

# Op-ed

## Good paper provides good news

You can find out some interesting things by reading The Telegram, things we should all consider good news! I was very excited to see that a women's clothing store may come to Norton. And also glad to see that many locally owned businesses are doing well. More about that later!

I was also pleased to see my daughter's name included in the list of fall 2008 graduates from KSU! Not sure how those lists are sent out but the KSU program listed her as being from Kensington. Our county paper usually picks it up when press releases come out about KSU students and always lists her as being from Kensington.

We are happy it is published but also feel badly because we loved the Norton schools and want them to get the credit for producing yet another student who was able to attain a college degree!

Graduation Day at Kansas State was very exciting. We were early for Patricia's ceremony and got to see Scott Goldsby get his degree in Business Administration. Keesha Deetlefs was in Ag, so we saw the Holste clan down the way! They outnumbered us but I think we were noisier!

We could have been louder if Patricia had let Craig take his air horn. We thought they were out-lauded in Bramlage. In his opening remarks the Dean actually encouraged such noise makers! This is

**Back Home**  
**Nancy Hagman**



part of why Patricia ended up in Ag — friendly folks who understand as you go along in life it's okay to have a good time!

Students receiving Master's Degrees have ceremonies at a different time so we missed seeing Tony Goldsby. Pretty exciting day for the Goldsbys! Scott and Tony's dad was a classmate of mine!

The Hagmans had two graduates that Saturday also. Elizabeth's ceremonies for her Master's of Music Education were held at Wichita State University. Wish we could have been in both places. She completed the degree work this past summer.

Kelsey Holste just defended her thesis we understand, completing her Master's work at KSU. I also have to mention Kevin Lentz graduating in Geography, just because I was his preschool teacher and I like him!

Now back to the success of local businesses and the possible expansion of the Norton business community! I agree increases in sales over the past year can in part be attributed to high fuel prices. I just hope everyone remembers their local merchants if fuel prices

stay low.

Sadly we don't live close enough to Norton to just run into town and pick up things. There are many things I want and use that I cannot buy in my county seat town any more. It is disheartening and makes me dissatisfied. Of course, we aren't moving, but if we could?

I understand why it is difficult to attract professional people like doctors, pharmacists, teachers, etc, to rural areas. If I had no ties to this small rural community why would I stay or come here when I can't even buy a spool of thread in the county!

If I worked for DOC or DOT or whatever and could transfer where there was a Target or Wal-Mart just down the road, well — why not?

Thinking along these lines, perhaps college graduations are not such good news. It is oft said in rural America we export all our best: our crops, livestock and most importantly our children. How many of these 2008 graduates will be in rural areas in 2013 or 2018?

Still the Norton news is exciting! Almost every issue of the paper tells us of the hard work being done for economic development. It is so wonderful to see the effort being made and successes in so many areas!

And no matter where they end up, a graduation is truly good news, a reason to celebrate!

Well done, one and all!

# Area woman adds to family

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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The kids — all five of them — smiled, laughed and played on a jungle gym in the front yard of their home.

The weather was warm, and no one wore a coat as they ran around and around.

The five kids — Cori and Judith, 7; Calista and Jesse, 6; and Christopher, 5 — may not look exactly alike, but are brothers and sisters now. They will grow up in the same home and have been joined as a family through adoption.

Jeanne Isbell has taken in all five children, from both China and Ethiopia, over the last seven years. In 2001, Ms. Isbell, a retired Denver police officer, started the paperwork and adopted Cori, then in 2004 Calista and in 2006 Christopher, all from China.

In November, the family traveled to Washington to meet her new son and daughter and the kids' brother and sister, Jesse and Judith, who were escorted to the States from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Although all of the kids are now a family, none of them are biological brothers and sisters.

Ms. Isbell said after adopting Christopher, she wanted to adopt another boy so that he would have a brother. Around the same time, China closed its doors to single parents and new restrictions were placed on couples wanting to adopt.

She said she wasn't allowed to adopt from some other countries because she turned 55 in August and was considered too old. She said her agency, International Adoption Guides, told her that she met the criteria for an adoption from Ethiopia because there aren't as many rules there. The agency also said it would be affordable.

The paperwork, she said, wasn't as horrendous as some, either, she said.

Ms. Isbell said the person from the agency told her she could adopt more than one child if she was interested. She told her about Judith, whose Ethiopian name is Yodit. Both she and Jesse, or

Ermios, were being raised by biological mothers who weren't able to provide for them. Their fathers are both dead and the kids were living in extreme poverty, she said.

Neither Judith nor Jesse had birth certificates, she said, so the courts in Ethiopia determined their age and gave them birth dates.

Judith's birthday, said Ms. Isbell, is May 1, 2001, and Jesse's is March 22, 2002.

Although she traveled to China when she adopted Cori, Calista and Christopher, the family only went to Washington to meet and bring home Judith and Jesse.

Ms. Isbell said it would have cost well over \$20,000 for her and kids and a helper to travel to Ethiopia.

The kids were escorted by two Ethiopian men from the adoption agency. The escort program cost \$6,500, far less than flying the family to Africa.

On Nov. 7, the family flew into Dulles, southwest of Washington. They stayed in a hotel that night and then met the kids at 7:30 a.m. the next day at the airport. The whole family flew back to Denver the next day and drove home.

The adoption was actually final on Aug. 4, before the kids flew from Ethiopia to the states, Ms. Isbell said.

It's been fun to watch Judith and Jesse, said Ms. Isbell. They didn't know how to get paper towels out of the dispenser in the restrooms and laughed about the hand dryers. They didn't know how to put a quarter in the slot on the machines at a pizza place.

Both kids speak Amharic, but can say their ABC's in English and count to 10. Both are attending Oberlin Elementary School, with Jesse in kindergarten and Judith

in first grade.

The kids are learning, especially Judith, who is picking up more and more English. They still talk Amharic at home to each other.

Ms. Isbell said when she first started thinking about adopting from Ethiopia, she considered how accepting Oberlin is of kids from other countries. She said she talked to Keith and Roma Grafel, who used to live here and had adopted. Ms. Isbell said she feels comfortable bringing black children into the community and everyone has been very accepting of her kids.

"Thanks for being such wonderful people," she said.

Ms. Isbell said there were times during the process that she was stressed. She didn't have the money to adopt again, but she found grants and applied for them. When it came time to pay the \$6,500 to bring her kids home, she didn't have it so she called a group called A Child Waits and they said she qualified for a grant. Ms. Isbell applied and received it.

Throughout the process she cashed in a life insurance policy and used her savings and tax refunds to make the adoption possible.

People have asked her why she adopted. Why not? she said. Her house is big enough, she said, she's a stay-at-home mom and her heart yearns for more children.

"It also helps to be a little crazy," she said with a laugh. "People who adopt have to do it by faith. Don't let the money intimidate you. Listen to your heart and desire, and the money will come."

Ms. Isbell also has a foreign exchange student, Linquan Wang, 17, from China, living with the family this year.

## New Year thought

Shared by Columnist Liza Deines

So what have we learned in 2 millennia?

"The budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled, public debt should be reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt. People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance."

— Cicero- 55 BC

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## Commission: community service request made

(Continued on Page 5)

airport board will meet on Jan. 12, the hospital board on Jan. 21, and he wasn't sure of the dates of the other boards.

Curt Archibald, Norton County Solid Waste Supervisor, said he received a phone call from Judge Deb Anderson asking if he would take a person on community service to help sort recycling.

Mr. Archibald told the commissioners he had already talked with Norton County Counselor Sebelius and cleared it through him, but that he felt he should also clear it with the commissioners before agreeing to the idea.

Mr. Wyatt asked if the person was a juvenile, and Mr. Archibald said the person is an adult. Mr. Archibald said if the commissioners didn't have a problem with it, the person would start today, and finish his 40 hours of community service by the end of the week.

Mr. Archibald said there is a lot of recycling that needs to be sorted, but that Tamko Building Products in Phillipsburg has shut down and won't reopen until February.

Incoming commissioner Applegate asked if Tamko would accept the recyclables even if the plant is not in operation.

Mr. Archibald said they have done that in the past, and that he would call to see if they will be doing it again.

Mr. Archibald said he would like to see liner placed in pits 4 and 5 at the county landfill sometime in these next two weeks as

the weather will be good, but that he did not get an answer when he called the construction company.

The commissioners reviewed letters of interest for the open hospital board position. Eight of

the letters were for the open position, and two were from persons already on the hospital board asking the commission for re-appointments. After commissioner-elect Applegate is sworn in next

Monday, the commissioners will discuss the appointments and vote for the three positions.

There was no further business, so the commission adjourned for lunch.

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