2004 CHRYSLER SEBRING LX SEDAN — White, V-6, Automatic Transmission, Power Seat, CD Player LIST \$13,500

2004 CHRYSLER PACIFICA SPORTS TOURING — All Wheel Drive, Butane Blue, 3.5L V-6, CD Player, Leather Seats, 24,000 Miles. LIST \$25,500

2004 CHRYSLER CONCORDE LX — 4 Door, Red with 50/50 Seats, Automatic Transmission, V-6, Power Seat, CD Player, 23,000 Miles LIST \$15,900

2004 CHEVROLET MONTE CARLO LS — Coupe, Sandstone, 3.4L V-6, Automatic, CD Player, 28,000 Miles LIST \$13,900

2004 DODGE DAKOTA QUAD CAB — 4X4, White with SLT Decor, V-8, 5-Speed Automatic Transmission, CD Player, Bed Liner, 22,000 Miles LIST \$23,900

2001 DODGE 1/2 TON QUAD 4X4 — Intense blue, SLT 360 V-8, Power Seat, CD, Trailer Tow, New Tires, 28,000 Miles. LIST \$18,900

1996 NISSAN SHORT BOX 2 WD PICKUP — Bright Red, V6, Auto. Transmission, Air, Stereo, Bed Liner, 19,000 Miles. LIST \$6,500

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Students answer questions

Knowledge team tests on computer

Do you know the names of the major parts of the U.S. Constitution? Do you know what common household ingredients can be mixed together to make a model volcano "erupt"? Do you know the name of the bay adjacent to Asia?*

If not, you probably couldn't qualify for the Eisenhower Elementary sixth-grade Knowledge Master team.

Wednesday afternoon, team sponsor Nancy Sebelius administered the timed, 100-question test to the team. The test was on a computer program with the questions projected onto a screen. The team could discuss the answers, however, they only had one minute per question to answer. The quicker they entered the answer, the higher their score.

Norton scored 711 out of a possible 1,000 points, racking up an impressive 98 percent correct answers.

Mrs. Sebelius reported the results and is waiting to learn how Norton's team stacked up against teams all across the country. Last year, the team took first in the state and ninth in the nation.

"The students' high score indicates not only how bright the students are, but also how solid their educational background is in the core curriculum as well as art, music, health, etc.," Mrs. Sebelius said. "Whenever academic competitions come around, I am grateful for the wonderful teachers we have in Norton."

Members of the sixth-grade team are Sophie Mills, Melinda Becker, Maia Carlson, Jade Braun, Kyra Fulton, Landon Keiswetter, Caleb Goss, Katie Grose, Rebekah Streck, Spencer Shirk, Lindsey Tacha, Zoey Myers and Kaylen Rossi.

Norton has Knowledge Master teams in fifth through 12 grade.

The high school competition will be held Thursday, April 7, with the junior high contest scheduled for Wednesday, April 13. Both contests will be held in the library.

Mrs. Sebelius is the sponsor for all teams.

*Answers: articles, vinegar and baking soda and Bay of Bengal.

Let's Play Ball!

Little League Baseball and Softball Starts May 31

T-Ball Coed League Ages 4-6

Division I (Boys) First, Second, Third Grade

Division II (Boys) Fourth and Fifth Grade

Division III (Boys) Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Grade
(13 Years Old on January 1, 2005)

Division I (Girls) First, Second, Third Grade

Division II (Girls) Fourth, Fifth, Sixth Grade

ENTRY FEE — \$10.00 (LATE FEE \$20.00)

Due by Saturday, April 9, 2005 at the Norton Recreation Center

REGISTRATION FORMS AVAILABLE AT THE NORTON RECREATION COMMISSION

K-18 (Boys) Ages 15 and Under (As of July 31)

ENTRY FEE — \$10.00 (LATE FEE \$20.00)

Due by May 13, 2005 at the Norton Recreation Center

Youth Track and Field Fun Day

SATURDAY, MAY 14, 2005 — 9:00 A.M.

Ages 5 & 6 Years; 7 & 8 Years; 9 & 10 Years; 11-13 Years

ENTRY FEE — \$2.00 DUE BY SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 2005

Baseball and Softball Coaches Meetings —

SATURDAY, APRIL 23: (BOYS)

Noon-T-Ball; 1 p.m.-Division I; 2:30 p.m.-Division II; 4 p.m.-Division III

SUNDAY, APRIL 24: (GIRLS)

2 p.m.-Division I; 3:30 p.m.-Division II

ADULT COED SOFTBALL (SLOW PITCH)

CONTACT: DEYTON HAGER — 785-874-5155

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL:

Norton Recreation Commission
(785) 877-3087