

Time to take another look

Dear Norton Residents:

We have more than a yes or no choice for the new pool. Just because you vote no does not mean you are not in favor of a new pool. It means you are not in favor of the current solution before us.

I am writing this letter to the editor because I am asking the residents of Norton to think long and hard before they cast their votes for the new pool next month. This vote will very likely affect every one of us for our lifetimes, even the young voters.

At this time we do not know the final price tag of the new pool. We do not know the price for operating the pool. We do not know if we will be able to find a pool manager and enough life guards to run the pool. There are too many unknowns for a project the size of the new pool.

Yes there will always be questions, but how big of a gamble are you willing to take on the new pool? And how much are you willing to spend on a pool that is barely open 25% of the year?

The largest sales pitch for the pool we hear is that you are not voting for a .75% tax increase because the State of Kansas will be reducing your sales tax by .60% in the summer of 2013. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE the State of Kansas will roll back their sales tax increase. In fact, Governor Brownback recently stated he did not know whether the State could afford to reduce the sales tax as they had planned; therefore leaving the state sales tax at its current rate is an option and possibility.

There are other options out there. Other communities in our area have built a pool with less expense. A great example is the new pool in Atwood. The city chose to build a basic pool and then for a year various groups, clubs and persons held fundraising activities and made donations to the pool. With those donations and fundraising efforts the city was able to add amenities to the pool beyond a basic pool.

A vote no does not mean you are not in favor of making the community better for current and future generations. A vote no does not mean you are not in favor of a solution to our pool problem. A vote no does not mean you are anti new pool. A vote no is actually looking out for the future of the community.

Because of all of the unknowns and high price tag I encourage you to vote NO. However, if you do choose to vote yes on the pool question I ask you also to think long and hard about your commitment to supporting the new sales tax. A vote yes should also come with a commitment by the voter to shop local, a commitment to shopping here at home paying the wanted tax and not across state lines where there is no sales tax on groceries.

Yours Truly, Missi Schoen, Norton Kansas



One size does not necessarily fit all

Usually it is those unfamiliar with an area or a people who make the statement, "They are all the same," or "they all look alike." Out-of-towners frequently and mistakenly, I might add, label small rural communities in this way. They don't see individuals they only see the masses. But for most of us who live here, most know we are distinctly and uniquely different than the residents in nearby counties. Not better or worse, just different. Let's take, for instance, a comparison of Norton and two other Northwest Kansas communities, Graham and Decatur counties.

Let's start with population	
Graham County	2,641
Decatur County	2,915
Norton County	5,635
Percent of population over age of 65	
Graham County	25.1%
Decatur County	26.8%
Norton County	18.3%
Percent below the poverty line	
Graham County	10.7%
Decatur County	16.2%
Norton County	9.9%
Norton County budget (2009) and Cost per resident	
Graham County	

Phase II Mary Kay Woodyard



\$6,960,450	\$1,642.79		
Decatur County			
\$4,395,407	\$882.37		
Norton County			
\$6,014,521	\$1,128.43		
School Enrollment			
Graham County	424		
Decatur County	346		
Norton County	943		
Total number of firms			
Graham County			
Suppressed, does not meet publication standards			
Decatur County	408		
Norton County	705		
Medical Personnel			
Co	M.D.	O.D.	people served
Graham	2	0	1,231
Decatur	1	1	1,458
Norton	4	2	939

In addition, there has been much said about the ambulance service. This is

one of those items people probably think is unnecessary until they need it and then it is a critical issue. Norton has seven EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians), one Emergency Medical Responder and two Paramedics; Lenora has four EMTs, two Medical Responders and Almena has one EMT. This provides 24/7 service plus the Norton airport is available for flights to transfer to larger hospitals.

As we listen to candidates, both nationwide and local, sometimes they forget we are not one size fits all. Our needs are different and our profiles varied.

When we compare ourselves to other communities, it reminds me a bit of when my children would say, "Such and such family does it this way."

My comment to my children, some politicians and to voters would be this, "That may be, but we are not Decatur or Graham counties. We are Norton; unique, progressive and bold." Vote for the County Commissioner who sees us in that way. Write-in Carolyn Applegate on November 6, 2012. Mail to: mkwoodyard@ruraltel.net

Dear Editor,

I would like to respond to a statement that was made by Carolyn Applegate in the Oct 16th paper about EMS.

Her statement was "The state changed the regulations for who could be on the department staff and we've done away with volunteers."

Let me present you with some facts: EMS is staffed 7 days a week, 24 hours per day, 52 weeks a year. Yes that includes weekends, nights & Holidays, even Christmas day during our family dinner or New Years Eve at 3am at a vehicle crash.

There are currently 4 Full Time employees, 1 Administrator, 1 billing clerk and 11 VOLUNTEERS.

We VOLUNTEERS keep our certifications current the same as the full time staff.

We VOLUNTEER to keep our pagers on 24 hours per day.

We VOLUNTEER to do car races, sporting events, county fairs and other community events.

We VOLUNTEER to cover shifts or take transfers to assist the full time staff.

We VOLUNTEER to be on standby when both Norton Units are out of town on transfers.

We VOLUNTEERS live in Norton, Almena, Lenora & Edmond.

Your VOLUNTEERS in Norton CO are Donna, Barb, Aden, Tad, Gary, Ruth, Steve, Terry, Andrea, David & Diane. These 11 people have provided Norton Co EMS with over 90 years of combined VOLUNTEER service time.

I as a VOLUNTEER I get frustrated with the "politics and micro management" sometimes with EMS but let me assure you that the staff and VOLUNTEERS are ready and well trained to answer that 911 call 24 hours per day.

Jill Diane Edgett, EMT, 15 years with Norton Co EMS as a VOLUNTEER.

I just wanted to present the facts.

Jill Diane Edgett
Edmond, Kansas

Feathering one's nest while still staying green

Some get depressed in the fall. Cooler days invigorate others. I'm in the second camp for many reasons. One being fall is the perfect time to feather the nest before settling in for winter!

First project: fix the peeling wall paper in the upstairs bathroom. I'll never find "paper" I like as much. "Paper" being the key word! Vinyl would have been a better choice for the moisture laden room.

Come to find out, wallpaper is now "green". That means vinyl free! I'm all for biodegradable! I just don't want it to biodegrade on the wall. From limited options available I found something serviceable.

I ordered on-line. It was confusing. Why do they price it by the single roll when single rolls are not available? I ordered two different patterns and decided I needed one double roll of the pattern one and 3 of pattern 2. They said I must order the rolls in multiples of 2. I thought they meant I had to order 2 double rolls. So I ordered 2 of each pattern, changing my idea of which walls I would do in each pattern because as I understood it I would have to order 2 and 4 to get 1 and 3.

Confused? Me, too! Anyway one pattern was back ordered. The other came, one double roll. That was the one I wanted 3 of, so I ordered two

This Too Shall Pass Nancy Hagman



more and waited.

One bright sunny day, I drove out of the yard and noticed a bunch of trash: sky blue, aqua, sea green vinyl trash. ODD!

Closer examination revealed it to be the backordered wallpaper. Lamont came bounding around the corner as if to say, "Yes, I killed it! I saved us all from the fearsome wallpaper!"

I put in a claim, all the wallpaper has now safely arrived. It languishes---

First because the old paper, which seemed to be falling off the walls, doesn't strip off all that easily.

Second; my last experience on a ladder! I thought it was only one step to the floor but it was two. I managed to stay upright and not spill the bucket of paint in my hand. I skinned my knuckles, thus sport scars to prove how perilous my position was!

This occurred right after Patricia commented that I looked very at ease atop an 8 foot ladder, edging a 12 foot

wall. I told her she wasn't looking at my toes, which were curled around the rung!

The experience led me to decide that the old hen may want the nest feathered but in the interests of safety she should find someone else to do the actual work!

I was painting for Craig and Patricia; who are now first time home-owners in Lincoln, NE. They could have lived there as it was but there is always room for improvement. They started in the front yard with a limestone Power Cat, purple weather vane and flag. I'm sure the neighbors appreciate it.

Inside some curious graffiti was discovered on a bed room wall. "Baby Betzold, May 3, 2013."

I volunteered to climb the ladder and paint because I didn't want Patricia to fall. I reassured the nervous future parents that the paint fumes would not harm Baby. Before Kate's arrival I did a lot of painting. Lead based paint was already banned and today's paint is even safer. Kate is normal.

My thesis was heartily debated by the younger sisters!

However every family member agrees a new generation is something to celebrate! The nest will indeed be well-feathered come May!!!

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