



Mid-Century Elementary League Music Festival judge, Mark Webster, shares his advice with Brooke Bramblett of Plainville on her performance on Wednesday. Telegram Photo by Harriett Gill

# Annual music festival held at the junior high

By HARRIETT GILL  
hgill@nwkansas.com

The 2010 Mid-Century Elementary League music festival was held at the Norton Junior High on Tuesday. The festival had nine schools represented including: Hill City, Osborne, Smith Center, Phillipsburg, Stockton, Plainville, Ellis, Norton and Trego.

The music ranged from bands to vocal solos. Abbie Smith, Norton eighth grader, said she was playing the bass clarinet. "I will play Orientale by Lenoard in my instrumental solo," she said, as she was rushing from her piano solo to the instrumental judging. "Norton has hosted the festival every year, we have more equipment available and our staff has experience in doing this." Mirla Coleman, Norton Community High School English teacher said. "The judges will also teach the

students in their musical presentations. This is not only a contest, it is a learning experience." Peggy Cox, Interrelated Teacher at the Junior High School, said, "I think it is more the socialization than the solos that the kids enjoy." This was evident by the amount of enthusiasm in the hallways and cafeteria. The piano solos were judged by Cheryl Metcalf, Oberlin private piano teacher. She said that she has been teaching piano for 30 years and has served as a judge for several years. "I always enjoy being asked to judge the festival," she said. "Everything went well in the band competition," said Don Mordecai, Norton Junior High band director. Mordecai, has been at the junior high for 12 years and is one of the coordinators of the Mid-Century Elementary League Music Festival. When asked how many students were present, he said, "I

really don't know the actual count but a good guess would be about 1,000 this year." He stated that without the help of fellow coordinators David Will, Norton Community High School band director, and Tamra Cochran, Norton Community High School vocal teacher, this would not be possible. "The staff of all the Norton schools have been a tremendous help, we could not have this festival with out them," he said. The junior high students will not be able to participate in the State competition until they are in high school. The Mid-Century Elementary League Music Festival in Norton is very important to the students and parents in the progression of their musical career in school. They look forward to the competition and are eager to learn their scores when they are posted.

# Posson starts retirement

By ERICA BRADLEY  
ebradley@nwkansas.com

Today marked the start of retirement for a postal carrier after 19 and a half years of delivering mail in Norton. Mary Ellen Posson said there have been some major changes in the industry, such as the introduction of the delivery point sequence machines. Posson said the machines work the letters, which reduced the time clerks put into handling letters.

The biggest change has been the decrease in mail in recent years, a result of the Internet. "This last year she keeps putting more on my route because there is less mail," Posson said. She said an hour was added to each day. Posson has carried on city route three, which stretches from State Street west to Pool Drive, and from Highway 36 south to Washington Street. "It was 12 miles, but they kept adding. It was a lot of walking," she said. Her route ended up being close



Mary Ellen Posson, right, celebrated her retirement with her daughter, Christine Knapp, and staff at the post office. Today marked the beginning of Posson's retirement after almost 20 years on the job. -Photo courtesy Norton Post Office

to 15 miles. Posson said she will stay in Norton, where she plans to enjoy her retirement. She hopes to be able to do some travelling and is planning a trip to Washington, DC this summer with her sister. "I haven't ever been there," she said. She has two daughters, one lives in Norton and the other is in Iowa.

She also has two grandsons. The post office held a retirement celebration for Posson on Feb. 19, which was her last day on duty. Posson used the rest of her accrued leave this week, making today the start of her retirement. Posson started at the post office as a part time employee on Aug. 25, 1990. She became full time after five years.

# Bridge program is discussed at meeting

By ERICA BRADLEY  
ebradley@nwkansas.com

Every year the Norton County Road and Bridge Department does bridge repairs and applies for new bridges to be built, but in recent years bridge construction has been put on hold.

At the Feb. 8 Norton County Commissioners meeting, Road and Bridge Department Supervisor Tom Brannan told the commission funding is still questionable, but the county will proceed with the scheduled repairs.

In an interview after the meeting, Brannan said there are 197 bridges in Norton County, and less than 10 are sub-sufficient. He said most counties have a higher percentage of sub-sufficient bridges. "Norton County is way ahead of the curve," he said.

Brannan said a new bridge hasn't been constructed since 2006. Counties are required to file a five year plan with the state every year, and bridge construction is approved by the state if counties are seeking federal funds.

He said counties can build their own bridges, but if construction is approved by the state there is an 80/20 split.

Brannan said there are still two bridges on the five year plan. One bridge has had \$30,000 put into it already, but the county is waiting for it to be approved by the state. "We're at a standstill," he said.

The annual bridge meeting will be held at 1 p.m. on March 8 in the commissioners chambers, on the second floor of the courthouse.

In other commission business:

- Norton County Clerk Robert Wyatt told the commission Rupp Arts of Victoria requested a change in their bid for the new sign at the Emergency Medical Services building. Rupp Arts had the low bid but requested the county dig the holes for installation. The commission reviewed the bid specifications and rejected the bid from Rupp Arts. Here's Your Sign of Norton was awarded the bid.
- Karen Griffiths, court trustee director, spoke with the commission about her department funding. She explained the bidding process and has been successful in the bid through June 2016. The court trustee budget has increased each year which reflects collections made. Griffiths has a staff of two full time employees and one part time employee. She requested a 3 percent raise beginning in January 2010. The commission agreed to make the raise retro to January.
- Norton County Health Administrator Gina Frack asked the commission to sign the policy and procedure manual for home health. It was signed as presented.

- Frack also requested updating the health department's phone system. Nex-Tech quoted the update cost at \$1,438.12. Frack said she still has funds from the HIN1 budget. The commission approved the request.
- Curt Archibald, Norton County Solid Waste supervisor, updated the commission on the charger for the forklift. He said it appears that the damage was done by an

electrical surcharge. Archibald contacted the insurance company and will provide additional information to them.

A new charger was found at Nebraska Machinery for \$1,862. The commission agreed to the purchase.

- The commission held a department and elected officials staff meeting at 1 p.m. The meeting was held to discuss issues with county budgeting and other issues.

The commissioners asked if there were any questions about the new health insurance plan. There were a few questions regarding the new vision plan.

- Brannan reported K-Camp, the county insurance provider, will be giving a defensive driving course on March 23. The course will take four hours and be offered in the morning and in the afternoon. Commissioner Miller recommended anyone who drives a county vehicle participate.
- Commissioner Miller spoke about budget concerns and asked staff for ideas about financial concerns.
- Alan Hale, Norton County appraiser, spoke about GIS data available in his office. He said the information is useful for many purposes.
- The staff discussed various ways to inform the public about financial concerns. Future cuts are possible.

The next Norton County Commissioners meeting will be held March 1 at 9 a.m. on the second floor of the courthouse. All meetings are open to the public.

# Important Opening

The Norton Telegram is currently taking applications to fill a second vacancy in the advertising department.



This is a full time position, and compensation is based on one's ability to sell to an established, and expanding market. The commission allows for bonuses when sales have exceeded established goals.

Some computer knowledge helpful but not necessary Training in sales will be provided

Interested? Please submit a resume in person, or mail to: Dana Paxton — The Norton Telegram  
215 S. Kansas Ave., Norton, KS 67654  
NO TELEPHONE CALLS, PLEASE

## THE NORTON TELEGRAM

Email: nortontelegram@nwkansas.com  
215 South Kansas Avenue, Norton, Kansas

# Sheriff's Log

January 20  
7:25 a.m. Received a call from reporting party of a black Chevy Avalanche sitting on Rd I  
8:17 a.m. Advised Deputy Land of an abandoned black Chevy Avalanche on Rd I  
10:31 a.m. Received a call from subject needing a VIN done on a trailer in Almena  
10:31 a.m. Advised Deputy Land of above  
3:06 p.m. Received a request for a Deputy to check Highway 9, 2 miles west of Lenora to make sure Highway is safe due to mud on highway



ANNUAL  
**McMullen & Wyatt Auctions**  
*Farm Consignment Auction*

McMullen & Wyatt Auctions is now accepting consignments for our Annual Spring Auction. Any farm related items, livestock equipment, tools, machinery, tractors, or trucks accepted for the March 27 auction. To consign or for more information, please contact Donald or Robert

785-877-3299 OFFICE  
785-877-2731 ROBERT  
785-877-2028 DONALD

