



A TURN OF THE WHEEL and Kendra Anderson (above) learned what foods are healthy and why they make a good meal or snack last week in the American Cancer Society mobile classroom. Sarah Ruf (below) listened to a recording of what a person's lungs sound like if they are a smoker.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Brandt

## Health prevents cancer

Mobile class stresses exercise, diet and saying no

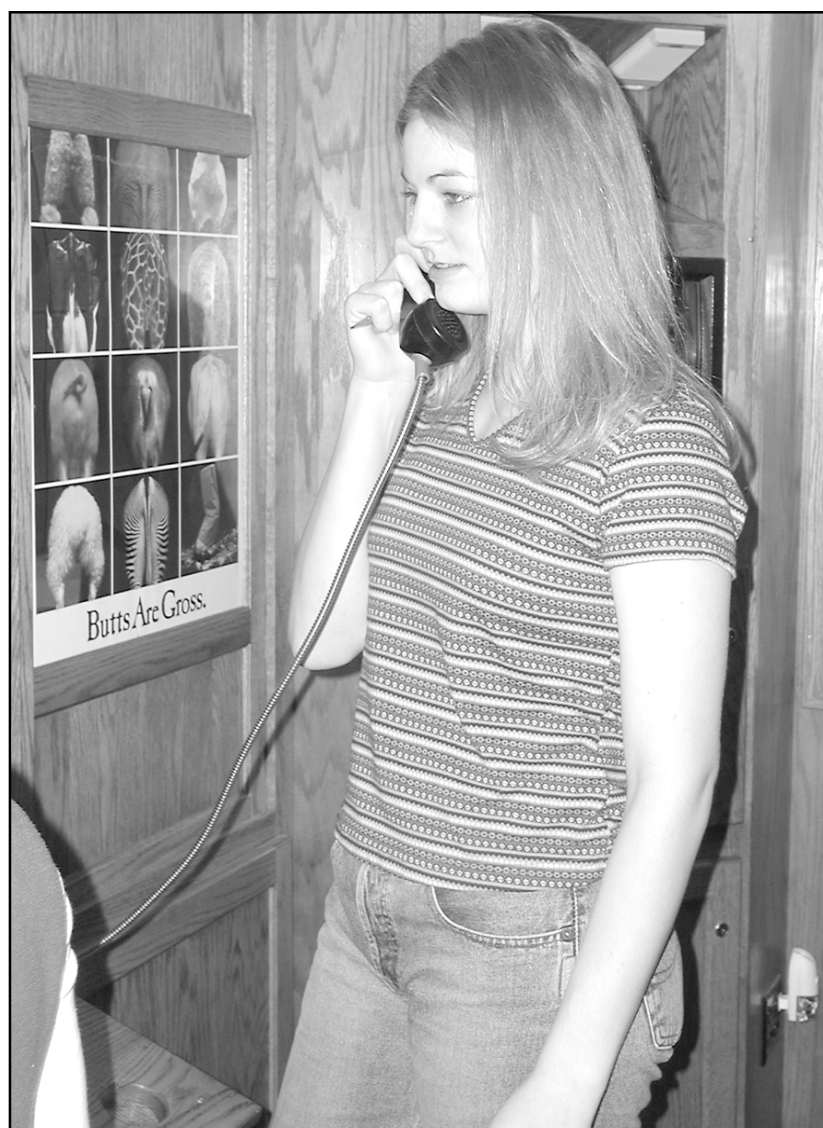
By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Students gasped and stated how sick it was for the teenagers on the screen to take a cigarette break after seeing the blackened lung during an autopsy, discolored because the person smoked.

The autopsy was only one part of a video students watched last Tuesday and Wednesday to learn about cancer prevention when the American Cancer Society's mobile classroom was at Decatur Community High School.

"The classroom provides a positive learning environment about cancer and health," said Shirley Watson, a mobile classroom specialist with the American Cancer Society. "The video, which the students only have a chance to watch part of is good, because it presents the facts on tobacco."

In the video, a group of teens either smoke cigarettes or use chew. Two of the girls who smoke are shown what smoking could do their appearance, including adding wrinkles and aging them faster. Other teens got to see an autopsy and what a healthy lung looks like as opposed to a smoker's lung. Freshmen had a shocked reaction at



seeing the lungs on the screen and were surprised when the teens in the video took a cigarette break after seeing the autopsy.

A group of young boys in the film chewed tobacco because of peer pressure, since they played baseball and were around it a lot. The boys had the chance to talk with a young man who

had mouth cancer and had only half a jaw left.

Each of the interactive learning experiences in the trailer is used to teach students what may happen and why not to chew or smoke and to eat healthy, said Ms. Watson.

The classroom, a 53-foot trailer, is (Please see CANCER on Page 5A)

## Officials question who names roads

The 911 phone is ringing in the dispatch office on the fourth floor of the Decatur County Courthouse. The dispatcher picks it up waiting for the blue screen in front of her to show an address and answers "911."

If you're calling from home or a business, any "landline" phone, the screen shows the name of the person calling, the phone number, the location of the house and any special directions. But if you're using a cellular phone, as more and more people are doing, the only thing that shows is the tower number which the call is being bounced off.

Dispatcher Roxie Pomeroy said when a cell phone call comes in, the first thing she asks is who she is talking to and the second is the number of the phone, in case the call gets disconnected.

With the 911 tax bill which has passed the Kansas House of Represent-

atives and now is in the Senate, counties would be able to charge up to 75 cents per cell phone per month to help purchase "enhanced" equipment. The enhanced 911 will be able to show the exact location where a hardwired or cell phone is being dialed from.

During a commission meeting last Tuesday, commissioners and County Clerk Marilyn Horn visited dispatch to find out what happens when calls come in and talk about the possibility of naming country roads.

Ms. Pomeroy said when a call comes in, entries for some locations show the fastest directions to the residence and then she gives those to the emergency crews. On others, she said, she has to do some "fast investigative work" on the map hanging on the wall.

Roads in Decatur County are numbered north, south, east and west from the U.S. 36-U.S. 83 intersection in

Oberlin. On the highway, most are marked with small signs at the intersections.

The roads were numbered about 10 years ago, but with the enhanced system, the county may need to name the roads so when an emergency call comes in, the coordinates can be given to help find that person.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman said when the roads were numbered 10 years ago, they picked strategic places to put signs, mostly on the highways and at major intersections. Not every intersection is signed, he said; they are intersections people are familiar with.

"We will have to do some investigation to see what will work best here if we have to name and sign all the roads," he said. "I know that other counties have used a grid system and that may (Please see ROADS on Page 5A)

## Letter points finger at extension agent here

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

The role of extension agent Byron Hale was questioned in a letter to the Decatur County Extension Council after Peggy Roe resigned her job as the family and consumer science agent.

The letter came from Mike Helm, a rural mail carrier. The letter, printed on Page 4A of this week's *Oberlin Herald*, blames Mr. Hale for the resignation.

Extension Council members received copies of the letter, as did *The Oberlin Herald*.

Mr. Hale was given the opportunity to respond to Mr. Helm's letter but said he didn't have any comments at this point.

Mr. Hale has been the county exten-

sion agent specializing in agriculture since August 1989. Kansas State University places extension agents in Kansas to be the liaison between the 4-H and fair board and the community, to help with non-traditional agriculture and administer 4-H programs, he said.

The extension office on the first floor of the courthouse receives money from the county and state. This year, the office has been allotted \$60,000 from the county budget. The office receives about \$15,886 from K-State each year per agent for salaries. The office also receives from the college technology support, benefit packages and a postage allotment. The office is run by the extension council,

which oversees the bills and operations, said Sid Metcalf, a farmer and chairman of the council, but the council has no say in hiring or firing.

Mrs. Roe said she had been the family and consumer science agent the last 2 1/2 years. She did "non-formal education" for area families on with topics people face every day.

She also worked with the family and consumer science part of the 4-H program, dealing with kids. As an agent, she worked here and in Rawlins County.

Mrs. Roe, who turned in her resignation about a month ago, said she didn't want to talk about why she left the office.

"I don't have any comment to the letter," she said.

Chairman Metcalf said he and other (Please see AGENT on Page 5A)



Byron Hale

## Firm hasn't yet provided countywide strategic plan

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

The Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. hasn't decided what to do with the information it paid a Colorado firm \$25,000 to develop for a countywide strategic plan, but the board seemed less than thrilled with the results so far.

The group contracted with Tekquity Ventures to find out if a technology business would fit here and to gather information needed for a county-wide strategic plan. At a board meeting Thursday night, President Vickie Bailey said she didn't think the firm had lived up to the contract, since the county didn't have a strategic plan yet.

The corporation paid Tekquity \$25,000 raised from community organizations for its services, and the firm wants \$10,000 a month to help develop a "business incubator" operation here.

At a meeting last month, each of the board members and subcommittee members who originally made contact with the Colorado firm took home feasibility, business and action plans submitted by the firm. Before representatives from Tekquity arrived at the meeting last week, the board talked about those plans.

"I read through it and don't know if I'm confident with all of it," said Allen Shelton. "As an attorney, I saw some things I didn't understand."

The newest member of the board, farmer Robbie Henningson, said he saw several things going on in the plans, there wasn't just one main point. Connie Grafel, marketing director for the corporation, said the thing which worried her was in September, Tekquity seemed interested in being part of a proposed call center and busi-

ness incubator, but now it sounds like they don't want to be a part of it.

"To be real honest with you, it kicks up a lot of butterflies in my belly," said Mr. Shelton.

The plan calls for the community to put up \$250,000, which would mean the corporation would have to endorse it, he said, but how can the board do that if they don't know what is going on?

After the first 30 minutes of the meeting, Tekquity representatives, Karl Dakon, Dale Graff and Charlie Mylander arrived to answer questions.

Mr. Dakon said he knew the group still needed to provide the plan but didn't have enough information to drill it down yet.

The men didn't give a time when the county would get the plan, which is (Please see PLAN on Page 5A)

## Postcard, almost a century old, returned to descendants of owner

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

After almost 100 years, a postcard which was sent to Oberlin in 1910 soon will be returned to descendants of the original owner.

The postcard, with the cat and flowers on the front, was sent to Oberlin on Feb. 12, 1910.

Stacie Schmelzer said she bought the card for \$3.50 about eight or 10 years ago from a vendor on the mall in her hometown of Plano, Texas. She said she was searching through boxes of postcards when she came across the one with the cats and bought it because she liked the picture and it had been postmarked on her birthday.

The postcard, addressed to Sina Jorgensen, sat in a box at Mrs. Schmelzer's Texas home until last month, when it came to light again. She said the postcard doesn't really show its years. It is a little yellow in spots, but still in good condition, since it has been kept in the bag which

she bought it in.

For the last three or four weeks, she has been trying to track down someone who was related to the person who was supposed to get the card or who had sent it.

Mrs. Schmelzer said she started with the library in Plano, a city of about 300,000. There she searched for media outlets in this area. She said she called news stations and *The Oberlin Herald*, but didn't have any luck until the beginning of last week.

Being the mother of a 13 year-old and an 8-month-old, Mrs. Schmelzer said, she isn't home a lot and she and a reporter at the paper started playing "phone tag." After they finally connected, the reporter talked with Mary Lou Olson, society editor of *The Herald*, who said Sina Jorgensen was a relative of the Lohoefer family. Mrs. Olson suggested talking to Ray Lohoefer, and he told the reporter it was actually Jerry Lohoefer she needed.

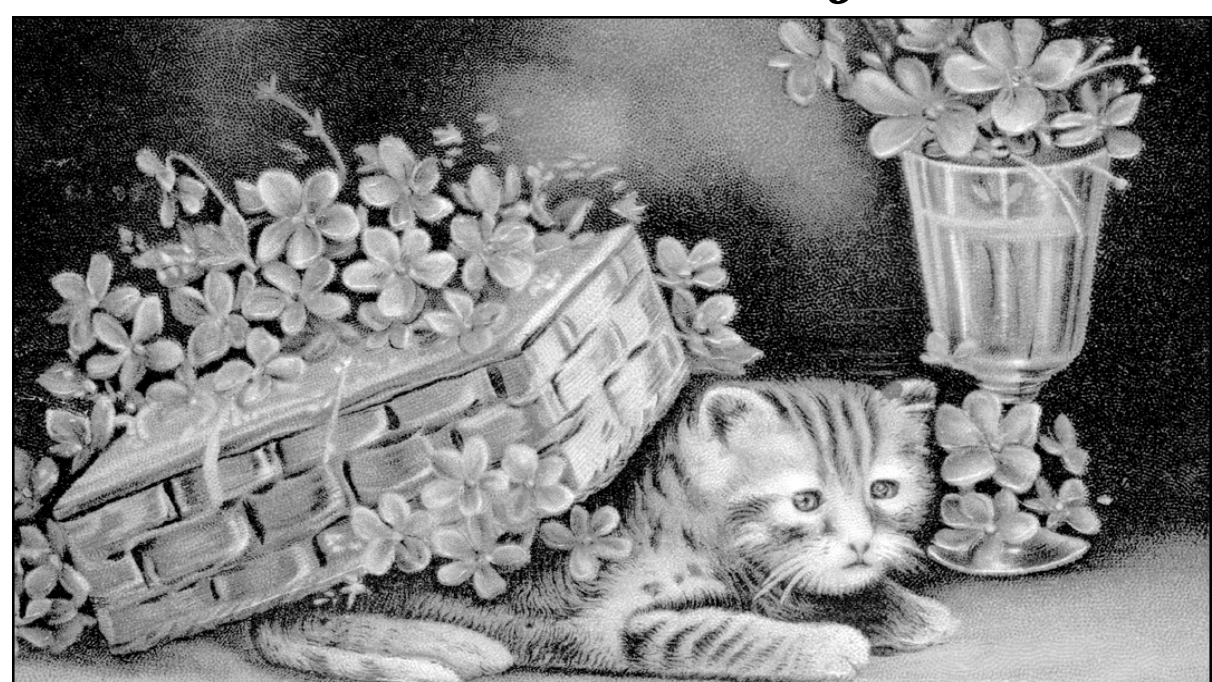
Mrs. Schmelzer said the card was from a Lota and Lina, who both wrote short messages about the family and wanted to see Sina soon. The postcard was mailed from Hastings, Neb.

Sina Jorgensen, for whom the card was meant, was born in Holdrege, Neb. Later she was married to Oscar Lohoefer of Oberlin at the age of 17 and lived here. They were married 74 years. For a short time, the two moved to Oregon because Oscar gave up farming, but then moved back.

She had one child, Harold, who was married to Irel Muller, and they had a son, Jerry Lohoefer.

Sina was a wonderful cook, loved her flowers and was a good housekeeper, said Irel Lohoefer.

Mr. Lohoefer said he knew his grandmother well, since he was raised here and happened to be her only grandchild. He said his grandmother died at the age of 91, but he keeps memories of her and has a few plates which once (Please see CARD on Page 5A)



WITH A PICTURE OF A CAT and purple flowers, the postcard meant for Sina Jorgensen was bought in a mall in Plano, Texas, about 10 years ago.

# \* Plan for the county hasn't been provided by firm

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 Mr. Dakon said the venture capital part of their business isn't interested in financing a project here because they couldn't get the turn around they want. But, he said, Tekquity still wants to be involved if the corporation decides to do two of three things.  
 The main interest, he said, is if Oberlin wants to do a business incubator. If the group just wants to do a call center, he said the company knows people who just do that and can get the development board in touch with them.  
 Before anything starts on the project, he said, two questions need to be looked into, where

people here want the job focus, and whether the group wants to provide long-term jobs or interim jobs and the number.  
 The second question is capital availability, meaning can the money be raised to start something. Tekquity has suggested raising \$250,000 locally and getting the other half of the money from grants.  
 Mr. Dakon said the group has asked venture capital organizations and other people to fund the project but haven't found anyone interested yet. He suggested starting to apply for grant money if the group wants to pursue the project and also to talk to area people about investing money. He said he didn't know how formal the

corporation needed to be in raising money with local people. Mr. Dakon said the economic development group should form a sub-committee of people to find those interested in putting up the money for the project.  
 After the corporation answers those questions, Mr. Dakon said, Tekquity representatives can come back.  
 If the group decides to keep Tekquity on after the first contract has been fulfilled with a strategic plan and private placement memorandum, the group will have to retain their firm's services.  
 That would cost \$10,000 a month, according to information handed out at last month's meet-

ing. No decisions have been made by the group yet.  
 In other business, board members:  
 • Heard a proposal fees the agency pays the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce. The board agreed to pay \$150 a month for salary and \$180 for rent, reducing the total monthly payment. The board pays half the salary and half the rent which varied in the last year, there wasn't a set figure. Ms. Grafel said she would present the plan to the chamber board at their meeting on Thursday. She said when the board agreed to help pay for the chamber office, the Chamber didn't have any money, but according to their last budget

report, it had \$6,000.  
 • Talked about the renewal of Ms. Grafel's contract as marketing director. President Bailey said she thought the contract needed to be renewed. The board agreed. Ms. Grafel's proposal was for another \$200 a month from the board; she now gets \$1,750. She said when she started the job, it wasn't full-time but she is working full-time. At the next City Council meeting, she said she would ask the city for a 3 percent raise.  
 "My feeling is you don't fix it if it isn't broke," said Mrs. Bailey. "Connie does a great job."  
 The contract for the next two years was approved.

# \* Roads aren't named yet here

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 be the best way to go here."  
 With the current numbering system, starting at the intersection leaving Oberlin, every mile on the highway has a sign like 1E for one mile east.  
 The county roads all have traditional names and highway numbers, but they aren't 911 names, he said, and many roads in the townships don't have names.  
 About three years ago, Cheyenne County officials named the county roads, said Gary Rogers, emergency manager there. He said the project was started after the legislature passed a law which said they could use 911 tax money to pay for road signs.  
 The commissioners passed a resolution for the naming of the roads and then had to publish it in the paper. The money is then collected and the signs are made.

tax on wireless phones, since some people don't use landline phones at all anymore, he doesn't think it will be possible for a county to go to the enhanced system without some big dollar support.  
 Mrs. Horn said she doesn't want to see the enhanced system. If the county names all the roads, with this equipment it would be just another step towards centralization of dispatch, meaning the 911 calls could be answered in Hays. Mrs. Horn asked how someone in Hays could know where people in Decatur County live.  
 Commissioner Ralph Unger said he had several ideas for naming the roads. They could use names which meant something to the area, he said, and maybe do numbers one way.  
 Commissioners questioned whether the county officials had the authority to name the roads or if it was up to the post office.



Oscar Lohofener and Sina (Jorgenson) Lohofener, Jerry Lohofener's grandparents.

"It is the coming thing," said Mr. Rogers. "We have so many people who are transient in rural areas."  
 He said he has been with the fire department for 35 years and prides himself on knowing where everyone in the county lives, but with people so mobile today, there are people renting farm homes who he doesn't know.  
 There are also vacant houses which had people living in them when he started.  
 The Cheyenne County system is basically a grid, said Mr. Rogers. Roads running east to west have numbers and those which run north to south have letters.  
 Now he is working with Rawlins County on naming the roads, which will be the same as Cheyenne County. He said although the roads are being marked, he doesn't see either county going to enhanced 911. Although he agrees it is important to collect the 911

members of the council hated to see Mrs. Roe leave, but once someone makes up their mind it is hard to change it. He said the council asked if they could do something to change her mind.  
 "Yes, we do regret seeing her go," he said. "She was doing a whale of a job."  
 In her letter, Mr. Metcalf said, the agent said she was going to pursue other opportunities, adding that he wasn't sure what those were.  
 Mr. Helm, in his letter, refers to the county fair and 4-H program as "two pillars in the community," saying each has deteriorated.  
 Mr. Metcalf noted that since 30 or 40 years ago, the average age of people in the county has increased and many people don't have 4-H age kids anymore.  
 He said this is one reason the numbers in 4-H groups have declined. In those days, he said, 4-H was a main activity for youths, but today there are other activities.  
 "Still, I would recommend 4-H to anyone," he said. "It is an excellent program, but times are changing and people do different things and prioritize differently."  
 Referring to Mr. Helm's letter, Mr. Metcalf said there were parts he agreed with and parts he didn't, although he didn't want to elaborate. He said Mr. Helm's letter is not the only one council members have received since Mrs.

# \* Card bought in mall meant for Oberlinite

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 belonged to her and his grandfather.  
 The Jorgensons, Sina's parents, used to live across the street east from Faith Lutheran Church and Mr. Lohofener and his great-grandma spent many hours sitting on the porch swing at the home, now owned and occupied by Alyce Avery. Grandma Jorgenson enjoyed taking care of him, said Irel Lohofener.  
 Last week, Mr. Lohofener received the postcard meant for his grandmother. How it ended up in the mall, nobody knows. Mrs. Schmelzer said the man she bought it from had tons of old postcards.  
 Nobody knows if Mr. Lohofener's grandmother ever had a chance to read the card, but what Mrs. Schmelzer does know is that Mr. Lohofener will be able to share it with his family.  
 "It took me three weeks and a lot of phone calls," she said, "but it was worth it."  
 She said she hopes her story will encourage people who have items from other families to return them, too.  
 Mrs. Schmelzer said as a mother, she wanted to find out who the card belonged to and give it back to them so they could share it with future generations, especially since the card is almost a century old.

# \* Cancer lessons taught

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 equipped with five computer screens which work off of touch, the food wheel, a small movie screen and other interactive ways for students to learn.  
 Another part of the trailer was a giant wheel with pictures of strawberries, fried chicken, steak and other foods hung on the wall, turned by students so a certain food met up with the arrow which would then make the computer show why that food is important in your diet.  
 When the arrow pointed at strawberries, the students learned that they were the best food on the wheel to get Vitamin C and fiber.  
 Actually, strawberries are higher in Vitamin C than oranges, said Ms. Watson.  
 On entering the trailer, the students got a worksheet to fill out with questions they could find the answers to on the computer screens. The screens contained information about physical activity, how to prevent cancer and information about smoking and chewing tobacco.  
 Biology teacher Amanda Tischendorf-Jones said her classes will keep the worksheets until they discuss the diet unit and lesson on the respiratory system, after spring break. Students had about an hour in the trailer, which didn't allow them enough time to fill out the

# \* Agent has little to say about letter

(Continued from Page 1A)  
 Roe's resignation. He said there have been several, not about Mr. Hale but the absence of Mrs. Roe.  
 Mr. Metcalf said farming services were different 30 or 40 years ago, too. He said back then, people went to their extension agent to answer questions or for help, but now there are several options with co-ops, crop consultants and other places where farmers can get answers.  
 "It is still absolutely necessary to have a county agent," he said. "Here, there are things the extension office can provide to people which they can't get other places."  
 For example, he said, Mrs. Roe was holding a baby-sitting program and classes for young parents. He said the extension office is basically a teaching institution, "an arm of K-State."  
 Patti Uehlin, a member of the council, said she didn't want to comment on the letter, but said that the council was going to hold an emergency meeting Monday night to ask Mr. Helm to retract it.  
 Also called to comment were Pam Wilson, Mike McKenna, Montine Alstrom, Kelly Shields and Torrey Morford. Mr. Metcalf and Mrs. Uehlin were the only people who had called back by Monday evening.  
 Mr. Metcalf didn't want to comment on what action the council might pursue because of the letter.  
 "This letter is an opinion," he said. "Good or bad, it is just his opinion."

# \* Business alliance plans social event for Friday

To have a chance to talk to people outside of meetings, the Oberlin Business Alliance is holding a social from 5 to 7 p.m. Friday at the American Legion Hall.  
 The idea is to get business people out to have a good time in a social atmosphere and have a chance to talk and get to know each other better, said Chairwoman Karen Metcalf. The social is open to anyone and costs nothing, although there is a cash bar. The evening will feature finger food by Arty Party Catering.  
 Mrs. Metcalf said if you want to come, give the Chamber of Com-

# \* Cancer lessons taught

merce office a call at 475-3441 so they have an idea on a head count for the food.  
 Anyone interested in joining the alliance, which boosts retail business in town, will receive \$25 off the membership fee during the social, \$50 instead of \$75.  
 Those in attendance will be eligible to win a dinner for two at the Legion or a dinner for four catered by Arty Party.  
 Mrs. Metcalf said she invites everyone to come out and meet new people, catch up with friends and have a good time.

# Emergency forms provide fast directions

Decatur County Dispatch has forms each household in the county can fill out with information such as a person's address, the quickest way to your house and if there are special circumstances for emergency response reasons.  
 The information from the form is then loaded into the 911 system so when you place an emergency call from your home, the information will pop up on the dispatcher's computer screen. Some people in the county have filled one of the forms out, but not everyone, dispatchers say.  
 Last week at the county commission meeting, dispatcher Roxie Pomeroy, discovered the commissioners didn't know about the forms, designed to help with emergency responses.  
 One question asked on the form is what emergency unit is the closest to your house, whether the ambulance needs to be dispatched from Jennings,

Oberlin or the new one in Selden.  
 Emergency Preparedness Director Bert Cool said dispatch gets new forms every day and then they load them.  
 Ms. Pomeroy said she would like to see a push to have everyone fill them out. One suggestion was to mail them to those people who have called in with an emergency and don't have directions on their screen.  
 She said anything can be typed in, for example, if you live alone or are in a wheelchair.  
 "It is really important to get these filled out," she said, "even if you live in town, you may have special directions."  
 Forms can be picked up in the county clerk's office on the third floor of the courthouse and dropped off in dispatch.  
 "To me, directions on the 911 screen are a whole lot better than an address," said Ms. Pomeroy.

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