

## Hail pounds fields in north of county

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
kldavis@nwks.com

Wheat fields near Cedar Bluffs, Danbury and east up to Norcat were damaged by hail during an afternoon storm Thursday which left almost an inch or more of hail on roads and fields north of Cedar Bluffs.

Most of the fields probably won't recover from the hail damage, said Doug Claussen, general manager of the Decatur Co-op in Oberlin.

"It's unfortunate that the northern part of the county got hit with the hail," he said, adding that fall crops aren't far enough along for the hail to have caused a lot of damage. Basically, the corn and milo plants are too little to be hurt much, he said, although both were probably dam-

aged some.

The hail hit in the north end of the co-op's trade territory and traveled east into Norton County, he said.

Other than that, said Mr. Claussen, the county has received timely precipitation all spring, going back to the snow pack this winter.

"We could have used some rain 2 to 3 weeks ago," he said, "but we had good subsoil (moisture)."

The manager said he has talked to some 70- and 80-year-old farmers who say this could be the best wheat crop ever, at least where it didn't hail. By the end of the month, he said, farmers should be ready to start cutting.

No one knows for sure how the crop will turn out, he said, and they won't until the wheat is in the bins.

At the co-op, which has elevators in Oberlin, Kanona, Herndon, Ludell, Danbury and Jennings, Mr. Claussen said crews have been busy getting ready for harvest. Mr. Claussen said they have been shipping out trainloads of grain and moving old grain so space will be available for the harvest.

For the last six to eight months, he said, the co-op has worked to get the grain sold because they are anticipating a harvest more like those before the drought.

He said the crew also has worked to make sure all of the mechanical equipment is working and added that the co-op has hired summer crews, teenagers and adults, to help when the trucks start to roll.

## Volunteers getting ready for Relay next weekend

Final plans are being wrapped up for Oberlin's annual Relay for Life from 7 p.m. Friday, June 15, through 7 a.m. Saturday, June 16, at Smick Memorial Field in Oberlin.

Chairman Chris Dempewolf said 11 teams have signed up and anyone wishing to sponsor a luminaria for \$10 in memory of someone or to honor a cancer survivor should call her at (785) 693-4315 or any team or committee member.

There will be a survivors' reception from 6 to 6:50 p.m. at the high school cafeteria. A barbecue fund raiser, sponsored by May Family Farms, will have meat cooked by R&M Service Center.

The Oberlin American Legion will present the colors at 7 p.m., followed by the national anthem.

The program will include a tribute to Nora Bell Manning, a 45-year cancer survivor. She and Patty Brown, another survivor, will be honored for bringing Relay for Life to Oberlin. This will be followed by the survivors lap around the track, joined by caregivers and family members for the second lap.

Kayla Wurm will share her story, and after that will be an auction of donated crafts, beginning at 8 p.m. Mrs. Dempewolf said she and Leta Meitl will be available for Locks of Love haircuts at 8:45 p.m. Hair, at

least 10 inches long, will be donated to make wigs for cancer patients.

The luminaria ceremony will begin at 10 p.m. and teams and individuals raising the most money will be recognized. Mrs. Dempewolf said golf carts will be available for those who need help and rocking chairs will be available for anyone not able to climb into the bleachers.

Those wishing to have their names and those for whom they are purchasing a luminaria put in the program must do so by next Tuesday. Call Carla Depperschmidt at 475-3452 or Jean Hale at 475-2136.

Everyone can watch the activities from the grandstand.

## Food pantry needs donations for basics, cleaning supplies

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
kldavis@nwks.com

The Decatur County food pantry is short a few food items, cleaning and hygiene supplies, workers say.

The pantry, housed in the Oberlin United Church, provides food and supplies for people who are having a rough time up to three times a year.

Melanie Anderson, who works at the pantry, said they are low on some basic things. In the winter, she said, big food drives usually fill the shelves. Then, each church in the county takes a month to collect food, and the pantry also gets donations.

Ms. Anderson said the pantry doesn't really need a summer food drive but could use a few items. Recently, she said, Raye's Grocery started to donate items, which has been a huge help. It has meant more variety of food. Last Wednesday, she said, the pantry got six full boxes from the grocery store.

The food pantry still needs toothpaste, toothbrushes, cleaning supplies including dishwashing soap, toilet paper, jelly, baking supplies and canned meat. Ms. Anderson said the pantry has only one little bag of flour and one bag of sugar left.

Fruit donations have gone down, she said, and they could use some.

For sure, she said, the pantry doesn't need any green beans or corn. Ms. Anderson said she has cases of the two vegetables stacked inside the pantry.

Mexican food items have become popular also.

### Pantry changes open days

The Decatur County Food Pantry, located in the United Church at the corner of Griffith Avenue and Maple Street on the east side of Oberlin, has changed the days it will be open.

The food bank will be open from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tues-

days and Thursdays, said Melanie Anderson. It had been open on Mondays and Thursdays.

The pantry needs donations of basic food and cleaning supplies, she added, especially flour and sugar, fruit and vegetables and meat which can be frozen.

The Decatur County Ministerial Association bought a big freezer for the pantry some time ago, said Ms. Anderson. The group buys hot dogs, cheese and hamburger. Anyone can donate meat that can be frozen, she said, but they need to call ahead so she can be at the church.

The food pantry started back in the 1980s, said Ms. Anderson, when the United Church decided to collect food to help people who needed it. It was kept in a little room off of the sanctuary. Then, said Ms. Anderson, they asked other churches and the ministerial association to help.

That's when the other churches started to collect food in rotation. In 2006, she said, the pantry helped 99 adults and 55 kids. So far this year the pantry has helped 51 adults and 30 children.

Ms. Anderson said she isn't sure why the numbers are up, but attributes some of it to illnesses and injuries as well as people getting low-paying jobs, not being able to work or just falling on hard times.

People in the county can use the pantry up to three times a year, she said. They have a short form for people to fill out the first time.

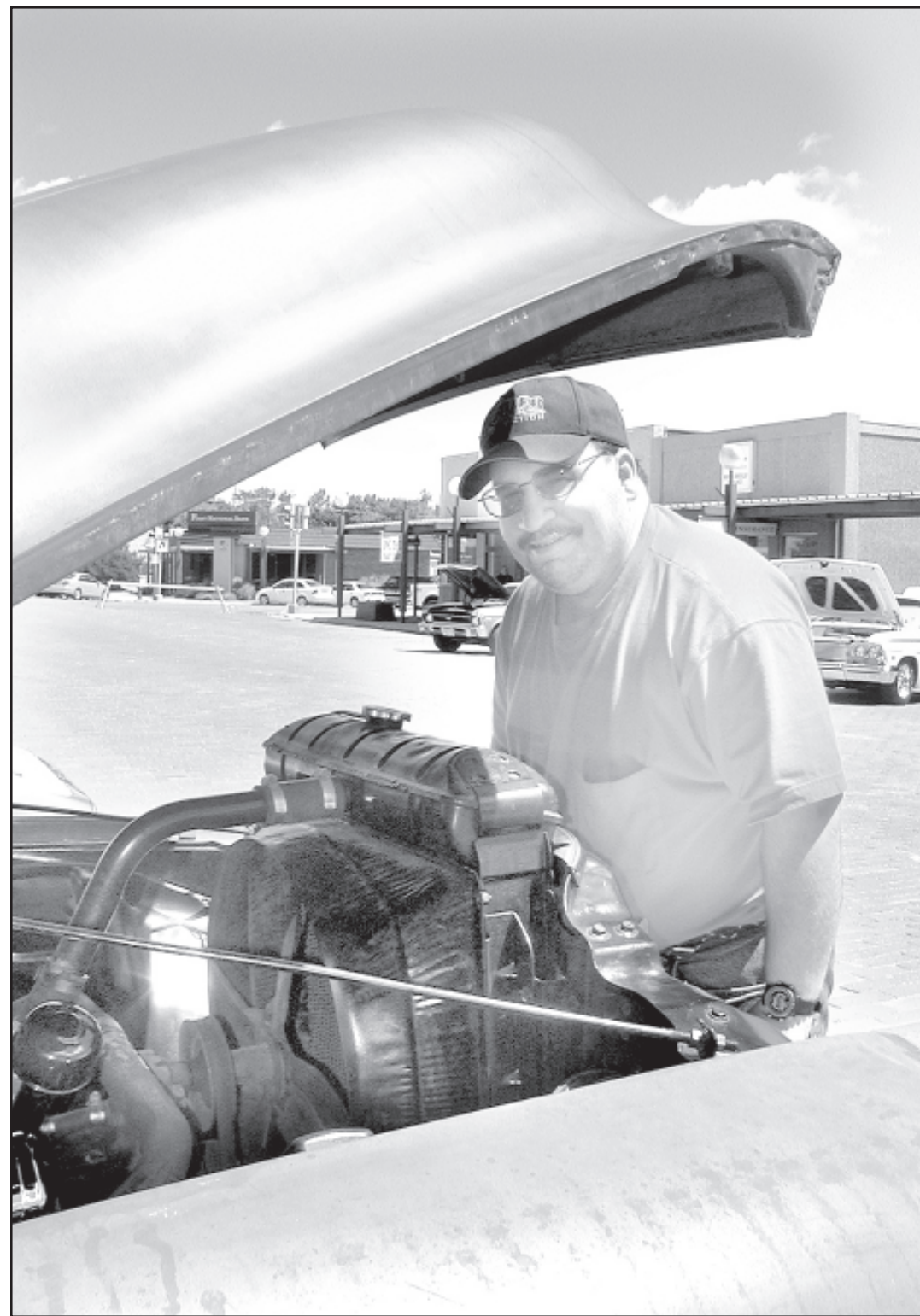
As a rule, said Ms. Anderson, the pantry doesn't help people outside of Decatur County, but there have been exceptions in the past.

The pantry has been open Monday and Thursdays, but she said, she is going to change the days to Tuesday and Thursdays. The hours will still be 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

People can make donations any time, she said, adding that the pantry would like to get some filled punch cards for Raye's to help people get bread, milk and other perishables. The pantry also will accept unused Bibles or devotional books to give away, she said.

Ms. Anderson said she wanted to thank everyone for their support, from individuals to churches who donate.

"This is a great service for the county," she said.



CHECKING OUT THE ENGINE on an old vehicle, Frank Black Jr. was among the visitors at the Last Indian Raid Museum's sixth annual Summerfest Car Show on Saturday

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes

## Sun, cars, trucks shine during museum show

By CYNTHIA HAYNES  
cahaynes@nwks.com

After a rainy week, the sun shined, the breeze blew and the cars sparkled for the Last Indian Raid Museum's sixth annual Summerfest Car Show on Saturday.

Antique bicycles, cars, trucks and motorcycles lined the business blocks of Penn Avenue, with 88 entries in the show, said organizer Dana Marintzer.

Things got underway on Friday night as vehicles began to arrive for a "cruise-in" at the museum and volunteers started to set up for Saturday.

Main Street was blocked to traffic from the museum to Commercial Street as roadsters and rods sat fender to fender with pickups and cycles, while strollers checked out engines, hub caps, running boards and tail lights. One owner had a mirror set up in front of his rod so people could appreciate the shiny steering rods.

Hungry car fans snapped up kettle corn, porkburgers, brats, pop and pie during the day. Museum volunteers served a pancake and ham breakfast and a barbecue supper at the Old Bohemian Hall on the museum grounds.

All-day activities included a cash raffle and a "car sledge," where people took turns bashing a pair of donated vehicles with a big hammer.

The Decatur Area Chamber of Commerce sponsored remote-control car races, and the museum had a burn-out, where a



SERVING UP A PIECE OF PIE, Joyce Hartzog was among the many volunteers who made things happen and kept things running during the car show Saturday.

driver spun his tires to try to make lots of smoke.

A car without oil was allowed to run until the engine blew up, and the strong, or strong of mind, had a chance to see how far they could throw a starter.

Car show entrants could take part in a poker run, following a

route to pick up their cards. Winners were Regan Badsky, first; Jim Gamblin, second; and Daniel Dempewolf, third, Mrs. Marintzer said.

Those with vehicles in the show were eligible for door prizes ranging from T-shirts to gift certificates (See ANTIQUE on Page 8A)

## Without help, Oberlin Speedway's dirt track might return to dust

By JIM MERRIOTT  
jimmerriott@nwks.com

The smell of burnt tire rubber, header pipes blowing fire from their exhaust, and the sounds that make windows vibrate through the town may well come to a stop unless someone goes to bat for the Oberlin Speedway.

The dirt track, brainchild of Mick Barth, stands in limbo until a new promoter steps up to save stock car racing in Oberlin. Sprint cars may run a couple of times this summer,

and a Colorado promoter plans races next week, but for now, no one has scheduled regular races on the track this summer.

"When we first started a petition in 2001, we had over 600 signatures (of people) who said they would support the racing program," said Barth. "I hate to see the speedway just sit there."

"Former promoters wanted the race commission to sell advertisement. We are all volunteers and we felt it was up to the promoters to sell their own advertisements, as

they were the people that made the money."

So just what is the status of the speedway? No one seems to be sure just what will happen at the track, restored and reopened six years ago by a volunteer group.

Don and Paula Bolt of Jennings, who promoted races at the track for five years, pulled the plug due to weak attendance, soaring prices and a low-to-no profit margin.

"It boiled down to finding a way to make a profit," said Paula Bolt. "Sometimes we had as many as 100 race cars, but due to poor

gate receipts, we had no choice but to scratch Oberlin from our venues."

The couple also promote races at Elmwood Parkwood Speedway in Norton.

Oberlin is left with only local resident Rick Salem, who promotes the United Rebel 305 Sprint Series in western Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska. Salem said he's putting his circuits' two remaining races this season in Oberlin, Sunday, Aug. 12, the day after the Decatur County Fair ends, and Sunday, Sept. 2, Labor Day weekend.

Salem said he has been received well in other circuit towns, especially at the Jetmore Motorplex, where he is one of the promoters.

"One of the major problems the Oberlin Speedway has is lack of sponsorship," said Salem. "The majority of the race tracks are sponsored by brewing companies."

Since the beginning of the fairgrounds years ago, county commissioners have voted down the idea of beer sales on public (See TRACK on Page 10A)