

Chronic wasting disease found in Decatur County

By Kimberly Davis
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Three white-tail deer taken along Sappa Creek in central Decatur County in the past hunting season have tested positive for chronic wasting disease, which destroys an animal's brain and eventually kills it.

The disease is similar to mad cow disease in cattle, said Mike Miller, editor of *Kansas Wildlife and Parks* magazine. Scientists have not shown it can be transmitted to humans, he said, but it still is something people want to be careful of.

With the three confirmed cases in the county, he said, the department will take the first step in its contingency plan, which is holding a public meeting in Decatur County (no date has been announced yet), talking to the landowners where the deer were killed and talking to the hunters. Then, said Mr. Miller, the department will want to do some more sampling to see how widespread the infection is.

Although the disease is still somewhat rare, said Mr. Miller, the department has known about it for some time. Since 1996, the department has held an annual sampling for deer taken during season and animals killed on the roads.

Each hunting season, hunters are asked to send in samples from the deer they kill so they can be tested for chronic wasting disease. So far, only one other confirmed case has been found in Kansas, in Cheyenne County in 2005. In 2001, there was a confirmed case in a captive elk herd in Harper County, but that animal had been imported from Colorado.

The disease is known to be more widespread in both Colorado and Kansas, he said, so it's not a surprise that it might appear along the borders with Kansas.

Basically, said Mr. Miller, during the hunting season a sample is taken from the deer and sent to the veterinary lab at Kansas State University. When there is a presumptive positive out of those tests, which is what happened with these three cases, said Mr. Miller, the samples are then sent to the National Vet Lab in Iowa. He said those results have shown a confirmed positive for chronic wasting disease.

The department, he said, wasn't

surprised to have some positives with the disease close by. Last month, a positive test result was reported by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission from a deer taken just a few miles north of Decatur County in Red Willow County, Neb.

The Kansas department will be doing some more testing, too, said Mr. Miller. He said he wasn't sure of the names of the hunters or if they were local people or people who traveled in to hunt.

According to information from the department, chronic wasting disease is fatal to infected deer and elk. The progressive disease causes small holes to develop in the brain. That results in decreased brain function, which means the

deer or elk can show signs of depression, a droopy head, staggering, loss of appetite and even a lack of response to humans. That continues into weight loss, drooling and excessive thirst.

The department asks hunters to continue getting deer tested for the disease and ask them not to take deer carcasses away from the area where they lived, especially ones taken in areas where chronic wasting disease has been confirmed. It also suggests not dumping the carcasses where deer or elk can come into contact with the remains, but instead having them double-bagged and taken to a landfill, since the disease can be transmitted by contact with a dead animal or from the soil.



NEW OWNER — Andy Beikman recently purchased Bumper To Bumper. Keith Dankenbrings shows Martin Beikman a tool set, while Andy Beikman looks up some parts.

Herald staff photo by Casey McCormick

Auto parts store has new owner since first of the year

By Karen Krien

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A St. Francis couple, Andy and Mary Beikman, purchased the Bumper To Bumper auto parts store, 307 W. Jackson, St. Francis, the first of January. It was formerly owned by Roger Lauer and Keith Dankenbring. Mr. Dankenbring will continue to work full time for the Beikmans and Mr. Lauer will work when needed.

Mr. Beikman has been an ag mechanic for the past 20 years and, of those 15 years, he has been an independent mechanic. "The last five years, I have

worked heavy truck repairs into the business," Mr. Beikman said.

He is bringing his ag and semi-truck mechanic experience into the new business.

"The resource I will offer in the truck and tractor parts line will be overnight service and eventually stocking items as needed," he said.

Other new items on inventory will be galvanized tubing (octagon and square), as well as Troco oil products — hydraulic oil, engine oil, irrigation drip oil and greases.

"There is basically nothing that

we can't get," he said.

They will still be maintaining the gun line with a selection of guns, ammunition, safes and reloading supplies.

Mr. Beikman said he was ready for a change and had always wanted to own and run a parts store. He will continue to do some truck and ag repairs at his home shop but, for the time being, he is enjoying visiting with old customers as well as new ones.

In the spring, the Beikmans plans to hold an open house but they encourage people to stop by the store anytime and see what they have to offer.

Andy and Mary, who is the art teacher in the St. Francis schools, have two children. Mariah is a fifth grader and Martin is in second grade.

Martin is as excited about the new parts store as his parents and is a regular worker after school. Mariah comes down when she isn't busy.

Christina Schoenrogge, reporter

Club Clips

Pleasant Hill 4-H Club

The Pleasant Hill 4-H Club decorated the Good Samaritan Village at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 5. The group then continued the meeting at the Equity building.

The flag salutes were led by Jake Faulkender and Travis Rogers. Roll call was "What do you want for Christmas?" There were 18 members present. The song Jingle Bells was led by Reagan Beims and Emileigh Dinkel.

In old business, T-shirt orders were handed out. In new business, dates for model meeting practices were set.

Refreshments were provided by all the families and the meeting was adjourned.

Christina Schoenrogge, reporter

Pleasant Hill 4-H Club

The January meeting of the Pleasant Hill 4-H Club was on Jan. 9 at 7 p.m. Flag salutes were led by Taylor Rogers and Jude Faulkender. The song was "Greasy, Grimy Gopher Guts" led by Reagan Beims and Emileigh Dinkel. Roll call was "What's your New Year's resolution or 4-H goal?"

There were 12 members present. In correspondence, there was a thank-you note from Tammy Grimes.

Old business was a discussion on club T-shirts, model meeting and skit for 4-H Days., and the fair premium sale.

In new business, the club practiced the model meeting.

A car safety talk was given by

Christina Schoenrogge and Jandy Dunn. A food safety talk was given by Katelyn Jones.

The game was Simon Says led by Brady Dinkel and Jude Faulkender. Refreshments were served by the Jones family.

Christina Schoenrogge, reporter

Ramblers Club

The Ramblers Club met Jan. 9 at the home of Arlene Walz. The hostesses were Betty Jean Winston, Dolores Kincheloe and Arlene Walz.

The program "My Trip to Africa" was presented by Betty Jean Winston.

The next meeting will be held at 1 p.m. on Feb. 17. It will be a (belated) Christmas dinner at the home of Rose Mary Bierig.

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Patty Eckhardt
210 W. 10th
Goodland, KS 67735
(785) 899-3070

Will Schnitker
607-A East 11th
Hugoton, KS 67951
(620) 544-2261

Completed applications must be received at the above locations by the close of business February 21, 2008. FSA is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Full-Time Help Wanted

The City of Bird City, Ks. is seeking applications for a position with the city maintenance department. Duties will consist of general maintenance with City water/sewer, street maintenance, park and recreation equipment, and other duties assigned by the City.

A High School diploma or GED equivalent is required. State Certifications in municipal water/waste water systems would be beneficial but not required. Compensation based upon experience for 40 hours per week plus occasional overtime.

Applications may be obtained from the city clerk's office at 111 E. 4th, P.O. Box 219, Bird City, Ks. 67731, or phone 785-734-2616.

All applications must be returned to the city clerk's office by Feb. 4, 2008 for interview scheduling. Applicant will be subject to drug, alcohol and background checks. The city of Bird City is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Casey at 785-332-3162

Take your Valentine to Supper
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