

Getting the grand tour



Natoma Corporation received a check in the amount \$740,000 which was a USDA Rural Economic Development loan program through Rural Telephone this week. After several years of working on getting the loan they were awarded the loan in May of 2009. It is to be used to help fund the expansion of the building and for a new C-N-C machine. The newly built addition is 30,000 square foot. This will almost double the existing 40,000 square feet

already in existence. The loan was guaranteed by Almena State Bank. Gail Boller, owner and President of Natoma, gave the Rural Telephone representatives and those from the Almena State Bank a tour of the entire facility. Pictured here is Gail Boller as he shows Mendi Alexander, NexTech Economic Development/Networking Specialist and Larry Sevier, CEO and General Manager of Rural Telephone, the existing facility.

— Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

1,200 dogs killed to stop distemper in Decatur County

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Over 1,000 dogs were signed over to a state agency after a fight against the often-lethal virus canine distemper in a Decatur County dog kennel. The dogs all apparently were put down and buried near the Nebraska state line.

The application to dispose of the canine carcasses was filled out by Jeff Fortin, owner of Beaver Creek Kennels near Cedar Bluffs.

A statement issued just before lunch today from the Kansas Animal Health Department states that the facility had been under quarantine twice since the middle of October. Throughout that time, the agency said, repeated tests showed distemper in dogs in the kennel.

According to healthcommunities.com, "Canine distemper is a contagious, incurable, often fatal, multisystemic viral disease that affects the respiratory, gastrointestinal and central nervous systems. Distemper is caused by canine distemper virus."

The animal health department, which regulates and licenses kennels in the state, said that with the puppies under quarantine, the kennel owner had no income flow, which meant not being able to maintain the work force, and had difficulty in keeping proper sanitation and being able to keep the animals fed and watered.

"It was apparent the owner could not survive financially under these conditions, nor did he want to chance spreading disease any further outside his facility," the release said.

All the factors lead to removing the dogs from the facility and quarantine continuing on the

empty kennel to allow for a clean-up period.

"The department had to balance its dual responsibilities of maintaining the welfare of the dogs with preventing the disease from spreading outside of the kennel," said Dr. Bill Brown, a veterinarian and state livestock commissioner, head of the department. "Decisions were made only after extensive discussions with numerous veterinarians familiar with distemper in breeding kennels."

"This difficult decision was the last choice of the department and the breeder, but in the end all believed it was the only humane way to accomplish both objectives: to prevent the spread of the disease and protect the dogs from prolonged suffering."

Mr. Fortin returned calls from The Oberlin Herald on Wednesday, but said he didn't want an interview until after talking with his lawyer and the state.

Last Wednesday, the day after the weekly Decatur County commissioners meeting, the county received a form and a letter from the state Department of Health and Environment asking for a zoning approval for a site to dispose of dog carcasses.

"No zoning exists for sites outside the City of Oberlin, so no local approval needed," was typed on the form and it was signed and sent back. The form asked for approval to dispose of waste "without a permit."

Guidelines spelled out in the letter stated that the animals had to be buried within 48 hours, quick or slaked lime, if needed, had to be added to control odors and the animals had to be covered with four feet of soil.

Christmas

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ing ticket to win the \$500.

During the first week of the promotion a total of 2663 tickets were collected. No \$50 instant winners came forward to claim their prize. In the second week we collected 2526 tickets and finally had our first instant winner. It was Weldon "Willie" Carlin and he got his winning ticket from Ag Valley Coop. During the third week of the promotion there were 3420 tickets brought in. Two winners came forward this time, Jeanice Goselin got her ticket from Sander Furniture and Curt Luehrs got his

from Engel's Sales and Service. In the fourth week 3309 tickets were counted and more instant winners showed up, Michelle Ulmer got her ticket from Nex-Tech, Eugene Wiltfong got his from Engel's Sales and Service, Juan and Wilmer Severns got theirs from Main Street IGA and Judy Luft got her ticket from Stitch Up A Storm. The last person to bring in a winning ticket was Cheri Renner and she got her ticket from Las Canteras. That left two unclaimed instant \$50 winners.

"In the final week of the promotion no new numbers were published but tickets were still

collected by many until 4 p.m. Wednesday. A total of 4142 tickets were counted in this final week for a total of 16,060 tickets this year and if you multiply each ticket by the \$10 spent to get a ticket the total amount of money that stayed in Norton due to this is \$160,600.00. Last year, 13,644 tickets collected for \$136,440.00. This year we exceeded by \$24,160.00 or 2,416 tickets so it was once again a great success, the best we have had since starting this promotion years ago." Paxton said.

"We here at the Telegram would like to thank each and every participant and sponsor that took part

in this promotion. I would also like to thank the Norton Senior Center for providing a nice warm place to hold the drawing again this year and to Larry Henderson and LeeAnn Shearer for providing the wonderful holiday music prior to the drawing as well as Althea Paxton for helping to draw the numbers. We couldn't have done it without all of you."

"The promotion is intended to keep our holiday money here at home helping our community, businesses and patrons and I believe we did it again. We look forward to holding this promotion again next year." said Paxton

Millings

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soil in some place up to three and four feet.

Braun said that if the county would make good on its promise of millings and start to move the pile so that the land could be reclaimed in a reasonable time, he

would forget about the upcoming fifth year of rent.

Braun also said that he could haul the millings and wanted to know how the county wanted them weighed and measured.

Miller suggested using the scale at Reager for every fourth

load and getting together with the county road crew on load size.

"I don't think it's an honest issue Roger," Road Foreman Brent "Topper" Cook said. "We just want to know what's happening."

Miller said he was sorry for the

whole mess.

"I guess, out of the scope of things, we may run short," Miller said. "But, if we do, we do."

Commissioner Carolyn Applegate noted that this is just an example of why the commissioners do not make verbal agreements.

Two take over as road foremen

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
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Norton County Commissioners decided to put interviews for a new road and bridge supervisor on hold and instead have promoted two crew members as foremen.

After discussing what to do about replacing former Road and Bridge Superintendent Tom Brannan, who resigned in October, the commissioners decided to meet with the crew, which they did Monday.

After that meeting, the commissioners opened their regular meeting and hired Floyd Richard to be foreman for the eastern part of the county and Brent "Topper" Cook, to be foreman for the west.

The suggestion to have two foremen had come from the crew itself and had been delivered to the commissioners during the Dec. 6 meeting by Road and Bridge Administrative Assistant Sandy Smith, who has been acting as a liaison between the commissioners and the crew while there has been on supervisor.

In addition the commissioners moved Herman Pfannenstiel from blade operator to shop foreman and Jim Coats from shop foreman to blade operator. The switch was made at the employee's request.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Granted Ronny Kent an easement under county land for a sewer line to a new ice-manufacturing plant he is putting up out by the new ambulance facility.

- Talked with Dustin Daniels about the purchase of a used D5 tractor to replace one that is so old and well used that it can only be

sold for parts.

- Agreed to republish the budget for the general fund, road and bridge and county health department.

- Agreed to pay half the cost of tearing down the old Almena

Community Building.

- Had decided at their Dec. 6 meeting to purchase a Bobcat from Fairbanks International of North Platte, Neb., for \$6,033 less trade, which will bring the price down to \$4,404.

Are you or someone you know caring for an aging family member or friend?

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