



Atkisson, Mary Lou, Logan .....	785-689-4305
Bohl, Ashley, Olmitz .....	620-586-3219
Buffman, Theresa, Russell .....	785-483-2007
Hofer, Bill, Cedar .....	785-695-2272
Kingsbury, Tammey & Daren, Russell .....	785-445-3490
Lamont, E Beth, Osborne .....	785-345-4036
Mauro, Shirley, Russell .....	785-483-2904
Rage Salon & Spa, Russell .....	785-445-4074
Rhea, Helen, New Almelo .....	785-567-4077
Sandoval, Edward, Rexford .....	785-687-2052
Sapp, Christine & Tyler, Burr Oak .....	785-647-5066
Thummel, J.D., Quinter .....	785-754-2175
Turnbull, Brad, Woodston .....	785-994-6213
* Voss, Berneda, Logan .....	785-689-4280
Wilson, Dustin, Downs .....	785-454-6000
Wright, Ray, WaKeeney .....	785-743-9554
Zimmerman, Martina F, Quinter .....	785-754-3580

\* Denotes a second home line.



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March 2011 **RURAL CONNECTION**

News and information from your local phone company!

**Green Rewards**

Every month, Nex-Tech/Rural Telephone customers get an exciting chance at winning \$50. All these customers have to do is pay their bill on time. Their names get entered into \$50 drawings automatically and ten winners are drawn every month. What's the program that makes this possible? Nex-Tech's Green Rewards. As a customer rewards program, Green Rewards has chosen over 250 winners in the past two years. You could be the next Green Rewards winner. Congratulations to the January winners!

- |                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Greg Traffas - Hays          | Sarah and Jake Kunc - Republic |
| Shirley Trowbridge - Quinter | Delwin LaRue - Stockton        |
| Glora Thomas - Osborne       | Rose Mary Dinkel - Victoria    |
| Vonda Tompkins - Portis      | Sandy Lee - McDonald           |
| Nancy McGinnis - Norton      | Carroll Bissett - Gove         |

For more tips on going green or more information about Green Rewards, visit [www.nex-tech.com/greenrewards](http://www.nex-tech.com/greenrewards).

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**Nex-Tech Donates Telecommunications Lines To FHSU**

The high-tech, high-touch learning environment at Fort Hays State University will soon become even more technologically advanced thanks to a major contribution from Nex-Tech.

"Nex-Tech, and its parent company, Rural Telephone of Lenora, have been long-time supporters of our university," Dr. Edward H. Hammond, FHSU President, said during a January 28 morning news conference. "We are here to accept another major gift from Nex-Tech that will greatly enhance our communication capabilities."

President Hammond and Larry Sevier, Chief Executive Officer of Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech, announced that Nex-Tech would install fiber optic cables in two locations: a two-gigabyte Ethernet circuit between the FHSU campus in southwest Hays and the university's Sternberg Museum of Natural History adjacent to Interstate 70 in north-east Hays; and a 20-megabyte symmetrical Internet connection to the University Farm to the south.

The value of the gift will be \$240,000 for the Sternberg connection and \$6,000 for the farm connection, for a total of \$246,000, which includes free service for the first five years.

"Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech understand that Fort Hays State University, and its inter-campus network infrastructure is critically important to Hays, Ellis County and western Kansas," stated Sevier.

"We greatly appreciate the generosity of Nex-Tech and Rural Telephone, and I want to emphasize how valuable these two lines of communication will be to the FHSU mission," President Hammond said. "This will give us connectivity between the campus and the museum that will extend university services to Sternberg with speed and efficiency that were not available previously. Perhaps more importantly though, this

is the missing link that will allow us to create a back-up communication system in case the campus is ever hit by a disaster. We will install computer servers at the museum that will allow uninterrupted communication over the Internet in the event of service disruptions on campus. It is not an exaggeration to say that this new line of communication between the campus and the museum may someday save lives."

In addition to making campus services more quickly and efficiently available to the University Farm, the president said there also was a hidden benefit in that new line of communication. "The farm has direct line-of-sight to the FHSU soccer stadium in the new Hays Sports Complex," he said, "so this will allow us to provide wireless communication between the field and the campus."

The Nex-Tech gift was made possible in part because of the recent federal Broadband Stimulus Plan. Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech were jointly awarded Broadband Stimulus grant funds of \$49,588,807 and loan funds of \$51,612,842 to develop broadband services in un-served and underserved areas of central and western Kansas.

"We have a wonderful, long-standing partnership with Fort Hays State University," Sevier added. "One aspect of the



Pictured are Dr. Edward H. Hammond, FHSU President and Larry Sevier, Chief Executive Officer of Rural Telephone/Nex-Tech.

partnership we are most proud of is the commitment to retaining area students. Of the more than 470 employees of Nex-Tech, Rural Telephone and Nex-Tech Wireless, more than 25 percent are FHSU graduates or current FHSU students," he added.

The fiber between the campus and Sternberg is scheduled to be completed within six months, and the fiber to the University Farm is scheduled to be completed within nine months.

# Open Skies...Open Arms - a journey back home to small town America! ✨

Seeing her children walk the halls at Wheatland Elementary School, Nicole Godek wonders where their interests and dreams will take them. She herself once walked these same halls, years ago. Taking a deep breath, she notices that it doesn't look, sound or smell all that different. It feels like home.

As a little girl growing up on a farm south of Grainfield, what Nicole Godek was interested in was art. The vast open skies that

touched her yard were filled with stars and inspiration. They led her to college, where she worked her art into a graphic design degree, then to jobs in California, and then to Colorado, where she stopped working for others and launched her own graphic design business. Along the way, she met Dan, an Omaha, Nebr. native, and they got married and started a family of their own.

About four years ago, the Godeks were living in Greeley, Colo., near Denver.

Elementary school loomed around the corner for their oldest child. Long commutes and a high cost of living were taking a toll. Nicole rarely had time to look for the stars, and the haze of the city lights did its best to obliterate them. It was hard to tell what direction to take. They looked forward to trips to Grainfield to visit Nicole's family.

On one such trip, the light of the stars

illuminated a new opportunity. Grainfield's grocery store was up for sale! Dan came from a family of grocers, and although he had never worked the business personally, the idea of owning his own store sounded like a good match. It was actually his idea to take the opportunity to relocate to Nicole's hometown.

Nicole's graphic design business had been open for about six years by now. She had grown her clientele from all over the United States. Most of her work and communication was done through the computer. She knew that with a high-speed Internet connection, she could continue to earn a good living doing what she loved from any place that she wanted. Fortunately for Nicole and the Godek family, Grainfield is served by Rural Telephone, and the connection speeds available with Lightning Jack High-Speed Internet were comparable, if not better than those they used in Greeley.

Today, Nicole and Dan's three children can dream while gazing at the stars over their ranch-style home in Grainfield. The older children ride bikes to school and to their

dad's Harvest Market, just a few blocks from home. The youngest, at age three, can claim to be a life-long resident of Grainfield. Nicole loves being so close to family, and her home-based business is still going strong.

In fact, it was when the home needed some renovations that Nicole actually found an opportunity to expand her business. Perusing the Internet in search of a contractor, she wasn't able to find one locally. She further discovered that very few of the local businesses and communities had any Internet website presence at all. It seemed unthinkable. Were they missing out on business? Were other people longing for the same type of lifestyle that the Godeks were enjoying?

LoveSmallTownAmerica.com, resulted from Nicole's web design experience, and her hope and faith in rural America. The website gives Nicole a creative way to share her passion for small town living, and gives small communities and

businesses an easy and affordable way to put themselves "out there." Any community of less than 2,500 people can be included, and the overall mission of the site is to match people with the communities, schools and businesses that they are seeking.

Rural Telephone's fast and reliable Internet connection is essential to Nicole's success. "My business would not exist without high-speed Internet. I could not have started my website." She hopes that others can escape the city and find a small town where they can thrive. "You can be very successful in a small town, because we can all do business out of our homes." The information superhighway provides a much shorter commute, and a chance to keep your feet on the ground and reach for the stars.



Daniel and Nicole Godek with their three children: Elliot (8 years), Anna (6 years) and Evangeline (3 years).

Get up to date with



TRAINING SERVICES

2nd  
Quarter  
Schedule  
2011

### April

- 4 Excel 07 Introductory
- 6 Word 07 Introductory
- 13 Word 07 Intermediate
- 14 Excel 07 Intermediate
- 20 Excel 07 Advanced
- 21 Word 07 Advanced
- 27 Excel 07 Advanced II

### May

- 2 Excel 07 Introductory
- 4 Word 07 Introductory
- 5 Access 07 Intro
- 11 Excel 07 Intermediate
- 12 Word 07 Intermediate
- 16 Access 07 Intermediate
- 18 Excel 07 Advanced
- 19 Word 07 Advanced
- 23 Excel 07 Advanced II
- 26 Access 07 Advanced

### June

- 1 Word 07 Introductory
- 6 Excel 07 Introductory
- 9 Word 07 Intermediate
- 15 Excel 07 Intermediate
- 16 Word 07 Advanced
- 20 Excel 07 Advanced
- 27 Excel 07 Advanced II

## Annual Meeting Announcement

You're invited to the Rural Telephone 2011 Annual Meeting

Come and enjoy an informative evening with your cooperative members, trustees and employees.

**When:** Friday, April 29, 2011  
Registration from 5:00 - 6:15 p.m.  
Meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.  
Refreshments will be served before the meeting.

**Where:** Hoxie High School Auditorium,  
Hoxie, Kan.



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To enter to win, simply write your name and phone number on a 3 X 5 card along with where "Lightning" is located in the

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Three winners of \$10 gift certificates will be drawn each month from all correct entries.



### February WINNERS

**Helen Theleman  
Downs**  
**Rosalee Hammerschmidt  
Russell**  
**Wilma Vahle  
Long Island**

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**IN THE FEBRUARY ISSUE:**  
Lightning Jack's lightning was located on page four in the top of the publication information bar.