

Board wants to wait on new sidewalks

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

The Oberlin School Board discussed the sidewalks outside the kindergarten building and across the street to the west at a meeting last Monday night, but decided to include it in the playground committee's plan.

Shanna Long, a parent who proposed the sidewalks in October, asked the board if part of the project could be done now. The proposal was for a sidewalk outside the kindergarten building and north up Cass Avenue. Another walk would be across the street to the north of the teacher parking lot, along Elm Street.

Board President Dwayne Jackson said he would like to work the sidewalk into the playground project. Every time you pour concrete, he said, even if it is all paid for, then someone has to be paid to clean it off when it snows. He said he doesn't want to see something put in and then have it be a drainage problem for the playground.

Could getting grants for a sidewalk hurt the chances of getting grants for the playground? asked Mr. Jackson. Mrs. Long said it wouldn't, because a grant for the playground would be more for equipment while a grant for sidewalks is more for construction.

For example, she said, Southwestern Bell only gives grants for sidewalks.

Mr. Jackson said he isn't opposed to the project. Maybe the playground committee can iron out the kinks and look into the plan, he said.

Principal Duane Dorshorst said the committee is just forming now. They haven't had their first meeting.

What about the sidewalk at the teacher parking lot? asked Mrs. Long. Board Member Delayne May said she didn't think anyone dropped off kids there.

Head Start uses that area for pick-

up, Mrs. Long replied.

Would the board consider adding that to the list of things to do, she said, or could she have the board's permission to talk with community groups for support and to raise money.

There are a lot of things on the list for next summer, said Mr. Jackson, and the sidewalk wouldn't be a high priority.

Would the board consider a letter of approval, she said, so she could go get money.

It is a good project, said Mr. Dorshorst, but his priority is going to be what affects the most kids. The sidewalks would be down lower on the list, he said. Looking at the grounds, the playground is the main concern, and then the steps on the east side of the school. The committee is important because they will help prioritize the items.

Is there a time limit on the grants? asked Mr. Jackson. No, said Mrs. Long.

Board Member Barb Olson said if community organizations want to help, that would be great. She said, though, that she would like to think they would come in and ask the board what the priority areas are first.

Board Member Kurt Vollertsen asked what the timeline for the committee was. Mr. Dorshorst said he is shooting for presenting a plan to the board in May.

Mr. Jackson said he would like to hold off approval on the sidewalks until the board gets the priority list from the committee and sees what is on it.

Mrs. Olson said maybe Mrs. Long should start looking for grant money. Most of the grants are around \$2,000 to \$5,000 and need a match, said Mrs. Long.

Then maybe it should just be one project with the playground, said Mrs. Olson.

Banquet to be Thursday

The Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce' annual banquet will be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

This year's speaker is Eric Eicher, with the state program "History Alive." He will speak on "Oz to Ah's" and talk about how "The Wizard of Oz" has helped and hurt the state of Kansas.

Mr. Eicher has a doctorate in English from the University of Kansas, received his master's from the University of California at Berkeley,

and teaches English at Fort Hays State University.

He included in his doctoral dissertation a chapter called "The Wonderful Weirdness of Oz," after studying L. Frank Baum's Oz series for over a decade. In 2003, he joined the Kansas Humanities Council speakers bureau.

The banquet will feature election for three people to serve on the Chamber board. Retiring directors are Marilyn Noone, Derek Riner and Judy Scott.



AT MOMMA MILLIE'S CAFE in Norcat, Millie Matchett mixed up a recipe she was going to serve that day. She and her daughter, Mandi Fick, took over the business on Jan. 1. — Herald photo by Carolyn Plotts

Woman's dream of restaurant comes true

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

Since she was a little girl, Millie Matchett has dreamed of owning a little cafe.

Effective Jan. 1, that dream came true when Mrs. Matchett and her daughter, Mandi Fick, opened Momma Millie's Cafe in Norcat.

The restaurant, previously the County Line, had been operated by Greg and Mary Long.

Mrs. Matchett said the name came from two college boys who used to live across the street from here family in Oberlin. She said every night they would call across the street, "What's for supper, Momma Millie?"

The cafe features home-style cooking, she said, with most dishes made from scratch.

"We make our own home fries and curly fries," Mrs. Fick said, "and Mom makes her own cinnamon rolls. Our pies are baked right here and we made our own noodles and soups."

Lunch-time diner Stan Miller added, "She makes a mean pizza, too."

Mrs. Matchett said their hamburgers got rave reviews; they are all pattied by hand.

The country decor welcomes guests to sit a while, but if they can't stay, Millie offers carry-out. They will deliver in Norcat.

The cafe opens at 6:30 a.m. Monday through Saturday and closes at 2 p.m. They will take reservations for special events or private parties and offer gift certificates. The second Saturday of each month finds the cafe open in the evening for a karaoke night.

The round table at the cafe is a favorite gathering place, with local farmers and ranchers staying for what sometimes is a three-hour cup of coffee. That's OK with the new owners.

"In the morning," said Mrs. Fick, "this is the pace to be. We have card games too, if anyone wants to play."

The menu features a lunch special Monday through Friday that includes a salad, dessert, coffee or tea. Small or regular size portions are offered.

Mrs. Matchett is the wife of Marvin Matchett, station manager at KQNK Radio, Norton. They live in Norcat and have three other children, Scooter, a freshman at Colby Community College; Marci, a junior at Decatur Community High School; and Martina Ruiz, who lives in Ellis.

Mrs. Fick and her husband Jonathan live in Oberlin and are the parents of 9-month-old Madison.

To contact Momma Millie's, call (785) 693-4000.

Deer caused most accidents in 2004

The Decatur County sheriff presented his yearly report to the commissioners last Tuesday, noting that most of the accident reports in 2004 were because of deer.

Sheriff Ken Badsky said during the past year, officers did 392 vehicle inspections, bringing in \$3,528. There were 72 accidents, 26 incidents reported, 64 offenses reported, 516 papers served and 124 tickets written.

The jail was used 960 days by prisoners from Red Willow County, with a total of 26 inmates and an average stay of 37 days.

Decatur County had people in jail for 415 days with a total of 32 inmates and an average stay of 13 days.

County Countdown

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Heard the year-end report from the sheriff. Story to left.
- Approved a bid of \$75,736 for fire sprinklers at the Good Samaritan Center. Story below.

Center. Story below. Started off the new year with Magistrate Judge John Bremer swearing in officials elected in November to serve the county for the next four years. Story on Page 10A.

Sheriff Badsky said over half of the accidents reported were because of deer.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said he didn't understand why the Kansas Department of Wildlife was so stingy with deer permits this fall. The state has been trying to reduce the deer herd, but said the program

has been successful.

Sheriff Badsky asked if County Attorney Steve Hirsch would help him collect money owed from the county attorney in another county. Mr. Hirsch looked up a state law for Sheriff Badsky to quote in a letter to the county attorney.

The sheriff said that:

Center to get sprinkler system

Decatur County commissioners approved a bid of \$75,736 to install fire sprinklers at the Good Samaritan Center at a meeting last Tuesday.

Administrator Janice Shobe and physical plant manager La Vern Burtis brought three bids to the commissioners. The first was from Simplex Grinnell out of Lenexa for \$75,736. There were some exemptions on the bid which they thought Hansen's Plumbing could do.

The second bid came from McDaniel of Wichita for \$97,140. The last bid was from Jayhawk Sprinklers of Topeka at \$147,267 for the interior work and an additional \$7,292 for the exterior.

The commissioners accepted the low bid.

Mrs. Shobe said she would get a contract from the company for the commissioners. She said she wanted to use special fund dollars to pay for the system.

Commissioner Patricia Glenn asked if the center had a generator in case of a power outage. Mr. Burtis said they do. It is run once a month with an electrical load but is checked every week.

Mr. Burtis said the roof at the center is done. The warranty should be coming in the mail. County Clerk Marilyn Horn said they haven't sent the second half of the payment. The county was waiting to see if the leaks

are fixed, she said.

Mr. Burtis said they have rain gutters that have to be put up this spring.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Received a bill from Hansen for \$4,352 for a hot water heater for the

Good Samaritan Center plus labor which replaced the old one.

Discussed whether Mrs. Shobe would be able to make it on Tuesday, Jan. 18, for the health meeting or if they should postpone it until February.

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