

# \$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



WEBSITE: [nwkansas.com](http://nwkansas.com) 10 PAGES

**Tuesday**  
June 21, 2011

## Briefly

### Summer reading at Lenora Library

Summer Reading, 2011, "One World, Many Stories," is underway at the Lenora Library on Wednesdays, June 15, 22 and 29, and July 6, 13, 20 and 27 at 10 a.m.

The program is for pre-school and grade school-age children.

You are invited to come for story time and fun activities, all sponsored by Lenora PRIDE.

### Huelskamp coming to Norton June 27

Coming off a week of seven town hall meetings in Kansas, Congressman Tim Huelskamp announced recently that included in an additional seven town hall meetings will be a visit to Norton on June 27.

Huelskamp is slated to stop at the Town and Country Kitchen on East Highway 36 at 2 p.m.

### Learning Center graduation June 24

Student Learning Center is holding their graduation on June 24 at 7 p.m. at the East Campus Auditorium. The public is invited to join in the celebration.

### Meals on Wheels volunteers needed

Community volunteers are needed for Meals on Wheels delivery from June 20 through July 1. Please call the Norton Hospital's dietary department at 785-877-3351 for more information.

### Monument Pavers for Veterans only

The paving bricks available for purchase to be included in the Veteran's Monument in downtown park are to honor only past and present Military members. Bricks can be purchased indefinitely.

## Markets

Tuesday, June 21, 2011

Wheat .....	\$7.13
Milo .....	\$6.23
Soybeans .....	\$12.79
Corn .....	\$6.84

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

## Weather

Tonight - Partly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Wednesday - Sunny and breezy with highs in the mid 80s. Thursday - Sunny with highs in the upper 80s. Friday - Mostly sunny.

## Kingham Report

Friday, June 17.....	Low 57, High 82
Saturday, June 18.....	Low 55, High 83
	.30 Rain
Sunday, June 19.....	Low 59, High 89
	.05 Rain
Monday, June 20.....	Low 63, High 79
Tuesday, June 21.....	Low 55, .30 Rain

(Readings taken at the Kingham farm 9 miles northwest of Norton)

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, help us to live each day in the light of your love. Amen

# Tornados strike rural Almena



Severe storms struck Norton County early Monday afternoon, causing at least one confirmed tornado that hit homes northeast of Almena. This home, owned by Cecilia Hillebrand and occupied by the David family, was reduced to a pile of rubble from the storm. The storm continued from Almena to Long Island and several individuals were taken to local hospitals for treatment of injuries. No further information on injuries or damage was available Monday afternoon. Above, local citizens inspect the damage to the David residence near Almena. For another photo, see page 5

-Telegram photo by Carleen Bell

## Wildlife and Parks Commission will meet in Norton on June 23

The Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission will hold a public meeting and hearing on Thursday, June 23 at the Norton Community High School Auditorium, located at 103 West Woodsfield in Norton.

The afternoon session of the meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. and run until 5 p.m. After a break, the Commission will reconvene at 7 p.m.

The afternoon session will begin with a time for public comments on non-agenda items, followed by general discussion on several topics, including legislative update, fiscal status, spring hunting seasons, and public land regulations. The afternoon will also include a workshop session to prepare for potential future regulations.

The evening session will include discussion of deer regulations and aquatic regulations. Following the workshop will be

a public hearing on several topics, including bird seasons and regulation and hunting provisions and regulations on several species.

Live video and audio streaming of this meeting will be broadcast through the KDWP website, <<http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us>>[www.kdwp.state.ks.us](http://www.kdwp.state.ks.us).

If notified in advance, the department will have an interpreter available for the hearing impaired. To request an interpreter, call the Kansas Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at 1-800-432-0698. Any individual with a disability may request other accommodations by contacting the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Commission secretary at 620-672-5911.

The next commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, Aug. 11, at the Kansas Wetlands Education Center, 592 NE K-156 Highway near Great Bend.

## Sebelius to retire from state commission

By Carleen Bell  
[cbell@nwkansas.com](mailto:cbell@nwkansas.com)



Doug Sebelius

After two terms and eight years on the Commission, local attorney Doug Sebelius announced recently that he is planning to retire from his position of Commissioner of the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

Sebelius explained that the branch of the State Department of Wildlife and Parks is made up of seven commissioners from all over Kansas who serve on the Commission for four-year terms. The purpose of the group is to enact regulations that deal with the activities of hunting,

(Sebelius - Continued on Page 5)

## Council votes to close power plant

By Carleen Bell  
[cbell@nwkansas.com](mailto:cbell@nwkansas.com)

After operating the facility for several years as only an emergency generator for the city, the Norton City Council agreed Wednesday evening to completely shut down and dismantle the existing power plant on the south edge of town.

Council Member Jerry Moritz, Chair of the Council's Utilities Committee, reported Wednesday that for some time, the Committee has been exploring options for repairing and renovating the power plant's cooling system, which is inefficient and in need of repairs. The cost of the repairs is expected to exceed \$1 million, an expenditure that City Council members were reluctant to authorize. "Even if we spend the one or two million dollars to fix it, we still aren't going to be using it for primary power," said Council Member Toby Kuhn. "The generation costs are about 20 cents (per kilowatt) and we can purchase it for about six and a half cents."

Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson explained that some of the engines at the facility were installed in the 1940's and 50's and in 1981, the city entered into an agreement with Sunflower Electric to supply primary power for the city. "The engines were shut off and used only for peak periods of demand," Lawson said. "It has run that way for several years and is now used for emergency backup only."

With the decision to shut down the plant, Lawson said, a transition time of

two to three years will include removing the generator engines, removing fuel and oil tanks, and removing meters and piping for electric meters.

The physical changes at the plant cannot take place, however, before the city gets an amended contract from Sunflower Electric that allows the city to be removed from the general power grid. That process, Lawson said, should take about 30 days.

Though utility customers should not notice any differences in their service or utility rates because of the transition, Lawson reported that the city has grappled with the decision to shut down the facility. "We've struggled with this decision because it will take away the emergency backup supply," he said. "Most of the critical locations like the hospitals and schools have their own backup generators, so that's not a big problem. I'm not saying a massive outage will never happen, but it's unlikely because there are three companies that can provide power for the city."

Not every City Council member was in favor of dismantling the power plant. Jerry Jones voted in opposition of the decision. Though offering no explanation at the City Council meeting, Jones later explained that part of his feelings were sentimental, though he realizes that the decision was probably for the best. "It's one of those things that we hate to let go of," Jones said, "but it has to be done. "We can't produce electricity for what we buy it for. I think it should be done,

but we need to plan for how we are going to shut it down."

Though the city agreed to shut down (Power - Continued on Page 5)

## City seeks input on swimming pool

By Carleen Bell  
[cbell@nwkansas.com](mailto:cbell@nwkansas.com)

After agreeing Wednesday evening to begin exploring options to improve the public swimming pool in Norton, the Norton City Council is seeking public comments concerning the possible future of the facility.

Council Member Donna Foley raised the topic of discussion with the Council Wednesday evening because the swimming pool is aging and behind on progress compared to the swimming facilities in some neighboring towns. Foley reported that the city has about \$10,000 set aside to help cover design and/or engineering fees to construct a new pool, but new construction is farther down the road if it even happens at all.

Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson explained that the current swimming pool is 54 years old and through the years, has had minor updates and repairs. Even though, it is aging and some major changes will need to be considered in the near future.

The public pool operation is funded through the city's General Fund, comprised mostly of tax revenue collected from Norton citizens. Though a necessary component of the community, Lawson reported that the city loses money every year on the pool because usage revenue doesn't cover the cost of operations. By Lawson's estimate, the \$10,000 already set aside would cover about one third of the design and engineering fees to design a new swimming pool.

The decision to explore the options for a new swimming pool is by no means a decision to spend extra money on the pool right now or to move forward with engineering or a design process for a new facility. Lawson said he is in the process of just talking with other towns and exploring options for improvement. "Pool improvements or construction aren't included in this year's city budget, so no matter what is decided, we won't be spending the money this year," Lawson said.

Any Norton citizens with input or ideas for the best way to move forward with a swimming pool project is asked to contact their City Council representatives.

