

# Flying high to be cool

Norton Municipal Swimming Pool was the place to be on Thursday to cool off as the temperature was over 100 degrees again, one of a long string of days reaching triple digits across the area. Makale Olliff was one of many kids taking a plunge off the diving board into the cool water.

—Telegram photo by Dana Paxton



# Lighting up the rural economy

By Ron Wilson  
Huck Boyd Institute

Let's tune in to the TV show My Fair Wedding. This series specializes in producing fancy weddings for television, and this particular wedding includes an elaborate fireworks display. Believe it or not, the fireworks were provided and operated by a family from rural Kansas. It's today's Kansas Profile.

Last week we learned about Steve and Peggy Showalter from Inman, Kansas. They own and operate Showalter Fireworks for consumers and Rainbow Fireworks for display fireworks. It all began with the Showalters shooting fireworks on the family farm near Inman, Kansas. Now they have developed a business to market fireworks and produce fireworks shows around the region.

How does this business work? "We go to China and select the products," Steve said. "We watch for quality and the reliability of the manufacturer. We look for what's new and what's priced so that customers will think it's a good buy."

The selected products leave from Shanghai or Hong Kong to Los Angeles by steamship. After passing through U.S. Customs they come by train to Dallas or Kansas City and are delivered to the Showalter's farm by truck. The Showalter's crew will store and organize the products in fireworks-approved storage containers.

The Showalters maintain several storage facilities, including one near Inman, one in Oklahoma, and one near the rural community of Dearing, Kansas, population 413 people. Now, that's rural.

This is a family, entrepreneurial business. For example, they have expanded the business to include inflatables, those giant bouncy play places that kids enjoy. The company owns more than 40 of these inflatables.

"At a small town festival or a

county fair, our crew can do the inflatables during the day and do the fireworks at night," Steve said.

The Showalters also offer free training schools for those who want to shoot display fireworks, which require a permit from the State of Kansas and the U.S. government. "We teach safety issues as well as what we've learned from practical experience to get a quality shoot," Steve said. "It's easy to get an operator's license and U.S. government permit. People can get these licenses if they want to do a festival or even a family or company event themselves."

The school is offered free on demand. Steve did six schools during spring 2012 and will do another six this fall.

Remember I said this is a family business? All five of Steve and Peggy's children have their fireworks operator permits. Matthew, Michelle, Sean, Amber, and Stephanie all help out during the busy times. In fact, this year a grandson will be doing a show.

Safety is a top priority for the Showalter shows. Modern technology is a big plus, especially when planning shows in new venues.

"For every event, we go on Google Earth and do an analysis to see if it is possible to do a show from a safety standpoint," Steve said. "We also do a site visit and physically inspect the venue." Then they design the fireworks to fit the setting.

"It's possible to shoot fireworks within a ballpark," Steve said. "The regulations require 70 feet of clearance for every inch of shell, and we always plan for extra space to allow for the wind."

The Showalters have a saying: Fireworks are not just for the Fourth of July any more. They will start shooting shows in April and go through New Year's Eve. In fact, the Showalters can design fireworks dis-

plays for all types of events to include concerts, employee appreciation events, trade shows, conventions, company picnics, grand openings, private gatherings, commemorative events, and of course, weddings. When the producers of My Fair Wedding wanted fireworks, Steve Showalter got the call.

For more information, go to <http://www.fireworks-display.com>www.fireworks-display.com.

This episode of the TV show My Fair Wedding has come to an end, but it featured a fireworks display designed and produced by Steve Showalter from Inman, Kansas. We salute Steve and Peggy Showalter and all their family involved with Showalter Fireworks and Rainbow Fireworks for making a difference with their hard work and entrepreneurship. Without such creativity and business development, the rural economy could go up in smoke.

## UPCOMING EVENTS in Kansas

Brought to you in part by Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism

**Wild West Festival**  
July 4-7, Hays  
Start 4th of July with a bang at the FREE Fireworks Spectacular & weekend of concerts. Hairball, Diamond Rio, Easter Corbin & Glen Templeton. All for a \$12 events ticket. wildwestfestival.com

**Downs Annual Celebration**  
July 5-7, Downs  
Area's largest carnival, reunion, beer garden. Fun for the whole family! Parade & live bands. Thur: Kill Creek Rising, Fr: Jimmy Dee & Fab. Sat: Pete Gile FREE! DownsChamber.com

**Cowhand's & Corriente's Championship Ranch Rodeo**  
September 1-2, Dodge City  
The best of championship ranch rodeo! Real cowboys show off their skills. Family-friendly event. Live music by Hometown Tuff. cvhorses.com

**31 SHOW**  
July 12-14, Dodge City  
Western State Bank Expo Center Th. & Fr. 8AM - 5PM; Sa. 8AM - 4PM  
Over 500 indoor and outdoor agri-business exhibits, consumer programs, health screens and vintage tractors. (877) 405-2883, 31show.com

**Ladies Night Out**  
July 13, Council Grove  
Food, fun, shopping and prizes in Historic Downtown Council Grove. Discounts & specials just for the ladies: 5PM-9PM (620) 767-5413, councilgrove.com

**Bluegrass & Old Tyme Music Festival**  
July 27-28, Milford Lake State Park  
Bluegrass music furnished at beautiful Milford Lake. Camping available. Family style festival. Featuring bands from KS & MO. milfordlakebluegrassfestival.com

**National Baseball Congress World Series**  
July 28-August 11, Wichita  
78th Annual. The nation's top amateur baseball teams compete in a 2-week tournament with Baseball Round the Clock, Aug. 4-5. (316) 264-6837, nbcbaseball.com



# Road construction begins on U.S. 24

Work is now underway to repave a section of U.S. 24 Highway in Thomas and Sheridan Counties.

The project extends from the U.S. 83 Junction east to the Sheridan/Graham County line. The project also encompasses work on K-186 from Sequin to the U.S. 24 Junction; and K-188 from Menlo to the U.S. 24 Junction. Late last week, workers started milling along the bridge locations. They will mill approximately 3/4-inch of the existing surface of the mainline beginning this week.

Later this week, workers will overlay 1.5 inches of new asphalt material along the milled surface.

Flaggers and a pilot car operation will guide one-lane traffic through the work zone during daylight hours. Delays of 15 minutes or less will be expected through the construction time frame. The public should plan their travels accordingly.

Please use caution, pay attention to the work zone signs, and respect workers when driving through any road construction zone. Slow down and "Give 'Em A Brake."

# PUBLIC RECORD

## District Court

These transactions were taken from the records of filings in the offices of the District Court Clerk at the Norton County Courthouse.

Traffic and Wildlife and Parks cases are given to the paper when the fines are paid.

### June 28

May 21-Marion L. Garcia, Hill City; Charge: Failure to wear seatbelt; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$0.

May 21-Marion L. Garcia, Hill City; Charge: Child passenger safety; restraining systems and seat belts; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$483.

May 21-Marion L. Garcia, Hill City; Charge: Vehicles; Liability insurance coverage required; Found: Guilty; \$0.

June 13-Jerald A. Heiser, Inman, Neb.; Charge: No lamps or flag on projecting load; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$173.

May 28-Terisa Jeanette Marsh, Oberlin; Charge: Speeding 105 in 65; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$443.

May 28-Rebecca J. Rezaei, Omaha, Neb.; Charge: 68 in 55; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$224.

May 28-Thomas Siard, Norton; Charge: Failure to wear seatbelt; Found Guilty; Fine: \$10.

June 16-Brian A. Taff, Gilman City, Mo.; Charge: No harvest permits; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$595.

June 16-Brian A. Taff, Gilman City, Mo.; Charge: No fuel permit; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$10.

June 16-Brian A. Taff, Gil-

man City, Mo.; Charge: Over weight limits on wheels and axles; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$0.

May 5-Coleton Thomas Valentine, Syracuse; Charge: Speeding 75 in 65; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$143.

June 6-Clay M. Vanover, Norton; Charge: Speeding 78 in 65; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$161.

June 1-Keri Vanover, Norton; Charge: Failure to wear seatbelt; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$10.

June 15-Robbie A. Luna, Rexford; Charge: Take/possess illegal length saugeye; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$148.

June 2-Ashley M. Scherbarth, Juniata, Neb.; Charge: Take/possess illegal length bass; Found: Guilty; Fine: \$148.

Seatbelt ticket; Plea: Not guilty; Other action: Trial; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$10.

June 13-Jordan Kinsey, Almena; Charge: Speeding 44 in 35; Plea: No contest; Found: Guilty; Sentence: Fine \$30, costs \$76, total \$106.

May 1-David Stapp, Norcatur; Charge: No proof of insurance; Other action: Dismissed/proof provided.

Nov. 17, 2011-Mark Saintz, Norton; Charge: Misdemeanor theft; Plea: Guilty as amended; Other action: Amended to criminal deprivation of property; Found: Guilty as amended; Sentence: \$100 fine, \$76 costs, pay appointed attorney fees, 30 days suspended jail time. Restitution, \$1,000 to John Grafel, \$71.50 filing fee, \$5 surcharge.

# STUDENT NEWS

The National FFA Organization has awarded a \$1,000 Fastlane Publications scholarship to Daniel Field of Northern Valley High School's FFA Chapter. Fastlane Publications, as a

special project of the National FFA Foundation, sponsors the scholarship. Daniel plans to use the funds to pursue a degree at Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture.



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## K-STATE

Research and Extension

K-State Research and Extension- Twin Creeks District, with office in Hoxie, Norton, and Oberlin, is seeking an Extension Agent, 4-H Youth development. Primary office location is yet to be determined. See: www.ksre.ksu.edu/jobs for responsibilities, qualifications, and applications procedure. Application Deadline: July 26, 2012. K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Employment is contingent upon results of a Background and Driving Record Check.

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## THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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