

Business receives accolades

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

Jill Edgett, Edmond, owner of Jill's Helping Hands, has come a long way since opening her home health agency in January of 1997. In 2002, she was one of 22 recipients of merit awards from the Kansas Department of Commerce. In 2006, Jill's Helping Hands was named Kansas' Woman-Owned Business of the Year, in the service industry division, by the office of Minority and Women Business Development. Mrs. Edgett had worked for the Kansas State Hospital for 18 years when it was converted to Norton Correctional Facility. At that time, she went to work for Social Rehabilitative Services (SRS) and stayed there for eight years. When the government privatized in-home health care programs, individuals were encouraged to create their own business. "And, that's what I did," she said.



Called to answer countless questions, Jill Edgett of Jill's Helping Hands, spends most of her working day managing her business from her comfortable office at her rural Edmond home. — Telegram photo by Carolyn Plotts

She started Jill's Helping Hands with 12 employees — all women she had worked with at SRS. In fact, the employees named the business for her. Eleven of those initial employees are still with her. Except, now, she has 56 employees, all part-time. Her home health agency contracts with Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging, with Medicaid and with private individuals. She said clients have a choice. Some of the services provided by Jill's Helping Hands workers are housecleaning, laundry, meal preparation, bathing, shopping and errands.

Since Jill's Helping Hands now serves 120 clients, Mrs. Edgett most often works in her home office on the managerial side of the business. She handles all the paperwork which involves payroll, time sheets, new client information, figuring state and federal taxes, workmen's compensation and liability insurance. One of her other duties is to make home vis-

its where she meets the clients on a personal level.

Mrs. Edgett said when she decided to start her own business, she sought out sound financial advice. She said her banker at First State Bank, Hill City, was willing to take a chance on her because of her knowledge of the home health business. She also credits Small Business Development in Hays for helping her figure a business budget.

"It's been a learning process," she said, "To deal with the state and local agencies."

Even though she could spread out state-wide, Mrs. Edgett said she prefers small towns. She likes to know both the client and her workers. She said Hays is the biggest town she works in.

Mrs. Edgett said the key to her success has been to hire good employees. She tries hard to match the right home care workers with the clients.

Every year she hosts an annual meeting in Lenora at the United

Parish Church fellowship hall. At these meetings, Mrs. Edgett offers continuing training to her workers, teaching adult CPR and giving hospice training. She said communication is key to a good working relationship.

Mrs. Edgett and Tom, her husband of 20 years, live on a secluded farmstead in rural Edmond. They have three sons, Shane who lives in Lawrence, Ryan and his wife LeAnn, York, Neb., and Kyle, a junior at Norton Community High School. They have two grandchildren, Isabelle and Gideon.

In her spare time, Mrs. Edgett enjoys photography, teaches first

aid and CPR classes and is on call for the Lenora ambulance and is also an Emergency Medical Technician for the Norton County Ambulance Service. She and her husband also spend a lot of time keeping up with their son Kyle's activities. He is on the Sunflower Gun Club precision shooting team and his competitions keep them on the road.

To learn more about job opportunities with Jill's Helping Hands or to learn about services her agency offers call 1-785-622-4245 or e-mail her at: jills_helpinghands@ruraltel.net.

Important date on horizon for certain crop coverage

December 1 is the application closing date for certain crops under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, said Bill R. Fuller, the state's executive director for the Kansas Farm Service Agency.

Crops eligible for benefits under the program are limited to those not insurable in the county and are produced for food or fiber.

Fuller said Dec. 1 is the final date to pay the applicable service fee and obtain Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program coverage for all grasses including alfalfa, apricots, asparagus, blueberries, caneberries (blackberries and raspberries), cherries, clover, grapes, lespedeza, honey, mixed forage, nectarines, oats, peaches, plums, strawberries and vetch.

The administrative service fee is \$100 per crop per administrative county not to exceed \$300 per producer per administrative county and a \$900 maximum fee for multi-county producers. Interested producers must pay the fee and file form CCC-471, Applica-

tion for Coverage, by the application closing deadline.

This coverage entitles eligible producers to a payment of 55 percent of an average market price for the commodity if a natural disaster caused a 50 percent production loss or greater of an eligible crop.

In the unfortunate event that a producer does suffer a loss on their particular crop, a form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, must be filed with the Farm Service Agency within 15 calendar days after the disaster occurrence, or the date the loss becomes apparent to the producer, Fuller said.

Producers are limited to \$100,000 in benefits per person per crop year, they must certify crop acres by applicable deadlines, maintain production evidence for three years, not exceed the \$2 million gross revenue provisions, and must comply with conservation compliance provisions in order to be eligible.

Interested producers must contact their Farm Service Agency prior to the Dec. 1 application closing date to obtain coverage, said Fuller.

PUBLIC INVITED

77th Harvest Home Festival
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11
 The Almena Congregational Church will hold its annual Harvest Home Festival. The administration and school board of Northern Valley Schools have generously given permission to use the Northern Valley gymnasium for the festival again this year. Events and times are as follows:
 4 p.m. — Fish Pond and Sale of Baked Goods and Fancy Work Starts
 5-7 p.m. — Soup Supper: Serving Chili, Chicken Noodle, Vegetable Beef and Oyster Soups and Pie for Dessert—Adults—\$4.00; 12 and Under—\$2.00; Pre-School—FREE
 6-10 p.m. — Kid's Games in the High School Auditorium
 7:30 p.m. — Auction of Handmade Crafts, Fine Goods, Soup, Other Items
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12 - 10:30 Church Service at the Almena Congregational Church featuring guest speaker, Ward Foley. There will be a Fellowship Dinner in the Church Basement following the service.
ALMENA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
 BRYANT STREET — ALMENA, KANSAS 67622

19th ANNUAL
 Norton County
 Genealogical Society's
Arts & Crafts Fair
Saturday, November 11, 2006
 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 FREE ADMISSION
Eisenhower Grade School
 Eisenhower Drive, 3 Blocks West of the Armory
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Sunday, November 12
 The Haven, a non-profit organization serving the Families of Inmates at Norton Correctional Facility

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