

# County, employees to meet on health insurance

Faced with a stiff price increase, Decatur County commissioners decided to hold a meeting at 7:30 a.m. today in the courtroom to talk with employees about possible changes in the health insurance plan. The county carries insurance through Corporate Plan for the employees. At their meeting last Tuesday, commissioners discussed possible changes to the plan. Currently, the county pays the entire cost for all employees to be insured. It also pays for part of family coverage. The family plan

costs \$787, with the employee paying \$325 and the county \$462 for an employee and spouse, employee, spouse and kids, and employee and children. Commissioner Ralph Unger said if the county has to make changes to the plan, he would rather do it gradually instead of abruptly in one year. He said if they have singles start paying part of their cost, it would be like having a lower salary increase for those people. Mr. Unger said he thought they needed to convey

to their employees what the plan is worth. County Attorney Steve Hirsch said besides health care, they have a dental plan and prescription drug plan. The commissioners received a handout listing three options. Commissioner Doyle Brown what would happen if they handed the options out to the employees and there were some who wanted each of the three. County Clerk Marilyn Horn said the

agency would be able to do that. The commissioners said if the insurance stays the same, it would cost the county around \$29,000 more than it did last year. Last year, they paid \$325,430, which means it costs \$27,500 a month. The monthly increase will be around \$2,416. Mr. Hirsch said the county's rates have been stable compared to some. Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman said he thought the employees would appreciate knowing and understanding

what the options are and what it means for them. They may not agree with the insurance changing, he said, but they still should know. The commissioners talked about holding a meeting and Mr. Hirsch suggested having Tim Carson with Corporate Plan here so that he can answer questions. The commissioners agreed and set the meeting. Spouses of employees are welcome to attend.

## Angels give gifts to needy

### Wives, others get, wrap presents

Nine years ago, Oberlin police officers' wives started the group Blue Angels to provide Christmas presents for needy kids, and this year, the organization is still going, giving presents to around 20 kids in town.

Sandy Zeigler, wife of Officer Scott Zeigler, said although the group started with the wives, the drive is now organized by her and Bev Reiter, a county dispatcher and widow of a former police chief.

The women put forms around town so that they can find out which kids 12 and younger need gifts and what is on their wish lists.

They then get donations from people of toys, cash, wrapping paper and bows. The women try to match the wishes on the list with the kids and then deliver the presents.

This year, she said, they had around 20 kids who are getting gifts. The cutoff time for donations was Dec. 5, and Mrs. Zeigler is now delivering the presents.

It has been a really good year, she said. There were only a few of the older kids who weren't sure what they were going to wrap for them. For some of those, she took the cash donations and purchased movie rental gift certificates.

This year, the Blue Angels had fewer kids than normal, she said. Normally, parents sign the kids up for the service, but this year they did get some names from other adults for kids who might need a present.

Mrs. Zeigler said she and Mrs. Reiter enjoy the project. It is a joy to see the looks on kids' faces when they get presents delivered to their homes, she said, and it's very rewarding.

## 'Farmers' sell 'crops'



AT THE WINTER FARMERS market on Saturday, Marilou Long sold blarney stones. Several others from the area sold baked goods, honey, toys and other crafts on the first floor of the courthouse. The market was sponsored by the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce. — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

## Crews to plow snow only in emergencies

Decatur County commissioners agreed at their meeting last Tuesday that the road and bridge department can remove snow to let emergency vehicles get to private residences, but not for other reasons.

If there is an emergency and a sheriff's vehicle, fire truck or ambulance needs to get to a house, commissioners said, the crew can plow the snow. Other than that, any kind of request to plow out a private residence can't be done. They agreed that it is not legal to use county equipment to be doing work that can be done by a private contractor.

The commissioners ratified a purchase of off-road diesel for the road crew for \$1.045 per gallon. They don't have the statement yet for how many gallons, since every semi load varies. Normally it is around 7,500 gallons. They also gave Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman permission to purchase grader blades.

After a hearing which no one came for, commissioners approved closing a road between sections 2 and 3 in Roosevelt Township, with a provision maintaining public access to a cemetery in section 11.

The commissioners voided four checks for \$200 which were to be paid for an emergency call routing fee to the state. The state has never asked for the money and the routing fee has been dropped.

In other business, commissioners:

- Approved a tax foreclosure petition including two houses in

## County roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, Decatur County commissioners:

- Agreed that the road and bridge department can remove snow to let emergency vehicles get to private residences, but not for other reasons. Story to left.
- Decided to hold a meeting at 7:30 a.m. today in the courtroom to talk with employees about possible changes in the health insurance plan. Story above.

Oberlin and one mineral interest.

- Voided a check for \$35 to the Kansas Emergency Medical Technician Association written last January. It has never been cashed.

- Heard that Custodian Bob Berls was interested in getting another Windsor vacuum because he was having problems with one. County Clerk Marilyn Horn said she bought a commercial Windsor vacuum five years ago for around \$500, but it is too heavy for her to use. She asked if, rather than buying a new one, the county would swap it for an Oreck vacuum at \$199. The commissioners approved the exchange.

## There's still time to sign up for giveaway

There are only a few days left to sign up for the Oberlin Business Alliance \$1,000 Santa bucks giveaway at 7 p.m. on Monday in front of the Chamber of Commerce office.

For the last few weeks, white boxes have been on the counters at alliance businesses with paper for people to sign up for the drawing. Those will be picked up Monday afternoon and combined and from those, 10 names will be drawn.

Each of those 10 will receive a box to open. In the boxes there will either be \$1,000 in Santa bucks or \$25.

You must be 18 to be eligible. The scrip can be spent at any business that belongs to the alliance.

Another drawing The alliance will also be holding another drawing, "second chance," using tickets from *The Oberlin Herald's* Christmas on Us drawing.

There will be 10 tickets drawn each day starting at noon on Tuesday. The tickets will be attached to a piece of cardboard and hung in one of the alliance stores. Each day, there will be one winner. The contest will go through Friday, Dec. 24.

The amount of the prize has not yet been determined.

## Death spawns rumors

Rumors started almost immediately after an unattended death was discovered in Selden last week, but officials say the investigation turned up no foul play.

Sheridan County Sheriff James Johnson said the body of Wanda Melton-Hanson, 54, was found at 12:05 p.m. last Wednesday at her home in Selden.

On Monday, the Sheridan County undersheriff said a preliminary autopsy report shows that Ms. Hanson's death was caused by a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The Kansas Bureau of Investigation came in to work on the case with the sheriff's department.

## Soup supper set to help telethon

The Seeds of Hope Telethon committee will hold its annual soup supper from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday night at the Golden Age Center.

The committee raises money to give to organizations in the county. This year's recipients are the Norcat Preschool, Decatur County Stand Against Violence, Oberlin Lions Club, Creative Movements Gymnastics, Decatur

Area Chamber of Commerce, Oberlin pool project, Decatur County Museum, Oberlin Community Fellowship, Jennings City Library, Tripple Creek Riders, FROGS camp, High Plains ArtFest, Decatur County Ministerial Association, American Family Radio, Salvation Army, the Blue Angels, Decatur Area Theater Association and Sunflower Cinema.

Money raised at the soup supper will be added to money raised at the telethon on Saturday, Feb. 5, and then given out to the organizations.

The price of the soup supper will be a donation.

On the menu will be vegetable beef soup, white chili, taco soup, chips, crackers, dinner rolls and pies and desserts.

## City to meet on Thursday

The Oberlin City Council will hold its second monthly meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in the upstairs meeting room at The Gateway. It will be aired on local access channel 7 on Oberlin cable.

## Norton Livestock Inc. Wednesday • December 22 • 1 p.m. Special Bred Cow — Bred Heifer Sale

Bred Heifers			
17	Red Angus Heifers	1100 cwt	Bred Red Angus
		Mar 1 calving	
87	Black Angus Heifers	1050 cwt	Bred To Low
		Birth weight Angus Bulls	
	Pelvic Measured	Calve Feb 3 for 30 days	
Bred Cows			
90	Black	2nd Calvers	Bred Black Angus
		Feb 20 75 days	Front end of 250 head
75	Red-Red wt, Blk, Char x cows		3 yr to solid mouth
	Bred to Black Angus Bulls	Feb 20	75 days
Dispersion: 73 Red-Red wt. cows few Blacks			
	Solid mouth to older	Feb 10 calving	
	Bred to Black and Red Angus Bulls		
80	Blk cows	3-6 yr. old	Bred Black Angus
		Feb 15	
60	Blk-Bwf cows	few reds	3 to 6 yrs. old
	Bred Black Angus	Feb 15	
Herd reduction: 80 Blk - Bwf cows			
	Bred black Angus	Solid mouth to older	Mar 1 calving
25	Older cows	X bred	Spring calving
15	Blk cows	young cows	for spring calving
75	Blk cows	3 to 6 yrs old	Bred Black for winter and spring calving
65	Cows	Mostly Black (40 3-4's)	3 yrs. to older
		Bred Black	Mar. 1 calving

Sale Barn Phone 785-877-5161

Clarence Tien  
Home 785-973-2231  
Cell 785-567-8113

Jan Tien  
Home 785-973-2744  
Cell 785-567-8151

### NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING AMENDING THE 2004 BUDGET

The governing body of City of Oberlin will meet on the 30th day of December, 2004 at 6 p.m., at City Office for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed amended use of funds.

Detailed budget information is available at City Office and will be available at this hearing.

Fund	Adopted Budget 2004		Proposed Amendment 2004	
	Actual Tax Rate	Amount of Ad Valorem Tax	Expenditures	Expenditures
Gateway Civic Center			167,230	197,960

Deanna M. Castle  
Clerk

## PUBLIC NOTICE

MONDAY  
DECEMBER 20

is the last day you can pay first half taxes without penalty.

NOTE: All personal property taxes come due if first half is not paid by Dec. 20.

Jean Hale  
Decatur County  
Treasurer