

# \$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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8 PAGES

Tuesday  
January 1, 2013

## The top stories for Norton in 2012

### Briefly

#### Fire ban lifted after six months

Effective December 28, 2012, the Burn Ban implemented on June 12, 2012, is lifted for Norton County jurisdiction per the Norton County Commissioners.

#### Commissioners to meet on Friday

Due to the New Year's holiday, the Norton County Commissioners meeting set for Monday, Dec. 31 has been rescheduled for Friday at 9 a.m. at the Norton County Courthouse on the 2nd floor.

#### Friday basketball action in Osborne

Norton Community High School's varsity and junior varsity basketball teams will travel to Osborne on Friday, Jan. 4 to take on the Bulldogs at 4 p.m.

#### Youth hunt set for this Sunday

Prairie Dog State Park is accepting applications for the Annual Youth Pheasant Hunt to be held on Sunday, Jan. 6, 2013, at 8 a.m. The hunt is limited to 12 youth hunters, ages 10 to 15. To apply, contact the Prairie Dog State Park Office at (785) 877-2953 no later than January 3 with your name, birth date and phone number.

#### BB Gun team to resume practice

The Norton Rotary BB Gun Team will resume team practice on Monday, Jan. 7, at 6:30 p.m. at the Norton Rotary BB Gun Museum.

### Markets

Tuesday, January 1, 2013

Wheat .....	\$7.72
Milo .....	\$6.64
Soybeans .....	\$13.53
Corn .....	\$6.95

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op



Wednesday Night - Partly cloudy with a low of 10. Thursday - Partly cloudy in the morning, then clear. High of 28 with a windchill as low as 0. Thursday Night - Clear with a low of 5. Friday - Clear with a high of 41. Friday Night - Partly cloudy with fog overnight. Low of 12 with a windchill as low as 0. Saturday - Partly cloudy in the morning, then clear.

### Prayer

Dear Lord, help us this new year and every year to read and study your word more and to spend more time with you. Amen



By Mike Stephens  
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Looking back on 2012, there was one story that dominated the news throughout the year, whether or not the city of Norton should build a new swimming pool. The question has been a topic before the City Council for about three years but it all came to a head in 2012.

#### Swimming Pool

On April 17, the city of Norton hosted a public meeting at the East Campus Auditorium to help gather public input on the matter. About 150 Norton residents attended the public forum.

Kevin McElyea of Aquatic Design Consultants Inc., who had been working with the city's pool committee to create possible designs for an estimated \$3.8 million project, said after an evaluation that the current swimming pool is in critical condition and repairing the pool for the long term would be almost

as costly as building a new one.

Some in the audience were skeptical of McElyea's evaluation.

One member of the audience said, "you are a pool designer and you've evaluated our pool. That's like me going to a barber and asking if I need a hair cut. What do you think he is going to say?"

"My recommendation is that if you aren't going to replace the pool, it needs to be shut down because you'll spend a lot of money just to get it up to standard," replied McElyea.

The proposed pool project also had its supporters.

"I'm not saying it's easy or that the money will just fall into our laps, but if we want our community to be a growing place where people want to live, we have to have some of these things done and we have to find a way to do it," expressed one concerned citizen.

"Maybe a sales tax isn't the answer, but we need to explore the options. I'm guessing that no one here paid for the swimming pool we have now because someone else paid for it, but now it's our turn."

Financing options for the project were presented by Rick Ensz of Cooper, Malone, McClain, Inc., the city's financial underwriter for the project. Ensz acknowledged that even though the project is estimated at \$3.8 million, exact numbers are hard to nail down until citizen input and the design are completed.

The primary concern for pool financing at the forum was alternatives that might be available instead of a sales tax. Ensz explained that the only reliable ways to fund the project would be through a property tax mill levy or through a sales tax.

The issue of a sales tax increase for the project went before the Norton City Council, and it split the council down the middle, 3-3, but in a tie-breaker vote Mayor David Corns supported the decision to move forward with the proposed sales tax.

"This is a decision to put (the tax)

on the ballot," said Corns. "The city hasn't voted to implement a sales tax. The public will be the ones who decide (whether or not we have the tax)."

On September 30, an open house was held at the Norton Swimming Pool to allow city residents to see for themselves the condition of the 58 year old pool.

Then on October 18, the City of Norton hosted a second public forum at Prairie Land Electric to discuss the proposed .75 percent sales tax increase. The proposed sales tax is for 20 years. This would be the last chance for citizens to get information on the project and express their concerns before the November election.

On November 6, the citizens of Norton County had the final word and by a narrow margin, 666 to 594, voted in favor of the .75 sales tax increase to fund a new swimming pool project. In Ward 1, there were 154 yes votes and 158 no votes. Ward 2 had 222 for the pool and 163 against it, and in Ward 3 there were 189 yes votes and 181 no votes.

Now that the dust has settled,

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## Fire destroys quonset



Last Friday morning around 10:49, the Norton Rural Fire Department was called out to the Leroy Lang farm northeast of Norton. Assistant Fire Chief Ed Witt stated, "The cause of the fire was unknown but it was a total loss of a large quonset, a tractor and feed wagon, another tractor and multiple other pieces of both large and small farm equipment and tools."

The City Fire Department was called in to help by hauling water to the fire. "I can remember that I saw three loads of water hauled for sure by the two City Firemen that helped," Witt said. Mr. Lang noticed the smoke from where he was working west of his home place and he returned to find it burning. He said there was nothing that could be done; he was just thankful for having insurance and to the firefighters.

- Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

## Troops return home just before Christmas

After serving a year in Kuwait supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, approximately 65 Kansas National Guard soldiers of the 170th Support Maintenance Company were welcomed home Dec. 23 for Christmas. The ceremony was held at the Salina Airport. The event was open to the public.

"To have these soldiers coming home just in time for Christmas is a wonderful present for their families," said Maj. Gen. Lee Tafanelli, the adjutant general. "They did an outstanding job during their deployment and have cer-

tainly earned this time at home during the holidays."

While deployed, the unit operated a security detail mission for VIPs, American citizens and contractors in Kuwait, as well as supporting base security, as required. This was the first deployment for the 170th since Desert Storm.

The 170th Maintenance Company is a subordinate unit of the 287th Special Troop Battalion, Hays. They are headquartered in Norton, with a subordinate unit in Colby, Kan.

## Youth Hunt this weekend

Prairie Dog State Park is accepting applications for the Annual Youth Pheasant Hunt which will be held on Sunday, January 6, 2013, at 8:00 a.m. The hunt is limited to twelve youth hunters ages 10 to 15. All participants must wear blaze orange during the special hunt and each youth must be accompanied by an adult. If more than 12 youth apply for the hunt, local staff will conduct a drawing to determine who will be eligible to hunt in this year's event.

In cooperation with the Norton Longspur Pheasants Forever, the annual youth hunt is held as part of the Kansas Hunter Recruitment and Retention Pro-

gram called "Pass It On." This program addresses the need to recruit new hunters and retain existing hunters in order to ensure future hunting in Kansas. The Prairie Dog State Park Youth Hunt is designed to encourage young hunters and should offer a quality experience with a better than average chance of success.

To apply, contact the Prairie Dog State Park Office at (785) 877-2953 no later than January 3 with your name, birth date and phone number. Park staff will notify the participants by phone on January 4 with the results of the drawing.

