



Betty Pfannenstiel, left and Patti Long, right, check through a box of supplies for poll workers as part of the election preparations.

— Telegram photo by Brandy Leroux

Election prep: Always a busy time

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supplies are ordered and information on voting precincts, taxing units, ballots and voters' registration information is inputted into computers. This could be done in a week, if someone sat in front of a computer, putting the data into the computer, for eight straight hours every day.

But both Ms. Long and Mrs. Pfannenstiel have other duties on a daily basis to attend to: payroll, vouchers, abstracts, motor vehicle, budgets and setting levies, just to name a few.

Twenty days before the election, advance ballots are mailed to those who have requested them. This means individual addresses put on envelopes, the envelopes are stuffed, and then mailed out.

As each envelope comes back, it is put into a locked safe, to be counted by hand by the Advance Board in the county commissioners' room on election day.

Next is sorting the ballots and getting ready for the polls, and confirming poll workers.

Every poll worker has to spend a couple of hours at a "renewal course" one week before the election.

Boxes for the poll workers are made, filled with all the materials they'll need while working at a polling station all day. Each box is double-checked to make sure all

the materials needed are in them. Five days before the election, Mr. Wyatt tests every voting machine for accuracy. A legal advertisement is printed in the newspaper to let the public know about the tests.

The day before the election, the clerk goes to every polling station in the county and sets up the machines and voting booths — which is usually a day long process — and poll workers pick up their supply boxes.

Keep in mind that during this two-month long process, the people in the county clerk's office have their usual day-to-day duties to perform.

Poll workers start the election day by showing up at their polling station by 6:30 a.m. to set up for the day. Ms. Long and Mrs. Pfannenstiel are in the clerk's office by 7 a.m. to answer questions and continue with their usual routine.

Voters come in and cast their ballots. After the polls close, each machine prints up the results it holds.

All the ballots are counted by M-100 voting equipment that has been approved by the Secretary of State.

The results are taken to the clerk's office, tallied, and the totals are faxed to the Kansas Secretary of State.

Their day ends sometime be-

tween 9 p.m. and midnight.

The next day, polling stations are taken down, supplies are put away, and the results are written down in "The Big Book," the official name of which is "The Abstract of Votes Cast." It is about a foot and a half long by a foot wide, and weighs about 20 pounds.

Individual voter history is put into the computer — only whether or not each registered voter cast a ballot.

The Monday following an election, the Board of Canvassers double-checks the tally book numbers to make sure they're correct.

The process, and time it takes, doesn't change no matter the election.

"It's still the same process, whether it's a big election or for a small one," said Mrs. Pfannenstiel.

Every single year, there is an election, be it presidential, gubernatorial, an election for county officials or city officials, or the school board.

"Any voter may still use a paper and pencil ballot if they wish," said Mr. Wyatt.

There is also an Americans with Disabilities Act compliant voting booth with an Automark voting machine available that anyone can use.

Students' misdeeds settled

By **BRANDY LEROUX**
bleroux@nwkansas.com

Two former Norton Community High School students appeared before District Court Judge William B. Elliott, and worked out agreements with Assistant Norton County Attorney R. Douglas Sebelius to crimes committed last spring.

On the night of May 21, Wesley Georgeson, Brandon Pride and Chantille Campbell poured a mixture of chemicals on the grass at Travis Field, and spray-painted five vehicles parked around town.

Count one of the charges against both Georgeson and Campbell was the felony criminal damage to Travis Field; count two of the charges was misdemeanor criminal damage to high school principal Rudy Perez's vehicle; count three of the charges was misdemeanor criminal damage to Susan Thomson's vehicle; count four was misdemeanor criminal damage to a vehicle belonging to Rural Telephone; count five was misdemeanor criminal damage to Haley Jones's vehicle; count six was misdemeanor criminal damage to Corey Rutherford's vehicle; and count seven was felony obstruction of official duty.

Pride was charged with two misdemeanor counts of criminal damage to property — specifically, Mr. Perez's truck and Ms. Jones's car.

On July 1, The Norton Telegram printed a letter of apology from Georgeson to the community for his actions.

Originally, as part of a plea

agreement, on July 14, Georgeson pled no contest to the felony criminal damage to Travis Field and misdemeanor criminal damage to Susan Thomson's vehicle, and all other charges were dropped. He was found guilty to the two charges. At that time, Georgeson had no attorney.

Georgeson later retained an attorney, David O. Baumgartner from Phillipsburg. According to a journal entry from Mr. Baumgartner, Georgeson withdrew his no contest plea because the plea and appearance had been made without the assistance of an attorney; two victim statements contained positive statements towards Georgeson — one of which said Georgeson was the one who apologized for his behavior and took responsibility for his actions, and the school district said it would like for Georgeson to be placed on a diversion program if possible; and because he wanted to discuss a different plea arrangement with his counsel.

Under state law, a plea of guilty or no contest can be withdrawn at any time before sentencing, at the discretion of the court if good cause is shown.

On Sept. 8, Campbell went before the court and under a diversion agreement, in which she pled guilty to the misdemeanors, will have the felony damage to Travis Field dropped, provided

she is on supervised probation for 24 months, pays her share of the restitution to the Norton School District as well as the owners of the spray-painted vehicles, completes 100 hours of community service by April 1, and makes written letters of apology to all the victims. On that day, Campbell paid all her share of the restitution, court fees and costs. The charge of felony obstruction of official duty was dropped.

The same diversion agreement was reached for Georgeson.

If Campbell or Georgeson get into any legal troubles during the 24 month supervised probation, the charge of felony criminal damage to Travis Field will be immediately set for arraignment.

Pride pled guilty to one of the two counts of criminal damage to property, and under a diversion agreement, the second count was dismissed. Pride will be under 12 months supervised probation, and if he gets a general education degree or maintains full-time employment and completes 50 hours of community service, the six months jail time and \$1,000 fine will be waived.

"I am confident these young people learned a good lesson by their experience and the process and we'll see three productive citizens once they fulfill their obligations to Norton," said Mr. Sebelius.

Help Wanted: City of Beloit • K-9 Officer

The **Beloit Police Department** is currently accepting applications for the position of K-9 Officer. Duties include general patrol, upkeep of K-9, investigations of criminal activity and traffic enforcement. The successful applicant must possess Kansas Law Enforcement Certification, must be willing to sign a 1 year commitment agreement and possess the ability to follow directions and understand the chain-of-command.

Requirements:

Must be 21 years of age, possess a high school diploma or equivalent, pass drug screen, pass a psychological and a medical exam, and possibly submit to a polygraph exam. Be free of any domestic violence or felony convictions. Residency is required. EOE

Salary:

Hiring Range: \$13.23 – \$14.88

Health insurance offered, boot allowance, weapon and uniforms supplied.

Applications will be accepted until the position is filled. Review of applications will begin October 15, 2008. Applications can be obtained from the Beloit Municipal Building, 119 North Hersey Street, Beloit, Kansas 67420, by calling (785) 738-3551 or at www.beloitks.org.

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AUCTION SCHEDULE

- 10/10/08 - 320 ac Trego County cropland & grass for the Honas Family, VFW, Wakeeney
- 10/21/08 - 3,000 acres Norton County cropland, CRP & grass to be sold in 13 tracts for Mechsner Trusts, St. Francis Parish Hall, Norton
- 10/23/08 - 160 ac Ness County cropland & grass for Terry Dockter, Ness City
- 10/28/08 - 320 ac Gove County cropland & grass for Wertz Heirs, Quinter
- 11/05/08 - 160 ac Gove County CRP & producing minerals for FHSU Foundation, Grainfield
- 11/19/08 - 640 ac Gove County cropland & grass to be sold in tracts for Edith Coberly Webb Estate, Grainfield
- 11/22/08 - Annual Fall Consignment Auction, Colby— Call in your items today!
- 12/09/08 - Farm Machinery for Dick Pettibone, Kanorado

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Wake up, America!

Your Turn

To the Editor,
What is this country coming to? We used to be a democracy with all kinds of freedom. That is why immigrants came to this country.

Today, you cannot chastise your own children without fear of a charge of child abuse. You are dictated to as to smoking, wearing seat belts, and dozens of other laws of what you can and cannot do.

I could live a great life if I could go to the bank each day and borrow thousands of dollars. The banker in my bank would loan until my credit was up. He would then demand that I make repayment. Our government and their brilliant financial advisors don't seem to understand that simple premise. If they continue they will be like Germany after World War I and how China was at one time. You could paper your walls with \$100 dollar bills cheaper than buy wallpaper with them!

It appears that we have a lot of morons or educated idiots leading us into socialism!

I may not be too bright but I remember being taught in school that we have three branches of government: the Legislative Branch, to make the laws, the Judicial Branch to see that the laws are legal according to the Constitution, and the Presidential Branch to uphold those laws. Today, the President tries to legislate laws. So does the Court System try to legislate laws. And the Legislators sit on their fannies and allow them to get away with it!

Where is common sense? To start with, immigrants came here for the benefit of freedom. They were English, German, Russian, Swedes, Norwegians, Irish, Balkans, etc. They were known by their heritage for a very short time, and then when you asked them their nationality they were proud to say, "I am American!" Today, we get the largest group of immigrants from third

world countries that are divided by clans of all kinds, war lords, etc. After coming here they do not become Americans, but are Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Afro-Americans, etc.

Come on, America, get our legislators to get us back on the right track to freedom!

This is the way that I see things.

Frank Ward
Norton
World War II Veteran

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