

# Wood-burning stove cause of Wednesday fire



The Norton Rural Fire Department was called to the home of Greg and Keri Vanover just before 2 a.m. Wednesday morning for a fire that broke out outside the home. The fire was distinguished quickly and no injuries were reported.

—Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

By Carleen Bell  
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No injuries were reported after a small fire at a house east of Norton in the very early hours of Wednesday morning.

Norton Rural Fire Chief Steve Otter reported Thursday that the fire department was dispatched to the home of Greg and Keri Vanover on the south side of Highway 36 about two and half miles east of Norton at about 1:50 a.m. Wednesday morning.

Otter reported that there had been some soot and tar build-up in the chimney of a wood-burning stove at the home and an ember ignited a pile of wood stacked along the north side of the house. The blaze ignited the siding of the house, but Otter reported that crews were able to extinguish the fire before any flame moved to the inside of the house.

Brenda Hopkins of Almena was passing by the home on Highway 36 at the time of the fire and was able to alert the residents and help get them out safely.

The house was occupied at the time of the blaze, but everyone was able to escape without injury. Otter estimates that damage to the house is about \$5,000. The family was able to return to the home after the fire and was not displaced because of the incident.

Responding to the scene of the fire were nine firefighters and four trucks with equipment, along with the Norton County Sheriff's Department and the Norton Ambulance Service.

# Producers asked to register for farm assistance programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency Administrator Bruce Nelson recently announced that enrollment for the 2012 Direct and Counter-cyclical Program and the Average Crop Revenue Election Program began on Jan. 23. The last day for producers to sign up for either program will be June 1.

The department urges producers to make use of the electronic program's automated website to sign up, or producers can visit any USDA Service Center to complete their 2012 contract. The program saves time, reduces paperwork and speeds up contract processing at USDA Service Centers. It is available to all producers who are eligible to participate in the programs and can be accessed at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dcp). To access the service, producers must have an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires filling out an online registration form at [www.eauth.egov.usda.gov](http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov) followed by a visit to the local USDA Service Center for identity verification.

USDA computes DCP program payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices.

For 2012, advance direct payments are not authorized in accordance with the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. Counter-cyclical payment rates vary depending on market prices.

Counter-cyclical payments are issued only when the effective price for a commodity is below its target price. The effective price is the higher of the national average market price received during the 12-month marketing year for each covered commodity and the national average loan rate for a marketing assistance loan for the covered commodity.

The program provides a safety net based on state revenue losses. When the Average Crop Revenue Election program option is chosen, it acts in place of the price-based safety net of counter-cyclical payments under the program. The department provides the farm a revenue guarantee. The guarantee starts with multiplying an average yield calculated using a five-year state average times the most recent two-year national price average for each eligible commodity. For the 2012 crop year, the two-year price average will be based on the 2010 and 2011 crop years. When all criteria are considered in calculating the target and the annual revenue is lower than the revenue guarantee, the farm is eligible for support under ACRE, assuming all other qualifications are met.

Since 2009, producers have had the option to participate in either Direct and Counter-cyclical Program or Average Crop Revenue Election.

A producer who initially chose to enroll in DCP has the option to switch to ACRE during the 2012 enrollment period; however, producers who chose to enroll in ACRE cannot switch back to DCP.

An ACRE payment is issued when both the state and the farm have incurred a revenue loss. The 2012 crop year ACRE payment is based on 85 percent of the farm's planted acres times the difference between the state ACRE guarantee and the state revenue times the ratio of the farm's yield divided by the state expected yield. The total number of planted acres for which a producer may receive ACRE payments may not exceed the total base on the farm.

In exchange for participating in ACRE, in addition to not receiving counter-cyclical payments, a farm's direct payment is reduced by 20 percent, and marketing assistance loan rates are reduced by 30 percent.

# Kansans asked to stay alert for missing children

In recognition of National Amber Alert Awareness Day, Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt is reminding Kansans to stay alert when the public's assistance is needed to locate a missing child.

When an Amber Alert is issued, it is broadcast to the public by media organizations. Kansans also are encouraged to sign up to receive Amber Alerts directly to their mobile phones or Facebook accounts. Information about signing up to receive Amber Alerts directly is available on the attorney general's website at [www.ksag.org](http://www.ksag.org).

The Amber Alert program, named for 9-year-old Amber Hagerman, is a voluntary partnership between law enforcement agencies, broadcasters, and transportation agencies to activate an urgent bulletin in the most serious child-abduction cases. Broadcasters use the Emergency Alert System to air a description of the abducted child and suspected abductor. The goal of an Amber Alert is to instantly galvanize the entire community to assist in the search for and safe recovery of the child.

Since its inception in 1996, this program has successfully brought 540 children home safely.

In Kansas, 21 children have been safely returned since 2002. The Kansas Amber Alert program is coordinated through the attorney general's office.

For more information or to sign up to receive direct Amber Alerts, go to [www.ksag.org](http://www.ksag.org), [www.ksamber.org](http://www.ksamber.org) or [www.facebook.com/AmberAlertKS](http://www.facebook.com/AmberAlertKS). You can sign up to receive text message alerts at [www.wirelessamberalerts.org](http://www.wirelessamberalerts.org).

**Community Calendar**

Please submit your events for the Community Calendar which is printed in the Monday EXTRA. Events may be e-mailed to: [nortontelegram@nwkansas.com](mailto:nortontelegram@nwkansas.com) or mailed to 215 South Kansas Avenue

THE NORTON TELEGRAM 215 S. Kansas Ave. Norton, Kan. 67654 785-877-3361

# Winter concert set for Sunday

The Norton Community High School band will present their winter concert this Sunday at 2:30 p.m. at the Stull Gymnasium.

This year's theme is "Sunday Afternoon at the Movies." School officials report that the band has chosen this theme because so much great music has been written for the motion picture industry over the years. There are still elements of a traditional concert as there are

marches and overtures and medleys. Music from movies represented may include Bridge over River Kwai, Cars, Dances with Wolves, Fantasia 2000, The Great Escape, The Incredibles, Pirates of the Caribbean, Ratatouille and Toy Story. Many of the musical selections were Academy Award nominees and/or winners.

Some of the students at Sunday's concert will be recognized for their participation in the

Kansas Music Educators Association District Honor Band, the University of Nebraska at Kearney Honor Band and the Kansas Music Educators Association State Band.

For anyone unable to attend Sunday's concert, the show will be broadcast on KQNK radio and video performances will be shown on the Nex-Tech local access station at a later date.

# Home loan applications now available

The US Department of Agriculture Rural Development is seeking applications for the Single Family Housing Direct Loan Program. The program assists low to moderate income rural Kansans to obtain financing to purchase a home. Loans funds can be used to build, repair, renovate or relocate a home, or to purchase and prepare sites, including providing water and sewage facilities.

With the direct loan program, there is no down payment required and 100 percent financing. Maximum loan amounts vary by county and applicants may be eligible for payment assistance, which could subsidize the interest portion of the house payment, lowering the overall

monthly payment amount. Applicant's eligibility requirements include good credit history, adequate and dependable income and repayment ability for the loan. Currently, the agency has ample funding for applicants at or below 50 percent of the area's median income.

In 2011, USDA Rural Development in Kansas provided more than \$14 million in financing for rural Kansas homeowners through the Single Family Housing Direct Loan Program. For more information about the direct loan program, contact the nearest USDA Rural Development office:

Garden City Area Office - 620-275-0211, Ext. 4  
Hays Area Office - 785-628-

3081, Ext. 4  
Iola Area Office - 620-365-2901, Ext. 4  
Manhattan Area Office - 785-776-7582, Ext. 4  
Newton Area Office - 316-283-0370, Ext. 4

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