

\$1 THE NORTON TELEGRAM



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Local man lived life of his dreams

By Mary Kay Woodyard
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Children over the decades have formed their heroes in a variety of ways. For some, it was the senior high school athlete, for others race car drivers, but for Nortonite Joe Ballinger, growing up during WWII, the heroes were the soldiers. They provided a bigger than life image, particularly the aviators. His path from rural Northwest Kansas to high in the sky over countries he had only read about, is a colorful reminder of how one man's life was transformed by movie news reels, radio accounts and a dream.

Joe's formal education began in Dry Creek Country School, not far from the land homesteaded by his grandfather, Joseph Edward Ballinger, in 1878. In 1940, at the age of seven, Joe and his parents, Guy and Bernice Ballinger, moved into Norton.

Never far from Joe's mind were those aviators of his dreams. After high school graduation in 1950, Joe attended Kansas State University and worked for Kansas Department of Transportation, but his focus wasn't school. In 1953, K-State and Joe parted ways. With the United States still engaged in the Korean War, and without a student status, being drafted was a distinct possibility. Joe assessed his options and determined, with his limited financial resources, the best plan was to go to Denver to take the USAF Cadet Pilot Exam. Fifty-four others hoped to achieve this status as well, but only nine did and Joe was one of them. Without the required 40 semester hours, he could not qualify for the pilot program, but if he enlisted he could enter Navigator Training. Which he did. He was commissioned through the Aviation Cadet program and became a rated Navigator.

But for Joe, this wasn't his dream, those aviators of WWII still were at the center of his aspirations and in 1958 he was accepted for Jet Pilot Training. Further training and testing in 1959, he stowed upon him the label of helicopter pilot. It may have been a career move determined by circumstances, but for this Kansas boy it was the culmination of a dream. He was now one of them, his heroes.

Following this training, he went on



to serve in Newfoundland in 1960-64; Thailand, 1965; South Vietnam in 1967; and the Philippines in 1969-71. Joe retired as a Major in 1973, and returned to Angelo State University in San Angelo, TX, to complete a degree in history. Making the Dean's List was rewarding, but the opportunity to fly again was a greater calling and after one semester he was, once again, in the air. This time

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Feel like you are "Missing" out on local community news?

Let us keep you informed with all the latest news in our Tuesday and Friday editions of

THE NORTON TELEGRAM

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Briefly

No open gym on Monday for sports

There will be NO open gym for volleyball on Monday, July 1.

Vets can get help with their claims

Jody Tubbs of the Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs will be in Norton from 10:45 to 11:45 a.m. at the Norton Public Library to assist veterans and their dependents with 6-2VA claims work on Tuesday, July 2. If you are unable to see her at that time contact her in Colby any Monday, Wednesday or Friday at 785-462-3572.

Junior golf starts Monday night

Junior golf will start on Monday, July 1 at 5:30 p.m. with golfing to begin at 6 p.m. and run to 8 p.m. Pre-registration is required so contact Tyler Rutherford at 202-0214. The course runs every Monday night through July 22.

Use caution during harvest season

With harvest time fast approaching, motorists are encouraged to be cautious and slow down for over-sized farm equipment traveling on the roadways. Most farm equipment is not designed to travel more than 15 to 25 miles an hour.

Business to hold appreciation days

The Norton Chiropractic Center will be holding its annual patient appreciation days July 1-3 with a BBQ lunch served on July 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Drawings and giveaways.

Public invited to attend horse show

There will be a 4-H, FFA and Open class horse show on Saturday at the Norton equestrian arena with registration at 8 a.m. and the show starting at 9 a.m. 40 classes to be judged with prizes for all.

Markets

Thursday, June 27, 2013

Wheat\$6.58
Milo\$6.51
Soybeans\$14.76
Corn\$7.04

Markets Courtesy of Norton Ag Valley Co-Op

Weather

Saturday - Partly cloudy with a high of 88. Saturday Night - Partly cloudy in the evening, then clear. Sunday - Clear in the morning, then mostly cloudy with a high of 82. Sunday Night - Overcast in the evening, then clear. Monday - Clear in the morning, then overcast with a high of 82.

Prayer

Dear Lord, thank you that our value is not determined by our riches, strength, or intellect, but by your unchanging love for us. May we diligently seek to know and honor you, remembering that our hearts, not our achievements, are most important to you. Amen.



Commissioners discuss possible burn ban

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
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The Norton County Commissioners are considering putting a burn ban on the county if the weather stays dry.

"If it doesn't rain pretty soon, we're going to have to look at that fire ban," Commissioner R.A. Peterson said at

Monday's meeting.

County Attorney Doug Sebelius told the commissioners a ban doesn't mean that no one in the county can burn and does not affect the cities in the county. They usually have tougher rules than the county, anyway.

People usually let the sheriff's dis-

patch office know if they need to burn some trees or large piles of trash, he told the commissioners. That way when a neighbor calls in worried that someone's place is going up in flames they can be reassured that its OK.

There have already been two fires in the county, the commissioners learned. However, they were not able to learn how either of them started.

There is already a ban on fireworks for campers at Prairie Dog State Park, they learned.

The commissioners asked Economic Development Director Scott Sproul about the annual fireworks show at the lake but was told that the Chamber of Commerce is working on that and he didn't know the details.

A burn ban, the commissioners decided, would allow the state park and fire chiefs to be in charge of saying whether it is OK to burn or not on farms and in the rural areas. The cities can make their own rules.

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Milestones...



The U.S.D. 211 Learning Center Graduation Ceremony was held Wednesday night at the East Campus Auditorium. The two graduates were Trent Lee Giles and Kaitlyn Campbell. Superintendent Greg Mann, Vice-president U.S.D. 211 Board of Education Chris Harting and Danna Kelly, Director U.S.D. 211 Learning Center, were among the speakers. Following the ceremony, a reception was held for the graduates at the U.S.D. 211 Learning Center.

-Telegram photo by Mike Stephens

Funds for community projects are discussed

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
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It's getting harder and harder to find help to pay for projects, Norton City/County Economic Director Scott Sproul told the county commissioners at their Monday meeting.

While Mr. Sproul said that the county needs to hunker down and make sure it keeps what it has, he is still working to inch things forward.

"We've just got to keep moving forward," he said.

Mr. Sproul said that he has found some grants that would pay for outside electrical work at the county shop, which has an electrical system so outdated road and bridge department personnel worry about the building catching on fire.

However a complete redo of the electrical system will be very expensive and the commissioners are hoping that there is some help to preserve the his-

toric WPA building.

Mr. Sproul said he would continue to look for help for the building including federal websites and see if there are any matching funds out there to help fix up aging WPA projects.

Mr. Sproul said that he has the county housing assessment and hopes to use it to get money to help Almena. However, he said, since the county has already gotten one grant for this, it might be a tough sell.

Work is going forward on Promoting Norton County, he told the commissioners. This project is aimed at state legislators, who do not represent the Norton area, so that they will understand the problems unique to the area. It is also aimed at supporting state institutions that are important to the county such as the Department of Corrections and Kansas Department of Transportation.

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