

Church:

Take advantage of the church listings to find out when and where to go.

Pages 6 & 7

Vol. 98, No. 103
75 cents

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Baby:

See what Norton County merchants have for the first baby born in the Norton County Hospital in 2006

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Friday
December 30, 2005

Norton, Kansas
Home of Joyce Maley

Briefly

Basketball starts up again

The Norton Community High School girls and boys basketball teams will play their first games of the new year on Tuesday against Oberlin of the Northwest Kansas League.

They will also play Mid-Continent League games against Stockton on Thursday to make up for games postponed due to bad weather on Dec. 17 and against Osborne on Friday.

Tuesday's games will begin at 5 p.m. with the junior varsity boys game in Wilmett Kirk Memorial Gym at East Campus and 4 p.m. with the C-team girls at Norton High Memorial Gym. The C-Team girls will play six-minute quarters. They will be followed at 5 p.m. by the junior varsity girls, varsity girls and varsity boys games.

No junior varsity games will be played with Stockton. The varsity girls game will begin at 6 p.m. in the Norton Memorial Gym and will be followed by the boys.

On Friday, the junior varsity boys will play at 5 p.m. at East Campus and the junior varsity girls at 5 p.m. at the high school gym, followed by the varsity girls and varsity boys.

Papers to be one day late

Because New Year's Day falls on Sunday this year, *The Norton Telegram* staff will take Monday off as an official holiday.

Your *Telegram Extra* will be delivered Tuesday and the Tuesday edition of *The Norton Telegram* will be delivered on Wednesday. Friday's paper will be printed as usual.

Weather

Forecast:

Tonight — Lows in the lower 20s. Light winds. **Saturday** — Highs in the mid 50s. South winds around 10 mph. **Saturday night** — Lows in the upper 20s. South winds around 10 mph. **New Year's Day** — Highs in the lower 50s. **Sunday night** — Lows in the mid 20s. **Monday** — Highs in the upper 50s. Lows in the mid 20s.

Howell report:

Tuesday High 56, Low 36
Wednesday High 57, Low 37
Thursday High 53, Low 33
Week ago High 53, Low 39
Month ago High 32, Low 21
Year ago High 56, Low 47
December precipitation60 inches
Year-to-date precipitation ... 22.75 inches
(Readings taken at the Paul and Pat Howell farm 10 Miles North and 1/3 Mile East of Norton)

Prayer

Lord, be with all those who are feeling over-whelmed, that they may hear your voice in their hearts and through the love of those around them. Amen

the Salaries

of public employees in Norton County

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Richard Miller, Norton County Hospital administrator and chief executive officer, is the top paid county official. He makes \$83,250 a year and has the use of a company car.

The administrator, who has been with the hospital for 35 years and administrator for 26, just helped oversee a \$4.1 million multi-year renovation project at the 24-bed critical access hospital. The hospital has run in the black since getting critical access status from the federal government.

Hospital Chief Financial Officer Brian Carlton, who helped put the many loans and grants together for the hospital renovation, received \$59,883 a year. He has resigned and a successor is being sought.

The highest paid official who works in Norton County is District Judge Bill Elliott, who lives in Hill City. Judge Elliott serves the 17th Judicial District, comprising Norton, Decatur, Phillips, Smith, Graham and Osborne counties. He makes \$105,673 a year, the same as all district judges in the state.

Norton School Superintendent Greg Mann makes \$79,000 and Norton Community High School Principal Lary Stull, \$75,398. Both men have master's degrees and more than 30 years of experience. Superintendent Mann has been with the Norton district for 15 years, including 10 as a principal and five as superintendent. Mr. Stull has been a principal for 29 years.

Norton Junior High Principal Larry Mills makes \$65,268. He has a master's degree and 24 years experience, including eight in Norton as principal and activities director.

Eisenhower Elementary Principal Corey Roy makes \$60,000 in his first year

Top three earners in county

1) Bill Elliott, judge of the 17th Judicial District for Decatur, Norton, Phillips, Smith, Graham and Osborne counties, \$105,673

2) Richard Miller, administrator at Norton County Hospital, \$83,250.

3) Greg Mann, superintendent of Norton School District, \$79,000.

with the district. He has a master's in administration and 22 years' experience.

At the Northern Valley School District, Superintendent and High School Principal (Roger) Bill Lowry makes \$70,917. He has worked for the district 25 years, the last six as an administrator. He has a master's degree and district certification. Pre-school and Elementary Principal Dwight Vallin makes \$54,572. He has a master's degree and has worked for Northern Valley for 30 years.

Jennings School District Superintendent Emery Hart make \$42,000 for part-time work and Lois Heilman, the clerk and administrative assistant for the district, makes \$30,100. However, this is the last year the Jennings District will operate.

At the Solomon Valley School District in Lenora, Superintendent Ken Tidball is paid \$30,000 for part-time work. Mr.

Newspapers publish officials' pay

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reporters for Nor' West Newspapers have been asking public officials across the region how much they are paid.

Public employees' salaries are, and always have been, open records. Any citizen can ask to see them, but few have the time to dig through city, county and federal files.

We feel those who pay the bills deserve to know what they pay for, and we've tried to compile an accurate list of top public officials' pay. Many, such as school administrators and judges, hold jobs that require advanced degrees. Generally, elected officials are paid less than professionals hired to run public agencies.

Tidball is officially retired and has worked in Lenora for three years.

All the administrators have access to their districts' health insurance and other regular benefits but none is provided with a vehicle or similar perks.

Among federal officials, Farm Service Agency County Executive Director Vesta Hobbs makes \$78,745. District Conservationist George Carter makes \$55,595 with the Natural Resources Conservation (Continued on Page 5)

Paychecks vary with experience

By CYNTHIA HAYNES

Public officials in Norton County are neither the best nor the worst paid in the state, but most make a good living.

The president of the Northwest Kansas Technical College in Goodland is the highest paid official in the area. Ken Clouse, who has more than 33 years in education, makes \$108,212 a year. Colby Community Junior College President Mikhail Ary made \$92,292 a year when he retired in October. A search is underway for a successor.

Norton Correctional Facility Warden Jay Shelton makes considerably less at \$64,168 a year to direct a large institution with nearly as many "students."

Other top earners are hospital administrators, with Decatur County Hospital

County salary comparisons

	Norton	Decatur	Sherman	Thomas
Superintendent	\$79,000	\$82,871	\$100,000	\$84,153
City Administrator	\$64,554	\$42,000	\$65,000	\$68,900
Chief of Police	\$46,039	\$37,480	\$48,481	\$55,248
Hospital Admin.	\$83,250	\$84,443	\$90,002	**
Sheriff	\$40,236	\$31,740	\$39,730	\$45,344
Appraiser *	\$27,094	\$27,094	\$40,000	\$34,574
Treasurer	\$35,450	\$31,860	\$36,369	\$35,305
Register of Deeds	\$26,337	\$29,708	\$29,811	\$26,660
County Clerk	\$37,600	\$31,860	\$44,870	\$33,280
County Health dir.	\$42,250	\$31,200	\$42,848	\$39,955

* Most appraisers work part-time for two or more counties.

**The hospital in Colby is privately owned, received no tax money and is not subject to the Open Records Law.

Administrator Lynn Doeden making \$84,443 and Norton's Richard Miller making \$83,250. In Sherman County, Jay Jolley, chief executive officer of the Goodland Regional Medical Center, makes \$90,002 a year.

The next-highest salaries are in the school districts, with Norton's superintendent earning \$79,000; Northern

Valley's, \$70,917, Oberlin's, \$82,871; Goodland's, \$100,000; and Colby's \$84,153.

In Norton, the county executive director for the U.S. Farm Service Agency makes \$8,075 more than the one in Decatur County. Vesta Hobbs of Norton County makes \$78,745 while Diane Barrett, Oberlin, makes \$70,670. In

Sheridan County, Michelle Dewey makes \$66,632. Salaries go up with years of experience, federal officials said.

At the high school level, Norton Principal Lary Stull makes \$75,398 to Oberlin's Charles Haag at \$72,311. However, Mr. Stull has been with the (Continued on Page 5)

Businesses, offices plan for second holiday in row

For the second week in a row, businesses have to decide whether or not to take Monday off as an official holiday.

Banks

First Security Bank and Trust will close at noon Friday and remain closed Saturday and Monday.

First State Bank will close at noon Friday, be closed Saturday, but will open for business Monday.

The Bank will be open until 4 p.m. Friday and be closed Saturday and Monday. Almena State Bank will close at noon Friday and be closed Monday.

United Northwest Federal Credit Union will close at 3:45 p.m. Friday and

be closed Monday.

Bank of the West/Security Abstract will be open Friday until 5 p.m. and again at 9 a.m. Tuesday.

Service Stations

Love's Convenience Store and the Norton Total Station will maintain their 24 hours a day, seven days a week routine.

Time Saver will also operate their regular hours from 5 a.m. until 11 p.m.

Grocery Stores

Jamboree Foods will be open New Year's Day from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m.

Norton Shop and Save will be open Norton from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Almena Market will close at 5 p.m.

Saturday and be open again on Monday.

Country Corner in Lenora will be open Saturday from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m., closed Sunday and open Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Restaurants

Adventures in Eating will be open Saturday from 11 a.m. until 8 p.m., closed Sunday and open Monday from 11 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Attitudes will serve supper New Year's Eve from 5 to 9 p.m.

McDonald's will close at 7 p.m. New Year's Eve. The restaurant will open Sunday morning at 7 a.m. Monday they will return to their normal weekday schedule

of 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Pizza Hut/Taco Bell will be open all weekend operating from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. New Year's Eve, and from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. New Year's Day.

Hidden Dragon Chinese Restaurant will be open New Year's Eve from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., New Year's Day from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., and closed Monday.

Pure Prairie Natural Foods Store will be open Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and closed both Sunday and Monday.

K & S Center Cafe will be open Saturday from 6 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., then closed both Sunday and Monday.

(Continued on Page 5)

Records made available

The is the second year that *The Norton Telegram* has compiled salaries of federal, state and local public officials but the first time these have been published.

The salaries are open records because the officials work for public agencies and are paid, at least in part, by tax dollars or hired by public boards.

Last year, there was some opposition and several agencies including the county, City of Norton and hospital asked for payment for providing the information. This is legal, and the paper paid the

required fees.

This year, however, there were no requests for payment and all agencies complied quickly and with no questions or problems. The city asked the reporter to fill out a request form, but retrieved the information and brought it to the newspaper within two days.

Some records, such as the salary of the postmaster, had to be obtained by writing to out-of-area offices. These were all received in good order and within a reasonable time, however.

Officials in Norton County make about what others get

(Continued from Page 1)

Norton district many more years than Mr. Haag has been in Oberlin. Eisenhower Elementary Principal Corey Roy makes \$60,000 compared to Oberlin grade school Principal Duane Dorshorst's \$70,573. Again Mr. Dorshorst has been in the Oberlin district many years, while Mr. Roy is new to Norton.

St. Francis Elementary Principal Larry Gabel makes \$63,408 and Hoxie's Scott Hoyt makes \$56,166.

Oberlin Postmaster Linda Smith, who has 22 years experience, makes \$66,780, while in Norton, Postmaster JaNan O'Brien with eight years of experience, makes \$58,312. In Hoxie, the postmaster makes \$56,924.

CITY OFFICIALS

At the city level, officials in Norton make more than those in Oberlin in almost every position, but Norton is almost twice as big, with a population of 3,012 compared to Oberlin's 1,860.

Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson makes \$64,554 compared to Goodland City Manager K. Wayne Hill, who makes \$65,000. Second-highest paid is the St. Francis administrator, J.R. Landenberger, who makes \$48,000, then Oberlin Administrator Gary Shike at \$42,000 plus benefits and Hoxie City Superintendent Fred Washburn at \$35,400.

Norton City Public Works Supervisor Dan Bainter makes \$39,713 while Oberlin's City Foreman Dan Castle makes \$38,367.

Police Chief Lynn Menagh in Norton makes \$46,039, John Bieker in Hoxie makes \$38,796, Wade Lockhart in Oberlin makes \$37,480 and, in St. Francis, Troy Gardner makes \$20,000 from the city, but also runs the county sheriff's office for \$24,808.

In Norton, City Attorney Charles Worden makes \$9,318 a year plus an hourly rate, while in Hoxie, City Attorney Ken Eland makes \$8,436, Mike Day in St. Francis makes \$1,500 and, in Oberlin, Steve Hirsch is paid \$50 an hour.

COUNTY OFFICIALS

Counties in Northwest Kansas flip flop on who is paid the most. Those positions include:

Norton County Road and Bridge Supervisor Tom Brannan makes \$45,176 while Decatur County's Tim Stallman makes \$35,436.

Sherman County Clerk Janet Rumpel makes \$44,870; Norton County's Robert Wyatt, \$37,600; Thomas County's Shelly Harms, \$33,280; and Decatur County's Marilyn Horn, \$31,860.

Norton County Treasurer Cynthia Linner makes \$37,200, Sherman County's Shelby Miller, \$36,369; Thomas County's

Donita Applebury, \$35,305; and Decatur County's Jean Hale, \$31,860,

Appraiser Alan Hale receives \$27,094 from both Norton and Decatur counties. Sheridan County's David Stithem makes \$52,500; Thomas County's Mary Cech, \$34,574; and Cheyenne County's Randy Sangster, \$12,000, but he also works in other counties. Sherman County's Terry Ballard makes \$40,000 for part-time work.

Sherman County Register of Deeds Carol Armstrong makes \$29,811, Decatur County's Judy Gaumer, \$29,708; Norton County's Wanda Vincent, \$26,337; and Sheridan County's Kari Weis, \$25,400.

Norton County Sheriff Troy Thomson makes \$40,236 plus \$12,000 as emergency preparedness director; Thomas County Sheriff Mike Baughn, \$45,344; Sherman County Sheriff Kevin Butts, \$39,730; Sheridan County Sheriff Jim Johnson, \$32,600, and Decatur County Sheriff Ken Badsky, \$31,740.

Norton County commissioners make \$18,750 a year, Decatur County commissioners, \$16,080, Sherman County commissioners, between \$14,450 and \$12,730; Thomas County commissioners, \$11,275; and Cheyenne County commissioners, \$9,444. The job is considered part-time.

Paper publishes tax-paid wages

(Continued from Page 1)

Service. They are paid through federal tax money.

Norton Dam Supervisor Mike Lentz also is a federal employee. He makes \$47,500 a year plus benefits. He has been working at the reservoir since June, 1989.

Postmaster JaNan O'Brien receives \$58,312 a year. Her salary is paid by the U.S. Postal Service, which comes under the federal Freedom of Information Act.

Norton Correctional Facility Warden Jay Shelton works for the state, which pays him \$2,468 per two weeks or about \$64,168 a year. His assistant, Corrections Manager Joel Hrabe, gets \$1,878 per two weeks or about \$48,838 a year.

Prairie Dog State Park Manager Steve Mathes makes \$45,667 a year, Park Ranger Jim Ray, \$41,362; and Department of Wildlife and Parks Area Manager Chris Mulder, \$38,500.

Longtime state employee Chriss McDiffett, district engineer for the Department of Transportation, makes \$78,062. He is a licensed professional civil engineer with more than 35 years experience, 23 with the state. He oversees 18 offices in northwest Kansas with about 300 employees. Jeff Stewart, construction and materials engineer with the Department of Transportation, makes \$56,846. He also is a licensed civil engineer and has 11 years of experience with the department.

Kansas Highway Patrol Lt. Doug Griffiths has been with the patrol since 1979. He makes \$62,691 a year.

Peggy Pratt, who is the case manager for the state Juvenile Justice Authority for Northwest Kansas, is paid through Norton County but works in a multi-county area. Her salary of \$46,332 comes from the state.

Deb Anderson, district magistrate judge for Norton County, gets \$48,838. Her salary is the same as all magistrate judges in the state.

While county commissioners put in a lot of hours, they are not considered full time. Commissioners Dean Kruse, Leroy Lang and John Miller get \$18,750 a year

plus benefits for their service.

Other county officials include Clerk Robert Wyatt, \$37,600 from the county plus \$2,400 from the state for case management, which is a fee for handling payroll and other administrative matters; Treasurer Cynthia Linner, \$35,450 from the county plus \$1,750 from the state for case management; Register of Deeds Wanda Vincent, \$26,337; Special Bridge Supervisor Michael Coffey, \$32,138; County Health Nurse Gina Frack, \$42,250; Ambulance Director Gerald "Andy" Nielsen \$31,200; Road and Bridge Supervisor Tom Brannan, \$45,176; Solid Waste Supervisor Curt Archibald, \$27,900; Noxious Weed Supervisor Reginald Beckman, \$33,615; Sheriff Troy Thomson, \$40,236 plus \$12,000 for emergency preparedness; County Attorney Karen Griffiths, \$14,160 plus \$53,181 as court trustee supervisor, which includes child support enforcement for a six-county area; and County Counselor Doug Sebelius, \$24,108.

Appraiser Alan Hale makes \$27,094 but only works part time for Norton County. He is also the appraiser for Decatur and Phillips counties.

Extension Agent Keith Van-

Skike makes \$50,882, of which Kansas State University pays \$17,082 and the county \$33,800. He has a master's degree and 25 years of experience.

New Norton Economic Development Director Marlene Henderson makes \$45,000 plus benefits. Her salary is paid partly by the county and partly by the City of Norton.

Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson makes \$64,554 plus \$465 a month car allowance. He has been with the city for five years and before that worked for 13 years as city superintendent in St. Francis and six as a lineman in Goodland.

Other city officials are City Clerk Darla Ellis, \$48,843; Police Chief Lynn Menagh, \$46,039; Water and Wastewater Supervisor Dick Hahn, \$42,130; Public Works Supervisor Dan Bainter, \$39,713; Parks and Cemetery Supervisor Steve Cole, \$40,903; Electric Distribution Supervisor J.B. Carlton, \$44,697; Power Plant Supervisor Curt Bozarth, \$36,344; part-time Fire Chief Mitch Jones, \$5,400 per year plus \$20 per run and \$10 per meeting; and City Attorney Charles Worden, \$9,318 per year plus an hourly rate for billed services.



Hannah Fulton (left) and Kyra Fulton, members of the Busy Beavers 4-H Club, review some of the 4-H centennial items on display at the Norton Public Library. The girls are the daughters of Todd and Samantha Fulton, Norton. — Photo by Keith VanSkike

4-H marks 100th birthday

Kansas and Norton County have a long history of involvement with 4-H. This year marks the state's 4-H centennial. The national 4-H pledge was submitted by former

Kansas 4-H director, J. Harold Johnson, from Norton County.

The Norton Public Library has several 4-H centennial items on display through the first week of

January.

Local 4-H members have special exhibits on display in the art gallery at the library.

Some to close for New Year's

(Continued from Page 1)

Whitefield's Coffee House will be open New Year's Eve from 6:30 a.m. until noon. They will be closed Sunday and Monday.

The Cardinal Bar and Grill in Norcatour will be serving a New Year's Eve buffet of all-you-can-eat bull fries or ham, starting at 6 p.m.

Time Zone in Lenora will be closed Sunday. Monday their hours will be from 4 p.m. to close.

Theatre

Norton Theatre will be premiering "King Kong" and featuring "Cheaper By The Dozen II" this weekend. Friday and Saturday

nights "King Kong" will show at 7 p.m. while "Cheaper By The Dozen II" shows at 8 p.m. Sunday night, both shows start at 5 p.m.

Discount Stores

Pamida will be open both Saturday and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. It will be business as usual Monday.

Dollar General will be open Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sunday and Monday from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Pharmacies

Pamida Pharmacy will be open Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., closed Sunday and open again on

Monday.

Moffet Drug Store will be open Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and closed Sunday and Monday.

Public Offices

The Norton County Courthouse will be closed Monday.

Norton City offices will be closed Monday.

The Norton Public Library will close at noon Friday and be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

Health Services

The Doctor's Clinic will be closed Monday.

Norton County Health Department will be closed Monday.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

NORTON

Senior High

Tuesday — C-team girls, junior varsity and varsity versus Oberlin, here, 4 p.m.; Rotary Soup Supper, cafeteria, 5-7 p.m.

Wednesday — Jay Singers, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday — Kays, a.p.; varsity basketball versus Stockton, here, 6 p.m.; Kay Board, 7 p.m.

Friday — Jazz, a.p.; junior varsity, varsity basketball versus Osborne here, 5 p.m.

Saturday — Scholar's Bowl at Logan, 9 p.m.; J.R. Durham Invi-

tational Wrestling Tourney, here, 9:30 a.m.; C-team girls basketball at Phillipsburg, 10 a.m.

Monday — Jay Singers, a.p.; FCCLA Board, 7 p.m.

Junior High

Wednesday — Team meeting, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday — Eighth-grade junior varsity, varsity basketball at Phillipsburg, 5:30 p.m.

Saturday — Mid-Continent Elementary League Basketball Tourney

Eisenhower

Wednesday — School resumes

-Section A Kindergarten Reports, 8:30 a.m.

Thursday — EC-grade 2 level meeting, 3:40 p.m.

Friday — Geography Bee - Band Room, 2 p.m.

All Schools

Monday — No School.

Tuesday — Teacher Work Day - No School

Wednesday — Administrators Meeting, Alice Tweed Center, 9:30 a.m.; Report cards go home

Monday — Board of Education Meeting, Alice Tweed Center, 7:30 p.m.



THE NORTON TELEGRAM

and the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce welcome the "NORTON COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICE" to the business community

"The Economic Development Office" is located at 116 N. First Street, Suite 112. Regular office hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (open lunch hour). Please stop in and visit with Marlene anytime or phone 874-4816.

HATS OFF TO 2006

Join us in celebrating a new year full of infinite possibilities for us all. We hope 2006 showers you with gifts of love, friendship and prosperity.



Worden Law Office

877-3086

— and —

Norton County Abstract Co., Inc.

877-3882

213 S. Kansas — Norton, Kansas