

THE NORTON TELEGRAM



Friday

March 14, 2008

Norton, Kansas
Home of Marjorie Watkins

Briefly

Easter Cantata planned Sunday

An Easter Cantata will be presented at 7 p.m., Sunday, at the Prairie View Reformed Christian Church. Everyone is invited. It will be performed again at 7 p.m. Easter Sunday at the Luctor Reformed Christian Church.
For more information call the Rev. Jeffrey Van Der Weele, 785-973-2794.

Toy, Collectable show Saturday

The 20th annual Toy and Collectable Show will be held Saturday at the Norton National Guard Armory from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Dealers from Colorado, Nebraska and Kansas will be in attendance to display old and new farm toys, NASCAR, trucks, HotWheels and more.

The event is co-sponsored by the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce and the Norton United Methodist Men. Admission is \$2 for adults, and children 12 and under are admitted free. There will be hourly drawings and a food bar featuring sandwiches and homemade pies. Proceeds go to help fund the church's mission projects.

System upgrade funds possible

The Northwest Local Environmental Protection Group today reminded homeowners on old septic systems, or who have old cesspools, there is a possibility of cost-share funding to upgrade to an approved system.
They suggest you contact the Norton County Conservation District for further details.
Application deadlines are near.

Weather

Forecast:

Tonight — A chance of rain before 1 a.m., then a slight chance of snow.
Saturday — Mostly cloudy with a high near 43. North wind 5 to 10 mph becoming east.
Saturday Night — A 20 percent chance of snow after 1 a.m.
Sunday — A chance of rain and snow before 10 a.m., then a chance of rain.
Sunday Night — A 40 percent chance of rain.

Kingham report:

Tuesday Low 27, High 69
Wednesday Low 39, High 68
Thursday Low 37, High 66
(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

Prayer

God, we know you understand our heartache. Thank you for weeping with us and then for giving us the courage to start rebuilding. **Amen**

Norton native part of acclaimed study

Focus on human evolution

By CAROLYN PLOTTS
cplots@nwkansas.com

John Hawks, a 1990 graduate of Norton Community High School, is an anthropologist at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and is much in demand. "When I graduated from high school I already knew I was interested in anthropology," he said.

He and his colleagues recently received attention for a study regarding human evolution. Their study claims humans are changing at a faster rate than the academic world believed. He developed a mathematical calculation that showed the bigger a population, the faster the rate of evolutionary change.

Mr. Hawks supplemented his mathematical calculations linking genetic mutation and population size with data from fieldwork. One of his studies was of 5,000-year-old skeletons in Germany. He theorized that in the last 5,000 years, humans have overcome lactose intolerance and can drink milk. "We worked out the mathematics of the connection between population and genetics. This was entirely new," he said.

From his studies of skulls, Mr. Hawks came to believe that a change in human brain size had taken place. His analysis of skulls showed the size of the brain started shrinking about 10,000 years ago. He says that today, the human brain is about an eighth of the size it was before this change. His theory is that evolution is making the brain more compact and efficient and that the change was driven by the dramatic growth in human population from an estimated 5 million people in 9,000 B.C. to 6.5 billion people today.

Using the latest technology, Mr. Hawks and his co-author, Gregory Cochran, an anthropologist at the university, tapped into the massive library of genes catalogued in the human genome project. It is their theory that those sequences showed evidence of adaptation. "We worked out the mathematics of the connection between population and genetics," Mr. Hawks said.

He has received a lot of recognition for his work and said he is gratified by the response. Unlike most of his colleagues in the scientific world, he enjoys talking about what he does to the general public. He maintains a blog, www.johnhawks.net/weblog/, that receives about 4,000 hits a day.

Mr. Hawks has been retained as a consultant by National Geographic and has been asked to appear in a National Geographic segment to be aired in the fall. He has also been interviewed for a feature story in *Discover* magazine for a future issue.

Additionally, Mr. Hawks has been interviewed on National Public Radio, Australian Radio, the BBC and for a magazine in Denmark.

Mr. Hawks said he will continue to study the human gene and how it relates to human history. "We want to know what genes gave people an advantage in the past and how they help protect us now. For every risk gene, there is a protective gene. We want to know how it relates to people," he said.

Mr. Hawks and his wife Gretchen, have four children, Sophie, 7, twins, Sadie and Lucy, 4, and Goodwin, 2.

His parents are Jerry and Kay Hawks, Norton.



Mr. Hawks with some of his favorite topics — human skulls. He will appear in a National Geographic Channel documentary in the fall.
-Photo by Milford Wolpoff.

Natoma Corporation wins elite award

By CAROLYN PLOTTS
cplots@nwkansas.com

Safety standards have always been high at Natoma Corporation in Norton. Recently, management at the precision equipment machine shop, decided to "take it up a notch" and apply for certification through Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP).

SHARP recognizes small employers who operate an exemplary safety and health management system.

A certified industrial hygienist made an inspection of the 40,000 square foot facility located on East Highway 36. She checked noise levels, air quality, equipment guards and safety signage and made her recommendations.

AKansas Department of Labor SHARP Consultant, Ken Bieker, made several safety inspections. He also provided a list of recommendations.

Suggestions for improved safety measures included: improved guards on hand-milling machines, re-labeling circuit breaker panel boxes, mark floors with minimum safe working distances, monthly inspection of fire extinguish-

ers and labeling of emergency washing stations.

Safety director Joe Leroux said Natoma Corporation provides all safety protection gear to employees and makes sure all new employees know the safety procedures.

The recommended improvements by the hygienist were made and the company was notified in January that they had earned the SHARP certification.

"The OSHA SHARP certification is something we are very proud to have earned," said Mr. Leroux.

"Each and every employee here at Natoma Corporation contributed to our ability to achieve this goal by their day-to-day safe work place practices and sincere involvement in the certification process."

Gail Boller, president, Todd Boller, vice president, Darin Campbell, general manager and Joe Leroux, safety director, met with Kansas Governor, Kathleen Sebelius as she signed a proclamation to commemorate the award on Feb. 19 in Topeka.

Natoma Corporation is the first company in Norton County to receive the SHARP award. Its attention to employee safety is proven by its safety record — no reported injuries in 2007 and none to-date in 2008.



Linda Becker, one of Natoma's 60 employees, is a model for safety procedures. Ms. Becker is wearing protective ear wear, protective glasses, an apron and rubber gloves while she uses air pressure to dry metal parts.

- Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

Cincinnati Reds' link to Norton speaks

By VERONICA MONIER
vmonier@nwkansas.com

Former Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the Cincinnati Reds John Allen returned to his hometown of Norton on Monday as the featured speaker for the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce's annual banquet.

Mr. Allen said he's done hundreds of speaking engagements, but coming home to speak at the banquet tops the list.

"Norton is what made me what I am today," he said. "I'm still the same person I was growing up here."

He said he had a great time growing up in Norton and went out for sports because he loved them, even though he's not an athlete.

"I don't have an athletic bone in my body..." he said. "But, I've always been involved in sports. It's always something I wanted to do. I knew I'd never

be an athlete, but I always wanted to be involved."

In 1989, he said he decided he was going to make it happen. He quit his high salary job where he had "all the trappings of success, but was not really successful," drove to Ohio and enrolled in the sports managers program. He then became an unpaid intern for a triple A affiliate of the New York Yankees.

Mr. Allen said he learned to do everything, from wrapping hot dogs to running the scoreboard and parking cars. He graduated with a Master's in sports management and hired on with the Clippers, trying to learn every aspect of the game. His wife, he said, was very supportive.

"The people I got to know is what makes baseball a great game," he said. "I learned a lot in the triple A. I wasn't making much money, but it wasn't about money. It was about the opportunities."

To make extra money, he said he parked cars on the side.

"One cold, wet night, a woman gave me a \$20 for a \$2 ticket," he said. "I had to give her 18 ones back in change. She was upset and said, 'this is why people like you do what you do.'"

Mr. Allen showed a slideshow of some of the people he's met over the years, some of the wonderful opportunities he's had.

"I loved being with the fans," he said. "I met three presidents — Jimmy Carter, George Bush and George W. Bush. I was selected to go overseas to visit the troops. And I would think of that lady when I had all of my experiences. I would stand out there and take tickets and I would talk to presidents."

Mr. Allen told about going to the big leagues in 2005 and how he got to where he was. When he was made interim man-

aging executive of the Reds, they started making baseball better — better for the players and better for the fans. It was a team effort, he said. Because of his efforts, they made him managing executive.

"I was just trying to do the right thing and because of that I got the job," he said. "I owe a lot of it to my upbringing here. This town, this community means so much to me."

"There's three things I can tell you to do — follow your dreams, do the right things and follow the golden rule... do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

"I'm very proud to be from Norton. I'm having a lot of fun, but I'm proud to be from Norton, Kansas."

Chamber Board President Don Kaus presented Mr. Allen with a baseball painting done by local artist Terry Wor-

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