

County asks sheriff to look at fixing vehicle

The Decatur County commissioners asked the sheriff to get prices to fix a 2004 Dodge Durango patrol vehicle before making a decision on whether or not to replace it.

Sheriff Ken Badsky said the Durango had 98,500 miles on it as of Jan. 1. There's a long list of items on the vehicle that need to be fixed, he said.

He asked if he should look into getting it fixed, get bids for a newer one or talked about buying a 2005 Dodge Durango from the state's emergency management department.

Included in the things that need to be fixed or looked at on the Durango, said the sheriff, are a decrease in power, gauges are shutting down and not working correctly, a cracked windshield and a transmission that slips, to name a few. He said he hasn't had any work done yet.

Are the department's vehicles on a regular maintenance schedule? asked Commissioner Gene Gallentine. Yes, said Sheriff Badsky.

A new unit will cost around \$35,000, he said, and that isn't in the department's budget. A used one might cost around \$20,000.

Commissioner Ralph Unger asked what would need to be done if the department bought the emergency management vehicle. Mostly, move the equipment, he said; there's already a light bar that needs to be installed. It would cost \$500 to \$600, the sheriff added.

If the Durango needs all of these repairs, said Mr. Unger, he doesn't see fixing everything; just get rid of it.

The commissioners asked Sheriff Badsky to get two proposals on what it will cost to fix the Durango from Dodge dealers. Mr. Unger suggested looking also for prices of a used vehicle.

Without knowing the budget constraints coming from the state, said Mr. Gallentine, all department heads need to look at budgets and prioritize the items.

Interim director asked to stay on in emergency job

The Decatur County commissioners agreed to a \$100-a-month pay raise for the interim emergency preparedness director, asking the Selden woman to stay on indefinitely.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch said he talked with Jacque Boultinghouse, who also is Selden's mayor, about staying continuing after the commissioners asked him to do so.

As of March 1, the commissioners agreed to start paying Ms. Boultinghouse \$500 a month, instead of the \$400 they had been paying her since December.

Mr. Hirsch said Ms. Boultinghouse didn't have a radio to contact dispatch here, so he gave her one.

The commissioners talked with Randy Hrabec, with the Northwest Kansas Planning and Development, about a landfill report that needs to be filed with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

The county has been holding a check for \$957 for Northwest Kansas Planning and Development until the report is filed.

Mr. Hrabec said it's been a while since he's worked on the report, as he's been doing micro-loan reports. He said he still needs the information to finish the micro-loan report from Decatur County.

The preliminary landfill report was sent to the department, said Mr. Hrabec, but the resolutions haven't been sent out to finalize the plan.

Tim Stallman, county road and

bridge supervisor, said a regional meeting needs to be scheduled and held, a resolution printed in the newspaper and the regional landfill plan has to be approved.

Commissioners said the county will continue to hold the check until the report is done and turned in.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Heard from Kari Ketterl, register of deeds, that her office is supposed to be charging the county budget to print notices on road closings. The deeds office basically pays that money back to the county general.

- Held two 15-minute closed sessions with Mr. Stallman for nonelected personnel. There was no action taken.

- Held a 15-minute closed session for personnel. There was no action taken.

- Received a phone call from a citizen asking who is going to pay the taxes on the new senior center. There will be no property tax on the new senior center, they said, as it's owned by the county. A senior citizen levy that's been in effect for more than 20 years will help pay operating costs. The Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. will pay for the rest of the building. The county has issued \$300,000 in general obligation bonds to borrow money for the center, said Mr. McEvoy.

- Re-appointed Sheriff Ken Badsky to the Decatur County Fair Board.

First baby at hospital taking its time arriving

Two months into 2009, and still Decatur County doesn't have a New Year's Baby.

Two years ago, though, the first baby wasn't born until well into March.

Although the first little miss or mister of 2009 hasn't year been born yet at the Decatur County Hospital, merchants are hanging onto their gifts.

Those 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 from Addleman Drug Store, dinner for two from Pizza Hut, a gift from Fredrickson Insurance Agency, a \$10 gift certificate from Ward Drug Store and a year's subscription to *The Oberlin Herald*.

To receive the gifts, the parents must contact the newspaper and agree to be interviewed. All must be claimed within 60 days of the birth.

Weather class to be March 25

With thunderstorm and tornado season approaching, a weather spotter training class is scheduled in three weeks.

The class will start at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 25, at The Gateway. Everyone is welcome to attend the free class. Experts from the National Weather Service will give the presentation on how to identify dangerous clouds and how to be safe in a storm.

Decatur County will also participate in the statewide tornado drill at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday. At that time the sirens in Oberlin, Norcat, Jennings and Dresden will be tested.

Normally, the sirens go off at 10 a.m. on Mondays.



NOTHING BUT A SMALL SCAR on his neck reminds him of the Nov. 23 accident that put Dawson Kempt, 7, on a helicopter ambulance bound for Kearney, Neb. Dawson and his 10-year old brother Dayton were jumping on a

trampoline in their family's backyard when he landed on an upright piece of steel rebar. The boys' parents are Shelby and J.D. Forbes of Oberlin.

— Herald photo by Carolyn Plotts

Boy recovered from bounce onto rebar

By CAROLYN PLOTTS

Dawson Kempt is a busy, bouncy first-grader at Oberlin Elementary School. He looks pretty much like every other 7-year old in his class — except for an inch long scar on his neck.

On Sunday, Nov. 23, Dawson was playing outside at the Norcat home of his grandparents, Dean and June Forbes. Dawson jumped from atop a pile of bricks and landed on a piece of rebar jutting out of the ground.

Without him even knowing it, the bar went through his chin and into his mouth, knocking out two front teeth.

"I didn't even feel it happen," Dawson recalled. Calls to 911 brought immediate help.

Norcat firemen C.W. Lyon and Troy

Wentz quickly solved the immediate problem — cutting the rebar so Dawson could be transported.

"It was fun when they cut the bar," Dawson says now.

He was taken by a Decatur County Ambulance, with the rebar still in his neck and mouth, to meet a helicopter sent from Good Samaritan Hospital in Kearney, Neb. It landed on the road connecting Norcat to U.S. 36.

Dawson said even though the helicopter ride was "fun," he was a little scared. His mom, Shelby Forbes, couldn't ride with him, as there was only room on board for the crew. Dawson remained awake and alert during the flight.

He was only in the hospital from Sunday

afternoon to Wednesday.

"I got lots of presents and toys," he recalled.

His mother had a little more than that to say.

"We are so thankful he recovered so quickly and is back to his ornery self," she said. "Everything is back to normal."

Dawson did not suffer any speech problems or lingering injury to his mouth, she said. The teeth he lost were baby teeth.

On the day of this interview, Dawson could hardly wait to go outside and jump on the trampoline with his brother Dayton, 10.

His other grandparents are Chris and Curtis Walston, Traer, and Dan Brown, Oberlin.

City to look at reverse osmosis for water plant

The Oberlin City Council plans to discuss options for a water treatment system, in particular a reverse osmosis system proposed for the area, when it meets at 7 p.m. Thursday.

Administrator Austin Gilley said both David Waldo, chief of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Public Water Supply Section, and Wayne Bossert, a member of the Upper Republican River Basin Advisory Committee, plan to be at the meeting to talk about water treatment for the city. Mr. Bossert is manager of Groundwater Management District No. 4 in northwest Kansas.

Although the council approved an ordinance banning wind-power generators at the last meeting in February, he said, the members will talk about it again, said Mr. Gilley.

The city will be submitting an application to the Kansas Department of Transportation for stimulus money to repave U.S. 36 from Penn Avenue to Wilson, the administrator said.

The employment contract for Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., is up, said Mr. Gilley. He said he has a contract that ended a year ago in

his records and it would be up now, but he doesn't have a contract that ends this year. Mr. Gilley said he had a call in to Ms. Grafel.

The meeting, at The Gateway, will be open to the public.



Festhaus Musikanten, German Band, will be playing during the Annual Dinner/Theater for Oberlin Arts & Humanities Commission on March 14, 2009 at 6:30 p.m.

Reservations are necessary by Monday, March 9 for members and non-members alike. The menu will be typical German food.

Tickets are by season ticket or \$25.
For information call Ella Betts 785-475-3557 or Mary Henzel 785-470-0218

This program is presented in part by the Kansas Arts Commission, a State agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency which believes that a great nation deserves great art, Oberlin Arts & Humanities Commission, Hansen Foundation.



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