

Politicians talk about important topics

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- **The budget.** He said they ended the year with a surplus of money, but it is already spent. If the economy doesn't grow fast enough, he said, it's going to be hard to find funding for extra spending.

- **School finance.** Sen. Ostmeyer said he thinks the amount of money the Legislature has put into school finance is sufficient, but it isn't getting to the right places, like western Kansas.

- **"There comes a day when you can't educate on a bus,"** he said. "And transportation is already a major expense."

- **Wildlife and Parks.** He said the \$4 extra on tags is, at the moment, a dead issue. The bill, which would charge people renewing tags an extra \$4 to beef up the Wildlife and Parks' budget, is sitting in the Ways and Means Committee. The department's secretary, Mike Hayden, is letting it lay for the moment, he said. The department needs an \$11 million influx and if 25 percent of the people ask for their \$4 back, it will cause a problem.

He said he is in favor of the state's parks, but they need to figure out what they are doing wrong as far as funding goes.

- "I would like to see us fund our parks," he said, "but its been a quiet issue in the state house this year. I don't see it coming out of Ways and Means."

- Rep. Faber said there is a provision that says the state can't close the parks.

- Rep. Faber also talked about:

- School finance. He said the

House has two education plans and the Senate has one. Probably, he said, the three will be merged together. The important thing to remember about a three to five year plan is that it's an election year, he said. One Legislature can't bind another into doing something, he said. So, he said, they can't pass any bills because everything could change depending on who is elected and the mood of the Legislature.

- **The machine and equipment tax.** Rep. Faber said he voted for it to see what would happen to it in the Senate. However, if the Senate passes it, it will have to be approved by the House again and he'll see what it says before voting for it or not.

Also at the meeting was Attorney General Phill Kline. He talked about:

- **Some of the cases the state has won.** He said they won against Nebraska and Colorado on cases dealing with water rights and won against Missouri in a health care case.

- **School finance.** He said he doesn't think its right to put a child on a bus for two hours. He said the judge is saying political compromise is a bad thing and that an outside company needs to come in and tell us how to run our schools. The problem with what the court did, he said, is that now an outside "expert" from the east coast is the driving force behind how we educate our children. It's taking away our authority to affect school policy, he said.

- **Jessica's Law,** dealing with child rape. He said they are trying

to get the law passed in the state of Kansas. The law, he said, saying if you are a man and you are an adult and you rape a child 13 or under, you get 25 years to life in prison.

- "This is child rape we're talking about here," he said. "It's not two 15 year olds in the back of a Toyota. It's child rape."

- **The death penalty.** Mr. Kline said Kansas' death penalty is very narrow. He said there are eight people on death row and two more

on trial. These are the worst of the worst, he said.

- "It's tough to get a death penalty in Kansas," he said.

- He said in 2001 the Kansas Supreme Court said it was constitutional and then in 2004, said it was not constitutional.

- "It was just a change in judges," he said. "We took it to the U.S. Supreme Court challenging the new ruling and expect a decision in about three weeks. So, we'll see how it turns out."



Kansas Attorney General Phill Kline (above right) joined Senator Ralph Ostmeyer (above left) and Representative

John Faber (top right) in Norton on Saturday to hit on the hot topics in the Legislature. — Photos by Veronica Monier

Essay deadline extended to April 2

In order to encourage all eligible students to apply, the deadline for the 2006 Lewis and Clark Youth Rendezvous essay contest has been extended to April 2.

Ten students from each state and U.S. territory will be selected — based on submitted essays — to take part in the week-long event sponsored by the National Guard Bureau. Focused on the 200th anniversary of the Corps of Discovery and the exploration of the West, the Youth Rendezvous will take place along the Lewis and Clark Trail in North Dakota Aug. 13-18.

The rendezvous is an event for students who will be high school juniors or seniors in the 2006-07 school year. The winners of the essay contest will receive a free trip to North Dakota during the 2006 Lewis and Clark Signature Event.

Participants will learn about military heritage and American Indian culture while touring the state and participating in fun and adventurous activities. Meals, transportation and housing will be provided free of charge by the National Guard.

"This event is a unique, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience history rather than just read about it in a book," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas' adjutant general. "Any student who has any interest at all in the history of our nation or the military should enter this contest."

Essays must be between 1,000 and 1,500 words, written in English and address the question, "In your opinion, what military value most describes the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery journey

- and why?"
- Military values are:
- **Loyalty** — Bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other Soldiers.
 - **Duty** — Fulfill your obligations.
 - **Respect** — Treat people as they should be treated.
 - **Selfless Service** — Put the welfare of the nation, the Army and your subordinates before your own.
 - **Honor** — Live up to all the Army values.
 - **Integrity** — Do what's right, legally and morally.
 - **Personal Courage** — Face fear, danger or adversity (physical or moral).

Essays will be evaluated on original thought. References may be used, but must be cited in a separate bibliography page. The essays can be submitted online or an application can be requested by mail. The essay should include these four parts: title page, essay, bibliography (if applicable) and a completed entry form. Information on the title page should include the title of the essay, the contestant's name, address and telephone number.

To receive an application by mail, send requests to:

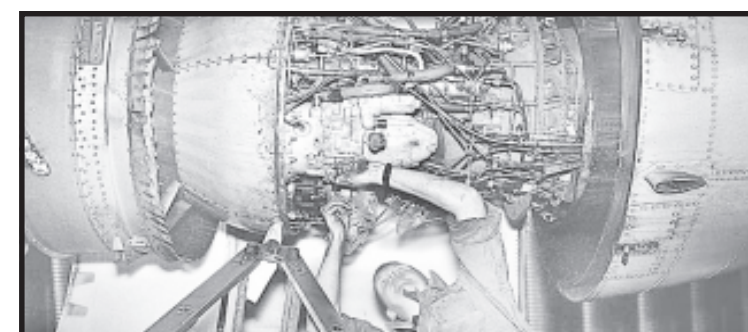
Lewis and Clark Youth Rendezvous
 P.O. Box 5511
 Bismarck, N.D. 58506-5511
 For information about the rendezvous and the essay contest go to www.lcyouthrendezvous.com or contact Adrienne Dickey, Kansas National Guard Youth Program Coordinator, at Adrienne.Dickey@us.army.mil, or cell phone (785) 806-1750.

Daffodils have arrived in Norton

The daffodils have arrived. Volunteers for the American Cancer Society will begin distributing bundles of fresh daffodils on March 13. Orders were taken ear-

lier this year for the annual fund raiser. For more information call Ramona Pabian at the Norton Senior Center, 877-5352.

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SCHOOL CALENDAR

Norton

No School — Spring Break

Northern Valley

Monday — Kansas Severe Weather Awareness Week; Topeka Government Trip; Jr. High St. Patrick's King/Queen Contest; Bus Drivers Meeting at Long Island, 8:45 a.m.; School Board Meeting, Alma, Conference Room, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday — Statewide Tornado Drill (Kansas Severe Weather Awareness Week); Topeka Government Trip; Cheerleading Uniform Check-In; Eleventh Grade State Reading Assessment Testing, 8:30 a.m.; Fourth Grade State Reading Assessment Testing, 9:30 a.m.

Wednesday — High School Junior High Cheer and Dance Sign Up; Kansas Severe Weather Awareness Week; Eleventh Grade State Reading Assessment Testing, 8:30 a.m.; Fourth Grade State Reading Assessment Testing, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday — Kansas Severe Weather Awareness Week; Forensics Meet at Lakeside; Eleventh Grade State Reading Assessment Testing, 8:30 a.m.; Fourth Grade State Reading Assessment Testing, 9:30 a.m.

Friday — High School Dance

Uniform Check-in; Kansas Severe Weather Awareness Week; Kindergarten Play "Seeds Needs" in the High School Auditorium, 3 p.m.; FFA Leaders Lab at Junction City; Grades Seventh and Eighth St. Patrick's Day King/Queen Dance at Long Island in the Band Room; FFA Leaders Lab at Junction City

Breakfast/Lunch Menus

Monday — Breakfast: Egg muffin, sausage links, orange juice, cereal; Lunch: Chicken-noodles, hot roll, mashed potatoes, peas, chocolate cake

Tuesday — Breakfast: Cherry coffeecake, sausage patty, fruit

cup, cereal; Lunch: Corndogs, French fries, green beans, apple crisp

Wednesday — Breakfast: Scrambled egg/toast, ham slice, hashbrowns, cereal; Lunch: Vegetable beef soup with crackers, carrot/celery sticks, cheese sticks, kolache

Thursday — Breakfast: Breakfast pizza, pear half, cereal; Lunch: Pork roast, mashed potatoes, hot roll, spinach, lemon pie

Friday — Breakfast: ham-cheese bagel; apple juice, cereal; Lunch: Cheese pizza, tossed salad with dressing, cauliflower, chocolate pudding

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EARLY DEADLINES...

for the Country Advocate for the Week of March 20. Display ad and word ad deadlines will be noon on Thurs., March 16. THIS IS ONE DAY EARLY!

Our staff will be at a training session on Friday



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