

Vocalists perform at spring concert!



The Norton Junior and Senior High School vocal students presented their year end concert last Thursday night. During the evening's performance, songs that the different group preformed in competition were sung. Instructor Tammy Cochran, took time during the concert to present individuals with awards received while at competition. Featured here are, from left, Peyton Renner, Audrey Morel, Neysa Carlson, Hailey branek and Sierra Griffith. They were accompanied by pianist, Sara Nelson and page turner Mitchell Shelton.

— Telegram photo by Dana Paxton

Now that's a real rural story

**By Ron Wilson, Director
Huck Boyd National Institute
for Rural Development at
Kansas State University**

The Pentagon, near Washington, D.C. Here at the headquarters of the Department of Defense, we find a custom-made, metal security cage. And where do you suppose this product was designed and built? Not California, not Chicago, not Atlanta, but at New Age Industrial located in rural Kansas.

Larry Nelson is president of New Age Industrial in Norton. This is the story of this remarkable company.

In 1966, a fellow from Nebraska came to Norton to buy a car. The car salesman must have been a good one because not only did he sell that fellow a car, when the salesman learned that the man from Nebraska was getting ready to set up a factory, he convinced him to put that factory in Norton. Local investors got together and built a building to house this new business, which would become known as New Age Industrial.

Unlike these days, when the term New Age refers to some kind of metaphysical thinking, this company was New Age before it was fashionable. The concept was that this company would usher in a New Age of manufacturing, and so the company was born.

New Age Industrial set out to work on the extrusion of aluminum. It opened in a 50 x 200-square-foot building. By 1972, when Larry Nelson joined the company, it had seven employees. As the company diversified into making various products from the extruded aluminum, it began to grow.

In fact, numerous additions were built onto the building through the years, but one of those almost led to a disaster. On April 8, 1996, a spark from a welder that was being used to construct an addition to the building set off a fire. That fire burned for 9 1/2 hours.

Fortunately, the extrusion press, offices, and production area were saved from the fire, which happened on a Monday. On Tuesday the owners met with key employ-

ees to form a recovery plan. On Wednesday, employees came in to begin to clean up and rebuild. No one was laid off, and two weeks later, the company had re-started production.

"The fire took out several walls of the old buildings," Larry said. "It actually opened up some space. We redid our electrical system and improved our product flow. We found the good that came out of it, but I wouldn't want it to ever happen again," Larry said.

Today, New Age Industrial operates in 180,000 square feet of space and employs 113 people. Products from extruded aluminum are still the company's specialty. This includes thousands of products made for use in food service, health care, materials handling, correctional facilities, and other venues. This includes such things as carts, trays and much, much more. In fact, about half of their business includes custom-designed and manufactured specialty products.

"Not too many people do that type of custom work any more, but we enjoy doing it," Larry said. "Our minimum order is one."

This responsiveness to the customer has paid off in the long run. The list of New Age Industrial's customers is astounding, including many small businesses plus national brands such as Costco, Target, JC Penney, Caterpillar, Advanced Auto, and McDonald's. New Age Industrial products have literally gone coast to coast from Norton.

In fact, New Age Industrial products have gone to such places as Walt Disney World, the Pentagon, and the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. Not bad for a company in Norton, Kansas, population 2,943 people. That's rural, but there's more. Larry actually lives at nearby Almena, population 461 people, and the company comptroller is from Jennings, population 143 people. Now, that's rural.

"We have great people working here," Larry Nelson said. "We take pride in quality work." For more information, go to www.newageindustrial.com.

Congressman hears gasoline concerns

**By Congressman Tim
Huelskamp**

While traveling across Kansas for 13 more town hall meetings during the past three weeks, I heard a myriad of concerns and ideas from constituents. One issue that arose in places like Sharon Springs, Colby and elsewhere was the concern about rising gas prices.

The high cost of gasoline hits Kansans who just need to get from point A to point B, to take their kids to school, or to operate their farm or other business. The high costs are also placing a tremendous burden on entrepreneurs who have to charge consumers more. But Kansans aren't looking for another 1970s approach demanding we consume less energy by doing fewer things -- they are looking for answers that do not disrupt their ways of life. What some environmentalist elite just don't get is that in Kansas there is no alternative to driving. There is no other way to get from point A to

point B but with a car. There is no way to transport Western Kansas products to market but by truck or train. Therefore, the solution is more energy, not less.

Increasing production not only lowers prices, but also creates jobs, helps families trying to make ends meet, and enhances national security by reducing our dependence on foreign sources. High gas prices are a matter of supply and demand. When Washington chokes the supply, costs go up. When Washington empowers drillers to add to the supply, costs go down.

This week, I joined some of my colleagues in the Republican Study Committee in cosponsoring the Consumer Relief for Pain at the Pump Act. This bill adds to production by offering short-term solutions for dealing with high prices of gasoline now and long-term solutions for improving the energy marketplace in the years to come.

First, it repeals the President's

"permatorium" on drilling on the outer continental shelf, which includes the Gulf of Mexico. Though the President has officially lifted the ban on drilling imposed after the Deepwater Horizon explosion last spring, the administration has effectively maintained that ban by delaying the permitting process for new leases. If the President truly cares about reducing unemployment, then stalling drilling permits - and effectively killing tens of thousands of jobs - is not the answer.

Second, this bill repeals the "Wild Lands Policy" that permits the Department of the Interior to stop energy development in America. Not only does it lift this authority from the Department, but it also streamlines the bureaucratic process and establishes a judicial review process for permitting procedures. Trial lawyers and special interests are allowed to exploit the current system, harming consumers.

Third, and perhaps most impor-

tantly, this bill releases the regulatory grip of the EPA on America's energy production. Through this legislation, the EPA would be barred from imposing regulations in the name of global warming - and without Congressional consent. Unelected bureaucrats have been handed too much power over our energy policy; decisions over energy policy should rest with those who can be held accountable by the voters.

This bill is a step toward reducing gas prices. Even more importantly, it is a part of a comprehensive, all-of-the-above energy strategy that is about meeting our needs and preparing for the future. It also recognizes that we are not going to transform the way we consume energy any time soon. Instead, with less regulation and more production, we have a real solution to high energy prices.

Congressman Tim Huelskamp of Fowler represents the First District of Kansas.

Police Log

May 2
10:00 a.m. Investigate trespassing complaint
3:12 p.m. Request for accident report
5:50 p.m. Traffic control, W. Crane
May 3
7:54 a.m. Request to speak to officer, Police Department
10:20 a.m. Vehicle accident, State St. & W. Wilton
11:30 a.m. Traffic control, State St. & Holme
12:05 p.m. Request to speak to officer, Police Department
12:30 p.m. Request for welfare check
4:05 p.m. Request for welfare check
4:15 p.m. Theft report
4:54 p.m. Traffic control, State St. & Holme
6:36 p.m. Request to speak to officer, N. Kansas
May 4
12:10 a.m. Report of trespass-

ing
5:00 p.m. Request to speak to officer, Sheriff's Office
7:04 p.m. Theft report
7:50 p.m. Activated alarm, United Northwest Federal Credit Union
9:00 p.m. Report of intoxicated driver
9:10 p.m. Remove debris from roadway, N. State
May 5
10:50 a.m. Parking complaint, N. Second
3:45 p.m. Escort inmate to Municipal Court
4:15 p.m. Request to speak to officer, Police Department
4:30 p.m. Request to speak to officer, Police Department
May 6
12:42 a.m. Parking citation
7:46 a.m. Motorist assist, W. Holme
8:00 a.m. Theft report
8:25 a.m. Stolen property recovered

10:40 a.m. Theft report
11:30 a.m. Vehicle accident, S. Archer
12:24 p.m. Report of kids on roof, Elmwood Park
2:00 p.m. Request to speak to officer, Police Department
2:21 p.m. Stolen property recovered
3:45 p.m. Request to speak to officer, W. Wilton
4:50 p.m. Report of erratic driver
5:32 p.m. Report of kids throwing rocks, S. Archer
5:49 p.m. Report of erratic driver
10:50 p.m. Report of kids throwing sticks, W. Wilton
11:30 p.m. Report of vandalism
May 7
1:24 a.m. Report of disorderly subject, E. Holme
2:31 a.m. Investigate vehicle, S. Norton
8:41 a.m. Request to speak to

officer, Police Department
6:15 p.m. Request civil standby
10:11 p.m. Officer assist Kansas Highway Patrol, Sheriff's Office
11:10 p.m. Secure building, Elmwood Park
May 8
12:55 a.m. Report of reckless driver
1:58 a.m. Report of suspicious activity
2:49 a.m. Motel checks
4:59 a.m. Report of suspicious activity
6:09 a.m. Motorist assist
4:56 p.m. Request to speak to officer, Horace Greeley
5:55 p.m. Request to speak to officer, Sheriff's Office
Six vehicle stops, five keys locked in vehicles and two animal calls were reported by Norton Police Department during the period May 2 to May 8.

Trivia

Any month's 13th day will fall on a Friday if the month starts on a Sunday

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NORTON AMERICAN LEGION
Tickets are \$25 per person. To purchase, contact: Brook at the Norton Area Chamber of Commerce Office at 877-2501

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