

# THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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8 PAGES

## Tuesday

### December 2, 2008

Norton, Kansas  
Home of Bill Mathes

### Briefly

#### Sen. Brownback to Norton Wednesday

Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback will be in Norton on Wednesday from 8 to 9 a.m. at the Town and Country Kitchen. This will be a Norton County Farm Bureau town hall meeting and is open to the public and media. Muffins, tea, and coffee will be served compliments of Norton County Farm Bureau Association. Sen. Brownback will also be in Hill City on Wednesday at the Oil Museum, 810 W. Main, from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m.

#### Blue Jay Booster Club sets meeting

All fans of Norton Community High School sports are invited to the Norton Blue Jay Booster Club meeting on Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at the high school cafeteria. Speakers will be Kevin Jilka, girls' basketball coach; Doug Reusink, boys' basketball coach; and Bill Johnson, wrestling coach.

#### Baseball, softball on board's agenda

The Norton School Board will meet in a regular session on Monday, Dec. 8 at 7:30 p.m. Included on the agenda will be baseball/softball program for the high school. The meeting will be held in the Alice Tweed Center on East Waverly. The public is invited.

How did 'Turkey Day' get its name?  
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### Weather Forecast:

Tonight - A 20 percent chance of snow after midnight. Wednesday - Scattered flurries, mostly cloudy with a steady temperature around 33. Wednesday Night - Scattered flurries. Thursday - Scattered flurries. Thursday Night - A slight chance of flurries.

#### Kingham report:

Fri., Nov. 28 ..... Low 30, High 39  
1 1/2 inches snow; .20 rain  
Sat., Nov. 29 ..... Low 29, High 44  
1/2 inch snow  
Sun., Nov. 30 ..... Low 26, High 43  
Mon., Dec. 2 ..... Low 20, High 42  
(Readings taken at the Kingham farm  
9 miles northwest of Norton)

### Prayer

Holy and loving Lord, when we wander from your path, lead us back to you. May we fully trust that in your mercy you will never forsake us.  
**Amen**

## You better watch out . . .



Santa and Mrs. Claus made their appearance in a sleigh during the Christmas Opening Friday night at the Norton County Courthouse. Children who came to talk to Santa were treated to cookies and hot cocoa. Santa Claus will be in his hut on the courthouse lawn's west side Thursday nights, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

— Telegram photo by Sherry Hickman

## High school program provides helpful 'nudge'

By BRANDY LEROUX  
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Extra help is available for students at Norton Community High School who are struggling with their grades.

Principal Rudy Perez, who was principal at Cimarron High School before arriving in Norton, created a program to help students get the extra help they needed to pass their classes and prevent drop-outs.

Called Building Academic Success for Students, meetings are held throughout the day once a week with individual students who need a little bit of a nudge. "Our goal is to not have any failing students," said Principal Perez. "Just like any student can tell you why he is getting an 'A' in a class, any student can tell you why they're failing — whether it's not understanding the curriculum or not doing their homework. If we can keep just one student from dropping out of school, it was all worth it."

The meetings include the student needing help, Principal Perez, Shane Miller, the high school counselor, Joan Hale, the school psychologist, an at-risk teacher, and the student's parents.

"We all sit down together and identify the problems," said Mr. Perez. "Sometimes it's just a matter of time management. We ask questions and brainstorm with teaching aids and learning aids. We figure out how the student learns best, whether he's a visual learner or a hands-on learner. The student has a lot of input into the process. Then we find ways to incorporate their learning styles into the classroom."

So far, Mr. Perez says this program has, overall, been a success.

"There are kids who are just a few points away from passing a class, and we help them focus their energies. Time management is heavily stressed," he said.

Other times, a student is failing several classes, and needs more work, more help

and more support. They can come in and talk to their teachers before or after school to get the help they need, the principal explained.

One of the students Mr. Perez is most proud of, a sophomore, said the program has helped him a lot, and he understands more of his schoolwork than he did last year.

"It helps that I can stay after school with any teacher and get a more detailed explanation of what's going on like in math," said the student. "My parents are a lot more happy with my grades now, I'm better organized, both at home and at school, and now I've found that I'll have filled out my planner without even realizing it. It's just become habit now."

The student, who didn't wish to have his name published, said he's now thinking of his future and possible careers, not just today.

"That student is the shining example of what can be achieved when they get a little

extra help," said Mr. Perez. "His chances of graduating have greatly improved."

Mr. Perez said the program has had 100 percent parent participation, and when the students see that people care about their grades, then the students start caring more about their grades.

"We're giving kids the responsibility for their education," said Mr. Perez. "A lot of times, homework is not the lesson. The responsibility of doing the homework is. This gives the students some control over their education, and they'll be more likely to do well if they know they've had a hand in it and there are people who care about them and their future."

Mr. Perez offers this advice to parents: "Don't believe it when your kid says he doesn't have any homework or something to study for. We're coming up on the end of the first semester. Finals are in a few weeks. There's always some homework

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## 'Bring it on!'



This crane stood like a bird of steel as Mother Nature showered the Norton area with two inches of the white stuff last Friday morning. The National Weather Service at Goodland predicted a dusting for northwest Kansas. They were right on the money.

— Telegram photo by Vicki Henderson

## Norton schools again make 'Annual Yearly Progress'

By BRANDY LEROUX  
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The Norton School District, as a whole, has made *Annual Yearly Progress* again, said Norton School District Superintendent Greg Mann.

The students were tested in the spring of 2008, but the results weren't known until after the beginning of this school year.

"It's not surprising we made the AYP," he said. "It would be surprising if we did not. It has become the norm for us to do well in our schools."

Norton Community High School received the Standard of Excellence awards for their test results in reading and math, which were the only two subjects tested, and also Annual Yearly Progress.

Norton Junior High School received the Standard of Excellence award for their test results in reading, which was the only subject tested and also Annual Yearly Progress.

Eisenhower Elementary, for the second year in a row, received a Standard of Excellence award in reading and math, made Annual Yearly Progress in reading, math and attendance, and based on scores, was among the top five percent of elementary schools in Kansas.

Students in 5th and 6th grades from the 2007-2008 school year received Outstanding Performance awards for their

scores in reading.

Because of the high scores at Eisenhower Elementary, the school also received the Governor's Award, which school board president Mark Keilig presented to the Eisenhower Elementary students at an awards assembly last week.

The Kansas Coalition of Confidence in Public Schools, a grassroots community driven organization, recognized Eisenhower Elementary for their test scores. The coalition recognizes schools that perform at a higher level than statistics expect based on the number of at-risk students in the building.

"Students who receive free or reduced-price meals at school are considered at-risk," said Superintendent Mann. "Statistically speaking, the more students in a building who are at-risk, the lower the building's overall scores will be on this test."

"Eisenhower Elementary seems to be the exception to that statistic," said the superintendent. "Forty-four elementary schools in Kansas received the Governor's Award, and Eisenhower Elementary was in around the top three percent of that group."

Superintendent Mann said teachers, principals and the board of education are

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