

Take advantage of the best local guide to what's on TV next week with The Telegram's handy schedule of programming.

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Tuesday  
Sept. 20, 2005

Norton, Kansas

Home of Geneva Persinger

Briefly



## Java Jive show set for Sunday

Norton Community High School vocal music students are preparing for this year's Java Jive to be held Sunday. The two performances are scheduled for 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

The theme for Java Jive revolves around Hollywood and movies. All the songs in the performances come from movies.

Tickets for adults are \$4, while tickets for children 12 and under are \$3. Junior high and high school vocal and instrumental students are also \$3. Child care is provided free by junior high students.

Call Valerie Lee for additional information at 877-3338 and look for the ad in Friday's *Norton Telegram*.

## Blue Jay Boosters meet 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 Dayton Hager will report on recent competition by their teams.

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

Weather

## Forecast:

**Tonight** — Partly cloudy with lows in the lower 60s. South winds up to 10 mph. **Wednesday** — Partly cloudy with record or near record highs in the upper 90s. South winds up to 10 mph. **Wednesday Night** — Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the upper 50s. Southeast winds up to 10 mph shifting to the northeast with gusts to 30 mph after midnight. **Thursday** — Breezy and partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers and isolated thunderstorms in the afternoon. Highs lower 70s. North winds 15 to 25 mph.

## Howell report:

Friday .....	High 83, Low 58
Saturday .....	High 90, Low 67
Sunday .....	High 80, Low 57
Monday .....	High 86, Low 57
Week ago .....	High 96, Low 60
Month ago .....	High 100, Low 66
Year ago .....	High 100, Low 69
September precipitation .....	.58 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

Father, help us to think before we speak so that our words may help rather than hurt and build up rather than tear down. Amen

# Firemen, commissioners talk trucks

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Volunteer firemen from Norton County's Rural Fire District told the County commissioners Monday that they were unhappy about a story which appeared in last Tuesday's *Norton Telegram* after a grant hearing for two new fire department trucks.

Six members of the district including Fire Chief Steve Otter; Assistant Chief Ed Witt; fireman Mike Wentz; fire board members Steve Persinger, Philip Loughry and Gale Schultz; Mr. Otter's father, Gil

Otter; and Deena Wentz from KQNK Radio station showed up for a meeting with the commissioners.

"We felt it was pretty negative to our fire department and our firemen," Mr. Loughry said.

"We had a hearing and nobody was here," Commissioner Leroy Lang said. "I was a little surprised we didn't go after a bigger firetruck."

"I was told it wasn't necessary that I be here," Chief Otter said adding that he was told so by Amy Griffey of Northwest

Kansas Development, who was helping with the grant.

Mr. Lang had said at the hearing last week that he felt that the department needed to request a larger truck to be able to more effectively fight house fires. He had said that the people in his district are concerned about their homes.

On Monday, Chief Otter told the commissioners that he has been applying for a federal grant for a large firetruck through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the past several

years.

That is why the fire department was applying for a Community Development Block Grant for the smaller grass-fire rigs, he said.

With the federal grant, he said, the department would only have to put up a 5 percent grant match.

Chief Otter said he wasn't sure when he would know about the federal grant request but thought by January. There are several rounds of grants each year, he said. (Continued on Page 5)



## Huskies show homecoming spirit

The Northern Valley High School Homecoming parade and pep rally were held Friday before the Huskies played the Kensington Goldbugs in football. The Northern Valley Booster Club (above) wanted to protect their school spirit by giving a vaccine to anyone with the no-school-spirit virus. At half-time, Serena Woodside and Frans Laubscher (left) were crowned the new Homecoming Queen and King. Avery Thalheim and Hope Hansen were named Homecoming Prince and Princess.

— Telegram photos by Susie Marble

# County lowers speed limit, puts no passing zone on Road L

By VERONICA MONIER

Because more and more people are using county roads to bypass the construction on U.S. 36, the Norton County commission feels that some regulation and signs are needed for safety.

The commissioners changed the speed limit on Road L from the Norton city limits to Road W-6 to 45 mph.

Commissioner John Miller said County Councilor Doug Sebelius also suggested making that part of the road a no passing section.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Tom Brannan said speed limit signs had been posted Monday morning and that he would see about finding no passing signs and putting them up, too.

Mr. Brannan said a bridge on Road B should be open on Friday. He said the bridge is finished, but some dirt work needed to be done to fill the road in.

He said they had the bridge list for 2006. The first on the list, he said, was the historic bridge, OS-75, about a mile west of Lenora on W-7 and Road BB.

"It's a larger one," he said, "a 40-footer."

He said they were going to work on

getting it moved this winter, when the bridge crew has some free time.

"We don't want to be doing that during the construction season," he said.

The second bridge is OS-70, which is at W-8 and Road Y. That bridge is about 15-feet wide and is a good candidate for replacement, he said. It gets some traffic, but not a whole lot.

The other three bridges on the list are OS-156, just east of Edmond on E-3 and Road V; OS-202 on Road G and E-8; and OS-18 on Road DD and W-14, another bridge on the Solomon River.

Mr. Brannan said there are only two or three bridges left that are covered on the 2003 bridge bond. He said they were getting close to having everything completed.

"We're on the downhill side of bridges in Norton County that need to be repaired," he said. "Most of our bridges are now in excellent condition."

Once they get all of the larger bridges finished, he said his department is going to have to go out and start looking at everything 19 feet and below, which are considered box bridges.

Mr. Brannan said they are going to mark

each one on a map and then say what condition it is in using a four-number scale. They will also have to go out and rename each one so there will be a reference.

But, he said, replacing the boxes will be down the road.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Met with Amy Griffey of Northwest Kansas Development to sign paperwork for two grant requests, one for a new emergency medical service building and another for two trucks for the rural fire department. In the process, the commissioners adopted four resolutions: one saying the county is putting \$150,000 in match money for the emergency medical service grant; one saying that the county has the money to maintain the building; one saying that the fire district will be putting up \$25,350 in match money for the grant for the trucks; and one saying that the fire district will have the money to maintain the trucks.
- Changed the mileage reimbursement rate to 48.5 cents/mile, effective from Sept. 1.
- Held a 10-minute closed session to discuss non-elected personnel with County Treasurer Cynthia Linner.

## Pupils fill classrooms in Norton

By VERONICA MONIER

"So far, so good" was the gist of the building principals' beginning of class reports at last Monday's Norton school board meeting.

Principal Lary Stull said the new staff at the high school is doing well. There has been a little bit of an adjustment, he said, since the librarian, Jane Burton, has been going back and forth from the high school to the grade school.

He said there are three new seniors, four new juniors, four new sophomores and two new freshmen. There are 260 students, including those from Lenora — 52 freshmen, 73 sophomores, 65 juniors and 70 seniors.

Principal Cory Roy said he was impressed with Eisenhower's open house.

He said 98.5 percent of the students had a parent in attendance. (Continued on Page 5)

Ambulance barn depends on state

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Norton County will get a new ambulance barn west of Norton if the county receives a state grant.

County commissioners held a public meeting on Monday as part of an application for a block grant. The county is requesting enough money to put up a metal building for a new ambulance barn, which will cost over \$400,000.

The county has offered to put up \$150,000 in matching money to obtain the grant.

Amy Griffey and Randy Hrabec from Northwest Kansas Development, Ambulance Director Andy Nielsen, Assistant Ambulance Director Ruth Schillig and two emergency medical technicians showed up for the hearing to testify in favor of the building and to discuss where best to put it.

There were two proposed sites — a vacant lot west of town and an existing building, which could be renovated, on the east side of Norton.

Mr. Nielsen said that he felt that the site on the west side of town, near Prairieland Electric, would provide better response time for calls, especially in the early morning.

Commissioner Dean Kruse reminded everyone that the commissioners had looked at a third location north of Norton near the National Guard Armory.

That lot would be close to the airport and hospital and in a section of town, which would not be a problem for residents

“Only disadvantage I see is all the school traffic,” said Commissioner Leroy Lang. “I drive through there every day. There’s a lot of machinery too and things at the armory — sales and auctions.

“I don’t want to argue with the location but it is crowded there.” Mr. Kruse agreed that that might be a problem.

Commissioner John Miller noted that the county doesn’t know if it can purchase the site with the building on the east side of town.

Mr. Hrabec warned the commissioners that it is harder to get a grant for a new building than for one that can be renovated.

This doesn’t mean that the county won’t get the grant, he said, but the county would lose points since new construction costs are more than renovation most of the time.

Much of the application is explaining what the county needs and why and giving arguments on why you chose what you have, Mr. Hrabec said.

“I don’t think the state has a preconceived notion that old is better than new,” Mrs. Griffey said.

Mr. Miller said he is most concerned about access during bad weather.

On west side you can get out during bad weather onto hard surfaced roads, he noted. On the east there could be problems with dirt roads. The western location is close to the county shop with equipment that could open a road.

U.S. 36 will normally always be open but it might be a problem getting to it from the east but not from the west, he said.

Mr. Miller said he was also concerned about getting an ambulance out due to traffic from both Natoma and New Age during shift changes and lunches.

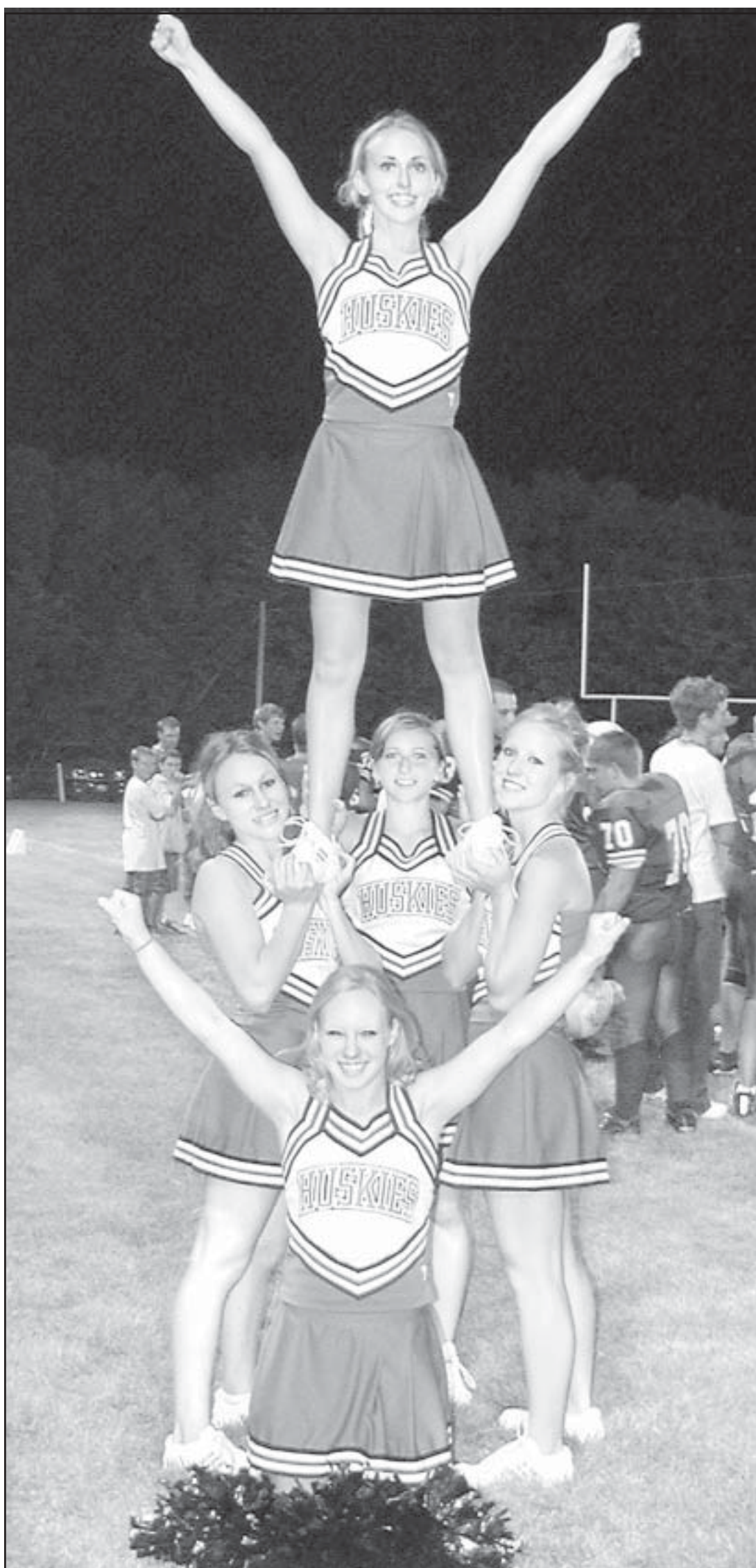
Mr. Hrabec suggested the ambulance crews do response-time tests between the two sites. He said if there is a significant difference that could sway the decision.

“I move that we build a new EMS building on the lot from Prairieland on 2.35 acres,” Mr. Lang said. “And the price of the land is \$7,500.”

“It’s the access,” Mr. Miller said. “Last week, I sat there and watched all that traffic coming out of New Age. That’s what I based my decision on.”

“I based mine on talking to the people,” Mr. Lang said. “They (Prairieland) is selling us the land for about what they’ve got in it.”

Go Huskies!



This year’s Northern Valley cheerleaders Joni Hilburn (front) Kelsey Kinderknecht, Amanda Hopkins and Jessie Redeker (middle from left) and Andrea Lowry showed off their stunts during a game earlier this season. — Telegram photo by Susie Marble

Norton schools off to good start

(Continued from Page 1) Student attendance has also been excellent at 99.2 percent, he said.

“I think attendance is very important,” he said. “Kids can’t learn if they aren’t in school.”

Mr. Roy said the enrollment numbers at Eisenhower have been fluctuating.

On Monday, three students left, but then two more arrived and two more early childhood development students were added. One more early childhood development student is expected.

As of Monday, there were 20 childhood development students, 39 kindergartners, 33 first graders, 58 second graders, 38 third graders, 58 fourth graders, 57 fifth grader and 50 sixth graders for 353 students.

He said there are 102 students eating breakfast, which he thinks is a good program.

Superintendent Greg Mann reported for Principal Larry Mills on the junior high. He said there are 121 students — 70 in seventh grade and 51 in eighth.

Participation in fall activities remains high, he said, with 26 vocal students, 49 in band, 40 in football and 34 in volleyball.

Mr. Mann said the district is still ahead of the number of students used to figure the budget.

The district is also ahead of where it was last year in enrollment, he said.

In other business, the board:

- Heard curriculum reviews from Trudy Stockham, language arts chairwoman; Dale Englebert, math chairman; and George Rossi, science chairman.
- Heard a Yearly-Adequate-Progress report from Wellness and Curriculum Coordinator Pam Menagh. The report includes reading and math levels and attendance and graduation rates. Norton’s students are doing well, she said. She also gave a presentation on the Communities That Care survey and on Kansas Individual Data on Students (KIDS), a statewide data base for student information.
- Approved a revised agreement with the City of Norton for ownership of Travis Field and water use at the field.
- Hired Jodi Ward as the Eisenhower Elementary intramural basketball coach.
- Decided to take part in the “Community Conversations” program with the Kansas Association of School Boards.

The program will have members of the community, staff and the school board meet and try to work out better ways to do things in the district. The board set March 24-25 for the meeting.

Mr. Mann said each board member needed to get three people to agree to join the group — a staff member, a person with children in school and a person without school children.

Firemen, county talk about trucks

(Continued from Page 1) but only 25 percent of the money can be used for fire-fighting vehicles.

“Well, constituents in the second district, my district, are chewing on me pretty good because we don’t have a good truck,” Mr. Lang said, indicating that no one had told the county that the department, which isn’t under the commissioners’ control, had applied for a grant for a large truck.

Mr. Otter said he was unhappy at the remarks in the paper that the fire department had not been able to save a barn.

“We haven’t saved a barn in three years,” he said adding that tin roofs make fire-fighting difficult and the lack of internal walls tend to make barn fires difficult to control.

The last barn was engulfed before the department was called, he said adding that it took eight minutes from the call came in until the first truck arrived on the scene.

“The big concern is houses,” Mr. Lang said

“That’s why I’m doing this right here,” Mr. Otter replied pointing to the federal grant request. “We have a lot to cover out here right now. We have people buying houses all over.”

He added that it doesn’t matter how good the district’s equipment is if there is no water to fight fires and unfortunately many people are building homes in areas without adequate water for fire protection.

“We use every available source of water to fight fires,” Chief Otter said indicating that they will use farm ponds if they are suitable.

“I think people are just beginning to realize we are equipment deficient,” Mr. Lang said.

“It takes a while to play catch up,” Chief Otter agreed.

Commissioner John Miller asked if the county could help if the federal grant is turned down.

“Leroy has said everyone out there says you need a truck,” Mr. Miller said. “While the rural fire (department) isn’t under the county, if the county thought it was important enough to come up with part of or all the funds to buy a \$165,000 truck, could the county buy that truck and give it to the rural fire department?”

County Councilor Doug Sebelius said that it could be done.

Mr. Loughry noted that the department has been moving forward.

“Guys, we need the truck,” he

Commissioner offers apology

County Commissioner Leroy Lang apologized for upsetting firemen by remarks he made at a commission meeting last week.

After Fire Chief Steve Otter demanded an apology because Mr. Lang said that he felt the department needed a large truck to fight house fires rather than two small trucks for brush fires, Mr. Lang said he was sorry if what he said offended anyone.

However, Mr. Lang said, he stood by his belief that the rural department needs equipment that will put out a house fire both from his own observations at fires and because a lot of his constituents in District 2 have told him they feel there is a need.

Mr. Lang said he did not mean to offend the firemen, however.

said. “We now have the building to put it in. We couldn’t buy a decent truck because we didn’t have a building to put it in.”

He said the fire district had looked at getting a low or no interest loan to buy a large truck but the payments alone would take the district’s entire yearly budget.

“Zero percent (interest) doesn’t do you any good if you can’t pay the bill,” Mr. Loughry said. “We all agree we would appreciate any help we can get. Repayment for us is really tough because it costs \$20,000 some a year and our budget is about \$25,000 a year.”

“Our goal has always been to provide the best service we can and keep our firemen as safe as we can.

“Our firemen are trained that if that building (on fire) is gone you protect what’s around. If that barn is gone, it’s gone and you protect everything else.”

All the men agreed that they worry about houses.

“We need a truck and I’m getting tired of hearing about it,” Mr. Lang said.

“I agree and I get a sick feeling in my gut when I see all these houses going up,” Chief Otter said.

“I think what we need to do here is work together,” Mr. Lang said. “Keep us informed.”

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