

\$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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Friday Consolidation, Wall top 2010 stories

December 31, 2010



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Briefly

Government offices to close for holiday

Norton Public Library will be closed Friday and Saturday for the New Years holiday.

Norton County Courthouse and other County offices will be closed Friday, Dec. 31.

Norton City Office will be closed Friday, Dec. 31.

Doctors Clinic will be closed on Friday, Dec. 31 and Saturday, Jan. 1.

Rotary to have soup before Tuesday game

Rotary soup supper will be held Tuesday, Jan. 4 at the Norton Junior High Cafeteria before the basketball game. Norton versus Oberlin here at 5 p.m.

Area schools back to work Wednesday

Norton Community Schools and North-ern Valley Schools will resume normal school hours on Wednesday, Jan. 5.

Telegram office to have Friday off

The Norton Telegram office will close Friday for New Year's Eve. The office will open again Monday.

Markets

Wednesday, December 29, 2010
Wheat \$7.21
Milo \$5.30
Soybeans \$12.88
Corn \$5.63
Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

Weather

Thursday Night - Areas of blowing snow and a chance of snow before midnight, then snow and widespread blowing snow after midnight. Low around 10. Blustery with a north wind between 20 and 25 mph with gusts as high as 30 mph. Chance of precipitation is 90%. New snow accumulation of 1 to 3 inches possible. **Friday** - Snow likely and widespread blowing snow before noon, the areas of blowing snow and a chance of snow after noon. Cloudy and cold with a high near 10. Wind chill values as low as -13. Blustery with a north wind between 15 and 25 mph with gusts as high as 35 mph. Chance of precipitation is 70%. **Friday Night** - Mostly cloudy with a low around 0.

Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, show us how to set our heart, eyes, and mind on you. Let your light of love shine through us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

It's been a busy year in Norton County as people have pulled together to get things done, have some fun and keep the "the boat afloat."

While the national economy struggled to come around, Norton County moved mostly forward with only a few backward steps along the way.

Business

One huge step forward for the county was a boost from the federal government.

• Rural Telephone and its subsidiary Nex-Tech was awarded \$101 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to set up broadband infrastructure early in the year.

The Lenora-based telecommunica-tions cooperative and its Hays-based subsidiary was chosen to receive a grant of \$49,588,807 and loan funds of \$51,612,842 that has enabled the development of broadband services in un-served and under served areas of central and western Kansas.

"Kansas jobs have been hit hard by the economic downturn in manufacturing, construction, professional and business services and a lack of broadband availability," stated Rural Telephone CEO/General Manager Larry E. Sevier.

"We estimate that we'll create approxi-mately 400 jobs with this broadband loan and grant," he said.



Kenny Calwalader, Almena and Cameron Hewitt, Phillipsburg pause in front of The Vietnam Memorial Wall on Thursday. Both servicemen are in the Kansas Army National Guard, 170th Maintenance Company that is based in Norton. The Moving Wall arrived in Norton and the guardsmen were part of the escort.

-Telegram photo by Harriett Gill

According to Sevier, the massive construction project will help 21 towns and 26 rural areas spanning over 4,600 square miles in Decatur, Ellis, Gove, Gra-

ham, Norton, Osborne, Phillips, Rooks, Sheridan, Smith and Trego Counties in Kansas.

"When completed, this expanded network will provide high speed services to nearly 23,000 households and businesses within the Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech footprint, including 335 community anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, hospitals, clinics, county health agencies, law enforcement agencies, senior and disability centers," Sevier said.

• Another local company, Natoma Corp., started a major expansion project, which was also a job creator.

Last June, Natoma was notified that it had received a U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development loan. The loan, which is a zero interest, 10 year loan, will be used to create jobs and expand the manufacturing part of the building. The loan will total \$740,000, and Natoma will provide an additional \$775,427. The total amount for the project is expected to be \$1,515,427.

Natoma President Gail Boller said the loan requirements include the creation of six jobs. He expects more than six jobs will be created.

"The whole idea is job creation, and

I think we'll be able to provide that," Boller said.

"We've always exceeded the job requirements. My prediction is we'll add 25 jobs in the next 10 years," he said.

• A new rural medical clinic is being built at the Norton County Hospital. When finished, the \$2.5 million project will provide a 9,000 square foot clinic, some renovation at the hospital, new off-street parking and a new sidewalk system at the facility.

• Three structures were demolished on East U.S. 36 as work began in October on a new motel. The Sleep Inn will be on property that once housed J&R Repair, the Beacon Cafe and the former Kansasland Tire building.

• Dollar General left downtown for a new building on U.S. 36 after the demolition of the old R&M Motel.

Smaller overall but important business changes included:

• Moffet Drug was sold to pharmacist Chase Rice of Smith Center by long-time owner Steve Vollertsen.

• Crow Chiropractic changed hands in April and changed its name to the Norton

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The Norton Rotary Club brought the circus to town this year. The performance of the lion and tigers, trapeze artist, hula hoop dancer and other acts were enjoyed by all the kids, ranging from babies to elderly. The proceeds that the Rotary Club received will be used toward the purchase of a vision machine for Eisenhower Elementary School.

-Telegram photo by Harriett Gill

Lions deliver food, toys

The Norton Lions Club delivered Christmas baskets filled with food and toys to 123 needy families all over Norton County on Saturday morning, Dec. 18.

The Norton Lions Club initiated the Christmas Basket Project in 1954 with assistance from numerous community organizations and individuals. The baskets contain a ham and other items need to prepare a traditional Christmas dinner as well as age appropriate toys for each child in the family.

Lions Club President and Project Chairman Tom Baumann said that the response from the community was fantastic again this year. More than \$2,500 was spent in local stores to purchase food and toys for this project. In addition, several hundred dollars worth of food and toys

were donated to the project.

In this 57th year for the annual project, several dozen local Lions as well as members the local Cub Scout and Boy Scout troops worked at the Valley Hope Corporate Office sorting food and toys; filling and delivering baskets. Baumann thanked all Lions who assisted with the project as well as the many individuals, businesses, clubs and organizations for their donations of toys, food, and cash as well as the use of their time and facilities.

Turn to the Lions, advertisement on page five of today's Norton Telegram for special thanks from the Lions.

"It is always great to see the way the community works together to serve those in need during this time of year," said Baumann.

Cops to enforce texting law

Beginning Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011, motorists can expect to receive traffic tickets if they text and drive in Kansas.

State and local law enforcement officers have been issuing warnings for this violation since July 2010, according to the Kansas Department of Transportation. However, the law provides that tickets can be issued beginning Jan. 1, 2011. Drivers receiving citations will be subject to a minimum fine of \$60, plus court costs.

"Kansas law bans texting for all drivers," said Pete Bodyk, KDOT traffic safety manager. "For all drivers with a learner's permit or intermediate license, the law also bans all cell phone use - both handheld and hands-free. Officers will begin issuing tickets to offenders Jan. 1, 2011."

Law enforcement may issue a ticket simply by observing a violation; they

need not have stopped a driver for another reason. The Kansas law applies even if a vehicle is stopped at a red light or stop sign.

"Learner's permit and intermediate-licensed drivers typically are under age 20, the age group with the highest proportion of distraction-related fatal crashes nationally," Bodyk said. "Drivers with those permits who are convicted of the violation may be subject to delays in full licensure as well as fines and court costs."

Bodyk said Kansas is one of 30 states to ban text messaging for all drivers. Eight states prohibit all handheld cell phone use while driving, and the federal government has banned texting while driving by federal employees on duty and all commercial truck and bus drivers.

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Catherine McMulin was walking in downtown Norton on Monday when she was struck by a car. McMulin was treated for minor injuries at Norton County Hospital, but was soon released.

-Telegram photo by Harriett Gill

Colby pedestrian OK after downtown accident

A Colby woman escaped serious injury on Monday afternoon when she was knocked down by a vehicle in downtown Norton.

According to the accident report provided by the Norton Police Department, Catherine McMulin had parked her vehicle in a marked parking space that is adjacent to the alley on N. Kansas. She had just left her vehicle and was

starting to cross the street when she was struck by a 2011 Chevrolet Blazer driven by Patricia Otter that was exiting the alleyway and turning south onto N. Kansas.

Ms. McMulin was treated at the scene by Norton County EMS and transported to the Norton County Hospital where she was later released.

