

# State recognizes phone company as outstanding

## Nex-Tech/Rural Telephone finalist for Governor's Award of Excellence

Nex-Tech/Rural Telephone, Lenora, has been recognized by the Kansas Department of Commerce as an outstanding Kansas company. In addition to being named a regional achievement award winner, the company was also a finalist for the Governor's Award of Excellence.

Kansas Commerce Secretary Howard Fricke made the presentation to the company June 14 at ceremonies in Colby.

"Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech was very honored to be nominated for this award, and then receive it," said Rod Walgren, director of community development and community service for the company.

"Over the years, Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech has done what we could to create economic development in northwest Kansas," Karla Reed, director of the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce, nominated the company.

She said, "Rural Telephone and its subsidiary, Nex-Tech, have of-

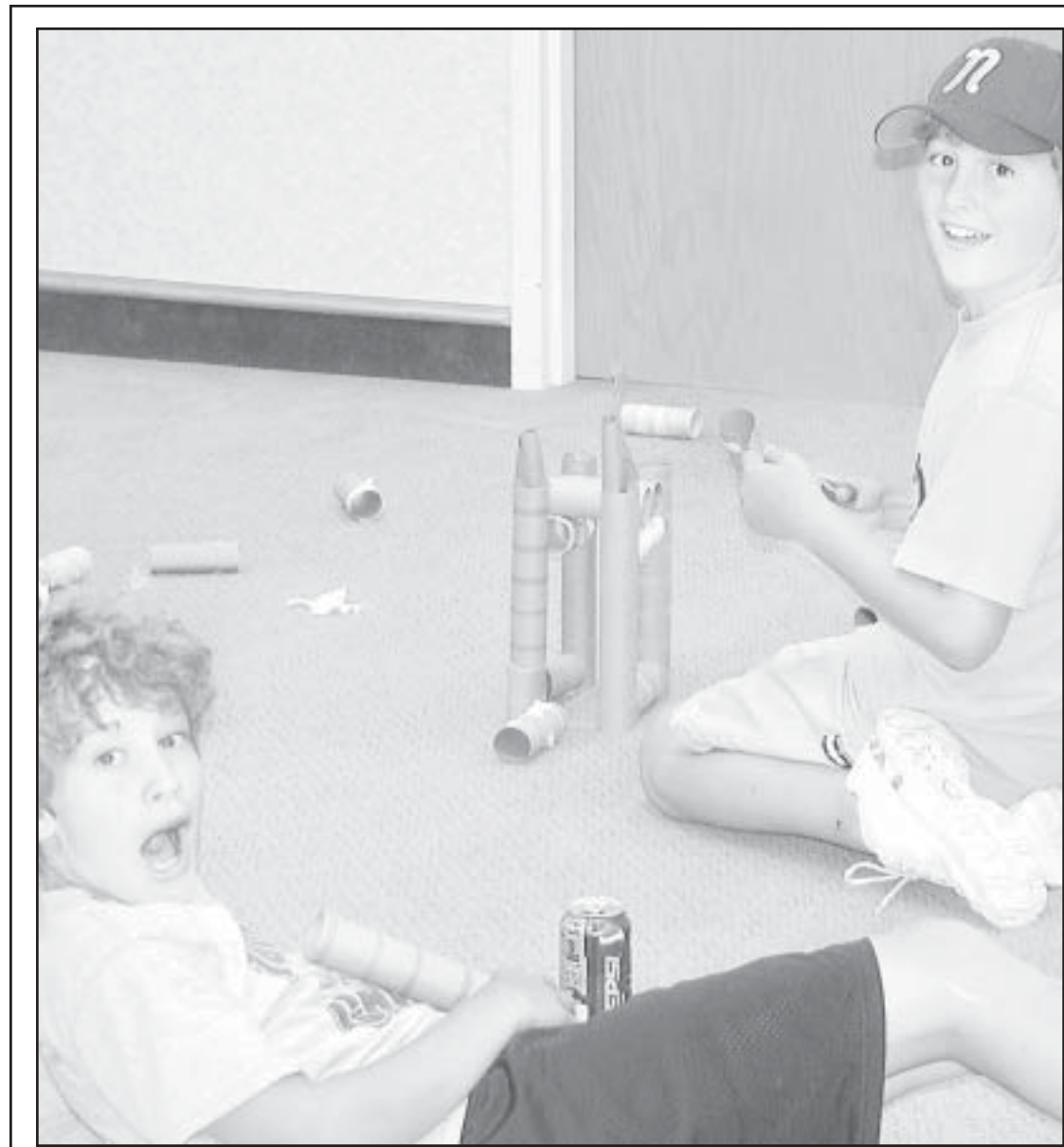
fered telecommunications services and technology solutions to northwest Kansas and other areas throughout the state.

"Before the end of the year, the company will also offer PCS Wireless Service.

"The company provides programs on phone etiquette, Internet safety and the history of telecommunications to area students.

"Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech attends career fairs to promote job opportunities to high school and college-age students in Western Kansas. The company also offers scholarships and awards to deserving students in the area. Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech has an economic department that manages a revolving loan fund, which provides low-interest loans to qualifying businesses in the region for start-up or expansion opportunities."

Norton manufacturing businesses, Miltech Machine Corp. and Natoma Corp. both received merit awards.



A little imagination, a few paper towel and toilet paper tubes and a castle is built. Brett Carol and Kaid McKenna were among the 28 youngsters at the Norton Public Library Thursday for Fun Night. Librarian Mary Luehrs directed the castle-building efforts and served refreshments.

— Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

# Council ups water, sewer fees

By VERONICA MONIER

The Norton City Council passed two ordinances Wednesday night increasing water and sewer rates.

The council waived the third reading and then adopted both ordinances.

The rate increases will be used to pay for renovations to the city's water and sewer plants. The city has to use rate increases to pay for the renovations because it is a stipulation of the loans.

The \$6.8 million water plant project is being paid for with money from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, two-thirds of which is a loan and the other one-third a grant.

The sewer project is estimated to cost \$3.2 million and is being paid for with money from the state revolving loan fund.

City Administrator Rob Lawson said bids for the sewer plant renovation should be sent out in about three weeks, while the water plant bids are set to go out in about two months.

In other business, the council:

- Heard from City Attorney Chuck Worden that he has talked to Nichols and Wolf Bond Council, and they have agreed to handle the city's bond issue for the water treatment plant renovation. The matter will go to Finance Committee for review.

- Learned from Mr. Worden that Abby Keiswetter, a senior at Fort Hays State University, will put together a personnel benefit book, to describe the benefits of being a city employee. She will get college credit so it won't cost the city.

- Approved the city attorney's salary at \$776.50 per month. The job description will stay the same and nothing will be billed over the monthly amount unless it is approved in advance.

- Heard from Councilman Jerry Jones that the cemetery looks nice and suggested people drive by.

- Heard a report on the airport board meeting from Councilman Jim Williams.

- Went into a 10-minute closed session for attorney-client privileges and a 15-minute closed session to discuss non-elected personnel.

# Emergency volunteer class needed

## Ambulance director looking for people to be first responders

By VERONICA MONIER

The Norton County Emergency Medical Service is looking for first responders.

Ambulance Director Andy Nielsen said four people asked if a first responder course was going to be held anytime soon.

He said he would like to have the class but needs at least 10 people to make it worthwhile.

He said the class would either be held in Norton or Lenora, depending on where the participants live, or it could be split and held in both places if there are enough people.

Mr. Nielsen said everyone in the county is welcome.

He said he hopes to have the class within the next couple of months, but they are planning a first responder/medical technician bridge class in October to turn first responders into technicians.

Emergency medical technicians have more training and can do more to help patients than first responders.

However, he said first responders are certified to do most patient care, such as taking blood pressure and pulse and administering oxygen.

The first responder class begins with book work and basic skills and then moves on to teaching patient assessment and more hands on training.

To be a first responder, Mr. Nielsen said a person must be at least 18, have a valid drivers license and must be cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certified. He said if people need certification that can be done during the initial course since he is a certified instructor.

Anyone interested can call the ambulance building. Also, those interested in becoming a volunteer can take a tour of the building, see the equipment and have any questions answered.

For information call the service at 877-5784.



John Milner and Mike Biggs, working on the Kyle Railroad, stopped in Norton to check the weather before continuing on to Colby from Phillipsburg. They make the trip in 8 to 18 hours, depending on the weather,

spraying for weeds along the way. They have to be cautious of wind and rain, because the chemicals have to be down for six hours prior to receiving moisture.

— Telegram photo by Rich Meyers

# Hospital looks at increase in budget

By VERONICA MONIER

The Norton County Hospital Board approved a budget for next year at Wednesday's meeting.

Hospital Administrator Rich Miller said, in the budget, patient days were projected to increase by 3 percent. Doctor's Clinic visits also had a projected increase from 2005.

He said an application has been submitted for a disproportionate share payment, which the hospital has gotten in the past because of its obstetrics program, among other things.

Allowances for bad debt and charity care are estimated at \$450,000 and expenses are estimated to be \$81,000 higher than in 2005, he said.

He said revenue rate increases have been projected at 8 percent for nursing care, operating room services, obstetrical services, and emergency room services.

Intermediate care room rates are set to increase by 4 percent, while Doctor's Clinic service will go up 2 percent. The rest of the services will remain the same.

The hospital is budgeting the county tax appropriation at 4 mills, or \$150,000. Last year, the hospital budgeted the same, but only received 2 mills from the county.

Mr. Miller said if the hospital hits its target, its revenue would be about \$8,957,000. However, without the increases, the hospital

would only bring in \$8,775,000. Total operating revenue is estimated to be \$6,598,125.

Other operating revenue, such as meals, Lifeline services, rental income, medical records fees, and supply sale is estimated to bring in \$99,672.

Expenses, he said, are projected to be \$7,064,913 — \$3,568,953 from salaries and \$3,495,960 in supplies and other expenses.

Mr. Miller said even with other income, without the disproportionate share payment, the hospital would probably have a negative bottom line, but it's still positive compared to some hospitals in the area.

Board member Steve Berry said he was having a hard time voting for a budget with a loss.

"I don't know the answers," he said, "but I have a problem with it."

Mr. Miller said he felt the same way and understood. He said the hospital has two options to get a positive bottom line — cut services which would cut expenses, or go to the mill levy. You can't just do it with increases in prices, he said.

Mr. Berry said the answer isn't always at the county level. He said the county's hurting too and the hospital should be trying to help.

Mr. Miller asked if Mr. Berry thought the hospital should just ask for two mills, rather than four.

Mr. Berry said he didn't have a problem with four mills.

"The county should know what's happening with the hospital," he said.

Mr. Miller said the hospital doesn't ask the county for more than it needs.

"We're in a pretty good situation compared to other hospitals," he said. "I don't think we're being a burden on the county."

Chief Financial Officer Brian Carlton said the hospital has a negative balance in the project budget almost every year. Usually, he said, it's small enough that the hospital can pull it into a positive.

In other business, the board:

- Heard from Mr. Carlton that in May there were 334 patient days, 60 admissions, three births, 17 surgeries, 3,367 outpatient procedures, and 1,292 Doctor's Clinic visits.

- Wrote off \$38,538 in bad debt at the Doctor's Clinic and \$97,000 in bad debts at the hospital. Mr. Carlton said even though the hospital was writing off the debts, it would still try to collect on them.

- Bought a convection steamer for the dietary department for \$3,219 and a 30-pound dryer for \$2,561.

Mr. Miller said both pieces of equipment were fairly old and required frequent maintenance to repair them.

**Norton County Economic Development Director**  
*Maintain and Improve the Quality of Life for the Citizens of Norton County*  
**QUALIFICATIONS:** Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with coursework in Business Administration, Public Administration, Planning or a Related Field; 3-Years of Increasingly Responsible Professional Experience in Economic Development, Grant Writing, Business or Public Sector Management, Including 1-Year Administrative Experience; Excellent Communication Skills; Outstanding Organizational Skills.  
**JOB SUMMARY:** Responsible for planning, directing, managing and overseeing economic development activities for Norton County that will promote economic growth, including attracting quality employment opportunities, revitalizing downtown areas, and improving housing options.  
**SEND RESUMES TO: Economic Development Committee**  
**c/o Norton County Clerk, P.O. Box 70, Norton, KS 67654**  
**DEADLINE FOR RESUMES IS JUNE 30**

# PUBLIC NOTICE

## Notice of property sale

Published in The Norton Telegram on Friday, June 10, 17, 24, 2005 (3T)  
**IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF NORTON COUNTY, KANSAS**  
**THE BANK, Plaintiff**  
**vs.**

Case No. 2005-CV-12  
**BRADLEY R. CARLIN, also known as BRADLEY CARLIN; ALMENA STATE BANK; JERRY JONES and BILLY SMITH, Defendants**

**NOTICE OF SALE**  
**TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS AND TO ALL PERSONS WHO ARE OR MAY BE CONCERNED:**

By virtue of an Order of Sale issued to me out of the District Court in the above entitled action, I will on Wednesday, the 6th day of July, 2005, at the hour of 10:00 o'clock A.M. of said day at the front door of the Courthouse in the City of Norton, Norton County, Kansas, offer at public sale and sell to the highest and best bidder for cash in hand, the following described real estate, to-wit:

The Northeast Quarter (NE/4) of Section Twenty-seven (27), Township Four (4) South, Range Twenty-three (23) West of the Sixth Principal Meridian, Norton County, Kansas, EXCEPT a tract of land beginning at the Southeast corner of said Northeast Quarter (NE/4); FIRST COURSE, thence on an assumed bearing of North 89°38'07" West 17.537 meters (57.54 feet) along the South line of said quarter section; SECOND COURSE, thence North 01°45'35" East, 71.099 meters (233.26 feet); THIRD COURSE, thence North 11°44'10" West, 128.550 meters

(421.75 feet); FOURTH COURSE, thence North 23°33'40" East, 80.777 meters (265.02 feet); FIFTH COURSE, thence North 01°11'12" East, 500.025 meters (1,640.50 feet); SIXTH COURSE, thence North 73°58'14" West, 51.057 meters (167.51 feet); SEVENTH COURSE, thence North 00°25'37" East, 21.336 meters (70.00 feet); to a point on the North line 61.991 meters (203.38 feet) West of the Northeast corner of said Northeast Quarter (NE/4) section; EIGHTH COURSE, thence South 89°41'58" East 61.991 meters (203.38 feet) along said North line to the Northeast corner of said Northeast Quarter (NE/4) section; NINTH COURSE, thence South 01°00'39" West 806.235 meters (2,645.12 feet) along the East line of said quarter section to the point of beginning. The above described tract contains 1.572 hectares (3.88 acres), which includes 0.850 hectares (2.09 acres) of existing right of way, resulting in an acquisition of 0.722 hectares (1.79 acres) more or less.

The above described real estate is being sold as the property of defendant, Bradley R. Carlin, and is directed by said Order of Sale to be sold, subject to the defendants' rights of redemption, and will be sold without appraisalment to satisfy said Order of Sale.

TROY M. THOMSON  
 Sheriff of Norton County, Kansas  
 R. Douglas Sebelius #09157  
 SEBELIUS & GRIFFITHS, LLP  
 105 South Norton Street  
 P. O. Box 10  
 Norton, Kansas 67654-0010  
 785-877-5143  
 Attorney for Plaintiff

**Cardinal Bar and Grill**  
 Main Street, Norcatour - 785-693-4499  
 Friday, June 17: Pizza Night  
 \$1.00 Draws  
 Saturday, June 18:  
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