

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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“Councilman Rob Merrill”



You may catch a glimpse of one of Norfolk’s new city council members in a national TV ad or hear his voice in a radio commercial. Rob Merrill, newly elected to represent Ward 3 on the Norfolk City Council, has been working for ad agencies for 20 years promoting everything from insurance to bath remodels. He was the Thrasher Basement Systems spokesperson for five years.

“It started when my wife’s niece’s husband asked if I’d work for his ad agency to advertise an upscale carwash. My picture got out there and I’ve been doing advertising work ever since,” Merrill said.

Merrill’s day job has been at Marathon Press as vice president of sales for the last 12 years. A native of Willow Springs, Missouri, Merrill graduated from North Kansas City High School and then attended the University of Missouri at Kansas City.

He worked at Land and Sky Manufacturing as their sales manager before becoming an independent furniture representative. Later on, as a sales representative for the Omaha Paper Company, his trade area included Norfolk where he got to know the management at Marathon Press. They then recruited him to come to Norfolk where he’s been ever since.

Merrill says he plays golf in the spring, summer and fall and does woodworking in the winter. His woodworking projects are evident in every room of his house as he has made a bedroom set, the dining room table and eight chairs, a dining room sideboard, and an entertainment center all out of solid wood. He also made solid cherry wood cabinets for the kitchen that he and his, wife, Jan, remodeled themselves. The two also redid their front porch, finished the attic and the basement, refinished the wood floors, gutted and remodeled the bathroom and built a three car garage.

In what they have left of their free time, the couple visits their six children and five grandchildren.

Merrill says he has been happy living and working in Norfolk and ran for the Norfolk City Council because he wanted to give back to the community.

“My goal to is emphasize economic development while I’m in office. As a community we passed LB-840 last spring and now we need to concentrate on bringing new employment opportunities to Norfolk and the surrounding area,” Merrill said.

Even before the primary election, Merrill was attending bi-monthly city council meetings to become current on city issues. Prior to his win in November, he met with each city department head to familiarize himself with the operations of the city. On December 6 he was sworn into the Norfolk City Council.

If someone doesn't recognize him from his national TV ads, they may catch sight of him playing in a band. Besides his other talents, Merrill is an accomplished musician. A band he used to be in once opened for Led Zepellin.