

BB Gun Team's meeting draws many prospects

By **DICK BOYD**

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Many prospective girls and boys shooters and their parents were present at the public meeting of the Norton Rotary BB Gun Team on Monday evening in the BB Gun Museum on east U.S. 36 Highway in Norton.

All youths ages 8-14 years of age as of Dec. 31, 2008 were invited to attend and learn more about the gun safety classes and marksmanship competition.

The annual shooting education program begins every year in October with six weeks of classroom instruction, followed by marksmanship and culminating in shooting competition.

The state shoot was held in late March of this year in Alma. Norton was runner-up this year but has won the state shoot more times than any other community.

The international shoot is held the beginning of July and has been held for several years in Bowling Green, Ky.

Norton placed seventh in the international shoot this year. Representing the state of Kansas, Norton has won the international shoot eight times, more than any other team.

In recent years, Norton teams have also competed in 4-H shoots and shot very well.

The team was originally spon-

sored by the Norton Jaycees and the Norton Rotary assumed sponsorship when there was no longer a Jaycees chapter in Norton.

The original shooting education program approved by the U.S. Jaycees and Daisy Manufacturing was submitted by Norton Jaycee member Duane Winder. A plaque in his honor is in the BB Gun Museum, which also contains trophies, medals, newspaper articles and other memorabilia of the Norton shooting education program.

On Monday evening, Norton head coach Cameron Archer began the meeting by showing a video on the program provided by Daisy.

The video featured testimonies from former shooters about their experience in the program. "It was a fantastic experience . . . I made many great friends . . . you learn to shoot properly and safely . . . the program teaches you discipline and the team concept . . . it builds positive traits for life . . . it's an experience I'll never forget" were some of the comments.

Coach Archer welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced assistant coach Mike Campbell and classroom instructor Sara Campbell.

Coach Archer stressed that the shooters would have a meeting every Monday evening until after

the international shoot in July. "There will be no fooling around," he said. "You will learn proper gun safety and that even a BB gun can be dangerous.

"If you miss two practices, you will be cut. We are serious about this program and expect shooters to be as well."

He said being part of the program is not that expensive and that guns are provided if a youth doesn't own one. He said cost of targets, BBs and books is minimal.

"Attitude is a big thing in this program," Sara Campbell told those present. "You don't have to be an athlete to be a good marksman," she said. "We want you to have a positive attitude, do your best regardless of circumstances and always have a smile on your face.

"We have some of what we call veteran shooters and they will be glad to show new shooters how good the program is. You'll find out that the exposure will last a lifetime.

"We also want parents involved inside and outside the practice building. You, too, will make memories you will never forget. It's hard work but it's worth it!"

During the evening, youngsters had the opportunity to shoot BB guns on the range with instruction from coaches Archer and



Youths touring the Norton Rotary BB Gun Museum during Monday night meeting were especially interested in the international championship traveling trophy which was awarded to Norton when it was retired. Norton has won the international title eight times, more than any other community. Pictured are, from left: David Smith, Clay Vanover, Kaitlyn Campbell and Dalton Vanover.

—Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Campbell. The girls and boys and their parents also enjoyed touring the museum to learn more about Norton's rich BB gun history.

The next meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. Monday in the museum. Those who were not present at last Monday's meeting and are still interested in participating in

the program may attend the next meeting or call Cameron Archer, phone (785) 877-5567 or Sara or Mike Campbell at (785) 877-3011 for more information.

Decatur County fair board finds itself in hot check chase

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**

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Members of the Decatur County Fair Board asked the county attorney for help collect money from a Colorado race promoter at a commissioners' meeting last Tuesday.

Board President Greg Long said the promoter isn't holding up to his end of the contract and hasn't paid the fair board for the races. He said the fair board loaned the man \$2,000 to get races started. That money has never been paid back.

Promoter Joe Bellm held races

on Saturday, June 7, Monday, June 16, Sunday, July 13 and Monday, Aug. 4.

The contract says the board is supposed to get 1 percent of the gross from the races, too, Mr. Long said, and the board hasn't seen any of that money.

Basically, he said, the fair is out at least \$3,000.

The board members are working on getting the facts and figures together to be turned over to County Attorney Steve Hirsch, he added.

Is this the same gentleman who wrote a hot check to the fair board? asked Mr. Hirsch. Yes, said Mr. Long.

There were several hot checks written to people around town, said Mr. Hirsch. He said he thought those had been covered, though.

Linda Schroer, fair board treasurer, said she went ahead and deposited other checks from the

promoter this past week. The board hasn't heard anything on those, she said.

It seems because of state laws written about tax money the board gets from the county, the board can't use public money to promote entertainment, said Mr. Long. How can the board go about paying to promote entertainment, especially with the amusement authority wanting to merge with it.

It seems crazy that the board continues to let money for the race promoter leave town when all of the work is done by people here, Mr. Long said.

Mr. Long said he suggested at a recent fair board meeting that the race committee, with the help of the board, promote those races and keep that money here.

Right now, said Sheriff Ken Badsky, a fair board member, the board doesn't have any money to

help promote or bring in entertainment.

It might be a good idea to keep the fair board and the amusement authority separate, said Commissioner Ralph Unger. The two don't fall under the same laws, he said.

Is there a plan for the county to come up with the money to help get the carnival rides worked on and certified under a new state law? asked Mr. Long. The commissioners said there isn't

Mr. Hirsch said the board could keep maintenance money and entertainment money separate from tax money if it gets into the

carnival or race operations.

The problem is that there isn't money to start an account, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy, who goes to the fair board meetings. Not unless some of that tax allocation is taken to set up the account, which is against the law, he said.

The board netted \$10,000 off grandstand events this year, said Mr. Long. If the board would have known about separate accounts beforehand, the money would have been handled differently.

If the board goes with a race promoter in the future, said Mr.

Hirsch, getting that 1 percent of the gross before they leave town would be smart, instead of waiting until the end of the year.

In 2009, said Mr. Long, the board plans to come back to the commissioners with an idea for a sponsored beer garden for the races.

If the board runs the races next year, asked Mr. Hirsch, where is the money to start things going to come from?

The thing is, said Mr. Badsky, that within the next 20 days or less, a promoter has to sign up for the races scheduled for the year.

Hospital Board room use flexible

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"We felt it would be more valuable as physical therapy, and that the new one could be smaller and still meet our needs," said Mr. Miller.

The new board room has multiple uses, such as a place for department meetings and committee meetings, and is about the same size as the old one.

Write-in

Wants more businesses

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the area. We need to keep them going," he said.

Economic development is also something he'd like to see more of. "We need more businesses to come to Norton County, which would benefit everyone," he said.

Mr. Ellis is a life-long resident of Norton County and graduated from Norton Community High School. He studied at Fort Hays State University for four years. He is a farmer, raising wheat, corn, soybeans, alfalfa and cattle.

His wife, Kim, runs a daycare in Norton. They have four children — Robert 13, Cody 13, Levi 7 and Raylenn four months.

Mr. Ellis served on the Norton County Co-op Board for 10 years, three of which were after the Ag Valley merger; he was on the Lenora Rural Fire Department Board for a year; has been on the Norton Junior High School Site Council; and has coached Jr. Jays football and baseball.

"I believe I can help bring change and new blood to the commission, and keep it going toward a growing direction," said Mr. Ellis.

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