

the Salaries of public employees in Decatur County

* Judge earns most



Judge Elliott



L. Doeden

(Continued from Page 1A) started his career as a teacher. To be a principal, he had to have a master's in educational administration. To become a superintendent, Mr. Glodt said, he needed his master's degree plus district-level certification, a minimum of 15 college credits beyond the masters.

Mr. Glodt has over 50 credits beyond his master's degree and has completed the course work for his doctorate.

The school district pays single-member health insurance for all employees at \$351 a month and term life insurance for the employee at \$2.70 a month.

Mr. Glodt gets a car allowance of \$200 a month to use his own vehicle for school business.

Kansas school districts are required to report salaries of their top administrators to news media each fall. The law once required them to publish the information, but few did. Charles Haag, Decatur Community High principal, makes a total of \$72,311 a year, which includes the employee health insurance plan.

Mr. Haag has worked for the district for four years, but has a total of 15 years as a principal. He has a master's degree in administration.

Duane Dorshorst, Oberlin Elementary School principal, makes \$70,573, which includes the employee health insurance plan. Mr. Dorshorst has worked for the district for 22 years, starting as a teacher, then he served as assistant principal and activities director at the high school for three years.

Mr. Dorshorst has been the principal at the grade school for 10 years. He has two bachelor's degrees, in biology and earth science, science and education, and a master's degree in administration. He also has district license certification, which means he has 40 hours past his mas-

ters degree in administration and is qualified to be a superintendent.

In other department head positions in the district, Jess Randel, technology coordinator, makes \$45,475 plus the employee health plan, and Brian Simonsson, transportation supervisor, makes \$34,305 plus the insurance. Mr. Randel's position is being advertised since he is leaving.

In part-time spots, Randy Olson is paid \$9,040 to be the activities director at the high school and Jim Andersen makes \$2,261 as assistant activities director, Nita Lavielle makes \$23,062 as a part-time high school counselor, and Sheila Jansonius makes \$20,794 in the part-time spot as grade school counselor. Both counselors get employee insurance.

The top-paid federal official here is Diane Barrett, who makes a little less than the high school principal with an annual salary of \$70,670. That doesn't count her benefits, which include health and life insurance and a retirement plan. Mrs. Barrett serves as the county executive director for the Farm Service Agency, which is under the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Mrs. Barrett has worked with the agency for 21 years.

The post of district conservationist with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service is open, but it has a pay range from \$41,772 for a new hire to \$65,704 for someone with around five years' experience.

At the Oberlin post office, Postmaster Linda Smith makes \$66,780 a year. She has worked for the Postal Service for 22 years.

Top three earners in county

1) Bill Elliott, judge of the 17th Judicial District for Decatur, Norton, Phillips, Smith, Graham and Osborne counties, \$105,573

2) Lynn Doeden, administrator at Decatur County Hospital, \$84,443

3) Kelly Glodt, superintendent of the Oberlin School District, \$82,871.

Payroll records fairly open

This is the second year that *The Oberlin Herald* has compiled salaries of federal, state and local public officials.

The salaries are open records because the officials work for public agencies and are paid, at least in part, by tax dollars or hired by public boards.

In requesting salaries from public officials, the only question was about the Decatur County Hospital.

After some discussion, it was determined that the

hospital is subject to the Kansas Open Records Act. There weren't any other problems obtaining the records.

In the last few years, County Attorney Steve Hirsch has gone over the open records and meeting laws with public boards.

Open records are key to the people knowing what their government is doing, said Mr. Hirsch. Without that information, it will be hard for people to judge who to vote for at the next election.

City Administrator Gary Shike, at \$42,700, is the top-paid city official.

He said the City of Oberlin pays health insurance differently than the school system, covering all of the single plan and half of whatever else the employee needs for family coverage. He said the health plan costs the city \$382 a month per employee. An employee and child costs \$721, employee and spouse \$821 and a larger family costs \$1,151, so the city pays the \$382 for the employee and then half of the family plan the employee chooses.

Mr. Shike said he and City Foreman Dan Castle have city vehicles because they are on call day and night.

He said other employees can use his city car when they go to meetings, which reduces the expense to the city.

Mr. Castle makes \$38,367 a year. Police Chief Wade Lockhart makes \$37,480 and City Attorney Steve Hirsch gets paid \$50 an hour for part-time work.

Tim Stallman, road and bridge supervisor, is the top-paid Decatur County employee at \$35,436. He is hired by the county commissioners. Mr. Stallman said he started in dirt construction in 1982 and then moved to county work in 1988. In May 1996, he became the department head.

Health Administrator Marilyn

Gamblin makes \$31,200 to head the health department. A registered nurse, she has an associate's degree and is working on her public health certification. Gaylen Huntley, noxious weed director, makes \$29,256 and Chief Dispatcher Jeanne Pachner makes \$25,360.

Among elected department heads, Treasurer Jean Hale and County Clerk Marilyn Horn make \$31,860. Sheriff Ken Badsky makes \$31,740, Judy Gaumer, register of deeds, makes \$29,708, and as county attorney, Mr. Hirsch makes \$28,980. He also has an outside law practice and is city attorney for several towns, including Oberlin.

Appraiser Alan Hale makes

\$27,000 and Fire Chief Bill Cathcart makes \$6,060. Both are part-time jobs. Mr. Hale also serves Norton County, where he is paid \$27,094 a year.

The full-time county employees got a raise in July of \$60 a month, but Mr. Hale declined the increase.

Decatur County pays for an employee's health insurance, which is \$600 a month. All full-time employees also are eligible for \$10,000 life insurance, and the county pays \$6.50 a month for those under 65 and \$3.50 a month for those over 65.

Among state employees, Master Trooper Jerry Stritt was paid \$54,142 after almost 18 years with the Kansas Highway Patrol before he moved to Salina this year. There currently is no trooper stationed in the county.

Magistrate Judge John Bremer makes \$48,448, which is a set salary for all magistrate judges in the state.

The lowest paid official may be Paul Lueschen, who serves as the city judge for Oberlin. He is paid \$350 per month to hold court twice a month.

Oberlin pays city council members \$100 per month and the mayor makes \$200 per month. School board members serve without pay.

Public employees here at middle to top of the pay scale

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Public officials in Decatur County make anywhere from middle to top salaries compared to those in surrounding counties, depending on the job and the person's experience.

Among those compared, the highest paid officials in all four counties were the district judges, who make \$105,673. The rate is the same for all district judges in the state.

The next highest were hospital administrators. There is only a \$1,183 difference in the top salaries, with Decatur County Hospital Administrator Lynn Doeden making \$84,443 and Chief Executive Officer Richard Miller making \$83,250 in Norton County. Sheridan County Health Complex Administrator Paul Mammeke makes \$70,000.

In Cheyenne County, the hospital is leased to a private corporation, and claims it is not subject to the state open meetings and records laws in the same way as the other hospitals.

The third-highest salaries are in the school districts, with Oberlin Superintendent Kelly Glodt coming in as the highest paid at \$82,871. The Hoxie superintendent makes \$72,000 and the Norton superintendent \$75,500. In Oberlin, there are 464 students, in Hoxie 320, and in Norton 731.

In St. Francis, with 323 students, Superintendent Carl Werner is retired and drawing a pension from the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System. Under state law, he can only earn up to \$5,880 in a year from the district he retired from. The

County salary comparisons

	Decatur	Norton	Cheyenne	Sheridan
Superintendent	\$82,871	\$75,500	\$5,880*	\$72,000
City Manager	\$42,000	\$64,554	\$48,000	\$35,400
Chief of Police	\$37,480	\$44,697	\$20,000	\$38,796
Hospital Admin.	\$84,443	\$83,250	****	\$70,000
Sheriff	\$31,740	\$38,000	\$24,808	\$32,600
Appraiser ***	\$27,094	\$27,000	\$12,000	\$52,500
Treasurer	\$31,860	\$35,450	\$25,400	\$26,300
Register of Deeds	\$29,708	\$26,337	\$24,689	\$25,400
Clerk	\$31,860	\$37,600	\$26,450	\$26,700
Public Works	\$38,367	\$38,577	\$48,000**	

* Retired, paid minimal salary under state law.
 ** The city manager in St. Francis also oversees the streets, solid waste treatment plant and operations for a salary of \$48,000.
 *** Most appraisers work part-time for two or more counties.
 The Cheyenne County sheriff also serves as St. Francis chief of police.
 **** The hospital in Cheyenne County is leased by Great Plains Health Alliance and says it is not subject to the Open Records Law.

assistant superintendent makes \$50,160.

In Norton, the county executive director for the U.S. Farm Service Agency makes \$8,075 more than the one in Decatur County. Vesta Hobbs of Norton County makes \$78,745 while Diane Barrett, Oberlin, makes \$70,670. In Sheridan County, Michelle Dewey makes \$66,632. Salaries change with years of experience, federal officials said.

At the high school level, Larry Stull, the principal in Norton, makes \$187 more than Charles Haag in Oberlin, \$72,498 vs. \$72,311. In Hoxie, Gary Johnson makes \$63,314 and in St. Francis, Scott Carmichael makes \$53,677.

Oberlin grade school Principal

Duane Dorshorst makes \$70,573 while St. Francis Principal Larry Gabel makes \$63,408, Norton's Larry Mills makes \$62,758 and Hoxie's Scott Hoyt makes \$56,166.

Oberlin Postmaster Linda Smith, who has 22 years with the Postal Service, makes \$66,780, while in Norton, Postmaster JaNan O'Brien with eight years of experience, makes \$58,312. In Hoxie, the postmaster makes \$56,924.

City officials

At the city level, officials in Norton make more than those in Oberlin in almost every position, but Norton is larger, with a population of 3,012 compared to Oberlin's 1,860.

• Norton City Administrator Rob Lawson makes \$64,554, which is

\$21,854 more than Administrator Gary Shike makes in Oberlin. Second highest paid is the St. Francis administrator, J.R. Landenberger, who makes \$48,000, then Mr. Shike at \$42,000 plus benefits and Hoxie City Superintendent Fred Washburn at \$35,400.

• In Norton, the public works supervisor makes \$38,577 while the city foreman in Oberlin makes \$38,367.

• Police Chief Lynn Menah in Norton makes \$44,697, Chief John Bieker in Hoxie makes \$38,796, Chief Wade Lockhart in Oberlin makes \$37,480 and in St. Francis Chief Troy Gardner makes \$20,000 from the city, but also runs the county sheriff's office for \$24,808.

• In Norton, City Attorney

Charles Worden makes \$9,318 a year plus an hourly rate, while in Hoxie, city attorney Ken Eland makes \$8,436, Mike Day in St. Francis makes \$1,500 and in Oberlin, Steve Hirsch is paid \$50 an hour.

• City council members in Oberlin make \$100 a month or \$1,200 a year, while the mayor makes \$200 a month or \$2,400 a year. In St. Francis, council members make \$2,400 a year and the mayor makes \$4,800. In Hoxie, members make \$85 a meeting and \$25 for a special meeting and the mayor makes \$125 a meeting or \$25 for a special meeting.

County officials

Officials in Decatur and Norton counties flip-flop on who is paid the most in each field. Those positions include:

• Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman in Decatur County makes \$35,436, while Steve Carter in Sheridan County makes \$33,600, Dave Flemming in Cheyenne County makes \$33,413 and Michael Coffey in Norton County makes \$32,138.

• County Clerk Robert Wyatt in Norton County makes \$37,600, Marilyn Horn in Decatur County makes \$31,860, Paula Biesler in Sheridan County makes \$26,700 plus \$2,003 to be the election officer and Terry Miller in Cheyenne County makes \$26,450.

• Treasurer Cynthia Linner in Norton County makes \$35,450, Jean Hale in Decatur County makes \$31,860, Esther Bainter in Sheridan County makes \$26,300 and Dolores Jenik in Cheyenne County makes

\$25,400.

• Appraiser Alan Hale makes \$27,094 in Norton County and \$27,000 in Decatur County. Appraiser David Stithem in Sheridan County makes \$52,500 and Randy Sangster in Cheyenne County makes \$12,000, but also works in other counties.

• Register of Deeds Judy Gaumer in Decatur County makes \$29,708, Wanda Vincent in Norton County makes \$26,337, Kari Weis in Sheridan County makes \$25,400 and Mary Morrow in Cheyenne County makes \$24,689.

• Sheriff Troy Thomson in Norton County makes \$38,000 plus \$12,000 as emergency preparedness director, Jim Johnson in Sheridan County makes \$32,600, Ken Badsky in Decatur County makes \$31,740 and Troy Gardner in Cheyenne County makes \$24,808.

• County Attorney Steve Hirsch makes \$28,980 in Decatur County, Karen Griffiths in Norton County makes \$14,160, Justin Barrett in Cheyenne County makes \$23,443 and Mike Haas in Sheridan County makes \$20,500.

County attorneys are allowed to have an outside law practice. In Norton County there is also a county counselor, former county attorney Doug Sebelius, who makes \$24,108.

• Norton County commissioners make \$18,750 a year, commissioners in Decatur County make \$16,080, commissioners in Sheridan County make \$10,400 and commissioners in Cheyenne County make \$9,444. Their job is considered part-time.

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