

Telethon set at Gateway Saturday

The 13th annual Seeds of Hope Telethon kicks off at 1 p.m. Saturday at The Gateway with talent, food and auction items all day.

For the last 12 years a committee has organized the telethon in February each year to raise money for non-profit organizations in Decatur County. In the fall, committee members start sending out letters to groups interested in receiving money, people who might want to donate an item for the auction and those who have a talent they want to perform.

This year's committee includes Jack

Benton, Bill Duncan, Regina Stanley, Brenda Ulery, Peg Smith, Kristi Smith and Timothy and Kimberly Davis. In November the committee members read letters from organizations asking for help this year and picked 19 groups to receive money. Those groups include Teens for Christ, the Decatur County Museum, the City of Jennings, the City of Norcat, Kansans for Life, Oberlin Area Concert Band, Oberlin Lions Club, the Salvation Army, Relay for Life, Decatur County Ministerial Association, Tripple Creek Riders, Decatur Professional

Women, Oberlin Girl Scouts, Creative Movements, Awana Club, the Golden Age Center, Decatur County Fair Board and half an amount to both the Decatur County Summer Recreation Program and Frogs Camp.

Each of the groups are required to provide someone to answer the phone for an hour the day of the telethon, do an interview and provide goodies for the concession stand. Once the final donation comes into the telethon, the money is divided up and each group will receive a check.

Money raised during the event comes in through the concession stand, people making monetary donations or pledges and making purchases at the auction. The auction lasts all day including both items that people can bid on an hourly basis and those that will be up for bid from 1 to 9 p.m.

During the first hour of the telethon, from 1 to 2 p.m. no auction items will be sold off. At the end of each hour after that up to 8 p.m. auction items featured each hour will be sold. At 9 p.m. the items featured on the all-day auction will be sold.

Anyone can either call in to 475-3753 or 475-2639 to make a bid on the auction items or come to The Gateway to do it.

Anyone still wanting to make a donation for the auction can do so by calling Kimberly Davis or Kristi Smith at 475-3510.

The committee asks anyone buying auction items to please pick them up at The Gateway by 10 p.m. the day of the telethon.

Some of the auction items include a purse, hair products, porcelain dolls, seasoning, a (See TELETHON on Page 10A)



AT THE ANNUAL Oberlin-Decatur County Chamber of Commerce banquet Thursday, Paul Siebert (above) performed on his hammer dulcimer before he switched to

the guitar and banjo. Kurt Vollertsen (below) served himself dinner before the entertainment started.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Music fills arena at annual banquet

Members of the Oberlin-Decatur County Chamber of Commerce elected 10 new members to the Amusement Authority and three to the chamber board of directors at the annual banquet Thursday night at The Gateway.

Those elected to the Amusement Authority included Tim Thornton, Candy Ketterl, Stephanie Blau, Jim Wesch, Elden Huff, Kevin Ketterl, Dana Koerperich, Jennifer Schissler, Melinda Grafel and Judy Scott. They will join Vicky Ray and Dana Marintzer who are already members to make up the 12 member group.

The new chamber board members include Amanda Grafel, Dr. Shannon Addleman and Dave Olson. They will join Kari Ketterl, Kem Bryan, Tami Shaw, Kelly Wasson, Beth Harmon and Sid Metcalf on the board.

Before starting the meal Jay Anderson, with the Oberlin City Council and a member of the airport committee, asked the people at the banquet to please write to their state and national legislators asking for support of the airport

expansion project.

"We need every letter we can get out," said Dr. Anderson. "Community participation counts."

The chamber board honored two people for their volunteer work in the county. Abby Hissong, said Brian Loker, has organized the angel tree for years and the fair at the grade school to name a few. Joyce Hartzog, he said, volunteers at the chamber, at her church and is just very giving.

A big thanks to both of them, he said, and to everyone who helped out this year including the Maverick 4-H club for helping decorate downtown, LaMoine Wolfram for helping replace lights, Rusty Addleman for the fireworks show and Gary Walter for organizing the light parade.

Before the evening was over, Paul Siebert entertained the group on his hammer dulcimer, banjo and guitar. Mr. Siebert, who is originally from Aurora, Neb., said he played at the Good Samaritan Center that afternoon and explored Oberlin too.

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Moisture totals in 2007 drop below average

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Even with all of the snow storms last year, Decatur County actually had almost two inches less in moisture in 2007 than in 2006.

Jerry Killingsworth, meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Goodland, said in 2007 Decatur County received 19.88 inches of moisture while the county received 21.85 inches in 2006.

Since 1893 Decatur County has had a weather station with an observer which sends regular reports to the National Weather Service, he said. Looking back at the moisture totals for over 100 years the average for a year is 20.79 inches.

In both 2006 and 2007 the county was within an inch to the average, said Mr. Killingsworth.

Just a few years ago the area was in a drought, he said, but now nowhere across northwest Kansas is in a drought. In order to determine that, he said, they have to put together a string of totals for several years. It took about five years or so for the

area to get into a drought and it takes about the same amount of time to get out of one.

In 2002, said Mr. Killingsworth, when Decatur County and northwest Kansas were in a drought there was 12.25 inches of moisture recorded, the following year there was 16 inches. The drought started to show up back in 1995 when the county only received 17 inches of moisture, which is over three less than average.

In 2004 and 2005 the county was about normal getting 25 inches, he said. Anytime a county or area can get an average year, they are doing a lot better than some of the other areas in northwest Kansas.

Using U.S. 36 as a line, said Mr. Killingsworth, anything to the north of that highway seemed to get average to above moisture in 2007. Anything to the south was below normal to varying degrees. Some places were well below normal, he said. For example, Goodland to Burlington down to Sharon Springs (See NUMBERS on Page 10A)

Meeting planned to discuss disease found in deer

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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The Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks plans to hold an informational meeting on chronic wasting disease at The Gateway next Wednesday, after confirmed reports of the disease in three white-tailed deer harvested this past hunting season.

Bob Mathews, with the department, said Lloyd Fox, big game project leader and Ruby Mosher, wildlife disease coordinator will both talk at the public meeting at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 6 at The Gateway.

The meeting was scheduled after three confirmed cases in white-tailed deer harvested here were released at the beginning of the month. All three deer were killed along the Sappa Creek, north of Oberlin.

There are about 600 more samples from northwest Kansas left to be tested. Last month a confirmed case of chronic wasting disease was reported by the Nebraska Game and

Parks Commission in Red Willow County.

According to information from the department, chronic wasting disease is fatal to infected deer and elk. The progressive disease causes small holes to develop in the brain. That results in decreased brain function, which means the deer or elk can show signs of depression, a droopy head, staggering, loss of appetite and even a lack of response to humans. That continues into weight loss, drooling and excessive thirst.

The department asks hunters to continue getting deer tested for the disease and asks them not to take deer carcasses away from the area where they lived, especially ones taken in areas where chronic wasting disease has been confirmed. It also suggests not dumping the carcasses where deer or elk can come into contact with the remains, but instead having them double-bagged and taken to a landfill, since the disease can be transmitted by

(See MEETING on Page 10A)

Little Miss wins gift certificates and prizes as the first baby born in 2008

At 7 pounds 14.4 ounces, 20 inches Brylee Annette Minnick is Decatur County's New Year's baby for 2008.

Born at 4:23 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 22, at Decatur County Hospital to parents Karlie Black and Nathan Minnick, Brylee is the first baby of 2008 delivered in the county.

Dressed in pink fleece type pants, a white long sleeved shirt with tiny flowers and a bow in her full head of dark hair, Brylee and mom were ready to go home Thursday.

Miss Black said they knew they were having a little girl and decided to name her after Mr. Minnick's brother Bryan. Annette is Brylee's grandmother's middle name on Mr. Minnick's side.

Miss Black said she had read in *The Oberlin Herald* that the New

Year's baby hadn't been born yet. She said her due date was Jan. 17, although it was changed several times, but she didn't really think about having the New Year's baby.

Miss Black has a son, Gage VanMeter, and Mr. Minnick a daughter Kariah Castle.

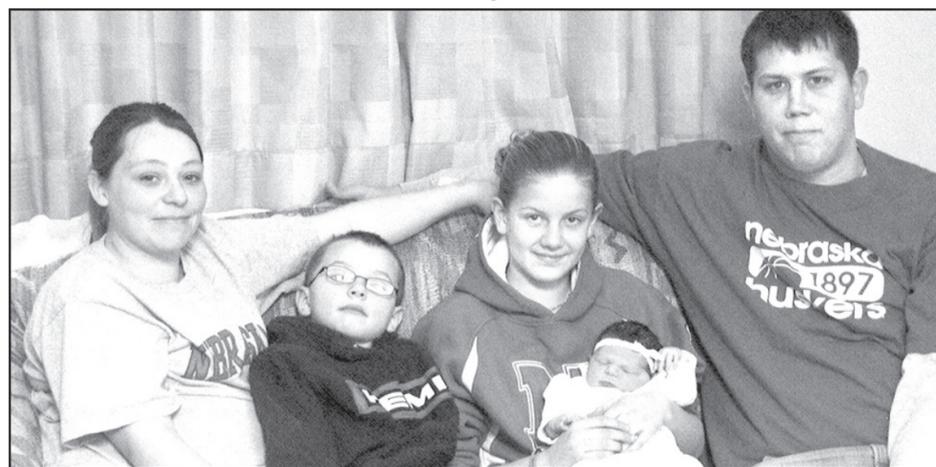
Miss Black is a nurse aide at the Decatur County Good Samaritan Center and Mr. Minnick works with Union Pacific out of North Platte.

On Brylee's mother's side, her family includes Penny Smith, maternal grandma, Kelley Black, aunt, Chris and Kasey May, aunt and uncle, all of Oberlin and Daniel and Shannon Black, aunt and uncle, St. Joseph, Mo.

On Brylee's father's side her family includes Cyndy and Scott Dolan, grandparents, of Oberlin,

Virginia Baker, great-grandma, Jean Minnick, great-grandma, both of Cambridge, Neb.; Bonnie Dolan, great-grandma, Justin and Nikki Sauvage, aunt and uncle, of Oberlin and Jeff Minnick, uncle, of McPherson.

Prizes for being the first baby of the new year include a \$10 gift certificate from the Dresser, a case of baby food from Raye's Grocery, a \$10 gift card from Stanley Hardware, a \$20 gift certificate from Carol Morford with Mary Kay, a \$25 gift certificate at Addleman Drug Store, a \$10 gift certificate at Ward Drug Store, a pizza for two from Pizza Hut, a \$25 gift certificate from Rocking R, a gift from Fredrickson Insurance Agency and a year subscription to *The Oberlin Herald*.



AT THE HOSPITAL last week, Karlie Black, Gage VanMeter, Kariah Castle, holding her new sister, Brylee Annette and Nathan Minnick sat on the couch before being released.