

The project moves forward...



Mild winter weather has allowed road construction on US Highway 36, west of Norton to progress rapidly. An earth mover barreled down a wide piece of road just one mile east of Norcat. — Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

At city council meeting Cold weather gear debated

By VERONICA MONIER
The Norton City Council wants more information on cold weather gear for the city's employees before making a decision. Councilman Jim Williams said at the last Personnel Committee meeting, a request was made to get new cold weather gear for the refuse department employees. If the city paid for all of it, the gear would have to be left at work and couldn't be used for private use. Councilman Ron Briery asked about the other crews. "We either need to do it for all of the employees or none," he said. "I know almost all of the city's employees are outside at one time or another in cold weather." City Administrator Rob Lawson said if that was going to be done, it needed to be budgeted. Mr. Briery said the issue could be taken back to committee and a total cost could be gotten. Then, he said, they can see what needs to be bought. "I think we just need to take it back and do some more talking," said Councilman Jerry Jones. Mayor David Corns said he would like to see it as a budgeted item. Mr. Briery suggested that they

budget for it and then once a year, buy part and then buy another part the following year, and so on. The gear that's needed the most can be bought first, until all of the gear has been replaced. The council felt there were still a lot of questions that needed to be answered and so sent the matter back to the Personnel Committee. In other business, the council:
• Were presented with an engineering service agreement for the water treatment plant renovation project by Thaniel Monaco of Miller and Associates. Mr. Monaco said the agreement has been reviewed by U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development and is required as part of the loan documents.
Mr. Lawson and City Attorney Chuck Worden will review the agreement and make a recommendation for approval at the next council meeting.
• Heard from Mr. Lawson that Norton County was declared a disaster county for the snow storm last November by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for electrical damage and snow removal. He said the city should be getting \$3,076.95 for electrical damage and \$6,122.13

for snow removal.
• Learned that EMC Insurance, the city's insurance carrier, has sent notice that the city needs to develop a written program within 30 days to reduce vehicle related accidents and injuries.
• Heard from Mr. Lawson that the clean-up of the condemned properties is going well. City crews have finished the properties at 513 and 515 W. Main for \$4,284.34.
"The guys are doing a good job," he said. "It really looks great."
The new owner of the properties at 510, 512 and 512 1/2 N. Archer is making progress with cleaning up these properties as well, he said. A new list of properties is being inspected and notice will be sent to the owners in the near future.
• Approved the cereal malt beverage license for Thunder Promotions, LLC, to sell beer at the races at Elmwood Park during the 2006 race season with the site to be indicated by a photo.
• Heard that the keep warm system at the power plant has been fixed. The city is no longer running its engines, said Mr. Lawson.
• Paid bills in the amount of \$319,191.28.

Solutions for 'winter blahs' given

By KAREN BEERY
For those who live in locations where winter brings colder weather, along with shorter hours of daylight, it is not uncommon to experience feelings of discouragement, unhappiness, and even depression during the first few months of a new year. Various terms are used to describe this including "post-holiday blues", "cabin fever", "Seasonal Affective Disorder" and "stimulus deprivation".
For some people, feelings of sadness are due to a let-down that often occurs after the excitement of the holidays. The parties are over, family members have returned from where they came, and the normal daily routine is once

again in place. Some people may be worn out from the stress of the holidays, while others may be experiencing disappointment because the holidays did not fulfill their expectations. The beginning of a new year may also be complicating the situation, with additional financial strain from the holidays, and resolutions that will take more time and effort. Add to all that, the colder weather that keeps people indoors more and traveling less.
So, what can be done about the "winter blahs"? here are a few suggestions:
• Recognize your feelings, talk with others and come up with a plan for restoring positive emotional well-being.

• Get together with friends and family members whose company is enjoyable.
• Volunteer time to local groups; helping others is a great way to feel better about oneself.
• Try something new such as a reading group, art class, or college course; begin a new hobby, or renew a project that has been set aside for too long.
• Take care of yourself, get enough sleep, eat healthy and exercise regularly.
• If feelings of sadness persist for several weeks, seek advice from a family physician, faith minister, or mental health professional.
Mail questions to: High Plains Mental Health Center, 208 East 7th, Hays, Kan. 67601.

Volunteers are key to hospice success

Hospice volunteers are members of the teams of professionals who provide care at the end of life. Hospices could not provide the care they do without volunteers, who bring companionship to people in the final months and weeks of life, respite to families and caregivers and support in fund-raising and administrative efforts by hospice groups. It is federally law that at least 5 percent of all hospice patient care hours be provided by trained volunteers.
According to the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, about 500,000 people volunteer in the nation's 3,300 hospice groups annually, providing more than 10 million hours of service annually. Hospice Services, which serves Northwest Kansas, has more than 200 volunteers. This year more than 1,000 hours

were recorded. We realize many more hours are donated than are ever recorded.
"Hospice volunteers play an indispensable role in enabling Hospice Services to offer the best care possible for patients living with life-limiting illness, their families and caregivers, said Amanda McKenzie, director of volunteers. "By sharing their time, energy, and expertise, our volunteers bring compassion and caring to the lives of those in need."
"We are so grateful to our volunteers throughout the year."
To learn more about hospice or to volunteer, call (785) 543-2900 or (800) 315-5122.
Despite the rapid growth of the field of hospice and palliative medicine during the last decade, many patients with advanced illness lack access to quality pallia-

tive care services. Beyond demonstrated deficiencies in end-of-life care, numerous studies have highlighted the prominent "fragmentation" of medical care as seriously ill patients are chaotically shuffled amongst varied providers and institutions.
Such care can be confusing and frustrating for patients and families, and the lack of "big picture" clarity results in undue chaos, fear and anxiety.
Many are trying to better coordinate the growing clinical services and education initiatives around end-of-life care. Critical studies have demonstrated that the provision of palliative care results in improved pain and symptom relief and increased patient and family satisfaction.
(This column provided by Hospice Services of Northwest Kansas.)

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Norton Animal Health Center
and
Schering-Plough Animal Health
will be holding a producer meeting on
March 9, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.
at the Town and Country Kitchen
in Norton, Kansas.
Please call: 785-877-2411
to reserve your seat.
Looking forward to seeing you there!

Norton Animal Health Center, Ltd.

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Hours: Mon.-Fri., 8-5 p.m. — Saturday Hours: 9 a.m.-noon