

Store plans to begin moving Saturday



A new sign (above) arrived at Orscheln Farm and Home's new site about the middle of March. Angela Allsup (right), assistant manager, held one of the baby ducks for sale at the store during a break Thursday. The store is preparing to move to the old Gibson's building across from Wal-Mart.

Photos by Sharon Corcoran and Jordie Mann/The Goodland Star-News



Orscheln gets more room

By Sharon Corcoran

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Prepare for a flurry of activity along Business U.S. 24 as Orscheln Farm and Home starts moving the first weekend of April.

Orscheln has been at 521 E. Business U.S. 24 about 25 years but is preparing to move to 2021 Enterprise Rd., next to Herl Chevrolet Buick and across from Wal-Mart in the old Gibson's building.

The move will allow the store to expand its inventory in existing departments, said Manager Jerry Freeman, as well as adding a tire shop and key duplication, and to nearly triple its staff.

Workers have been busy building pallets and shelves to display merchandise, putting up signs over the departments, putting in pegs to hang merchandise and even hanging birdhouses waiting to be claimed by owners and tenants.

Trucks have started to deliver merchandise to the new store, Freeman said, and the tire shop just needs some finishing touches before it's ready to open.

The new location will double the store's space, Freeman said, and it will have nearly double the inventory. He said the site should bring in nearly double the customers as well.

While the store seems to do well with its target customers, farmers, Freeman said, it could do better with

the rest of us.

"We need to get more people to realize we're not just farm supplies," he said.

The store carries clothing, hardware, pet supplies, housewares and bedding plants, he said. People can buy coffee pots, slow cookers and ice cream makers, even spices and seasonings.

The store is also selling baby chicks and ducklings until early June, he said, adding the chicks are really popular now with the price of eggs being so high.

He said they plan to move outdoor merchandise April 4-6 and indoor merchandise April 11 and 12. In between, he said, the store will be open at two locations. If people want something that's at the new store, he said, they can pay at the old location and take their receipt to the new place to pick it up.

The old location will close by April 11 or 12, he said, if the move goes according to plan. But that's "if."

"I wanted to be out by March 1," Freeman said, "and be busy one place instead of two, but that didn't happen."

Orscheln is planning a grand opening for the new store about a month after the move, he said, on Mother's Day weekend, May 9-11. There will be giveaways, he said, vendors doing demonstrations and events for kids.

"We want it to be a celebration," he said.

The store's hours will expand at the new location as well, from the present 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and noon to 5 p.m. Sunday to 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday.

The staff will increase from five full-time employees to eight full time and six to eight part time. Freeman said he's working on having extra help with the move and will eagerly accept volunteers.

The tire shop will sell and mount light truck and passenger tires, he said, but won't do oil changes. The key duplication service is new, he said, and the existing departments will all increase their inventory and offer things that they haven't had room for.

"We've outgrown this building," he said. "We started planning for the move a year and a half ago. That's when the company asked what I thought we could do with a bigger store."

Freeman, who has managed the store 2 1/2 years, said they will rent the new location from Chuck Wilkens. Orscheln, he said, is a family-owned chain of 148 stores in nine Midwestern states — Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Kentucky and Indiana. Their first store opened in Sedalia, Mo., in 1960.

Federal return required for stimulus payments

By Tom Betz

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With the tax deadline two weeks away, the Internal Revenue Service is working overtime to help everyone eligible for an economic stimulus payment of \$300 to \$600 to file the forms needed to get one of the checks to be sent out beginning in May.

The payments will be sent to more than 130 million homes, but to receive any payment, a person must have a valid Social Security number, at least \$3,000 of income and file a 2007 federal income tax return. The IRS has posted details about the filing on its web site at www.irs.gov.

People filing a federal tax return will be eligible for a check of \$600 each (\$1,200 for a married couple filing jointly), and parents can receive \$300 more for each child under 17.

The IRS site says that millions of retirees, disabled veterans and low-income workers who usually don't have to file tax returns must file this year to receive a check.

To see that everyone eligible has the opportunity to get a payment, the IRS has sent a package with a

tax form to 20.5 million people receiving Social Security or Veterans Affairs benefits.

The 10-page tax package contains everything the person will need to file a tax form: An information notice, tips for completing Form 1040A, a sample Form 1040A and an actual Form 1040A for the filer to complete.

The package is designed for people who qualify for an economic stimulus payment but who normally aren't required to file a return, the agency says.

"We want to put everything right at the fingertips of the people who need this information the most," said Linda E. Stiff, acting IRS commissioner. "In some cases, seniors and others in this group haven't needed to file a tax return for years or even decades.

"To help them get a stimulus payment, we're doing everything we can to make this as easy as possible. These packages mean many people will just need a pen and a stamp, and the IRS will do the rest."

To be eligible for the payment, a tax return or an extension must be filed by Tuesday, April 15.

Stimulus payments will start May

2. The last two digits of the person's Social Security number and whether they opted for direct deposit or a paper check will determine when the payment is sent.

If you ask for a paper check and the last two numbers are 00 through 09, the checks will be mailed by May 16; numbers 10 through 18, mailed May 23; 19 through 25, May 30; 26 through 38, June 6; 39 through 51, June 13; 52 through 63, June 20; 64 through 75, June 27; 76 through 87, July 4; and 88 through 99, July 11.

If you ask for direct deposit, the process is a bit faster. If the last two Social Security number are 00 through 20, the money will be deposited on May 2; numbers 21 through 75 on May 9; and 76 through 99 on May 16.

To help those who do not usually file a return, the IRS has opened offices in 320 cities across the country on Saturdays, and hundreds of others who help people fill out tax forms are working extra to make

sure everyone has the opportunity to get a stimulus payment.

For those who have access to a computer, the IRS has a list of on-line companies who will file their return for free. Go to www.irs.gov and click on the "free-file" button.

The stimulus payment has a phased limit where the amount begins to decrease based on the income level over \$75,000 for an individual or \$150,000 for a couple.

Beware of scams

The IRS warns taxpayers to be aware of identity thieves who are pushing scams involving the stimulus payments. At least one telephone scam is making the rounds using the proposed check as bait to get the victim's bank account numbers. The IRS issued an advisory about these scams on Jan. 30.

"This phone call is a scam. The IRS does not force taxpayers to use direct deposit. Those who opt for direct deposit do so by completing the appropriate section of their tax return, with bank routing and account information, when they file. The IRS does not gather information by telephone."

corrections

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