

# \$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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8 PAGES



## Friday

September 4, 2009

Norton, Kansas  
Home of Terry Laughlin

### Briefly

#### Meeting to deal with VA benefits

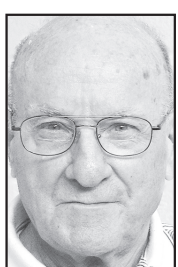
American Legion Post 63 will host a meeting for all veterans and their families who want to learn more about their earned VA benefits, on Tuesday, Sept. 22 from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Veterans, or their family members, who have specific questions about VA benefits are urged to attend. The Norton Legion Post Home is located on north US 283. Additional information will follow in Tuesday's Telegram.

#### Racing action at park this weekend

Racing will resume this weekend at the speedway at Elmwood Park. Track promoters are expecting a large crowd on Saturday and Sunday. Pits open at 3 p.m., track iron out is set for 4:00, hot laps at 5:00, pit, drivers meetings at 6:00, and racing start at 6:30; The grandstand is open at 5:30. If you need additional information, please call Jerry Bantam at (785) 877-5353, evenings.

#### Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels will be delivered from Sept. 7-13 by the Church of God. Contact person is Marilyn Colip (785) 877-2461. Drivers are to be at the hospital no later than 11:30 a.m.



The time has come  
Page 4

## Weather forecast

Tonight - Mostly cloudy with a low around 56.  
Saturday - Mostly sunny with a high



near 78. Saturday Night - Partly cloudy with a low around 58. South wind between 10 and 15 mph. Sunday - Mostly sunny with a high near 81. Sunday Night - Partly cloudy with a low around 62. Labor Day - Mostly cloudy with a low around 62. Monday Night - Partly cloudy with a low around 62.

#### Kingham report:

Tuesday, Sept. 1 ..... Low 48, High 84  
Wed., Sept. 2 ..... Low 57, High 75  
Thurs., Sept. 3 ..... Low 56, High 83  
(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

### Prayer

Father, give us the strength, the wisdom, and the love to shed your light in this dark world. In Jesus' name. Amen

## Arts council has tie to 'America's Got Talent'

By TOM DREILING  
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'America's Got Talent' will figure in the programming for the approaching Norton County Arts Council's entertainment season.

Among performers for the 2009-2010 season will be the popular Elvis Impersonator, Joseph Hall, of "America's Got Talent" fame. A top ten finisher in the 2008 talent show, Mr. Hill will take the stage on Saturday, Nov. 28 at 7 p.m. at the East Campus Auditorium.

Here's a peek at the rest of the fare:  
√Oct. 19 - 1:30 p.m., Eisenhower Elementary, Chinese Acrobats.  
√Oct. 25 - 2 p.m., Brent Dellinger, Spinmaster (Yo Yo Champion), East Campus Auditorium  
√Nov. 14 - 9 a.m., Annual Craft Fair  
√Jan. 24 - 2:30 p.m., Jeff Davidson Band, Celebrate Kansas Day! East Campus Auditorium  
√Feb. 11 - Flying Debris (Juggler), 1:30 p.m. Eisenhower Elementary; 7 p.m., public performance, East Campus

Auditorium  
√March 14 - 3 p.m., Wild Clover Band, Kearney, Neb., Happy St. Patrick's Day, East Campus Auditorium  
√April 11 - Gladys the Riveter, time and location yet to be determined  
Carol Erlenbusch, Arts Council President, said, "We are excited about our program this year... All of the programs are suitable for families, and yet are totally entertaining for our mature members." The level of business sponsorships are:

- Platinum - \$750, includes 10 single memberships
- Gold - \$500, includes 6 single memberships
- Silver - \$250, includes 4 single memberships
- Bronze - \$100, includes 2 single memberships

Sponsors will be announced at every show, and additionally will be provided single season memberships which may be used by their employees. The single sea-

(Arts - Continued on Page 5)

## Project progressing



Paul-Wertenberger Construction crews, Hays, worked quickly this week to demolish the east wall and part of the north wall at the Moffet building project on South State Street. By Thursday morning they were already

putting the walls up. Construction, weather permitting, is expected to be completed soon.

-Telegram photo by Erica Bradley

## City's utility rates going up

By ERICA BRADLEY  
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Utility rates are on the rise again, due to state unfunded mandates requiring the City of Norton to update its water and sewer plants. The city council discussed their options during the council meeting on Wednesday.

The council talked about the steps they have taken to fund the \$11 million debt they were forced into. At the last council meeting, the finance committee recommended a hiring freeze and a five percent reduction in city departments. Both have been implemented.

The city also has the option of refinancing their debt through the United States Department of Agriculture. The finance committee reported that refinancing would "bring substantial savings."

The committee estimated that the savings to the city would total \$170,000 per

year. Discussion was held about utility rate increases due to the loan the city has to pay off.

Toby Kuhn, finance committee chairman, said the increase will not be as bad as it would have been if the city was unable to refinance through the United States Department of Agriculture.

"It's not the best news, but it's good news," Mr. Kuhn said.

The sewer rate will increase by 53.74 percent, going from a minimum of \$13.25 to a minimum of \$20.37; the refuse will increase by 20 percent, going from a minimum of \$13 to \$15.60; and the water will increase by 48 percent, going from \$16.82 to \$25 inside city limits.

In an interview after the council meeting, Darla Ellis, city clerk, told The Telegram she estimates that the utility bill for an individual living in Norton would

increase by an estimated \$20 per month. She said she has not run the estimate for a family.

The council also discussed going to an escalator scale for utility rates. The scale would go off of a three percent increase every year instead of having large increases in utility rates every few years.

After the council meeting, Rob Lawson, city administrator, said a three percent increase would help the city with the rising cost of materials, like chemicals.

"A 60 or 80 percent increase is drastic. Three percent is not. It's easier to do a little at a time," he said.

The council made a motion to increase water, sewer and refuse rates. Vote taken, motion passed.

In other council business:  
• Mr. Lawson updated the council on the work on the water tower.

(City - Continued on Page 5)

## Bicyclist has eye on Denver; personal cause

By DICK BOYD  
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Jama Babcock of Phillipsburg and formerly of Logan loves to ride her bicycle so much that she cycles 10-20 miles every evening and 60-70 miles every weekend.

That may sound like a lot of miles to most people but Jama was trying to find a reason for a really long ride. And she found it recently!

Her good friend 24-year-old Cody Hilburn from Logan married Kara Boyd in May and, shortly after their honeymoon, Cody was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare and aggressive form of cancer.

Cody will be receiving treatment in Denver for several months.

The Logan community has been gen- (Biker - Continued on Page 5)

## Norton water tower work nearing completion

By ERICA BRADLEY  
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Work on the Norton water tower will continue through next week, although problems with water pressure are not expected to cause any more water leaks.

At Wednesday's city council meeting, Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson said the crew is finished working on the inside. The tower will be re-filled today and drained again on Wednesday when the crew will continue work.

Mr. Lawson reported that having water in the tower, even though it will be drained again on Wednesday, will save water since the release valves will not be running. The valves are on fire hydrants around the city and are relieving pressure on the water pipes.

"It could possibly have a different smell and taste," he said.

He said the water will be safe.

Mr. Lawson said city crews do not anticipate any more problems with water leaks, but it is possible that the power will (Tank - Continued on Page 5)



When completed, the water tower is expected to carry the name NORTON in big, black letters, as this sketch, provided by Miller and Associates, Consulting Engineers, shows, and will also include the Norton Bluejay beak. The tower is expected to be completed within the next two weeks, unless there are complications.

-Courtesy photo

## Local animal issue resolved

By ERICA BRADLEY  
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The animal cruelty issue that has been discussed at recent Norton city council and county commission meetings has been resolved. At Tuesday's public safety committee meeting, the committee addressed the issue, saying that animal cruelty was already in city and state codes.

The issue has been brought up at past meetings by Roxanne Kent, who had asked the city and county to adopt laws regarding dogs being left in vehicles during inclement weather.

Sherry Hickman, animal control officer, said Norton has laws against animal abuse and neglect. She said the laws cover all abuse and neglect without specifying (Issue - Continued on Page 5)