

Commission looks at building values for insurance

The Decatur County commissioners looked at recent building appraisals for the county insurance.

Last week, Brandon Mann, loss control manager from Kansas Counties Association Multi-lined pool was in town to appraise the buildings for insurance reasons. County Appraiser Alan Hale said he talked with Mr. Mann, who said typically when counties switch to the pool for insurance, the old val-

County Round-up

At their meeting last Tuesday, Decatur County commissioners:

- Heard that a reserve officer working for the sheriff's office has been suspended, leaving just one officer for duty. Story to come.
- Signed a contract with promoters

for the Oberlin Speedway for the race season. Story below.

- Looked at building appraisals for county insurance. Story to left.
- Heard that the ambulance director hasn't made any decision bids for a new truck. Story to come.

inspections and found some counties are insuring their buildings too much or not enough.

Mr. Hale said he was pleased with the representative. The appraiser said he asked how the figures were arrived at, and the man explained the numbers and formula.

"Probably the most disturbing thing is that this is an area I may have been a little negligent in," said Mr. Hale.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch

said there is a little shift in some of the values, but most of them are the same. He asked if the appraisal for the ambulance barn was correct. It had been set at \$169,000.

Sheridan County is putting in a similar barn, said Mr. Hirsch, for around \$300,000. He said he didn't think the county could replace the barn for \$169,000.

Mr. Hale said he could have the representative look at the numbers again.

Mr. Hirsch said the Norcatur and Jennings shops and the Oberlin fire station weren't on the list. He asked if all the buildings were viewed. Mr. Hale said that Mr. Mann said he was only here to look at some of the buildings.

With the new numbers, the county will pay a lower premium, said Mr. Hale.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said he would like to make sure all of the county buildings are on the list.

Jewelry store owner dies after 87 years

Miles E. Ray, 87, owner and operator of Ray Jewelry in Oberlin for over 50 years, died Monday, March 17, 2003, in Denver.

He was a native of Orleans, Neb., and after graduating from Denver University, he taught flying in Fort Morgan, Colo., then moved to Texas, where he piloted planes before joining the Air Force. He was stationed in India, where he flew fuel tankers over the "Hump" (Himalaya Mountains) from India to China.

After returning to Denver in 1946, he met Ila Robertson, a native of Oberlin, and they were married April 2, 1948. He had planned to finish medical school, but since it had been seven years since college, he decided to seek other business avenues.

He chose watch making and he and his wife moved to Brush, Colo., to apprentice, after which they moved to Oberlin and opened Ray Jewelry.

Besides being a part of the busi-

ness community, he enjoyed bowling, golf, flying a small 4-seater at the local airport, woodworking and had also raised cattle on the farm of his father-in-law.

He was born June 22, 1915, at Orleans, Neb., the son of Jesse and Eva (Ericson) Ray. His father was a railroad engineer and they moved as his job required, living in Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado.

Survivors include his wife, Ila; his daughters, Vicky, Karen and Marla; his grandchildren, Paul, Kelsey, Kayla, and Taryn, and his sister-in-law, Jean Earlywine.

He was preceded in death by his parents and one sister, Helen.

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at Pauls Funeral Home in Oberlin. The Revs. Nolan and Barbara Pierce officiated and burial was in the Oberlin Cemetery.

A memorial was established to the Oberlin Library or Oberlin Country Club. Contributions may be sent to the funeral home, 121 N. Penn, Oberlin, Kan., 67749.



MILES RAY enjoyed working at the Decatur County Fair each August.

Deadline draws near for scholarships

Students at Decatur Community High School only have a week to get scholarship applications in for college next year.

Principal Charles Haag told the Oberlin School Board at its meeting Monday, March 10, about the opportunities students have here with scholarships and how the process works. He said although some parents think only a select few are asked to apply for scholarships, that isn't how it works.

He said he and Counselor Nita Lavielle met with seniors and told them it was time to apply for scholarships.

He said they explained that the school doesn't choose who receives the scholarships, the organizations offering them do.

He said he also sent a letter out to parents recently reminding them of scholarship opportunities.

The applications then go out in the counselor's office and students have to sign that they have picked up one for each scholarship they are applying for. For most grants, applications have to be back by Tuesday.

Board Member Jeannie Martin said she would like to see eighth graders at the assembly to learn about scholarships before they enter high school instead of at the end of their freshman year. Many freshmen, she said, don't know or think about the fact that all four years of school count for scholarships. If eighth graders are interested in them, maybe it will help them work a little harder that first year of high school, she said.

Board Member Kurt Vollertsen said he agreed, adding that it would be nice to let the parents know a little earlier so they have the information they need, too.

The letters, said Board Member Barb Olson, need to go out sooner. Kids don't remember all the important dates and the school should be able to remind parents earlier about some deadlines.

Board Member Chris Bailey asked how early students can take the ACT test. Ms. Lavielle said as early as they want, but most take it their junior year or early in their senior year.

Health department works on compliance

By KIMBERLY BRANDT

The Decatur County Health Department is working to comply with new federal regulations under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

Health Administrator Marilyn Gamblin met with county commissioners to have them sign documents and to fill them in on where the department stands.

Ms. Gamblin said the regulations came from the Department of Health and Human Services. They govern release of health care information to outsiders. Any agency that bills electronically for health care will have to follow the regulations, including the health department and the ambulance service.

The first thing she said she needed was a written statement from the commissioners on what constitutes a covered entity for the county. She said Decatur County would be a covered entity and then the health department, ambulance service, county clerk's office and county attorney would be under it.

The reasoning behind listing the clerk and the attorney is that they see bills or other patient information, said Ms. Gamblin.

For each entity, there needs to be a privacy officer. She presented the commissioners with a letter defining her as the privacy officer for the health department. The commissioners signed both letters.

Ms. Gamblin said patients will

have to sign a sheet to authorize the release of any information.

Commissioner Doyle Brown asked who decided to do this. Ms. Gamblin said all of the regulations are coming from the federal government.

How many people read what they sign? asked Commissioner Pat Glenn.

"These regulations are why I moved my office," said Ambulance Director Patrick Pomeroy. The covered offices must provide confidentiality for patient records.

What about the radios? asked Commissioner Brown, pointing out that there are scanners in a lot of homes in the county. The health services will have to get in touch with

NexTech and see if there are extra channels and traffic will have to be scrambled all the time, said Mr. Pomeroy.

He said they won't be able to have two patients in the ambulance at the same time anymore, he said. The effects of this will be pretty massive.

Ms. Gamblin said she will be working on business/associate agreements for people who may come across information. For example, she said, Pharmacist Rusty Addleman reviews the family planning records. He would fall under this agreement. So would the accounting firm that does the county audit.

The first phase of the regulations starts on Monday, April 14, she said.

School board votes on contract extensions

The Oberlin School Board extended the contracts of its three administrators for two years, but made no promises about pay raises until teacher pay is settled.

The board went behind closed doors for nonelected personnel for 30, 10, 5 and 10 minutes before coming out into open session to approve the motion at its meeting Monday, March 10.

Contracts for Principals Charles Haag and Duane Dorshorst were extended until July 13, 2005. Superintendent Kelly Glodt's contract was extended until June 30, 2005.

The board agreed to wait until after teacher negotiations to make any decisions about salaries.

Superintendent Glodt said he had received 10 applications for the outdoor maintenance job. So far, he said, he is impressed with the quality people who had applied.

From the 10, four were sched-

uled to be interviewed. He said the No. 1 concern is to get a person hired who can get the grounds to where they should be and where they can be.

In other business, the board:

- Decided to hold its annual employee recognition dinner at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23, at The Gateway.
- Decided to hold a special board meeting at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 8, to discuss rehiring teachers.
- Selected 4 p.m. Tuesday for the first meeting for negotiations.
- Approved the resignations of Jerry Fidele, outdoor maintenance man; Casandra Holdeman, fifth grader teacher; and Megan Carter, secretary at the high school.
- Held a 10-minute closed session for non elected personnel. There was no action taken.
- Approved the Spanish Club's request to go to Mexico.

Commissioners sign papers to start racing

There will be racing next month at the Decatur County fairgrounds. County commissioners signed a contract last Tuesday for the Oberlin Speedway for the race season of April 12 through Oct. 30.

The contract is between the county, promoters Don and Paula Bolt and the fair board.

The fair board had already signed the document and the commissioners agreed unanimously to sign it.

Commissioners said they would like to see the track called the Decatur County Speedway or Oberlin Raceway at Decatur County

Speedway since it has county dollars in it.

The first race is scheduled at 5 p.m. Saturday, April 12.

The commissioners met with Dave Barber, from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to sign bonds for Decatur Health Systems for the loan. They authorized the chairwoman to sign the papers.

The loan is for \$100,000 at a rate of 4.625 percent.

Commissioners held the hearing for roads to be changed to minimum maintenance in Harlan Township. With no one in the audience and no

protest, the commissioners approved the resolution and made the roads minimum maintenance. Roads changed to minimum maintenance include the roads between sections 2, 3 and 4 and the Nebraska state line, 4 and 5, 8 and 9, 16 and 17, 2 and 11, 3 and 10, 12 and 13, 19 and Sherman Township section 24, 19 and 30, 25 and 36, 26 and 35 and the SW4 of 26 and SE4 of 27.

In other business, commissioners:

- Held a 10-minute closed session for non-elected personnel. There was no action.
- Re-signed orders to abate per-

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