

## Ecstasy pills purchased at high school

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Two 15-year-old boys allegedly bought the drug ecstasy at a dance at Decatur Community High School, prompting law enforcement officials to search lockers at the school with the county's drug dog last week.

The boys reportedly bought the pills, one plain and the other with an image imprinted on it, for \$20 at the dance, said Chief of Police Wade Lockhart. The youths' names have not been released because no charges have been brought against them so far.

Principal Gordon Matson said the dance, sponsored by Teen-agers Acting and Caring Together, was Saturday, March 24. Sunday afternoon, March 25, he received a call at home from the parents of the boys saying they had bought the illegal drug at school. Monday morning, Mr. Matson said, he met with Principal Duane Dorshorst and Superintendent Duane Steele.

After that meeting, he said, they turned the problem over to law enforcement, calling Chief Lockhart about the incident. They invited the chief to have the drug dog go through the school on Monday. It is legal for the school to give officers permission to search because they own the lockers.

"We decided Monday morning that we needed to check to see if we had anything in the school," said Superintendent Steele. "We didn't and that was very positive."

The group that sponsored the dance, known as TACT, gives teens a chance to be role models for younger kids. Members organize events, supposedly alcohol and drug free, and among other things, eat lunch with students at the grade school and are supposed to be role models in the community.

Monday, March 26, all four Oberlin Police officers and several sheriff's officers went into the school about 1:50 p.m., accompanied by Luna, the county's drug dog, to check the lockers. That morning there had been a planned locker clean out, giving students the opportunity to throw away trash or other things, which Mr. Matson said the school does about every nine weeks.

While the kids were in class, Mr. Matson said, he announced over the loud speaker system that the school was in a non-threatening lock down situation. No one would be allowed to leave during the search.

Luna went through the school, smelling closed lockers. She didn't hit on anything and was taken out. Then the officers opened all the lockers and did a visual search, said Chief Lockhart. The officers didn't find anything, either.

Mr. Matson said although the investigation is still underway, the main

## New drugs deadly for teen users

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

Methylenedioxymethamphetamine, more commonly known as ecstasy or XTC, an illegal drug sold for about \$10 to \$15 a pill, recently in the news for killing a 16-year-old Colorado girl, was sold at a Decatur Community High School dance.

The drug is taken orally, according to the U.S. Department of Justice's Drug Enforcement Administration web site. It causes takers to experience "profoundly positive feelings, empathy for others, elimination of anxiety and extreme relaxation." The effects last four to six hours as the drug tells the body it doesn't need to eat, drink or sleep.

The pills, small and odorless, have become popular with teenagers, said Shirley Armstead, public information officer with the drug agency.

"For some reason, people think ecstasy is a safe drug and there is a lot of hype about it," she said. "Ecstasy is more dangerous than marijuana because using it can raise the temperature as high as 109 degrees and put you into instant death."

Although research on the long-term effects of the drug started only three years ago, it has been discovered that the drug causes brain damage and "depression, anxiety, memory loss and other neuropsychotic disorders." Other side effects, which are more short term are "nausea, hallucinations, chills, sweating, increases in body temperature, tremors, involuntary teeth clenching, muscle cramping and blurred vision."

Ms. Armstead said the drug also causes heart and kidney failure. (Please see DRUG on Page 8A)

thing is to get the school back to normal. He said they haven't taken any action to discipline anyone since they don't want to jeopardize any legal action.

"The bottom line is to make sure who the supplier is and stop it," he said.

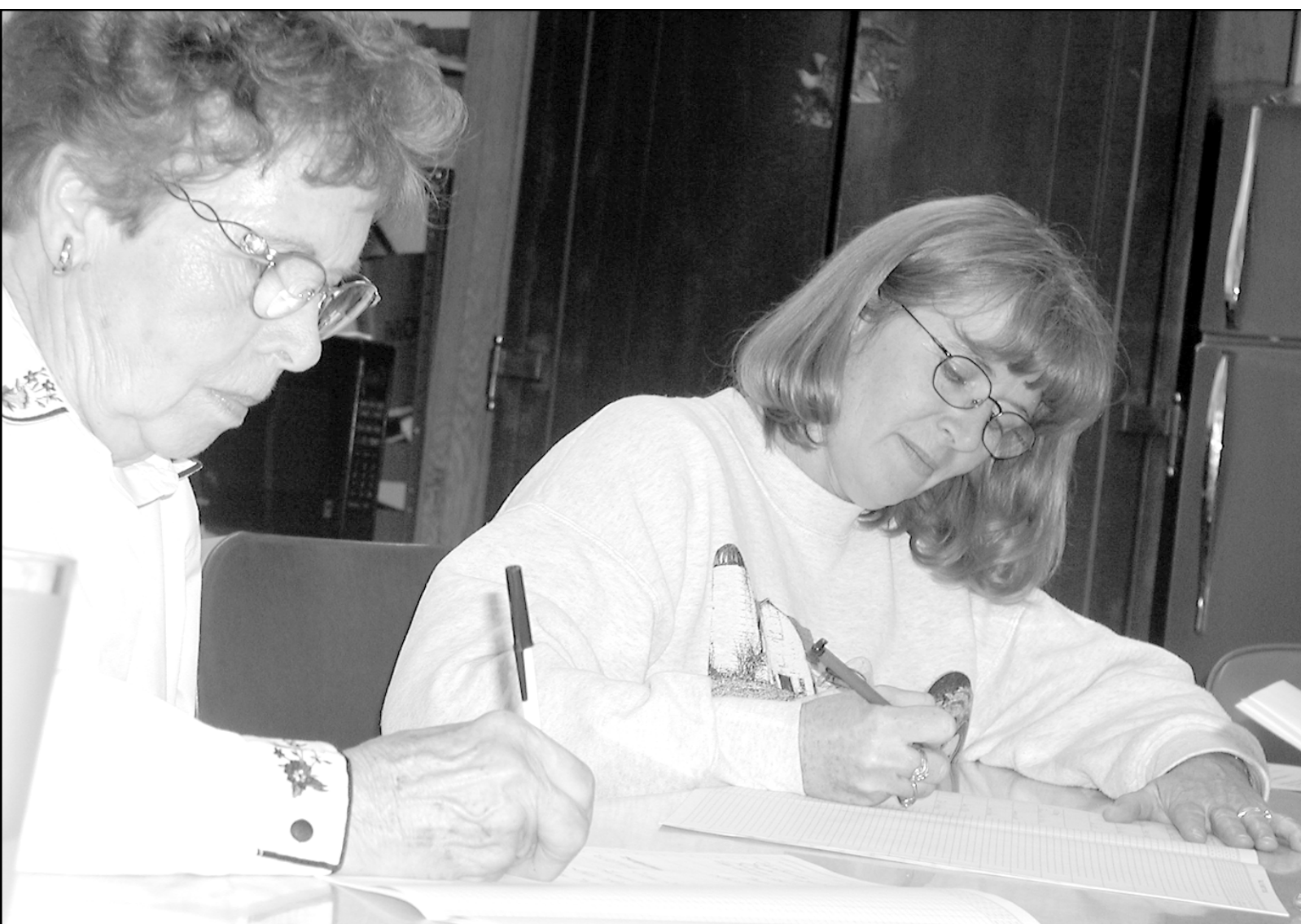
Officers could arrest both the people who bought and sold the drugs, but (Please see ECSTASY on Page 8A)

board member, principal or the superintendent should act as an expert to answer questions.

During public meetings and speeches, he said, speakers should work at pulling out some of the real problems at the schools and show the solutions.

Mrs. Stallman said the group needs to start informing the teachers at both of the schools first because many of them aren't equipped to give speeches or answer questions now. Mr. Shogren said then the first task for the speakers' bureau is to hold a meeting for the teachers and staff to educate them.

Volunteers also looked at a "target 600" campaign, which is basically finding 50 people who will call people and get them to register and then (Please see GROUP on Page 8A)



**VOLUNTEERS WORKING INTO THE NIGHT** at the courthouse, including Dolores Koerperich (left) and Rhonda Wildeman (above), counted ballots and put tally marks in the election books. County Commissioner Patricia Glenn (below) helped during the last hour of the election, cutting corners off the ballots. — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Brandt

## Council gets new faces

### Incumbent, retired vet, military man lead ballot

By KIM BRANDT

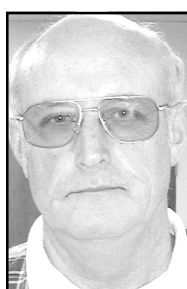
Oberlin voters elected an incumbent councilman, a retired veterinarian and a write-in candidate with military experience for the next four years to the council.



Jay Anderson



Stan McEvoy



Ken Shobe

- Banker Gale Cook with 175 as a write-in.
- Richard Russ, a contractor and former councilman, 157.
- Phil Erickson, a retired teacher, 108.

There were also two others write-ins, Roger Cochran and Alan Marietta, each with one vote. Out of 1,309 registered voters, 629 turned out to cast ballots. That nearly matched the prediction of County Clerk Marilyn Horn of a 50



percent turnout.

Dr. Anderson said he wanted to make decisions that are right for the future of the city. He said tough decisions needed to be made about the physical facilities, things like streets and the water system.

"I hope I live up to the expectations of the voters," he said after the vote came in, just after 8 p.m. Polls had closed at 7 p.m.

Mr. Shobe, who had run as a write-

in candidate, said he is anxious to learn the ins and outs of city government. Growing up in the area and graduating from high school here, he said, this is his home and he wants to help improve the town for the future, including the water project and the sidewalk improvements.

"I'm looking forward to serving the city I grew up in," he said.

Mr. McEvoy, who sells insurance (Please see COUNCIL on Page 8A)

## Committee studies fact sheet for school bond issue election

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

The first draft of a front-and-back "bullet sheet" with information on the Oberlin school bond issue was handed out to executive committee volunteers running the campaign last week and should be ready for the public soon.

On Tuesday, 16 volunteers met at the district office with Steve Shogren, bond salesman from Ranson and Associates out of Wichita. He handed out of the 11-by-17 sheet with information telling about challenges at the schools because of the needed improvements, the proposed solutions and other information. Mr. Shogren said the volunteers need to look at the sheet and expand on the ideas. He said right now the information is very general and it needs to be specific.

He suggested giving the sheet to the action-committee information central, co-coordinated by teacher Brenda Breth and real estate agent Jack Metcalf. A noon Friday deadline was set for ideas for the sheet. At their next meeting on Tuesday, April 10, the group will put the finishing touches on the sheet.

"I am not sure we have enough definition in the challenges," said Mr. Shogren. "We need to show the need. I know you are proud of your buildings, but we need to lay out the dirty laundry and justify your needs."

The sheet, since it is not asking for a yes vote, but is just providing information, can be paid for by the school district, he said.

Mr. Shogren said the document will be used to hand out and to give speeches from.

Mrs. Breth said she thinks the information needs to include not only a breakdown of what each item in the renovation will cost, but what the bond issue will cost a taxpayer.

The co-chairs went through with each action committee what they have done and if they have a game plan. Mr. Shogren told Kristin McHugh, co-coordinator for voter registration, to check with the county and get a list of registered voters and find out when the last day to register is.

Gary Walter, co-coordinator of ways and means, asked how much money it normally takes to put out information and run a campaign of this size. Mr. Shogren suggested having around \$2,000 to \$3,000. Mr. Walter said one idea is to send letters to parents and grandparents to explain what the district is trying to do

and ask for contributions. Mr. Shogren said in other cities, people have gone to businesses and banks.

The committee has to keep a record of all donations made and turn them in at the end of the year. The law says that since the group is an action committee, they have to turn their reports into the state, not the county clerk.

Teacher Cassandra Stallman, co-coordinator for community relations, asked if they do pamphlets, buttons, yard signs and items like that if Ranson helps with that. Mr. Shogren said since the company is an agent of the board they can't help promote a yes vote.

For the speakers' bureau, Mr. Shogren said he thinks everyday average "John Q's," as he called them, should do the speaking and then a

## Hospital board says yes to weather machine

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

The Decatur County Hospital Board agreed last week to spend up to \$7,000 for an automated weather observer at the Oberlin Airport on U.S. 83, which will record what is happening in the atmosphere and let pilots know whether it is safe to fly.

Greg Lohoefer, board president, said the city approached them about paying for some of the equipment since the hospital uses the airport to fly patients out and doctors in. He said that the Kansas Department of Transportation is paying for 90 percent of the cost, and the local share will be from \$7,000

to \$10,000 with a monthly maintenance fee of \$325.

The machine will measure temperature, wind speed and other weather elements which people at the airport can use to determine whether it is safe to land or fly.

Board Member Gene Gallentine said he thinks the equipment is valuable, especially since they have the opportunity now to have it subsidized by the state.

Hospital Administrator Lynn Doeden said when they determine whether it is safe to fly, they can't see what is going on in the sky and the hos-

pital needs to know that before they send someone off.

"With us using the air flight as much as we do, it is worth it," she said.

Mr. Gallentine added it would be a "great service to the community."

Mrs. Doeden said without checking the figures, she would estimate the hospital uses the airport about twice a month.

There is a weather machine in McCook, but since things can be so different, the board agreed it is important to have one here.

The board agreed to pay up to \$7,000 for the machine if the city picks up the

rest of the possible \$10,000 and the monthly payments.

The board also approved up to \$7,500 for clinic improvements. Mr. Lohoefer said the clinic staff is looking at reupholstering the chairs, painting the walls, replacing 39 door casings and other small projects which haven't been upgraded in the last 20 years.

Margee Wilson, with Cedar Living Center, asked board approval to use \$400 out of memorial money to replace name cards and numbers on the doors. She said the ones in the building now look very institutional and she wants to (Please see BOARD on Page 8A)

## Senator will stop here for breakfast next week

Sen. Pat Roberts will speak at a breakfast sponsored by the Oberlin-Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce at 7:30 a.m. next Wednesday at The LandMark Inn.

Everyone is welcome to attend the breakfast, which will cost \$5.95. Contact the chamber office at 475-3441 by Friday.

Sen. Roberts is from Dodge City and is a graduate of Kansas State University. In 1969 he became the

administrative assistant to 1st District Congressman Keith Sebelius. After Rep. Sebelius's retirement in 1980, Sen. Roberts took his seat.

In 1996, Sen. Roberts ran for the position he holds now.

He sits on the Agriculture, Armed Services, Education, and Labor and Pensions committees, the Select Intelligence Committee and is the chairman of the Select Ethics Committee.

# \* Group works on plan

(Continued from Page 1A)  
ask them to vote yes and get a commitment from them.  
Volunteer Jill Reichert asked if somewhere down the road the Jennings School District closes and those kids came to Oberlin schools, if they would have to help pay off the bond. Mr. Shogren said he didn't think so. It is only the taxpayers who lived in the district at the time of the vote.  
Mr. Steele said it works the same way if Jennings had any debt, the Oberlin taxpayers wouldn't pay on it.

# \* Ecstasy bought, not used

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Chief Lockhart said he isn't saying that will happen in this case. With the cooperation the department has received from the two boys and their parents, there may not be any charges against them, although he said the decision is up to the county attorney.  
Chief Lockhart said the boys didn't take the drugs, which he has in his possession. The pills were tested to make sure they were ecstasy after he called the Kansas Bureau of Investigation to find out what type of test to run. There have been no arrests in the case, he said, but officers are working on one. Anyone arrested for selling a narcotic on school property could face both jail time and fines, he said.  
"If there is a reason to arrest someone, we think it should happen," said Superintendent Steele. "We don't want drugs in the school and want to see the law followed and charges filed."  
He said he felt it was an isolated incident, but if the school thinks there may be drugs in the building, officials won't hesitate to search again.

# \* Board says yes to clinic changes

(Continued from Page 1A)  
do something else making them all the same and up-to-date. The board approved the money.  
In other business, board members:  
• Received an offer to buy the Corder house at 809 W. Colombia. It has a listed price of \$48,000, said Mr. Lohofener.  
The board decided they didn't need the extra space since they already have a home across the street.  
• Heard the fourth quarter report from Mrs. Doeden, who said for 2001 the hospital will be focusing on outpatient surveys. She said the inpatient surveys have continued to have high numbers. The hospital is still receiving low ratings for its food and people are asking for more home-cooked like meals. She said that Banner Health would provide the facility with \$100,000 for the year, but they have a list of stuff they want to do and the total is more than that.  
Mrs. Doeden said she went through the list and found the things which really need to be done this year and got it under the \$100,000 mark.  
• Held a closed session for non-elected personnel for 15 minutes for administrative evaluation. The board also had a 15-minute closed session for financial affairs. No action was taken.  
• Toured the hospital

# \* Council victors include veteran, two new faces

(Continued from Page 1A)  
in Norton, has served for the last four years on the council and now has been elected to another term.  
"I am honored and anxious to work for the taxpayers for another four years," he said.  
The councilman said he doesn't see any major changes to the way things work. He said he would like to see the city keep moving ahead on important projects. Mr. McEvoy has pushed changes in the employee insurance plan so that the city doesn't pay for all of the family coverage, a growing expense.  
As the only incumbent re-elected, he said he hopes to help the new council members get acquainted to the job.  
"They will be relying on all of us to

## Playing with the first toy



TOYS AND EQUIPMENT were donated to the Little Sam's Day Care Friday during a baby shower at the Good Samaritan Center. Day Care Manager Barb Berry held her son, Mason, who touched the nursery toy through the plastic.  
— Herald staff photo by Jeanette Krizek

# \* Drug can cause brain damage

(Continued from Page 1A)  
ure. Since the drug is illegal, it isn't approved by the Federal Drug Administration, she said, and there are no restrictions on what people can lace it with. Even straight ecstasy, though, isn't safe.  
The pill has been tagged the "rave drug" because it is a stimulant and hallucinogenic and people can dance all night, she said. A rave is a late night party held at a hidden location, sometimes a warehouse, abandoned house or something like that. Most raves provide a place for people to dance, drink and take drugs. Many kids don't know ecstasy also can raise their body temperature until a user's system shuts down or they can go into convulsions and their internal organs will start to bleed, she said.  
Ecstasy taken at a party caused 16-year-old Britney Chambers to slip into a coma and die in the Boulder area. Miss Chambers took the drug at her 16th birthday party, according to articles in the *Longmont Daily Times-Call*. The girl took only one pill, officials said, and then drank three gallons of water in about 45 minutes. Her mother found her later in the bathroom

vomiting.  
The girl slipped into a coma, never opening her eyes again. On Feb. 3, she was removed from life support and died. Officials said Miss Chambers didn't overdose; she took the minimum dosage of one pill.  
Later in February, a 15-year-old girl from Castle Rock who officials believe took Ecstasy was placed into a medically induced coma. In an article officials stated that they believed the girl took the drug at a rave-like party in Boulder.  
Miss Armstead said there have been numerous deaths because of the drug.  
Although ecstasy may be new to northwest Kansas, she said there are approximately 3 million tablets smuggled into the county every week. Nationally ecstasy use is on the rise.  
Last Wednesday the Wyoming Highway Patrol pulled a man over for speeding and made the nation's largest stop for ecstasy. Officials said they found 135,000 pills, 147 pounds, with a street value of up to \$6 million.  
The teen-agers who bought the pills at the school dance here were the first case Police Chief Wade Lockhart has seen.

In Thomas County, Undersheriff Mike Baughn, who is a Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) officer, said the group will start to educate people on the drug. He said he has heard of problems and use of it in the Wichita and Hutchinson area, but out here it is something new.  
He said they are just starting to get information on the drug.  
"Ecstasy is going to be a real problem," said Mr. Baughn. "I can see that now. It is so easily accessible and it is a fad drug right now."  
A fad drug, he said, which can kill you.

# Grant to provide education about meth

Decatur County has one of the highest number of kids using methamphetamine in Kansas, according to the 1999 Kansas Communities That Care student survey, and a group here is trying to change that.  
The Decatur County Interagency Team, organized two years ago, has received a \$1,500 grant from the state Juvenile Justice Authority for meth education, said Peggy Pratt, director of Northwest Kansas Juvenile Services.  
The group, which is made up of people from county entities and representatives from both county school districts, plans to use the money to educate staff at the hospital on the symptoms of meth use, and work with Rotary Club members, since many of them have businesses where people can buy meth making products, and high school kids.  
In business, Mrs. Pratt said people need to look for items being bought in bulk, such as rubbing alcohol, rock salt, lye, iodine, acetone, paint thinner, coffee filters, glass bottles, batteries and some allergy medications.  
Mrs. Pratt said she has been in con-

tact with Principal Gordon Matson at the high school to start planning education of his students. With the recent discovery of the drug ecstasy at a school function, a member of the meth group said the program will be expanded to include information on that drug.  
The group says part of the reason to target meth is because replies to the student survey in 1999 found 4.2 percent of sixth, eighth, 10th and 12th graders here reported they had used meth at least once. That is higher than the state average of 3.4 percent. At least 2.1 percent of students here said they used meth in the last 30 days.  
The team agreed in order to decrease use of the drug, it needs to make people aware of the problem. The other project goal is to "increase healthy beliefs and clear standards of families, schools, communities and individuals" through prevention education.

# Write-in wins mayor's seat over incumbent

Councilman Bob Jones got 37 write-in votes in Jennings city balloting Tuesday to oust incumbent Mayor Richard Rowlinson.  
The mayor got nine votes, also as a write-in. It was one of the few surprises Tuesday night.  
For the Jennings council, Louise Cressler, the only registered candidate, was re-elected by 42 votes. Don Bolt received 27 write-in votes to take the other open seat on the council.  
Ballots for school board elections in Oberlin and Jennings and city positions in Dresden and Norcatgur took little time to count, since there was no competition for any post and few candidates on the ballot.  
In the Oberlin School District, three incumbents who paid \$5 to file for the ballot were re-elected without opposition.  
For the 4th district, Delayne May got 126 votes. She has been a member of the board for 13 years.  
For the 5th district, DeWayne Jackson, who is just completing his first four years, got 104 votes.  
In the 6th district, Chris Bailey, was

re-elected with 60 votes. This was his first election since he was appointed to fill a vacancy two years ago.  
For the Jennings School Board, Sarah Coiner was re-elected with 93 votes. Elected as write-ins were incumbent Vickie Bailey with 57 votes and newcomer Larry Miller with 53. A fourth seat apparently will have to be filled.  
All the seats at large, meaning everyone in the district votes for them. Mrs. Coiner won a two-year term, and the others will serve for four years.  
In Norcatgur, there were three council positions and the mayor up, all of which will be filed by incumbents who were elected through write-ins. Positions will be held by Mayor Doug Dempewolf, with 49 votes; and Linda Hunt, and Collen Ramsey, both with 14, for the council. Carl Lyons received 25 votes to be elected to a two-year term for a seat which has been vacant.  
In Dresden, voters re-elected Mayor Russell Rhodes with 10 votes and Councilman Ron Jacobs, with 7, to three-year terms. Don Ritter received eight votes to be elected for two years.

# Windows broken at Lyle home

Two windows in a house outside of Lyle were broken out with a blunt object between 5 and 6 p.m. Friday afternoon.  
Decatur County Undersheriff Randy McHugh said the house belongs to Earnest Huff, who is fixing the place up so it can be a rental. He had people work-

ing on the home all day and they left at 5 p.m. At 6 p.m., Mr. Huff went out to the house and saw that the windows had been broken.  
Undersheriff McHugh said he looked around the area and couldn't find an object which may have broken the windows.



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