

### A day in Norton to remember

The Norton community came together Friday unlike never before. The reason was the funeral service for and burial of Sgt. Scott Turner, who lost his life a little over a week ago in a training accident at Fort Riley. His wife is the former Amy Roeder and his father- and mother-in-law are Jerry and Pam Roeder, Norton.

Hundreds of residents flocked to the downtown area to witness the assembly of the Patriot Guard. Their motorcycles were parked along several streets downtown as the riders stood holding American flags during the service in the Christian Church.

The Patriot Guard's mission is to simply honor fallen soldiers and support their family. That seemingly was also the mission of the many hundreds of Norton and area residents who stood by to watch. For most of them this was their first exposure to the Guard.

The Patriot Guard, as explained in a front page story in *The Telegram* last Tuesday by Carolyn Plotts, carry on their mission as invited guests of the family, and they do so peaceably and lawfully. They form a barrier, and in so doing shield the family and friends from interruptions created by any protester or group of protesters outside the church and at the burial site.

No protesters were evident, only a very large and solemn gathering of residents who may or may not have known the sergeant but wanted to display publicly their support of his mission.

Fortunately, one of the infamous groups usually showing up at military funerals to display their disgusting behavior was a no-show. Fred Phelps and his congregation from Topeka had been rumored to be on their way. Perhaps the lawsuit they lost back east earlier in the week had something to do with that. Phelps and his hate-driven losers were ordered to pay the family of a Marine who filed the suit nearly \$11 million.

But our purpose is not to dwell on what might have happened, but rather to dwell on what did happen. A community turned out in large numbers to show its support, and a group known as the Patriot Guard carried out their mission in impressive fashion.

What we all witnessed here Friday was the way it should be.

-Tom Dreiling

### Norton did itself very proud

To the Editor,  
I am very proud of my adopted hometown of Norton. I moved here seven years ago and am often left in awe at the generosity and caring of others.

But, never more so than when I drove down State Street at 1 p.m. on November 2, 2007. The Christian Church was holding services for an American hero who lost his life while representing our country.

And, instead of condemning him or judging him, the Norton community, with the help of the Patriot Guard, came together to show support for a fallen American soldier.

I drove down State Street and saw American flags waving in the wind. I saw our businessmen and women, adults and children alike, standing together holding

flags and, a mural painted of a kneeling soldier.

I saw pride and compassion on the faces of those I drove past. But, mostly I saw and felt the patriotic caring of an amazing place to live.

Thank you Norton, not only for making my son and I feel at home. But, for reminding me over and over again what a wonderful country we live in and the great people who live in its communities.

Kathleen McConney  
Norton

### LETTER

### Thumbs Up...

To...the **Patriot Guard**. It was great what you all did. (called in)

To...the **Andbe Home**, for a super fall festival Excellent yummys! (e-mail)

To...the students at **Northern Valley**, for your generous contribution to God's Pantry, the result of a recent dance. (e-mail)

To...the **many** people who made possible the much appreciated salute to the Blue Jays in the two page ad in *The Telegram* on Friday. (e-mail)

To...the **undisclosed** inmate at the Norton Correctional Facility, for the monetary donation to God's Pantry. (called in)

(To submit a name of names, please e-mail [tomd@nwkansas.com](mailto:tomd@nwkansas.com), call either 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton or drop by the office. There is no charge. Thanks for your continuing input. -td)

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### Now you can call him 'Dr. Jim'

Let's see: You've heard of self-denial, self-help, self-esteem and self-taught. But, have you ever heard of "self-surgery?" Jim should write a book called, "How To Operate On Yourself In Three Easy Steps."

Last week I came home from work to find him in pain, with a bandaged finger. He said he had been unloading some sheets of plywood and ran a sticker into his finger. Upon closer inspection it was obvious this was no ordinary sticker. This was a piece of wood, rammed crosswise entirely through his finger, just below the base of his fingernail. He said, "I want you to get it out." Now, I'm not very squeamish. But, one look and I knew it was out of my scope of "sticker-pickin'." My prescription: bread and milk poultice. That's my cure-all.

Don't laugh. You can call me "old-fashioned" but I never had trouble with my children's stickers. If they got a little sticker, there were no tears because they

### Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



feared the needle. No, I would slap a bread and milk poultice on the sticker before they went to bed and by morning, you could almost pop the sticker out with your finger. There must be some chemical reaction that happens between the yeast in the bread and the lactose in the milk that has "drawing" power.

In this case, though, a poultice made with a loaf of bread and a gallon of milk was not going to do the trick. I gave Jim two ibuprofen tablets and applied the poultice. But, not before eliciting a promise from him that if it didn't work, he would go to a doctor.

Next morning, the splinter was still there; it still hurt; and he kept his promise. I called him later to see how it went, knowing he would have to get a shot to deaden the pain, even before a real doctor could get it out. Here's his version of what happened.

"Yeah, it's out. No, didn't hurt a bit. Yeah, he gave me a shot. Can you believe it, he wanted to X-ray it. No, I didn't let him. X-ray a sticker....are you kidding? He stepped out of the room and I took the scalpel and cut it open myself. Calm down, it came right out. Yes, the doctor saw it. No, I didn't do any nerve damage (at least, I don't think so). Hey, he said he wouldn't charge me since I did it myself. Well, the doc did have to sew me up where I made the incision. Nah, don't worry, it only took four stitches. Carolyn? Are you there? Carolyn? Huh, she must have hung up."

Lord, help me. If he doesn't kill himself, I just might do it for him.

### Drive in the country always interesting

We have not seen a lot of pheasants or heard reports of really successful hunts on opening weekend. But that doesn't mean there is not a lot of wildlife out there however. We are seeing deer in abundance. The fall cattle round up scared as many deer out of the creek as cattle.

Junior saw a nice group of deer emerge out of some CRP pheasant hunters were walking. Sadly for the hunters there were no pheasants!

I've been running the swather and have been chasing a lot of little cottontail rabbits out. Earlier in the summer we were seeing a lot of Jack rabbits. Folks around are surprised at the number of Jacks we are seeing; no one is sure why they seem to be resurging.

Climate change? I believe they like warmer, drier weather, but our summer has been pretty wet compared to the past few years.

It could be lack of predators. We see very few coyotes. And those we do see are sickly, mangy creatures.

There are plenty of pack rats down on the river. The old timers say they never saw pack rats until the last 10 years or so. Pack rats are a mess. They like irrigation pipe, and carry off the gaskets. When we swath they are always running out of the alfalfa. Yuck, some things are just gross.

### Back Home

Nancy Hagman



Again perhaps coyotes used to keep the numbers down.

We are always hearing reports in the area about mountain lions. If they are around you'd think they could help out and eat a few rats. House cats like mice, surely the premise is not too different!

There are lots of bobcats and foxes. We rarely see them, but Wildlife and Parks tell us large numbers inhabit the area. Officially, there are NO mountain lions in Kansas.

Kansas is also one of only two states in the country that have no bear population!

We do have a large variety of birds. We are starting to see geese. It seems the geese are late this year. Climate change? Whatever, any time I see flocks of geese fly over is good. It is one of my favorite things about living near the Kirwin Reservoir.

We have such abundant fall crops this year; it should bode well for all birds.

The turkeys are getting about as bad as deer. You can get your Thanksgiving dinner just driving to town, but they are big enough you will probably also need a trip to the body shop for repairs.

Another bird we see a lot of is the Prairie Chicken. As a child I remember going to my uncle's in Graham County; sometimes they would mention seeing a Prairie Chicken. It was very unusual; worthy of comment.

Lesser Prairie Chickens are endangered so I'm assuming what we see are Greater Prairie Chickens. Research tells us Prairie Chickens find the highest elevation possible in the spring for their mating ritual. The males beat down the grass and dust themselves, strut and fight. Apparently if you are a female Prairie Chicken this is a real turn on.

We have a wheat field where the Prairie Chicken mate. It is not a large space but very evident, very little wheat in the circle survives. Interesting little critters!

City folks might not think there is much to do out in the country; they are wrong. Every trip to town means an encounter with "wildlife." I hope all the hunters this fall have an enjoyable time in Western Kansas. It's not just about the kill, it's the hunt. And we all can hunt in our own way, take a drive in the country and see what you find!

### Too much talk, very little action

There is an old "joke" which asks how you can tell if a politician is lying. The answer; if you watch carefully you will see his lips move. I'm not sure it is a joke anymore, maybe it never was.

What is a joke, is the political climate we witness each day. Anyone who thinks their party of choice is a non-contributor to these antics is grossly politically challenged. What is happening is overkill. I fear as we head closer to the election there will be a major backlash. Normally I would welcome such, but in this case, the backlash may well be greater apathy. One gets the sense that "it really doesn't matter" because while there may be a difference in what the candidates believe there is no difference in the methods they use to acquire the votes.

### Phase II

Mary Kay Woodyard



The candidates who try to refrain from attack campaigning are seen as "weak." If they admit to not having the answer or being unsure of a particular approach, they are seen as "wishy-washy." It used to be we admired people for their civility and kindness and when people were willing to listen and consider both sides of an issue they were seen as "fair." Not any more, the labels they acquire are negative ones.

We watch as the candidates travel around the country promoting their agenda. To be sure in both parties some candidates are both more verbal and more visible than others. These candidates are raising disturbing levels of money for their candidacy, which also insures more visibility for their campaign approach. The problem is we have heard all of the rhetoric before. We have seen the performances. What we haven't seen after elections is the action.

This is, in part, why apathy has such a strong hold. It will take years of elections before the American public believes what they hear. It will take years of action on the part of elected officials. The public needs to feel they have been heard. When elected officials talk, we want to be able to listen and believe.