

*Man dies in car wreck during storm

(Continued from Page 1A) of his minivan on the icy highway about three-quarters of a mile south of the city limits. The van slid sideways and into the south-bound lane, into the path of a semitrailer truck.

All of the passengers were taken to the Decatur County Hospital, where Mr. Votapka was pronounced dead.

Undersheriff McHugh said the road was snow-packed. The semi truck driver from South Dakota wasn't injured.

Monday afternoon, the Votapka family sat around the family room of the home. Some friends brought in food and others called.

Mrs. Votapka said the house, just north of town on U.S. 83, was built by her husband's grandparents, Charlie and Clara Votapka, in 1916. His parents, Guy and Helen (Vermillion) Votapka, later lived in the home. His mother had Dale in the bedroom downstairs, the sixth of seven kids. The first one died in childbirth, she said.

Her husband was a top wrestler as a young man, she said, and his record for winning three state championships at Decatur Community High still stands. No one has ever broken it or matched it.

He also wrestled in the U.S. Navy and at Fort Hays State, she said. Mrs. Votapka said her husband refereed wrestling for years and was chosen to be in the Kansas Wrestling Hall of Fame.

She said both were active in the United Church of Oberlin. She serves on the board at the Decatur County Museum and he always was right there along side her helping.

Mrs. Votapka said her husband didn't know anything about music, but he was always willing to help her with the bell choir she was in charge of for years.

In 1989, she said, they started to travel in their motor home. Their goal was to see the whole country.

The couple, she said, were "snowbirds," traveling to warmer weather in the winter. In 1999, they started helping Habitat for Humanity in Arizona, raising money in the retirement area where they stayed for the winter.

Over 20 years ago, said Mrs. Votapka, Harry Schrammel, who originally purchased the train for the Decatur County Fair, asked her husband if he would take care of it since he was getting older. Dale agreed, she said. He was a jack of all trades, and being a farmer, he knew about engines and who to contact to help him fix it.

For years, she said, he kept the train in running order. If they weren't in town when the train was needed, he would find someone else to be in charge. Everyone knows him as

Uncle Dale or "the Train Guy," said Mrs. Votapka, with a smile.

"Dale was a wonderful husband, father and all around good guy," she said.

Besides their three daughters, she said, they had an exchange student, Paulina Rossi of Kirkkonummi, Finland, who lived with them her junior year and became their "fourth daughter." Her children, said Mrs. Votapka, call them Grandma and Grandpa. She lost her father when

she was very young, Mrs. Votapka said, so she has always been very attached to Dale.

Mrs. Votapka said her husband stood with her through everything, including breast cancer. For a year, she said, he took her to treatments in Wichita.

When things got tough and she would pace, she said, he would suggest something fun.

"He probably put on 20 pounds that year from ice cream," she chuckled.

"You couldn't walk on him," said Mrs. Votapka, "but he would give you the shirt off of his back."

Mr. Votapka was born June 20, 1934. He attended Oberlin schools and graduated in the class of 1952.

He served in the Navy and was on the All-Navy Wrestling Squad. He took a fifth place in the 1956 Olympic Trials for wrestling. He returned home and enrolled at Fort Hays State College, again serving on the wrestling team. Later, relatives said, he maintained one of the highest ratings awarded a wrestling referee.

He married Cheryl Ann Koehler on Aug. 8, 1965, at the Federated Church in Oberlin. He farmed all of his life until he retired in 1998.

He was preceded in death by his parents, two brothers, John Neil and Chuck Votapka, and an infant sister, Mary Louise.

Survivors include three daughters, Beth and Chris Sluder, Bethany Mo.; Drs. Pam and Eric Huerter, Lawrence; and Luanne Rupe and finance Rick Rowilson, Hays; a brother Howard and Janette Votapka; two sisters, Faye Meitl and Norma Anderson; and two sisters-in-law, Joy Votapka and Jackie Votapka, all of Oberlin; and 12 grandchildren.

Services were planned for Tuesday at Pauls Funeral Home in Oberlin with Pastor Judi Stricker officiating. Burial was to be in the Oberlin Cemetery with military rites by the Oberlin American Legion honor guard.

A memorial fund was established for the Decatur County Amusement Authority or the Decatur County Museum. Contributions may be sent to the funeral home, 121 N. Penn, Oberlin, Kan., 67749.

*Loan approved for housing bonds

(Continued from Page 1A) August. The agency needs \$30,000 to finish paying off the bonds, said Mr. Hirsch.

Once those are paid, the rent money should be enough to run the project and repay the loan. The buildings belong to the city, but will be run by the authority.

The agency doesn't need \$30,000 all at once, said Mr. Hirsch, but they need to be able to get hold of the money, and it makes sense to do the loan. He said by his calculations, the money will come back to the authority 18 to 20 months after the bonds are paid.

The Housing Authority has been slowly using its reserve account, he said, and it's now gone. The other option is to borrow the \$30,000 with new bonds, he said, but that would

cost too much.

The city could take the money from its community growth fund, which is money the council set aside to use on projects, he said, and then put the money back as the authority repays it.

Is there money in the fund? asked Councilwoman Rhonda May. Yes, said Councilman Rob McFee, around \$159,376.

After August of next year, said Mayor Joe Stanley, without the monthly \$3,500 payment on the bonds, the authority should be able to operate in the black.

The bond issue is for the newer part of Sappa Valley Manor which includes the south end and east side, said Mr. Hirsch.

The council approved the loan in a unanimous vote.

Homes on tour soon

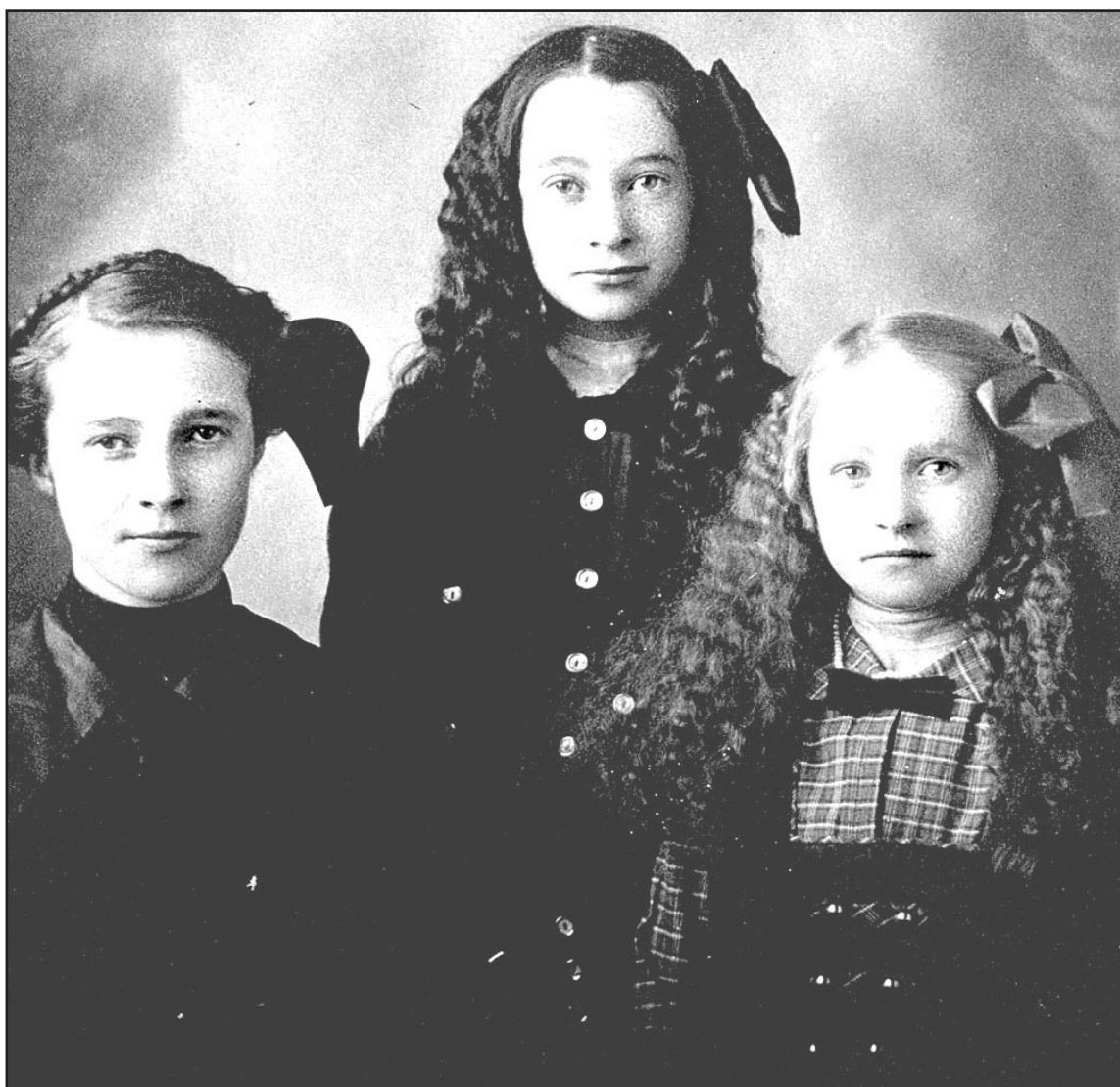
The Decatur Professional Women are getting ready for their annual Holiday Homes Tour in December.

Owners of four homes, Jerry and Melissa Chambers, LaVern and Carolyn Burtis, Tom and Barbara Mullen and Bill and Connie Riedel, have agreed to open their houses for the tour on Sunday, Dec. 12.

Tickets for the tour are \$12 and people can purchase them ahead of time at the Dresser or the Decatur

County Area Chamber of Commerce office. The money raised goes for scholarships the organization gives out to graduating seniors at Decatur Community High School and older women going back to college.

The tour will start at 2 p.m. at the United Church. Also on the tour will be the Christmas trees at the museum. Following the tour, the group will end up at United Church for a soup and dessert supper.



AT AGE 7 OR 8, around 1914-1916, Tressie Flood (right) posed with two of her sisters, Gladys (left) and Alta. Their sister Mildred had not been born.

*Woman celebrates a century

(Continued from Page 1A) of Trenton, Neb. She grew up on the farm and attended a nearby country school for eight years. She had three sisters, Gladys, Alta and Mildred.

As a young woman, she said, she went with another guy to a dance at Ludell, but she and Adrian "Ed" Samson were attracted to each other and he later asked her for a date. They married on May 29, 1929, at the courthouse in Atwood.

Their first farm home was 7 1/2 miles east of Atwood. It was there that their three children, Frances Elizabeth, Richard Bernard and Shirley Ann, were born.

They bought a farm 1 1/2 miles east of Ludell in the fall of 1941 and that remained her home until she moved to the nursing home. When their son was married in 1968, he and his wife Bernadine built a home on the same farmstead and still live there.

Her family said that she was a typical hard-working farm wife,

raising chickens, milking cows, raising a big garden and preserving fruits and vegetables, besides keeping house. Over the years, she also enjoyed quilting and needlework.

A close companion for many years was her dog, Razzle Dazzle, a purebred Australian Shepherd which she raised from a pup. He was protective and stayed inside her yard, said her daughter-in-law, Bernadine Samson.

However, she did have to get after him a couple of times when he chewed through the telephone line outside her house.

When her children were growing up, her family said, she never allowed animals in the house, but after her husband died in 1976, she started letting male cats on her porch and called them all "Tommy."

Her pride and joy in later years was her yard and flower beds. She always enjoyed working outside more than inside.

Her son Richard said that during

the summer months, you could always find her digging up sand burrs and dandelions that got in the yard. With dandelions in the alfalfa field south of the house, there were always plenty to dig.

Mrs. Samson had only one grandchild who lived in the area, Jamie Samson, so he was very special to her. She cared for him during his preschool years while his mother taught school.

"Tressie's face always lights up when Jamie comes to visit," his parents said.

Relatives who plan to come for the birthday party include her daughters, Frances and husband Dean Carpenter, Del City, Okla., and Shirley and husband James Coghburn, Hobbs, N.M.; her son, Richard and wife, Bernadine, Ludell; and their son, Jamie Samson and friend Sara Bishop, Lindsborg, along with many other relatives and friends.

Mrs. Samson counts five grandchildren; four step-grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; nine step-great-grandchildren; 12 great-great-grandchildren; and six step-great-great-grandchildren.

*Goals set for district leader

(Continued from Page 1A) Board President Dewayne Jackson. Normally, that's how it works, said member Barb Olson.

The board has to get the superintendent's evaluation done in December, said Mr. Jackson.

If the board isn't OK with the goals, that's OK, said Dr. Cullen. They can be changed. Mrs. Olson said she is fine with the goals, but isn't sure about the indicators.

The goals are fine, said member Delayne May, but it will be hard to do the evaluation based on the list. It will be yes or no, did he do each

of the goals, she said. There will be little room left for discussion.

Dr. Cullen said he wrote the goals to allow him to tell the board how things are going in the district. He said that six are a lot, so maybe the goals need to be redefined.

This can be a living, changing document as needed, said member Dan Grafel.

Mr. Jackson said he also talked with Charlie Mansfield, with

McPherson and Jacobson, the company the district used to help find a superintendent, who is coming to help with the evaluation. Mr. Jackson said the board can use Mr. Mansfield's evaluation plan this first time and then use these goals for the next evaluation.

The board approved the idea of using these goals for the second evaluation and approved the performance goals.

*City wants grant

(Continued from Page 1A) intersection and east to Neill Avenue first, he said. Then it heard it would get a grant for repaving from Neill to Penn before the first project was done, so the two were combined.

The highway was widened a couple of feet on the north side and new curb and gutter was put in along U.S. 36 where the road was replaced. The widening meant the city had to take out the street lights on the north side, Mr. Shike said, and the crew put some of the lights back up.

Although the original design had the whole project in concrete, said Mr. Shike, the bids were higher than anticipated so the state decided to mill off some of the old asphalt and put an overlay from Neill to Penn. The west part of the job, including the intersection, was done in concrete.

The Department of Transportation, he said, recommended that the next project should replace the asphalt section with concrete. The only question will be how far east on U.S. 36 the department will go with the project, Mr. Shike said. The application for the project has been sent in, he said, but the city hasn't heard anything from the state. If awarded, he said, it would be for 2009.

The city also gets money from the state to maintain the highways in town, he said. Every city, said Mr. Shike, has an agreement with the department defining who does what. For instance, in Oberlin, if a hole or some damage appears on the highways, in the traffic paths, it is the state's responsibility. If something happens with the curb or gutter, though, it is the city's.

Kristen Brands, Department of Transportation spokesperson in Norton, said the geometric projects are designed to help cities make improvements to state roads within city limits. Lots of towns have taken advantage of this program, she said.

Shotgun fired at home in city

The Oberlin Police Department is looking for one or more people who drove by a house in the 800 block of North York Avenue and fired at it with a shotgun.

Police Chief Wade Lockhart said dispatch received the call around 7:39 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 17, that someone had shot at the house at 803 N. York. Mark Vittitow, 46, who lives in the house, was home at the time.

The shot hit the house near the front door. Chief Lockhart said there were no injuries.

Anyone with information about the case should call the police department at 475-3392, he said.

Chief Lockhart said this is the first time in the over 10 years he has been here that someone has shot a firearm at a home, though there have been some incidents with pellet or BB guns.

REHE Rawlins County Health Center RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR 707 Grant Atwood, KS 67730 (785) 626-3211 Bringing Specialized Healthcare To Your Community December 2007	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
							1
	2	3 Cardiac Rehab Dr. Rubiniowitz Hematology/Oncology	4 McDonald Clinic - p.m.	5 Diabetic Clinic Echocardiograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	6	7 Nuclear Stress Test MRI Mobile Unit Vasc Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	8
	9	10 Cardiac Rehab	11 McDonald Clinic - p.m.	12 Diabetic Clinic Echocardiograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Dr. Frankum Surgery	13 Dr. Saba Orthopedics Dr. Reeves Podiatry	14 MRI Mobile Unit Vasc Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Nuclear Stress Test Dr. Reeves Podiatry	15
	16	17 Cardiac Rehab	18 McDonald Clinic - p.m. Dr. Miller Cardiology	19 Diabetic Clinic Echocardiograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Dr. Curtis Cardiology	20	21 MRI Mobile Unit Vasc Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Nuclear Stress Test	22
	23	24 Cardiac Rehab	25	26 Diabetic Clinic Echocardiograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	27	28 Nuclear Stress Test MRI Mobile Unit Vasc Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	29
	30	31 Cardiac Rehab	In House Services Available Daily CT Scan ** Bone Mineral Density ** EKG Electrocardiograms		TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A VISITING PHYSICIAN, PLEASE CALL (785)626-3211 Cheryl Banister, RN Specialty Clinic Director		