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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

### VOLUNTEER RETIRING AFTER 60 YEARS OF SERVICE

Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company Director Omer Hoffman of Clearwater, NE will officially retire from the NNTC Board of Directors after serving as a board member for nearly 60 years! It all started because Hoffman wanted a telephone in his home.

In the late 1950s Hoffman, along with Joe Knievel and Maynard Sterns, worked to raise \$27,000 with the goal of bringing dial telephones to their area. They went door-to-door asking residents in Clearwater and Bartlett to donate \$30 with the promise of a phone. The men raised the money needed to get a government loan which allowed them to buy into Northeast Nebraska Telephone Company. NNTC had just been established in Jackson in 1957. Clearwater and Bartlett joined the company in 1958.

From there Hoffman was hooked. Once he established phone service in his area, he stayed on the Board of Directors for SIX more decades.

“I wanted to go off the board the last time and they insisted that I stay on, but do you realize that I’d be 100 years old when I got off the board,” he jokes.

The 97-year-old rancher has spent two-thirds of his life advocating for telecommunication service in rural Nebraska.

He said the biggest change over the years was the addition of providing internet services.

“Can you imagine the old ringer phones up until now? It’s all electronic age so you wonder where it’s going,” Hoffman said.

Hoffman has been driving from Clearwater to Jackson to attend meetings for the company for decades. He estimates he has spent three years of his life in total, attending meetings and volunteering for NNTC.

“If you live in an area, you should do something to help support the area. We’ve got volunteer firemen, school board members. This was an opportunity for me to be doing something. And I was glad to give back and to get a phone!” Hoffman said.

Omer Hoffman will be recognized for his contributions at NNTC's annual membership meeting on Thursday, September 13<sup>th</sup> between 6:45 and 7 pm at NNTC facilities in Jackson, Nebraska. Omer will be available for interviews at the end of the meeting around 7:30 pm. Hundreds are expected in attendance.

The media is welcome to attend. Photos are available upon request.

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