

Mission is possible!



Mission Possible, Relay for Life, set up shop at the Sweetheart Home Based Craft Business Expo on Saturday at the Norton Armory. The booth was manned by Rhonda Browning, right, captain and Molly Maddy, co-captain. Relay for Life will be held on May 13 from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. on the 14th at the Norton County Courthouse Square.

-Telegram photo by Harriett Gill

Local company receives grant

As Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech CEO/General Manager Larry Sevier turns his calendar to 2011, he understands the company is in a race against time. Since being awarded approximately \$101 million in Recovery Act Broadband Infrastructure grant and loan funds less than 12 months ago, the Lenora-based telecommunications cooperative has hit the ground running. Rules outlined in the federal program require participants to complete their projects within a three-year period.

"Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech has a rich history of working with the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) in constructing improved telecommunication networks through its loan program dating back to 1952," Sevier said. "Understanding the RUS and their processes enabled us to begin preliminary engineering and construction activities prior to receiving any initial funding from the stimulus program."

That "jump start" in engineering and construction and the overall sense of urgency has resulted in a number of "firsts" for the organization as it relates to the Recovery Act Program, according to Sevier. On July 13, 2010, less than six months after being selected for the Recovery Act Broadband Infrastructure funding, Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech technicians were connecting customers to its Fiber-To-The-Premise (FTTP) network in Long Island, Kansas; utilizing the stimulus funding.

"Our contacts in the USDA have told us that Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech was the first company in the nation to receive Recovery Act funding, and more importantly, the first in the nation to connect customers to broadband service under the program," Sevier explained. "Because we've been first to hook-up families and businesses to broadband through the stimulus program, RUS officials have taken a keen interest in our construction progress in western Kansas."

While Sevier is understandably proud of Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech's achievements and the positive feedback from Washington, he's most pleased with the response he's getting from customers who, as a result of the massive construction initiative, are enjoying the benefits of high-speed Internet service for the first time.

"In the mornings, I would spend 45 minutes to an hour going through my email, looking at the overnight markets," explained Sheridan County farmer and seed dealer, Bill Nondorf. "Now, in 15

minutes, I'm finished, and I'm trying to figure out what to do with the rest of my time," he chuckled.

Bill, and his wife, Shelley, were connected to 3 Mbps broadband Internet from Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech via FTTP this past August.

"Time is a factor out here on the farm," offered Nondorf. "I use the Internet to order seed. That (dial-up Internet) was really frustrating because sometimes the seed company's website would show availability for a certain seed variety when you knew it was closing out, or getting to the end of its supply. You saw that it was available, but by the time you got there, it might be five or ten minutes later. Other dealers were seeing the same thing, so by the time you actually got your order in, you may not have been quick enough in that five minutes to get your order in."

Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech Director of Operations Ron Ellis stated that despite some weather delays, preliminary engineering and construction work is progressing steadily throughout the region. "In addition to utilizing our own engineering and construction crews, we currently are working with three outside engineering firms and five outside construction companies on this project," said Ellis. "As of the end of December, we have connected over 1,600 additional customers to broadband," he added.

According to Sevier, the massive construction project will impact 21 towns and 26 rural areas spanning over 4,600 square miles in Decatur, Ellis, Gove, Graham, Norton, Osborne, Phillips, Rooks, Sheridan, Smith and Trego Counties in Kansas. "When completed, this expanded network will provide high-speed services to nearly 23,000 households and businesses within the Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech footprint, including 335 community anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, hospitals, clinics, county health agencies, law enforcement agencies, senior and disability centers," Sevier stated.

While January is typically a time for New Year's resolutions, Sevier has a clear vision for the next 12 months, and beyond. "Our Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech staff will be working diligently to complete the broadband construction projects, and make high-speed service available to thousands of additional homes and businesses in central and western Kansas who are desperately trying to stay competitive with the rest of the world," he added. "It's a race

against time that Kansans can't afford to lose."

Rural Telephone Service Co., Inc. is a Kansas cooperative and leader in the telecommunications industry since 1951.

Nex-Tech is a subsidiary of Rural Telephone Service Company, Inc. Nex-Tech provides a full line of voice and data services to residential, government, education and commercial clients. In addition to its Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLEC) services, Nex-Tech also provides a host of other services including long distance, VoIP, Internet, home security and cable television. Nex-Tech prides itself on bringing affordable, state-of-the-art technologies to central and western Kansas.



ANNUAL
McMullen & Wyatt Auctions
Farm Consignment Auction

McMullen & Wyatt Auctions is now accepting consignments for our Annual Spring Auction. Any farm related items, livestock equipment, tools, machinery, tractors, or trucks accepted for the March auction. To consign or for more information, please contact Donald or Robert

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Business in the spotlight

Each month this column features one Norton County business selected at random in honor of all our local businesses large and small, well-established and newly-established for their valuable contribution to our economy. Economic development board member Roberta Ryan submitted this month's article.

Business in the Spotlight - February 2011

Business Name: Moffet Drug Store

Phone: (785) 877-2721

Moffet Drug Store, in business since 1943, remains a mainstay in downtown Norton. Always a happy place, at least from the time this writer worked there in the early 1950's, on any day one can enjoy laughter, joking, and coffee or a Coke with the guys at either 8:30 a.m. or 2:30 p.m. or the gals at 10 a.m. This never seems to change along with the original and still working fountain and counter. No sundaes, sodas, or malts and fewer booths adorn the floor to make room for more gifts and supplies. Patty and Jane keep everything in line for the new managers Chase and Abby Rice.

Former owners, Don and Willa Vollertsen bought the store from Melvin Moffet, who at that time was looking for a pharmacist to help him after the departure of Ralph Pool, who moved to Kinsey, to open his own drug store. Don worked his way through college at Nebraska University with the help of a track scholarship, then married his college sweetheart Willa (Hill) at Hebron, Neb., in June of 1951. Ironically, Don and Willa spent their wedding night at the Kent Hotel in Norton. They returned to Norton in 1955 from Horton, for Don to work as a pharmacist for Melvin Moffet.

At that time, furniture was shipped by rail. When it arrived in Norton, no one knew the Vollertsen address, and as many know, towns that sound alike are often confused in Kansas. The railroad decided the furniture must have been meant for Horton, so the Norton station sent it back. Eventually, it arrived safely and Frank Alley, a well known furniture mover in Norton, delivered it to the Vollertsen home.

Don, through the years bought into the store, finally buying out Melvin in 1978. Don held licenses in Nebraska, Arizona and Kansas. The Vollertsens often enjoyed attending pharmacy seminars in Arizona.

Melvin and Don also purchased Ward Drugs in Oberlin. They remodeled and set up a pharmacy for a short time across the street from

the Doctor's Clinic, now housing the Norton Health Clinic.

Steve Vollertsen, Don and Willa's son, and wife Randa (Swindler) attended college at Kansas University and moved back to Norton in 1975 for Steve to work with his father, Don, and Melvin Moffet and to raise their family. Steve and Randa bought the store in 1993 when Don retired at the age of 65. Steve's brother Kurt, married to the former Becky Wilfong, attended Emporia State then pharmacy school at Kansas University and returned in 1980 to run, then buy Ward Drugs in Oberlin.

Melvin acquired the business from George Cutting who left for California to become quite wealthy in the drug and veterinary supply business. Melvin bought the store and property for \$8000 from J.E. Gleason who owned it at that time, having bought it earlier from Dwight Hamilton.

Steve recently hired Chase Rice, who attended school at Kansas University, as manager and chief pharmacist. Right now Steve is serving as a mentor to Chase as he learns the business.

Moffet's will eventually change hands again when Abby (Hess) and Chase Rice buy it. As many know, Abby and Chase hail from Smith Center. Chase once said

his mother couldn't believe her grandchildren would be wearing blue and gold. Their son Hayden turns a year old in March and already wears the blue and gold occasionally.

When one enters Moffet's today, the first thing that catches your eye is the new paint adorning the walls. Another change, notice the new diabetes center with supplies including shoes and socks for both men and women. Other differences will show up in the future.

Abby and Chase enjoy life in a small town and Norton is a good fit for them. They want their children to be free to run, play and become involved in the many activities small towns afford them. They take pleasure in the personal bond and closeness of the people in smaller communities.

The Vollertsens and Rices all notice the economic changes that have hit the Norton community, but they hope with the national economic recovery signs and the efforts of our local economic development office that Norton will once more gain population and retail stores. With the support of the citizens of Norton, all things are possible for the community.

Welcome Chase, Abby and Hayden. May you enjoy Norton and prosper here.

•PUBLIC NOTICE•

Published in The Norton Telegram on Tuesday, February 22, March 1, and March 8, 2011.

(3T)
IN THE 17TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT DISTRICT COURT OF NORTON COUNTY, KANSAS

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION OF

Case No. 2011-CV-6
Div. No. _____

Deborah Kay Combs
Present Name
To Change Her Name to:
Deborah Kay Scott
New Name

PURSUANT TO K.S.A. CHAPTER 60 NOTICE OF HEARING PUBLICATION

THE STATE OF KANSAS TO ALL WHO

ARE OR MAY BE CONCERNED:

You are hereby notified that Deborah Kay Combs, filed a Petition in the above court on the 18th day of February 2011 requesting a judgment and order changing her name from Deborah Kay Combs to Deborah Kay Scott.

The Petition will be heard in Norton County District Court, 105 S. Kansas Avenue, Norton, Kansas on the 9th day of May 2011 at 1:30 p.m.

If you have any objection to the requested name change, you are required to file a responsive pleading on or before April 4th, in this court or appear at the hearing and object to the requested name change. If you fail to act, judgment and order will be entered upon the Petition as requested by Petitioner.

Partnering To Bring Medical Specialists To Norton

Norton Outreach Clinic Schedule

Norton County Hospital
102 E. Holme - Norton

Cardiology - Dr. Christine Fisher
Second Tuesday - (785) 625-4699

Ophthalmology - Dr. John Pokorny
Surgery
Fourth Monday every other month
Clinic
Fourth Tuesday every other month
(785) 628-8218

Orthopedic - Dr. Alex DeCarvalho
Fourth Tuesday
(785) 261-7599 or (866) 428-8221

Urology - Dr. Darrell Werth
Third Wednesday
(877) 312-1619 or (785) 628-6014

Mobile Echocardiography
Every Tuesday - (785) 877-3351



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