

# \$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



WEBSITE: [nwkansas.com](http://nwkansas.com)

10 PAGES

**Tuesday**

December 15, 2009

*Briefly*

## Last day to see Santa approaching

Santa's last appearance in Norton will be Thursday at his home on the lawn of the Norton County Courthouse. He will arrive at 6:30 p.m.

## Football banquet to be held Sunday

The annual Norton Community High School Football Awards Banquet, sponsored by the Blue Jay Booster Club, will be held on Sunday at 6:30 p.m. in the high school cafeteria.

A carry-in meal will precede presentations by head football coach Lucas Melvin. All fans are invited and are asked to bring a main dish and side dish or dessert and their own table service. Drinks will be provided.

## Booster Club sets next meeting

The next meeting of the Norton Blue Jay Booster Club will be at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday in the high school cafeteria.

Norton wrestling coach Bill Johnson, girls basketball coach Kevin Jilka and boys basketball coach Doug Reusink will give updates on season opening competition.

You do not have to be a member of the booster club to attend the meetings.

**MARKETS**  
Cash Prices-Norton  
December 15, 2009

<b>CORN</b>	\$3.41
<b>SOYBEANS</b>	\$9.75
<b>WHEAT</b>	\$4.28
<b>MILO</b>	\$3.23

314 W. North Street  
Norton, Kansas  
785-877-5188

## weather forecast

Tonight - Mostly cloudy with a low around 5. Wednesday - Partly sunny with a high near 35. Wednesday Night - Mostly cloudy with a low around 16. Thursday - Partly sunny with a high near 37. Thursday Night - A 20 percent chance of snow.

## Kingham report:

Friday, December 11 ..... Low 2, High 23  
Saturday, December 12.. Low 2, High 31  
Sunday, December 13.. Low 13, High 28  
Monday, December 14... Low 0, High 17  
(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

## Prayer

O God, take away our fear of failure, and help us to rely more on you and on our fellow servants. Amen.



## Annual nativity held



The First United Methodist Church held their annual live nativity from 6-8 p.m. on Sunday. The event had been delayed a week due to a snow storm last Sunday. Despite the cold, many residents turned out to view the nativity, although many did so from inside their vehicles. -Telegram photo by Erica Bradley

# Funding concerns commissioners

By ERICA BRADLEY  
[eradley@nwkansas.com](mailto:eradley@nwkansas.com)

State budget cuts are hitting counties hard and while the 2010 budget has already been filed, the 2011 budget is worrying Norton County Commissioners.

During yesterday's county commission meeting, the commissioners discussed funding concerns with John Mapes, Mapes and Miller Accounting. Commissioner John Miller expressed concern about more state cuts, as well as Norton County sales taxes being down. He said they were down 20 percent in September, and if they keep declining by 20 percent each month an estimated \$60,000 would be lost over a year.

"I hope we can make it through next year," Miller said.

The commissioners discussed the possibility of having to cut services, such as road and bridge and health services.

Mapes said cutting health services would end up hurting the county since they would lose state funds.

An estimated \$1.5 million was lost in assessed agriculture land value last year. Miller said the county appraiser, Alan Hale, estimated the loss of another \$1 million next year.

"We in county government have done a tremendous job of staying afloat. I don't know how much longer we

can do it," Miller said.

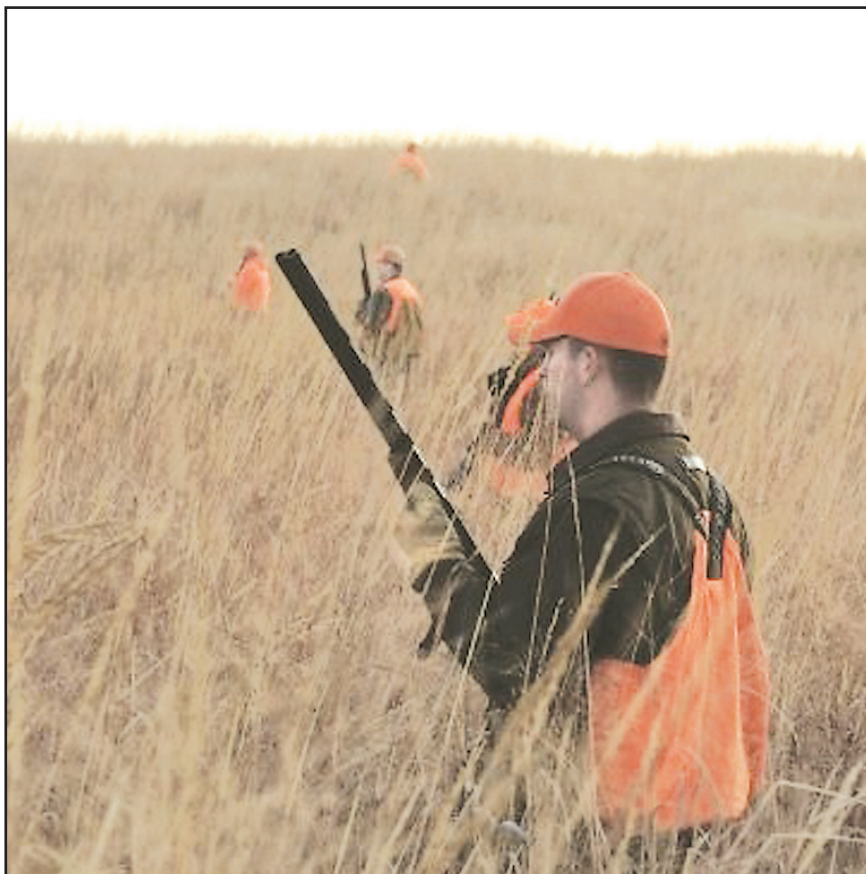
Mapes attended the meeting to present the Independent Audit Report for 2008. He said the audit was in good shape.

"The audit for 2008 indicated there were no problems," Mapes said.

In other commission business:

• Norton County Solid Waste Supervisor Curt Archibald presented more information about the county's e-waste contract. The contract with Soloman Valley will end in October. The commission discussed e-waste in Norton County, saying they will continue to do it  
**(County - Continued on Page 5)**

## Hunting season underway



A crew here for the weekend hunting with Darren McMullen walked CRP ground. The locals as well as out of state hunters have found it to be a bountiful season. -Courtesy photo

# Armory closures do not include Norton

Last Friday, the Kansas Adjutant General's Department released the names of the communities where 18 of its 56 National Guard armories will close in early 2010 due to state budget cuts.

Norton's Armory will remain open but three armories in northwest Kansas will close including Goodland, Phillipsburg and Russell.

Other closures include: Atchison, Burlington, Chanute, Cherryvale, Council Grove, Fort Scott, Garden City, Garnett, Horton, Kingman, Larned, Sabetha, Salina East, Troy and Winfield. (Salina East building will remain open for Guard use, but armory operations will be transferred).

Armory personnel, community leaders, legislators and congressional staff affected by the impacted armories, as well as all Adjutant General Department staff, have been notified of the specific locations affected.

**Budget cuts and the need for long-term sustaiment of operations force closures**

The decision to close the facilities and

consolidate operations into 38 existing locations resulted from state budget cuts announced in the governor's budget reduction package on Nov. 23, and is necessary for long-term sustaiment of armory operations.

"This was a difficult decision, but we had little choice as the state budget was reduced and we considered what would be necessary for long term sustaiment of armory operations statewide," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, Kansas adjutant general. "We've been operating with much less than the necessary required funding even when the state budget was better, so an analysis of closures had been done. These latest cuts forced us to take action right away. Unfortunately, additional closures and consolidations may be necessary in the future."

**Personnel and financial impact**  
Personnel working at these 18 facilities (all are Guardsmen) will be transferred to other armory locations. Training, equipment and other items needed to continue operations will also be relocated.

**(Armory - Continued on Page 5)**

# Planning begins for road work near EMS facility

By ERICA BRADLEY  
[eradley@nwkansas.com](mailto:eradley@nwkansas.com)

The new Emergency Medical Services building is expected to be completed on time, despite the recent snow, and planning is underway to start construction on west Washington Street.

Norton City/County Economic Development Director Diane Stiles is filing an application for Recovery Zone Economic Development Bond Reallocation, totaling \$65,000, to remove the hill on west Washing-

ton Street. She said removing the hill and resurfacing the roadway will be helpful to all businesses in that area including Emergency Medical Services, Miltech Machine Corporation, Western Distributing, F&F Iron, Norton Fuel Service, Norton Sports Center, Thiele's Crop Consulting, Skrdlant Welding and the Lutheran Church.

"The Washington Street Improvement Project will support over 12 percent of the total employment opportunities in Norton County. Few projects in our com-

munity have this deep of an impact on our economic vitality," she said.

Stiles estimated almost 250 jobs are tied to the businesses on Washington Street.

Washington Street is one of two main arteries in Norton, with Highway 36 being the main one.

"It is the most direct route to our downtown from the west edge of our city," she said.

Construction will consist of removing 700 feet of  
**(Road - Continued on Page 5)**