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Tuesday Sept. 13, 2005

Norton, Kansas
Home of Jim Myers

Briefly

Boosters to meet on Wednesday

The weekly meeting of the Norton Blue Jay Booster Club will be held at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday in the high school cafeteria.

Norton Community High School football coach Bruce Graber, volleyball coach Jill Lively, tennis coach Jim Green and cross country coach Deyton Hager will report on early season competition.

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

Bow shoot set at state park

The Norton Archery Club will hold a 3D Bowhunter Practice Shoot on Sunday.

The shoot will have a trickle start from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Norton Prairie Dog State Park archery range, north of the west shower house in the northwest corner of the park.

The shoot will cost \$5 per round and will have optional scoring.

For more information, call John Baker at 877-3253 or Randy West at 877-5269.

Catholic classes to be offered

Any adult interested in learning more about the Catholic church and its doctrines is invited to attend a class at 2 p.m. Saturday at the St. Francis of Assisi Parish Center. The Rite of Initiation for Christian Instruction for Adults will be taught by Gil Otter and Margaret Wetter. To learn more, call the church at 877-2234.

Weather

Forecast:

Tonight — Partly cloudy in the evening, then mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers and isolated thunderstorms after midnight. Lows in the lower 50s. Northeast winds around 10 mph. Chance of rain 20 percent.

Wednesday — Mostly cloudy with a slight chance of showers and isolated thunderstorms in the morning, then partly cloudy in the afternoon.

Wednesday Night — Partly cloudy.

Howell report:

Friday	High 90, Low 67
Saturday	High 92, Low 68
Sunday	High 92, Low 67
Monday	High 96, Low 60
Week ago	High 82, Low 63
Month ago	High 79, Low 64
Year ago	High 98, Low 72
September precipitation58 inches
Year-to-date precipitation ...	19.46 inches

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

Prayer

Gracious God, thank you for making scripture real and personal to us in times of need and in times of uncertainty. Amen



Norton County Rural firemen kept an eye on the blaze, and the wind, as a late Sunday afternoon fire destroyed a barn on the Marvin Stutheit farm, northwest of Norton. — Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

Blaze destroys farm barn

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

A fire Sunday afternoon at the Marvin Stutheit farm, a mile west and three miles north of Norton, destroyed a barn.

A call, which came in at about 4 p.m., sent five Norton Rural fire trucks and nine men to the scene. The structure was fully engulfed and the firemen's main goal became to protect other property around the barn.

Assistant Rural Fire Chief Ed Witt said they were lucky to have a corral around the barn. Mr. Witt said they used a portable water tank to cool off the outside edges of the rubble so they could pull tin off to expose any hot spots.

The wooden barn, which contained a loft, was covered with tin. It contained a manure spreader, grain grinder, feed bunks, hay and a holding pen.

An estimate of damages was not available.

Electrical wires, that were whipped by the wind, are the main suspects as the cause of the fire.

The firemen returned to the station shortly before 10 p.m.

Commissioner worries about fire equipment

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

No one appeared for a 10:15 a.m. public hearing during the Norton County commissioners meeting on a block grant application by the Norton Rural Fire Department for two new trucks.

The application is for two new 300-gallon flatbed brush units.

This is the second year the department

has applied for a grant to purchase the trucks. However, the request is for more this year as the trucks have become more expensive.

Fire district personnel will go through surveys the emergency medical service has collected to prove that there are a majority of low to moderate income households in the district, said Amy Griffey of Northwest

Kansas Development, which is helping the county apply for the grant.

Last year the district offered to pay \$20,000 of the \$140,000 needed to purchase the trucks, Mrs. Griffey said. This year they will cost \$160,000 and the district is looking to see if they can come up with more money to put into the project.

Commissioner Leroy Lang said that he

thought that the fire district needed a regular fire truck more than brush trucks.

"I think they need a fire truck," he said. "They just lost a barn yesterday. I was out there and I think they need a friggin' fire truck."

"I've been out with them and they've had a lot of fires this summer. The people (Continued on Page 5)

Jennings school has nine students

The Jennings Grade School is well into its last year with three students enrolled and six pre-schoolers.

Though it's far fewer students than the district expected, the state Department of Education granted a waiver to allow the district to finish its last year. Kansas schools are supposed to have a minimum of 10 students.

Over a year ago, the Jennings School Board members started to look into closing the schools. Enrollment had declined by around 50 students and there was talk about how long the school could stay open. Last year, with 31 students enrolled in the fall, the board decided to contract with neighboring school districts for junior and senior high students and maintain a grade school this year.

At the end of this year, the board plans to dissolve the district, with the land, money, building and equipment being given to neighboring districts.

Superintendent Emery Hart said they thought the school would have around 24 students in the grade school this year. Parents apparently decided to send their young students to other districts to let them get adjusted to their new schools as soon as possible. Mr. Hart said he understands that.

Last year, the district thought there was a possibility of 12 students, but it ended with just three, one each in kindergarten, first and second grade.

Mr. Hart said as soon as he found out there were only going to be three students, he called the state. State officials told him

they wanted the school in Jennings to stay open this year and close properly. That way, the decisions that need to be made about the equipment, building and land can be made in time, he said.

"We just wanted to do what is best for the kids," said Mr. Hart. "With having school here this year, those kids who wanted to go here can."

The school has eight employees, he said, all contracted before they knew the enrollment would be just three kids. Those include Mr. Hart as part-time superintendent; Lois Heilman, board clerk and administrative assistant; Kathy Randolph, teacher and librarian; Denise Carter, teacher, Diane Carter, elementary and music teacher; Mary Wahlmeier, (Continued on Page 5)

Students to celebrate national song

Eisenhower Elementary will join schools and communities across the nation in singing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at 9 a.m. tomorrow to celebrate the anniversary of the national anthem.

Not only will the National Anthem Project celebrate the song, but it will also spotlight the important role music education plays in giving Americans their patriotic voice.

Join the students of Eisenhower in this celebration.

Homes tour has garage in lineup

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

This isn't your grandfather's garage. But, you'll get a chance to see it, firsthand, on this year's annual Norton County Arts Council Homes Tour, Sept. 25.

Jeff Urban, known as "Goof" by his friends, admits he's still a kid at heart. That could be part of the reason he has converted his two-car garage into the "Big Boy's Toy Store".

Mr. Urban, with the blessing of his wife, Sue, has turned his fantasy into reality.

The garage behind their ranch-style home at 504 S. Second Street, looks like most other garages in town. But, inside, it resembles a garage from the 1940s. Tools and collectibles go on back to the '20s.

A 1923 gas pump, given to him, is ready for renovation.

That's how he comes by a lot of the items you'll see in his "store". Anonymous donors often leave old oil cans on (Continued on Page 5)



Sue and "Goof" Urban lean over the door of the garage. The Urbans' "Big Boy Toy Store" is on this year's Homes Tour. — Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

Garage filled with fun

(Continued from Page 1)

his front porch. A recent addition to the garage is a large, hand-painted wooden Shelly Gas sign. He bought it for \$25 at an auction a few weeks ago.

His wife's uncle, Clinton Minium, Morland, recently gave him a 1966 Harley Davidson motorcycle to restore. The cycle, an Italian version, had been in the uncle's quonset for the last 30 years, but it is still in excellent condition.

One area in the Big Boy Toy Store that he is most proud of is the Main Street mural painted by local artists Kristine Posson and Stacie Roth. Every visitor gets the guided tour of old-time Norton businesses.

Another area of the "store" is the room dedicated to the Hot Wheels collection Mr. Urban began as a child. He has over 8,000 now.

The Urbans welcome anyone to come for a tour.

He is always quick to warn you, "It's a work in progress. I'm always looking. Always looking for a way to barter."

He enjoys sharing his love for antiques with others. Their 15-month-old granddaughter, Kennedy Brown, who lives in



Sue and Jeff Urban sit astride his prize motorcycles. He, on a 1960 Cushman and she on a 1966 Harley Davidson. Both cycles can be seen on the Norton Arts Council's Annual Homes Tour on Sunday, Sept. 25.

Tulsa, Okla., will be the recipient of an antique pedal car her grandpa is going to paint pink.

Mrs. Urban said she's fine with the many collections.

"It's all okay as long as he keeps it in the garage," she said.

The Urbans will be celebrating their first wedding anniversary Sunday.

While he collects garage items,

she gathers Precious Moments figurines.

In the last year over 500 people from across the country and a visitor from Norway have been through the toy museum. Mr. Urban encourages clubs, organizations and individuals to come by for a tour. He just asks that you call ahead to 877-5535 to let him know you're coming.

He works for the Kansas Department of Transportation with a hot-mix plant that serves 18 north-west Kansas counties. She is a customer service coordinator for Nex-Tech in the Norton office. She is an officer of the Lions Club and he is a member of the Eagles.

They have two sons, Curtis and Jessica Brown, Tulsa, and Justin Brown, Norton

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

County wants large fire trucks

(Continued from Page 1) out there are worried about their houses. They've been out a lot of times but the building always goes.

"It's pretty bad when Almena needs to come put out a hay fire. "If you had a house fire out there, ain't no way we're ever going to save one. We're really concerned about our houses in the second district."

Commissioner John Miller said that the district could reapply for a regular truck next year.

"I know they want the new brush trucks," Mr. Miller said. "The new brush trucks are pretty efficient. If you have a tanker to go along with the new brush trucks, they can put out a pretty good fire."

Mr. Lang responded that the department had to use a farm pond to get water to put out the barn fire on Sunday.

In other business, the commission:

- Agreed to send four emergency medical technicians to a class in Phillipsburg to learn how to start intravenous lines. Ambulance Director Andy Nielsen said the class will cost \$100 for books, \$200 for tuition plus mileage for one vehicle plus the exam fee. The class, which starts Monday, Sept. 26, takes one to two nights per week for about six weeks, he said, with a state exam on Nov. 14.
- Learned that the road and

bridge department is sending out new leases to owners of sand pits throughout the county.

• Heard that Solid Waste Supervisor Curt Archibald has been speaking to the high school freshman science classes about recycling.

• Signed contracts with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment for bioterrorism grants. One was for almost \$15,000 for a county grant and one for almost \$54,000, which goes into a pot for an eight-county group.

• Heard that the county road and bridge department has been mowing but that the weeds are keeping ahead of them.

"We're not getting ahead of it," Road and Bridge Supervisor Tom Brannan said. "We need a frost. That's what it's going to take for us to see daylight with the mowers."

• Heard from Commissioner Miller that he thought the next project the county would see is a new jail, probably within the next five years. All small counties will have to build new jails or combine for a centralized one, he said.

• Talked to County Weed Supervisor Reggie Beckman about the cost of chemicals.

A few farmers have not had their fields sprayed, he said, but he won't spray until the wind dies down.

• Heard from Register of Deeds Wanda Vincent that she will have Salina Blue Print put several older county books on microfilm. The cost is \$3,800, she said. A duplicate copy will be sent to the salt mines near Hutchinson for storage. Cost of storage is \$132 per year for all the county's documents.

Norton may have to raise electric rates

By VERONICA MONIER

Due to a new agreement with Sunflower Electric Power Corp., the city electric rate will be going up.

At the Aug. 17 city council meeting, the council approved a new contract with Sunflower, which has been in the works for awhile. The new five-year contract became effective Sept. 1.

Because of this, the city's rate will go up, but it will be cheaper in the long run because it is less expensive to buy power than to generate it.

City Administrator Rob Lawson told the council at last Wednesday's meeting that Tony Turner with the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency will be doing an energy rate study in November to determine if an increase is needed to cover the new rates from Sunflower. He said the study will cost \$2,000, but will be worth the price.

Mr. Lawson said until the study is finished and the city's electric

rates are changed, the rise in cost will be reflected in the fuel adjustment fee on residents' utility bills.

By putting it in the fuel adjustment, he said the city won't have to keep changing the rates until a new one is established.

Mr. Lawson said the city's power plant has been having problems with its "keep warm" system and had to have it repaired. He said he has received a proposal from a company to do an evaluation of the city's engine cooling system, which he will present to the Utility Committee.

He said city has done its capacity test at the power plant, which is good.

Although it is cheaper for the city to buy electricity from Sunflower, the power plant must still be maintained because part of the contract with Sunflower is that Norton can generate electricity if needed.

In other business, the council:

• Heard from Mayor David Combs that in July the city received

\$19,036 in city sales tax receipts and \$12,969 in county sales tax receipts for a total of \$32,005 Last year in July, the city received \$31,388. The year-to-date total for this year is \$230,359.

• Decided to revise the agreement with the school board on water distribution and ownership for Travis Field. City Attorney Chuck Worden said the agreement that had been drawn up could leave the city open to giving the school district water for the field for an unlimited time. Mr. Worden will work with Councilwoman Elaine Mann, chairwoman of the Parks Committee, and with the school district to get a new agreement put together.

• Adopted Resolution 16-2005, authorizing the transfer of \$600/month from the sewer fund into the sewage replacement fund. The original language was 5 percent, rather than a specified amount.

• Suspended the rules and waived the three-reading rule for

Ordinance 1551, authorizing and providing for the codification and publication of the ordinances into a loose-leaf binder. Basically, said Mr. Lawson, the ordinance will allow city staff to clean up the city's ordinances.

• Heard from Mr. Lawson that "no parking" signs have been placed in the ally near the Rural Fire Department building.

• Learned from Mr. Lawson that he has had many requests to allow a storage garage on a vacant lot, which is currently not allowed by the city's building code. He said he wants to change the code to allow it. The issue will be taken to Finance Committee.

• Heard that the state has approved the plans for the water plant renovation project and well field project and Rural Development has recognized the application as "eligible". Mr. Lawson said the loan/grant hasn't been approved yet, but that the city was in a good place to be eligible.

• Recognized the city crews for their work in getting the city cleaned up after a storm two weeks ago.

• Went into two 15-minute closed sessions for attorney-client privilege.

• Heard from Councilman Jerry Jones that people shouldn't be driving on the city streets without Department of Transportation approved tires.

School stays open to serve nine youngsters

(Continued from Page 1)

aide; Carol Carter, cook and custodian; and Robert Schillig, custodian and driver.

Mr. Hart said the students have a home room together and then they break out into different rooms with teachers for certain subjects.

That way, he said, the teachers get to teach the subjects they want.

They are also running a preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds. There are six kids in preschool. The school isn't getting any state money for the preschool, but Mr. Hart said they feel they are helping these kids get a start in life.

The school is still providing a hot lunch for the nine kids.

This is the last year for the Jennings School, he said. He and the board are going to decide where the building, equipment, land and money will go and they hope to have everything decided by February. However, the state board gets to make the decisions.

The school has a budget this year of \$881,000, with \$423,146 of that in the general fund budget. If the district has capital outlay money or local option budget money left, it will be divided up with the land.

He said there will be money left; he just isn't sure how much and which of the neighboring districts will get what.

With the students being contracted, they are enrolled in the Jennings District for budget purposes, then Jennings pays so much

per student to the district they attend.

The Jennings District has a full-time equivalency of 12 1/2 stu-

dents, which is what the state aide payment is based on.

Some students decided to go to Norton this year, but they aren't

contracted through the district.

So far, the year is going smoothly, thanks to the cooperation of everyone involved.

The paper you read for the news you need!
THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Norton County Weather----- Sept 13th - 17th

Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
78/50	75/48	80/50	83/53	85/55

Normal High: 80
Normal Low: 52

Sunrise: 7:19 to 7:22 A.M.
Sunset: 7:45 to 7:51 P.M.

A cool front has dropped temperatures twenty degrees today. The cooler weather will be refreshing after 3 weeks of 90-degree heat 5 days of hot winds. Actually the next couple mornings will be rather chilly with lows in the upper 40's. Tonight and tomorrow night there could also be a few scattered storms, but the best chances for heavier rains will be to our east. A .25" to .50" is possible through the period and may be enough to allow farmers to start planting wheat. By the end of the week daytime temperatures will warm back into the 80's while lows remain in the 50's.

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