

Completely nuts is an accurate business description

By Ron Wilson
Huck Boyd Institute

Completely Nuts. Does that sound like an unusual name for business? Today we'll learn about a young entrepreneur who is involved in several enterprises, but one is focused on a very specific line of products: In fact, the product line is nuts only.

Ben Weber is a young entrepreneur in southeast Kansas. His uncles farm and his father is a Pioneer Seed salesman and has been for 25 years. Maybe Ben got expertise in sales from his father.

First, though, Ben went to Washburn University to play football. Unfortunately, he blew out his shoulder and was unable to play. While in Topeka he met an older couple that had a business selling cinnamon-roasted nuts. During school he helped them sell their products part-time. In 2001, he had the opportunity to buy their equipment

from them. Two years later, he purchased another nut company.

Ben put himself through school selling these delicious flavored nuts and then took the business on the road. When it came time to name the company, he came up with a tongue-in-cheek name, so to speak. He named the company Completely Nuts.

"I'm working for peanuts so I might as well have a fun name," Ben said with a smile. He had a roasting machine, a recipe, weighing scale, and supplies. He mixed cinnamon, sugar, and a splash of vanilla, added the nuts, roasted and cooled them and then hand-weighted them into bags. There are three sizes: small, medium and large. Eventually he got three different sets of equipment so he could serve three locations simultaneously.

When I say he took the business on the road, I mean that literally. Ben started traveling

to malls, festivals, and events to sell the delicious roasted nuts. He sold nuts as far west as Las Vegas and up and down the eastern seaboard. Ben sold the nuts from the Orange Bowl parade down in Miami up to Niagara Falls on the Canadian border.

One year, Ben was selling nuts in a mall in St. Joseph, Mo. during the Christmas season. An attractive young woman bought nuts from him and they got acquainted. Her name was Lara. Sure enough, they fell in love.

"If this doesn't work out financially, at least it worked out socially," Ben said. Ben and Lara got married and eventually they moved back to Ben's rural hometown of Yates Center, Kansas, population 1,586 people. Now, that's rural.

Ben is now an associate in his father's Pioneer Seed sales business while also selling Meridian seed tender wagons and independent crop insurance. He still

sells cinnamon roasted nuts but doesn't go on the road as much since he started a family. In fact, Ben and Lara have five children, seven years of age or younger: They have girls age seven and five, plus a three-year-old son and twin boys age seven months. Forgive me for saying so, but life in a household like that might be completely nuts.

Ben Weber takes it all in stride. He enjoyed traveling with the nut business, but he is really enjoying being home with his young children. In his traveling days, he had the opportunity to do a lot of sightseeing. Still, he said, the greatest highlight of the business were the nice people he had a chance to meet.

Ben started selling his cinnamon roasted nuts at Bass Pro Shop stores and even met the owner of the chain. He has encountered other celebrities along the way as well.

"One day I was selling at a

Bass Pro Shop in Dallas when Terry Bradshaw came along," Ben said. "He bought some nuts and was so nice to pose for pictures with us. Not two days later, along came Deion Sanders and he was the same way."

Completely Nuts. It seems like an unusual name for a busi-

ness, but in this case it accurately describes the business's products. We commend Ben and Lara Weber for making a difference with entrepreneurship and family life in a rural setting, and with a product line that consists completely of nuts. Oh, nuts.

•PUBLIC NOTICE•

EXHIBIT A
Published in The Norton Telegram on
Friday, February 28 and Tuesday, March 4, 2014 2(T)

NOTICE OF BOND ELECTION UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 211, NORTON COUNTY, KANSAS (NORTON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS)

The Board of Education of Unified School District No. 211, Norton County, Kansas (Norton Community Schools) (the "District"), has heretofore, pursuant to resolution duly adopted, declared it advisable to: (a) construct, equip and furnish additions to the existing Eisenhower Elementary School in the District to create new kindergarten, early childhood, and art classrooms, new restrooms, a new multi-purpose room to also function as a storm-safe area, new concourse area, and new administration/student support area with controlled access entry for enhanced building security; (b) make renovations and improvements to certain existing areas of Eisenhower Elementary School for enhanced educational programs and improved student support; (c) construct site and parking improvements at the Eisenhower Elementary site; (d) construct, equip and furnish additions to the existing Norton Community High School and Norton Junior High School in the District to create a new and expanded student support area with controlled access entry for enhanced building security, expansion of the Stull Gym lobby area to create a new food service area with new kitchen and expanded cafeteria/concourse area, restrooms, a new band and vocal music area to also function as a storm-safe area, and new locker rooms at Stull Gym and other support areas; (e) make renovations and other improvement to certain existing areas of Norton Community High School and Norton Junior High School for enhanced educational programs and improved student support; (f) demolish certain areas of the existing facilities to accommodate the proposed improvements; (g) make improvements to District facilities, including but not limited to, wheelchair accessible seating at the East Campus Gym and also conversion of the existing Weight Room to a District Office, Stull Gymnasium ventilation upgrades, electrical receptacles in classrooms, and partial replacement of roofs at District attendance centers; (h) make all other necessary improvements appurtenant thereto (collectively, the "Project"); and (i) pay costs of issuance and interest on said general obligation bonds of the District during construction of the Project, at an estimated cost of \$14,825,000. Notice is hereby given to the qualified electors of the District that a bond election has been called and will be held on April 1, 2014, for the purpose of submitting to the qualified electors of the District the following proposition:

Shall the following be adopted?
Shall Unified School District No. 211, Norton County, Kansas (Norton Community Schools), issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$14,825,000, to pay the costs to: (a) construct, equip and furnish additions to the existing Eisenhower Elementary School in the District to create new kindergarten, early childhood, and art classrooms, new restrooms, a new multi-purpose room to also function as a storm-safe area, new concourse area, and new administration/student support area with controlled access entry for enhanced building security; (b) make renovations and improvements to certain existing areas of Eisenhower Elementary School for enhanced educational programs and improved student support; (c) construct site and parking improvements at the Eisenhower Elementary site; (d) construct, equip and furnish additions to the existing Norton Community High School and Norton Junior High School in the District to create a new and expanded student support area with controlled access entry for enhanced building security, expansion of the Stull Gym lobby area to create a new food service area with new kitchen and expanded cafeteria/concourse area, restrooms, a new band and vocal music area to also function as a storm-safe area, and new locker rooms at Stull Gym and other support areas; (e) make renovations and other improvement to certain existing areas of Norton Community High School and Norton Junior High School for enhanced educational programs and improved student support; (f) demolish certain areas of the existing facilities to accommodate the proposed improvements; (g) make improvements to District facilities, including but not limited to, wheelchair accessible seating at the East Campus Gym and also conversion of the existing Weight Room to a District Office, Stull Gymnasium ventilation upgrades, electrical receptacles in classrooms, and partial replacement of roofs at District attendance centers; (h) make all other necessary improvements appurtenant thereto (collectively, the "Project"); and (i) pay costs of issuance and interest on said general obligation bonds of the District during construction of the Project; all pursuant to the provisions of K.S.A. 10-101 et seq.; K.S.A. 25-2018(f); K.S.A. 72-6761; and K.S.A. 75-2315 et seq.?

To vote in favor of any question submitted on this ballot, darken the oval to the left of the word "Yes." To vote against it, darken the oval to the left of the word "No."

YES
 NO

The polls will open at 7:00 o'clock A.M. and will close at 7:00 o'clock P.M., on April 1, 2014, the election day. The voting places in the District, and the area each voting place will serve, will be as follows:

Voters Residing In	Will Vote At
Lenora City and Highland #1	Lenora Community Center
Norton City and Rural 211	Courthouse Lobby

The election will be conducted by the officers and/or persons provided by law for holding elections, and the method of voting will be by ballot. Registered voters are eligible to vote by advance voting ballot upon application to the County Clerk at the address set forth below pursuant to K.S.A. 25-1117 et seq.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following additional information is provided by the District with respect to compliance with the provisions of K.S.A. 10-120a and K.S.A. 12-6.122. This information has been obtained from sources deemed reliable by the District. Certain portions of this information is based upon projections. No assurances can be given that these projections will be accurate as of the date of issuance of the bonds due to changing market conditions, any changes in assessed valuation of the District, changes in the amount of state financial aid received by the District and other matters unknown or unavailable at this time. The projected rates of property taxation to be used to pay the principal of and interest on the Bonds are based upon the current assessed valuation of the District, the assumed principal repayment schedule and the average interest rates for recent bond issues for similar types of financings and the current level of state financial aid the District would receive with respect to the bonds, all as shown below.

Projected Summary of Project Costs		Uses of Funds	
Sources of Funds		Project Costs	\$14,341,000
Bonds to be Issued	\$14,825,00	(including architectural/engineering services)	
District Funds	0	Interest During Construction	\$359,000
Interest Earnings	0	Issuance Expenses (including attorney fees, printing costs, rating agency fees, financial advisor fees, underwriting fees and other miscellaneous expenses)	125,000
Total	\$14,825,000	Total	\$14,825,000
Projected Summary of Bond Issue Repayments		Average Annual Property Tax Mill Levy Rate for Principal and Interest Payments	
Principal payments over 20 years		Average Interest Rate	4.25%
Total Interest			
Cost to Maturity	\$8,079,533	Assessed Valuation (2013)	\$45,968,656
Average Annual Principal and Interest Payments			\$1,145,227
Portion of average annual principal and interest payments from state aid			\$377,925
Portion of average annual principal and interest payments from District funds			\$767,302
Total (without any State Financial Aid)		22.37 Mills	
District Portion (with current level of State Financial Aid)		14.99 Mills	

The election officer conducting the election will be the County Clerk of Norton County, Kansas, whose address is Norton County Courthouse, 105 S. Kansas, P.O. Box 70, Norton, Kansas 67654-0070.
DATED: 2-24-2014
(SEAL)

Robert D. Wyatt, County Clerk
Norton County, Kansas

Pre-contest concert!

The Norton Junior High School Choir and Band Pre-contest Concert was held Tuesday night at the gymnasium. The girls ensemble, boys ensemble and the choir sang several songs for the large crowd of family and friends. The band performed several selections as well, under the direction of Don Mordecai. There was a clarinet, percussion, flute, saxophone and brass ensemble. The band closed out the performance with two pieces, "Screaming Eagles March" and "Wind Sketch."

-Telegram photo by Mike Stephens



Area students recognized for scholarships

Students from four Kansas counties and parts of a fifth were recognized for the scholarships they have been awarded from Fort Hays State University at the recent Student Recognition Program in Phillipsburg.

Students from Norton, Phillips, Smith and Graham counties and from the cities of Stockton and Palco in Rooks County were invited to the annual Phillipsburg Student Recognition Program

Scholarships awarded at the Recognition Program include the \$1,200 Miller Black and Gold Academic Award and the \$800 Hays City Silver Academic Award. Both are renewable provided students maintain the minimum required academic standing. Also awarded are the

\$2,000 Fort Hays State University Presidential Award, the \$700 Fort Hays Bronze Academic Award and the \$500 Copper Academic Award, all of which are one-time scholarships awarded only to incoming freshmen enrolling in college for the first time. The \$1,000 Transfer Student Scholarship, which is a one-time award, is also awarded at the Student Recognition Program.

Each Program event also features two drawings -- one for a \$400 Fort Hays State Student Recognition Program Scholarship and another for an iPad.

Students are arranged by high school, with their parents and intended majors, when students listed them.

Logan High School

Kyle Pakkebier, Lenora, a 2014 Logan High School graduate, accepted a \$900 Academic Opportunity Award in education and a \$700 Fort Hays Bronze Academic Award. Marcotte, daughter of Sean and Kim Marcotte, plans to major in elementary education.

Norton Community High School

Christopher Richard, Norton, a 2014 Norton Community High School graduate, accepted a \$700 Fort Hays Bronze Academic Award and a \$900 Academic Opportunity Award in physics. Richard, son of Floyd and Kathy Richard, plans to major in physics.

Palco High School

Kiley Marcotte, Damar, a 2014 Palco High School gradu-

ate, accepted a \$900 Academic Opportunity Award in education and a \$700 Fort Hays Bronze Academic Award. Marcotte, daughter of Sean and Kim Marcotte, plans to major in elementary education.

FYI

The Norton Area Chamber of Commerce's Annual Chamber Banquet will be on Tuesday, March 11 at the Norton American Legion ballroom. Social hour at 6 p.m. with dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets can be picked up at the Chamber office or from a board member. For more information call 785-877-2501.

COLLEGE NOTES

Hutchinson Community College has announced the honor rolls for the Fall 2013 semester, including grades through the end of the interterm session. 1,288 students have been honored with selection to the two honor roll listings, with 648 achieving the Vice President's Honor Roll with at least a 3.5 grade point average for the se-

mester. The President's Honor Roll is released in a separate document.

The students selected to the Vice President's Honor Roll are listed below by hometown.

The Vice President's Honor Roll (Students with 3.5 to 3.999 grade-point averages)

Norton: Sierra Black; Whitney Criqui

STUDENT NEWS

Hailey Branek, a sophomore at Norton Community High School, traveled to Wichita State University on Saturday, Feb. 22 to compete with other qualifying regional winners from across the state, where she was awarded a Superior I rating.

The Regional Piano Festival was held on Feb. 8 at Fort Hays State University where four Norton Community High School students competed. Those students and their respective ratings were; senior Landon Slipke - II, senior Gin Lee - III, sophomore Lauren Mordecai - II, and Hailey, who received a I,

qualifying her for state competition.

All these students are to be commended for their practice, commitment and hard work.

The National Weather Service (NWS) in Goodland and Norton County Emergency Management invite you to attend a Storm Spotter Class in Norton.

This year's training will be held Tuesday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m. CDT at the Prairie Land Electric Coop Downstairs, 1101 W. Hwy. 36, Norton, KS

The class is free of charge and open to anyone with an interest in High Plains weather. This program is conducted only once a year by NWS meteorologists so consider attending this fun and educational training in Norton. Topics will include severe weather climatology, storm structure and evolution, important cloud types, weather safety and how to report severe weather events. Updates on Wireless Emergency Alerts and Impact-Warnings will be provided, including a change in the convective outlooks issued by the Storm Prediction Center.

For more info, contact the Goodland NWS at 785-899-7119

A complete listing of the 2013 Spotter Training Schedule across the Tri-State Area is available on the Goodland NWS web page: weather.gov/goodland

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