



To... the 20th Century Women's Club, for the wonderful work you did to improve the Norton Cemetery. (called in)

To... the graduating Class of 2009, for having a fun, yet responsible senior prank night. (called in)

To... city crews, for putting in the new lighting at the Blue Jay field in Elmwood Park. (called in)

To... the best ever graduating class at Norton Community High School. We love ya' all! (e-mail)

To... our little stinker, you're graduating from high school! (regular mail)

(To render a salute, e-mail tom.d@nwkans.com, call either 877-3361 or 877-6908, fax 877-3732, mail to 215 S. Kansas Ave. 67654 or drop by the office. Thanks for your continuing input. - td)

Budget

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The high bidders were Jim Frack, who got a Hustler mower for \$262 and a Snapper mower for \$2,610, Lee McCubbin received a Turk Turf Seeder for \$579 and Ray Hillebrand received a Pull Behind Sprayer for \$55. The winners have

all paid for, and picked up their equipment, Mr. Mann said.

He said the auction money will go into the capital outlay fund, which is the school's cash fund.

According to Mr. Mann, the expenses for the 2008/2009 school year are coming in under budget.

Norton Library

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visit the library, browse and read at no cost.

About that time, the library contained 10,000 volumes, with a circulation of 12,000 to 15,000 books and 400 to 600 magazines and periodicals annually.

In 1957, J.P. Bradshaw was president of the library board and Mrs. Ida Walker was vice-president. Ida had served continuously as a member of the library board since the library was established in 1909 except while she was serving in the Kansas State Legislature. Others serving on the board at that time were; Mrs. Dave Mickey, secretary; Mrs. Gordon Brantley, treasurer; Mrs. Roy Wingfield, Mrs. W.B. Ryan, E.R. Brock, and Mrs. Dean Newbury.

The Library Board met on the first Monday evening of each month. Members of the board were appointed by the mayor. The president appointed the book committee, finance committee and the building and yard committee.

Since the library was under the jurisdiction of the city, the library board treasurer was required to be bonded and an audit of the books was made by CPA's. The board managed a budget of approximately \$4,000 to \$4,500 annually.

In the late 1950s, a new library board room was constructed in the basement. The board tried to make some improvements each year such as purchasing electric fans, new tile flooring in the basement and major furnace repair.

Since a new Christian Church was being constructed just north of the library, the board members made plans to "do something" about the yard and, "when water becomes more plentiful" to start a new yard. Lights and water were furnished by the city.

In 1959, 12 new magazines were added to the already large list of magazine subscriptions. That year, Mrs. Dean Newbury was president of the library board. Other board members were: Rev. J.B. Leach, Mrs. Roy Wingfield, Mrs. Gordon Brantley, E.R. Brock, J.P. Bradshaw, Mrs. W.B. Ryan and Miss Mary Norris. Ida Walker was an now an honorary member of the board.

By 1959, the board managed a budget of \$6,000 annually. The current source of taxation revenue was derived from a 1.08 mill levy. Fines accounted for approximately \$450 per year! In 1959, the city allowed additional funds for the library board to purchase an air conditioner. Other improvements included a refrigerated drinking fountain and new venetian blinds.

As of April 15, 1960, Alice Casey was librarian and Mrs. Wayne Laws was assistant librarian. The library contained 11,259 volumes and a circulation of 18,111 books and 490 magazines and periodicals. New books purchased the previous year totaled

504. Over 200 "worn out" books were removed from the shelves.

Mrs. Irene Long became the librarian following Mrs. Alice Casey and Muriel "Bennie" Henningsen succeeded Mrs. Long, serving as librarian from 1963 to 1975.

In June, 1968 through 1969, Lydia Bishop worked in the Children's Department and "Story Hour" was initiated at the library. About that time, Talking Books were also introduced to the Norton Library for the use of the handicapped.

In the late 1960s, the Kansas Regional Library System was completed with the Norton Library designated in the Northwest Region. The Northwest Kansas Library Systems Office was then located in Hoxie. As a member of the Systems, Norton Library's patrons were now able to enjoy the "traveling library service" and the inter-library loan service which permitted users to borrow books on any subject from other libraries in Kansas and even outside the state of Kansas.

In September, 1976, it was decided to move the Systems headquarters from Hoxie to the former Washington Grade School building in Norton. This was a real "plus" for Norton! The office employed approximately 11 people.

In the mid 1960's, the Friends of the Library organization was established. Bennie Henningsen, Ruth Hartman and Helen Bullock were all instrumental in this project. Membership in the "Friends" is open to all the patrons of the library for \$1 a year.

Members of the Friends of the Library purchased a slide projector for patrons' use. Art prints were also made available for library users to rent at \$1 a month. The VCR and film strips for "Story Hour" were also special projects of this worthwhile organization.

When Bennie Henningsen retired in 1975, Rita Shelton became librarian and held that position for eight years.

When asked to share a few of her special memories about her years as a librarian in Norton, Rita said:

"Several times the library was host to a "coffee" for authors. My best memory is when Shirley Sarvis visited her parents, Cy and Minnie Sarvis of Norton. Shirley was the author of several best-selling cook books. Shirley spoke to the guests and several of her books were available for sale and to be autographed."

"Another special memory was starting the children's story hour for the pre-schoolers once a week. We used a lot of local people in this program, as well as library staff."

Rita's favorite library quotation is:

"Those who do not read are no better than those who cannot read." Anonymous

(To be continued)

Tip for parents: teach your kids well

Insight

John Schlageck

Before long kids will toss their schoolbooks and pencils in the far corners of their rooms, don their Magellan garb and embark on a summer course of outdoor exploration.

For many rural children, railroads, dumps, junkyards, abandoned properties and ponds make exciting places to explore. It is up to parents to decide where suitable adventure sites may be found.

Each year, hundreds of railroad trespassers are killed and injured, according to the National Safety Council. Children who crawl under or pass around lowered gates, walk the tracks, cross trestles, take shortcuts across railroad property, hop trains, climb in, on or around railroad cars run a tremendous risk.

This spring take the time to warn your children of these dangers, says Holly Higgins, Kansas Farm

Bureau safety director. Instruct them to obey warning devices and insist they never cross a railroad track until they have looked both ways and are sure it is safe.

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"Never assume children will act like responsible, mature adults," Higgins says. "Advise them often because they forget."

Kids will be kids. For most, life is an adventure. Anything and anywhere is fair game for exploration.

When I was a boy growing up in northwestern Kansas, there was always something magnetic about a junkyard. We had an abandoned dump within easy walking distance. We dug and sifted through the trash at the site for hours, collecting little treasures to add to our growing collections.

Sometimes these "keepers" as we called them consisted of rusted iron spikes, neat-shaped bottles, broken wrenches and tools, discarded containers and

other cast-offs.

While we weren't aware of it or didn't care, the risk of injury was always present. Wasps, snakes, rats, spiders and other creatures scrambled and slithered to move out of the way of our excavation projects.

Broken glass and boards with rusty nails threatened to cut or puncture our small feet. I will never forget the pain and tears of stepping on a nail.

Dumps also feature trucks, bulldozers and other heavy equipment. It's difficult for operators to see children scooting among the debris. Such equipment can easily crush kids. Warn your children to stay away.

Dark deserted buildings - including barns and abandoned farmhouses - often have the reputation of being haunted. Such structures were always considered another adventure when I was a youngster.

Big kids often dare little kids to go in. I remember accepting the challenge and brushing my way through cobwebs and crawling around rodent holes and fleeing mice. Although I survived, I wouldn't advise any child of mine to do the same.

As a youth, my dad always warned me again and again about

swimming ponds. I guess the repetition paid off because I never swam in such pools of water until I was in high school and an "okay" swimmer.

Remember to tell your children about such ponds. They are deep. You can be into water up to your knees the first couple of steps and the next - over your head.

There are no lifeguards. Fencing off ponds may help. Warning signs also may serve as a deterrent, but kids always find a way into the water.

Warn children about such potential hazards. Then warn them again. Saving one child's life is worth the effort. Many times it takes more than once for them to grasp your warnings.

Lead by example and remember that as a parent you have been entrusted with safeguarding your children's well being. Summer-time is a special time for kids. Having a child is indeed a treasure. Take care of, cherish and nurture this wonderful gift.

(John Schlageck is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. Born and raised on a diversified farm in northwestern Kansas, his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.)

Downtown

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donated the middle portion of this building to the Norton County Community Foundation. Ms. Becker said the ultimate goal of the project is to renovate the second level into apartments and renovate the ground level into viable business space.

She said the success of the project depends on the success of securing grant funding and donations from the public.

She also said the project is vital to the redevelopment of downtown Norton since it is located in one of the main downtown blocks.

Besides the storefront renewal project, Ms. Becker is also working on designating a downtown historic district. She said she is working on the two year process. The first year involves doing a survey of business owners to find out if they want the district. Ms. Becker said 50 percent of business owners have to agree to apply to become a historic building; they receive tax cuts if they are designated as a historic building.

Ms. Becker mentioned many benefits of having a historic district in Norton, including tax-credit programs which help finance historic preservation and increase tourism.

"I do plan to see an increase in tourism if we successfully designate a historic district in Norton," Ms. Becker said.

Job well done, ladies



Norton Girl Scouts received their Bronze Award pins at a recent ceremony. Here, Donna Mulford, co-leader of Troop 10197, pinned Valery Rostek. Left to right are Elaine Remington, Morgan Griffey (behind Donna), leader Donna Mulford, Carmen Ball, Valery Rostek, Hailey Branek, Brooke Sumner. Not pictured are Raenee Patterson, Shelby Mulford and Audrie Burge.

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Best of luck, 2009 grads!