

Youth found not guilty

An Oberlin youth has been released from Sappa Valley Youth Ranch after the Rawlins County District Court determined that the state had not met its burden of proof and charges against him were dropped.

Jonathan Smith, 17, had been charged with aggravated battery and abuse of a child early in August after an incident in Atwood. Reports then charged that Mr. Smith and the victim made a \$100 bet that the victim, a 14-year-old boy, would set himself on fire. The victim doused himself with gasoline and Mr. Smith allegedly ignited him.

Todd Stramel, Mr. Smith's attorney, said the state filed a motion to have the court impose both a juvenile and adult sentence if he was convicted. The court denied that motion.

On Aug. 25, the young man went on trial before Magistrate Judge Charles P. Carroll. The court dismissed all charges and Mr. Smith was found not guilty.

Mr. Stramel said generally speaking, Mr. Smith can't be charged a second time for charges out of the same incident. He had been held at Sappa Valley Youth Ranch until the trial.

Basically, said Mr. Stramel, Mr. Smith didn't do what the state alleged he had done. He said he didn't expect any more litigation in this matter. Mr. Smith is innocent, he said.

FFA unit travels to Kentucky

The Oberlin School Board looked at slides and talked to members of the high school's FFA chapter, who traveled to Louisville, Ky., for their national convention.

Teacher Nathan Copeland said this year, there are 51 members in the organization with eight getting the chance to attend the convention. There were 52,000 members at the national meeting, he said, with all 50 states represented, plus Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Mr. Copeland said the group pretty much paid its own way with fund raisers. The annual fruit and meat sale just completed was the best yet, he said.

While at the convention, the students got to hear speakers, and they toured several places along the way.

Some places of interest which the group toured included the Anheuser-Busch Brewery in St. Louis, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, the Corvette Museum in Bowling Green in Kentucky, Diamond Caverns, and the Mississippi River, the Gateway Arch and Union Station in St. Louis. Two evenings, instead of returning to the hotel, he said, the group went bowling and ice skating.

At a board meeting last Monday, the students took turns explaining the pictures they took on the road. They said they traveled through five states.

Mr. Copeland said the Oberlin chapter goes to a convention every three years.



AT THE GRADE SCHOOL Thursday, Lawrence Wenger (above left), Bill Woods and Walter Pennell were three of the veterans honored. Samantha Anderson (below) held a book by Lynne Cheney, wife of the vice president. — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Students honor veterans

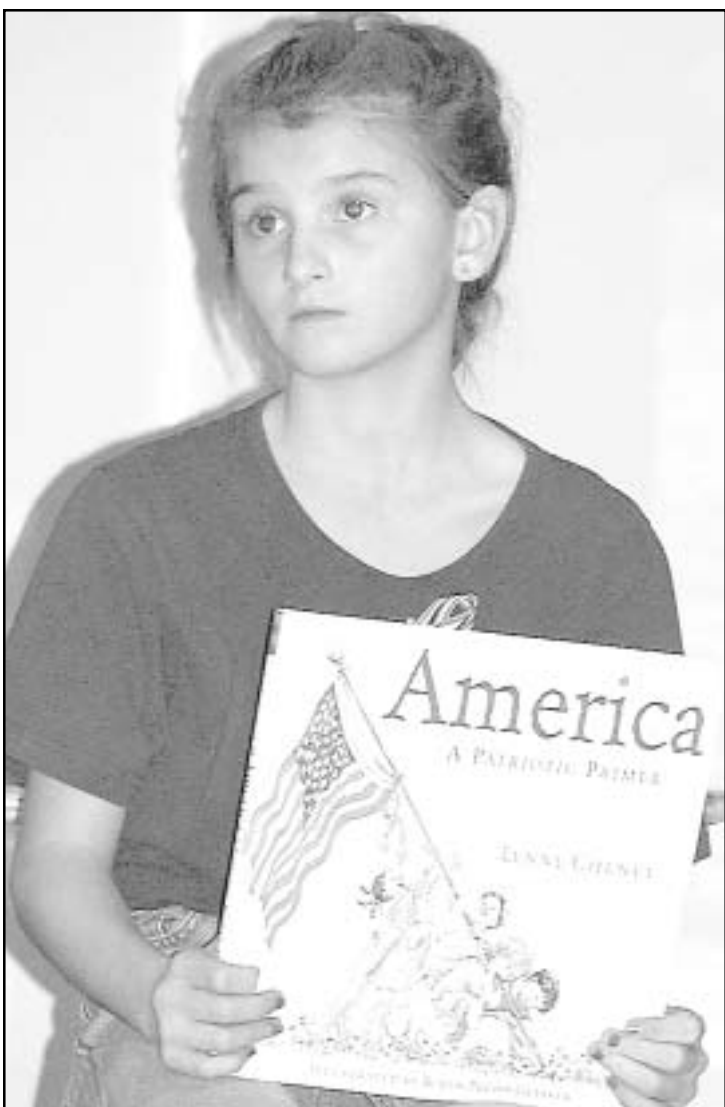
Veterans from the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and National Guard all received certificates of appreciation from students at Oberlin Elementary School on Thursday.

During the annual Veterans Day program, four students handed out the certificates to men and women who have served their country. The afternoon program drew many veterans and people from the community.

Kade Brown, master of ceremonies, said the program was intended to share the students patriotism and say thanks to the veterans.

He said Veterans Day started when Congress passed a bill to change Armistice Day, which commemorated the end of World War I, to a day to honor veterans of all wars.

The second and fifth graders worked together to give a little information about America. Using the book "America, A Patriotic Primer," by Lynne Cheney, wife of Vice President Dick Cheney, each fifth grader said what each letter of the alphabet stood for. The fifth graders walked into the gym from the west door while one or two second graders came out of the east door with the letter of the



alphabet in their hands. After the presentation, several of the second graders used their letters to spell "Thank you, Vets." A slide show with pictures of veterans and students was shown before certificates were handed out and Kade spoke again.

"Thank you," said Kade, for attending, and for serving the United States so well. He said the students will never forget. "Let's give an OES thank you to the veterans," he said. Many stayed around for tea and cookies with the kids.

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Executrix

Allen Shelton
Attorney for Executrix

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Leaky water heater dampens barn

The hot water heater in the ambulance barn is leaking, leaving the director looking for bids to replace it.

Ambulance Director Patrick Pomeroy told county commissioners last Tuesday that he didn't think the barn needs as big of a heater as it has. He said they only need to fill a bucket with hot water to wash the ambulances once in a while, plus the bathrooms.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said he would like Mr. Pomeroy to get bids, then bring them back to the commissioners before making a decision.

Mr. Pomeroy said he has worked on making the monthly reports more useful, adding the total amount billed instead of just what has been received.

He said they have several self pay patients who pay weekly or monthly, and those are on the report. There are also some bills that are in bankruptcy. Mr. Unger asked if those had been filed on, and Mr. Pomeroy said they had.

Commissioners talked with Custodian Bob Berls about a letter from Oberlin City Administrator Gary Shike. Recently, the commissioners discussed replacing the concrete parking area on the south side of the courthouse. Mr. Berls contacted the city about the work.

Mr. Unger said that the commission would review the work for the next year.

They would like to have the city work on the bad places then, but if it isn't feasible, maybe it could be

County Roundup

At the meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Heard that the road crew has been putting up snow fence, mowing township roads and fixing bad spots on some county roads. Story below.
- Ask for bids on a hot water heater for the ambulance barn in Oberlin. Story on left.

planned for the next budget year. The commissioners started talking about the project at the end of October.

The commissioners heard that Chuck Votapka had resigned from the fair board, so there is a seat available in commissioner district No. 1, which includes Center, Olive and Roosevelt Townships and the east side of Oberlin.

Anyone who is interested should contact the county clerk's office.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Agreed to see if Richard Carpenter of Selden could use the computer parts that weren't purchased in the county's silent auction. County Clerk Marilyn Horn said Mr. Carpenter rebuilds the systems and donates them to kids.
- Signed two resolutions, one for \$700 and one for \$980, for Pitney Bowes Postage Process.

County road crew prepares for winter

The Decatur County road and bridge crew is putting up snow fence, mowing township roads and fixing bad spots on some of the county roads, Supervisor Tim Stallman told Decatur County commissioners last Tuesday.

He said the crew started to put up snow fence on Monday and he thought they would be done the next day. They are a little later in doing that than usual because they were waiting for harvest to be over.

He said the crew is working on some soft spots on township roads which formed during the last rain-

fall. After the mowing gets done, said Mr. Stallman, the crew will be out pulling gravel back up before it starts to snow.

He said the crew is making sure all the bridge weight-limit signs are up and are accurate. The collapse of the bridge near Lyle is being handled by insurance companies, he said. There isn't any new information about the bridge.

Mr. Stallman said he would like to order a diesel additive which will cost around \$750 for 55 gallons, which the commissioners approved.

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