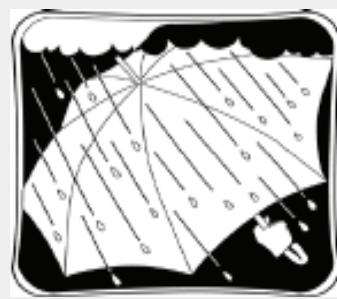


Weather Corner



Tonight...Mostly cloudy. A chance of light rain in the evening... Then a slight chance of light snow after midnight. Lows in the upper 20s. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Saturday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 40s. Northeast winds around 10 mph shifting to the southeast in the afternoon. Saturday night...Mostly cloudy. A 20 percent chance of light snow after midnight. Lows in the upper 20s. Southeast winds 10 to 15 mph.

Sunday...Mostly cloudy. A chance of light rain and light snow in the morning...Then a chance of light rain in the afternoon. Highs in the lower 40s. Southeast winds 15 to 20 mph. Chance of precipitation 30 percent. Sunday night...Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of light rain. Lows in the mid 30s.

Monday...Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of light rain and light snow. Highs in the upper 40s. Monday night...Mostly cloudy. A chance of light rain in the evening...Then a slight chance of light snow after midnight. Lows in the upper 20s. Chance of precipitation 30 percent.

Tuesday...Partly sunny. Highs in the lower 50s. Tuesday night through Thursday...Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 20s. Highs in the lower 50s. Thursday's low, high: 30, 66

Man reunites with family 50 years later

By **VERONICA MONIER**
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Fifty years ago, a baby boy was adopted from an orphanage in Canada. Last month, that baby, now a man, met the family he never knew he had.

Mike Barrett is that man. Mike, a longtime Almena resident who recently moved to Norton, found out about his here-to-unknown family on New Year's Day when his birth sister, Bonnie, called him. Bonnie had been searching for her lost brother for over 20 years when a chance meeting on the Internet with an ex-girlfriend of Mike's led her to the right place.

When Bonnie told Mike he was her brother, he felt mild disbelief. When she told him he had four sisters and nine brothers, he was shocked. Mike had grown up with one sister, Suzie, who had been adopted from the same orphanage by their parents, Harold and Dolores Barrett.

After many phone calls talking to his new family, Mike was finally able to meet some of them. In February, he and his wife, Tina, flew to Seattle and then took a clipper, or ferry, across the border into Canada to Vancouver Island. After a two and a half hour boat ride, they landed in Victoria, the island's capital city.

That's where they met Brian, one of Mike's older brothers, who is 53 to Mike's 50. After spending

a few hours with Brian, they were off to meet Bonnie in Nanaimo, the halfway point between Brian's home in Victoria and Bonnie's in Courtenay.

"We were supposed to meet her at Starbucks," Mike said. "When we got there and she saw us crossing the street, she rushed out into the pouring rain and just hugged me. We stood there hugging for a long time, blocking traffic."

When they made it back to Courtenay, Mike and Tina met Mike's brother, John. Mike, John and Bonnie are the only three of the 14 children who share the same mother and father. Throughout the trip, Mike met all of his brothers except two, but of the four sisters, was only able to meet Bonnie.

The icing on Mike's cake, though, was meeting his 90-year-old mother, Merta Clark, for the first time.

"It was a wonderful trip and we met a lot of people," he said. "But, I think the highlight of the whole trip was spending time with Mom. She's a real character."

Mike met his mother the second day they were in Canada, when Bonnie took them to her lodge, which is what they call a nursing home in Canada. Bonnie told Mike that their mother has dementia, and so might not remember him everyday. But, she did and rarely let go of him while he was visiting her.



After 50 years of not knowing who his blood family was, Mike Barrett was reunited with his 90-year-old birth mother, Merta Clark, right, when he and his wife, Tina, went to Canada in February. When he met his sister, Bonnie for the first time, they stood hugging in the pouring rain in the middle of the street. Bonnie found Mike, who was adopted when he was six months old, after over 20 years of searching. — Photos courtesy of Mike and Tina Barrett

"We went and saw her everyday," he said. "Because she's deaf, she has a board that she and other people can write on. Before this, she only wrote on it two or three times a year. While I was there, she wrote on it every day, telling

me that she was happy I was there and that she loved me. We had a wonderful time.

"It was a thrill to spend time with her like that. She may not be able to walk or hear, but she really has it together."

Mike said he and Tina are planning on going back as soon as they can. The family reunion will be sometime around August and they are definitely going back for that, when he hopes to meet the rest of his siblings and family, he said.

Sheriff recommends charging boyfriend in bathroom case

NESS CITY (AP) — The sheriff is recommending charges in the case of a western Kansas woman who sat on her boyfriend's toilet for so long that her body became stuck to the seat.

Ness County Sheriff Bryan Whipple said Thursday he asked the county attorney to file charges against Kory McFarren for mistreatment of a dependent adult. The county attorney will decide whether any charges are brought. The attorney has not returned phone calls seeking comment.

News about the case made Internet headlines around the world and left many of the town's roughly 1,500 people incredulous.

"The unfortunate thing is this truly is a case of two people, in my opinion, with diminished mental capacity," Whipple said.

McFarren did not answer his door Thursday, but later called The Associated Press and said he was done giving media interviews. He said he did nothing wrong.

"The only thing I am guilty of is I didn't get her help sooner," he said.

On Wednesday, McFarren said

his girlfriend, Pam Babcock, 35, had a phobia about leaving the bathroom.

Whipple was the second law enforcement officer to respond to the mobile home where McFarren and Babcock were living. Whipple, who described Babcock as a "thin, petite woman," used a pry bar to take the seat off the toilet so the woman could be transported to the hospital where the seat was removed.

"The house was cluttered but not in shambles," he said. "The smell was overpowering — a terrible smell about the house, obviously coming from where she was

at," McFarren, 36, told the sheriff at that time that Babcock had not left the bathroom in two years, although McFarren now contends he's unsure how long she was in

there. Whipple said Thursday that judging by the woman's condition — she had open sores on which the toilet seat would stick — it appeared she likely sat on the toilet continually for at least a month.

"She would have to be sleeping on the toilet," the sheriff said.

McFarren said she moved around in the bathroom during that time, bathed and changed into clothes he brought her. He brought food and water to her. They had conversations and an otherwise normal relationship — except it all happened in the bathroom.

But the sheriff disputed that account: "She hadn't bathed for

quite some time, I am safe in saying. She obviously was not keeping herself up."

McFarren said he finally called police Feb. 27 after he became worried because Babcock was acting groggy, as if she didn't know what was going on around her.

What emergency responders found when they entered the bathroom has left many in the town of about 1,500 people buzzing and authorities incredulous.

Doctors at the Wichita hospital where Babcock is hospitalized told the boyfriend an infection in her legs has damaged her nerves and may leave her in a wheelchair.

Former AG says he's innocent

OLATHE (AP) — Former Attorney General Paul Morrison said Thursday that he looks forward to proving that he's innocent of criminal misconduct allegations raised against him as he became embroiled in a sex scandal.

In his first public comments since he resigned after admitting to an affair with a subordinate, Morrison accused Johnson County District Attorney Phill Kline of orchestrating a misinformation campaign against him.

"This is about a political vendetta," Morrison said at a brief news conference at the Johnson County Courthouse. "It has nothing to do with justice."

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9	10 Cardiac Rehab	11 McDonald Clinic - p.m.	12 Diabetic Clinic Echocardiograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Dr. Frankum Surgery	13 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	14 MRI Mobile Unit Vasc Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Nuclear Stress Test Dr. Reeves Podiatry	15
16	17 Cardiac Rehab	18 McDonald Clinic - p.m.	19 Diabetic Clinic Echocardiograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	20 Dr. Saba Orthopedics	21 MRI Mobile Unit Vasc Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Nuclear Stress Test	22
23	24 Cardiac Rehab	25 McDonald Clinic - p.m. Dr. Miller Cardiology	26 Diabetic Clinic Echocardiograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	27 Dr. Curtis Cardiology	28 Nuclear Stress Test MRI Mobile Unit Vasc Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	29
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