

Andbe Home passes exam

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

Norton's Andbe Home has cleared up its deficiencies and passed its state examination but board members, staff and volunteers are still working to make sure the building is ready for the next time the state comes to visit.

Most of the nursing home's problems were wood surfaces and flooring, which has become worn. Because of this, the state warned the facility that it would have to fix many things including handrails, flooring and almost all wood surfaces before it could take any new Medicaid patients.

Board members and the home's administrator visited with the Norton County commissioners during their meeting on May 19 to keep them up-to-date on the facility.

Earlier, board members had asked the county to help fix deficiencies the state had noted and some that they could foresee having in the future.

The county owns the building but does not run the facility. County tax money is used to help run the facility.

Andbe Home board member Janis Monier said the state had done a resurvey and cleared the home of its deficiencies, which had to do with the building, not with patient care.

"We've made enough progress on the wood surfaces that they cleared us," she said, adding that there was still lots more work needed on the wooden areas and a lot of other problems that need addressing.

Home Administrator Nancy McGinnis said that the board and staff wants to get ahead of the state and fix whatever it will see as a problem before the next inspection.

Some of the upcoming problems have to do with closet doors and the nurses' station, which is out in the open and is probably not compliant with federal medical privacy standards and aging air conditioning units, she said.

Ms. Monier agreed. "We don't have a whole lot of time on this," she said. "We have to get it moving. Something has to happen. We have to have something accomplished before the end of the year."

The staff has come in at night and volunteered their time to make needed repairs, she said.

"There's just a lot of woodwork in that place," Ms. Monier said.

Prisoners from the Norton Correctional Facility have taken out doors and are stripping and refinishing them but there's still all the other woodwork and built-in fixtures to redo, she said.

Some of the wood will get refinished but some will have to be painted since refinishing is labor intensive and time consuming.

"Painting can cover up a lot of stuff," Ms. Monier pointed out. "They (the state examiners) will be back to resurvey — probably before the end of the year. They said we would have to have the doors, door frames and the majority of the woodwork completed," she said. "You really don't want to get a repeat deficiency."

The board had applied for a grant from the Dane G. Hansen Foundation in Logan but did not get it. Now it is looking at a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant or loan to help pay for renovations.

County Clerk Robert Wyatt said that might be a good idea but said that, since the county owns the building, it can not be used as collateral in a loan.

Economic Development Director Diane Becker said she would help the Andbe Home board investigate the possibility of the government loan.

Oil hunt



Murfin Oil started drilling a well this week about six miles west of the city of Norton on the south side of U.S. Highway 36.

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

Youth rally scheduled

An entire day of food, fun, games, prizes and music has been planned for the youth of Norton and the surrounding area. An event called, "It's A God Thing" is being planned for Saturday, June 7 at the 4-H Building and Elmwood Park. Lots of team events are being planned so teams, consisting of five people, are encouraged to register before the rally by calling Mrs. Jackson at 877-2196.

Kandis Jackson is the Christian Education Coordinator at the First United Methodist Church in Norton. She is organizing the rally for all area youth (seventh through twelfth grade), from all denominations. Registration will begin at 9 a.m. at the 4-H Building followed by opening ceremonies at 10 a.m.

Norton schools join Nex-Tech program

The Norton School District has signed an agreement with Nex-Tech Wireless to participate in its School Rebate Program, said Bill Bernhart, the company's director of sales and marketing.

"This program is incredibly simple, but the benefits and impact are huge," he said, explaining, "the more people who participate, the greater the amount of funds Norton Community Schools will have at their discretion."

The program started in the fall of 2006 and Nex-Tech Wireless has donated in excess of \$20,000 to schools throughout their service area.

Subscribers, he said, simply select the school of their choice and Nex-Tech Wireless then donates 3 percent of the customer's monthly service fee to that school.

Current and new customers can sign up for the program by visiting the nearest Nex-Tech Wireless office. In Norton, the office is at 117 N. Norton.

Extensive damage reported as tornadoes hit the Oberlin area

By KIMBERLY DAVIS and CYNTHIA HAYNES
kldavis@nwkansas.com
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

At least nine tornadoes swept through Decatur County last Thursday, with two touching down and leaving a trail of damaged barns and outbuildings across the county.

During the onslaught, which lasted a couple of hours, at least one home was picked up and moved seven feet, outbuildings were smashed or simply exploded, and the storm sirens in Oberlin were blown four times, sending people scrambling for shelter.

Patti Skubal, county emergency management director, said Dave Floyd, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Goodland, came up Friday to check the damage. He told her the county could have had up to 20 tornadoes on Thursday, but had nine confirmed for sure. Mrs. Skubal said that doesn't mean they all touched down.

She said she'd had several dozen calls about damage from the county, including five on Tuesday morning.

A local disaster has been declared for Decatur County, said Mrs. Skubal, and officials may ask for a federal disaster declaration. Basically, she said, that makes state resources available to victims of the damage.

Mrs. Skubal said she had a conference call scheduled for Tuesday afternoon to talk with authorities with the state asking for a federal declaration, which would allow financial assistance or low-interest loans for those who suffered major losses in the storms from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

"Decatur County was one of the ones that was hardest hit from that storm," she said. Around 4:45 p.m., Mrs. Skubal said, the National Weather Service called and told her that tornadoes were heading directly for Decatur County and Oberlin. She said a command center was set up at the fire station

on Penn Avenue.

At 5:25 p.m., dispatchers set off sirens in Oberlin. The wind was blowing and quarter-size hail was seen by spotters.

Nine minutes later the sirens went off again.

Traffic on the radio indicated a wall cloud, which can spawn a tornado, south of town moving northeast and another storm developing south of that one.

At the same time, a tornado was on the ground near the Lund Church Road southwest of Oberlin. Another storm started to form at the same time, west of Kevin Wurm's home, which is on U.S. 83 near the Decatur-Sheridan County line.

At 5:45 p.m., the sirens blew again, this time the all clear, instead of the take cover. "Dispatch you're blowing the all clear and not the take cover," someone said on the radio.

"Three miles southwest of Oberlin, it's on the ground," said a spotter. "It's a big one."

At 5:52 p.m., it sounded like the tornado would hit part of the town. Another funnel was seen about five miles behind it.

Two minutes later, the sirens went off again. Three after that, the storm seemed to be coming at the hospital, in the southwest part of town. Despite the reports, the only damage recorded was to outbuildings southwest, west and north of town.

"We have multiple vortex tornadoes coming down right over the town of Oberlin. Right over the town of Oberlin," said a spotter.

"We're going to have some water in the streets," an officer reported. "Cass (Avenue) is running good."

Throughout the evening, more funnel clouds and hail hit the area. By 8:05 p.m., though, the all clear was blown. Most of the damage, said Mrs. Skubal, seems to be in the Dresden area and near Jennings, and north of town along U.S. 83. One twister crushed grain bins at the feed yard and blew away a metal building north of

there. The county appraiser's office was trying to assess the damage this week. On Sunday, said Mrs. Skubal, she went out and looked at the damage in the county.

Prairie Land Electric estimated damage to poles and wires at \$80,000 to \$100,000, she said, and at least 20 residents had damage to houses, machinery and outbuildings. The total damage could be about \$2.5 million, she estimated, some of which will be covered by insurance.

The whole thing, she said, was a frightening situation. During the 12-hour period, she had as many as 200 calls.

During the storm, Mrs. Skubal said, she and Linda Manning, county ambulance director, and Fire Chief Bill Cathcart were at the command post. Both Undersheriff Randy McHugh and Deputy Jay Tate were out on the roads, watching the storms.

The National Weather Service in Goodland confirmed that two tornadoes had touched down. The first was reported at 5:25 p.m., 13 miles southwest of Oberlin. That one formed northeast of Leoville and then tracked north by northeast to west of Dresden, meteorologist Jerry Killingsworth said. It barely missed Leoville and Dresden, crossed U.S. 36 east of Oberlin and dissipated north of the highway in rural Decatur County.

The second twister developed southwest of Selden on U.S. 83. It moved north by northeast to just west of Oberlin, past the feed yard to just east of Cedar Bluffs and dissipated near the state line. The tornado was reported by off-duty weather service personnel, the public and law enforcement officers, Mr. Killingsworth said.

Both tornadoes were classified as EF1, he said, the smallest and weakest on the Enhanced Fujita scale. The classification system is based on wind speed and damage, he said, but still powerful enough to blow away a barn or crush a grain bin.

Senator casts vote for farm bill

U.S. Senator Pat Roberts voted to override President Bush's veto of the farm bill joining members on both sides of the aisle in approving the measure containing critical tax relief, livestock provisions, conservation measures, energy and nutrition programs.

Major Kansas and national farm organizations supported the bill, he said, including the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers, Kansas Farm Bureau, American Farm Bureau Federation, National Sorghum Producers, National Cattleman's Beef Association, Agricultural Retailers Association, American Association of Crop Insurers, Kansas Cattleman's Association, Kansas Farmers Union, National Pork Producers Council and many others.

"It is time our producers in the fields have a farm bill so they can plan their operations," Sen. Roberts said.

"Farmers went into the fields this year not knowing what farm policy would be available for them at harvest. This bill protects producers from any changes in the game this year and provides

predictability and stability in the years to come. There are some strong, positive provisions in this bill that will go a long way to benefit not only Kansas but also the nation."

Volunteers Needed to Help Build the Lenora Walking Trail

The Lenora Walking Trail Committee is now ready to begin building the Lenora Walking Trail to surround Larrick Park. Please bring any trail building equipment you may have available, including shovels, hoes, picks, and weed eaters to: **Larrick Park at 5:30 p.m. on May 31**

Everyone is welcome! Free hot dogs and chips!

DiscoverHorton.Com

Basic Computer Education Course
June 14 and 21
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

USD #211
Learning Center
600 N. State Street, Norton
(Behind the East Campus Auditorium)

This two day course is offered through Northwest Kansas Technical college for \$35. It will cover basic computer applications, such as icons and double clicking, as well as basic Microsoft Word. Class size is limited to 10 people.

Hurry and register today by calling or stopping by the Norton City/County Economic Development office.

The registration deadline is Friday, June 6

DiscoverHorton.Com

Norton City/County Economic Development
113 N. Norton Street,
Norton - 785-874-4816

CULPEPPER & MERRIWEATHER CIRCUS

GREAT COMBINED

Elmwood Park

SHOW TIMES 5:00 & 7:30 PM

www.GMCIRCUS.com

Hey Kids! Download the coloring contest and enter to win!

BUY ADVANCE TICKETS & SAVE

Norton Animal Health Center
The Bank, Garrett's Plumbing
Norton Co. Farm Bureau,
Zwickle Accounting,
Jamboree Foods,
Norton Shop-N-Save,
Norton Chamber Office
Norton Rotary BB Gun Museum

TICKETS: In Advance Circus Day
Adult.....\$8 Adult...\$1.00
Child.....\$6 Child..\$7.00
(ages 2-12) (ages 2-12)

To purchase tickets with credit card call 866 BIG TOP 6 • M-F 8-5

NORTON Tuesday • June 3

Sponsored by The Norton Rotary Club

Telegram Lines:
(785) 877-3361, 877-6908