

## Let's get crackin'



**FILLING CRACKS** in the pavement just south of Oberlin on U.S. 83, Kansas Department of Transportation workers were busy last Tuesday while the temperatures were in the high 70s. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

# County to buy high-pressure steam cleaner

The Decatur County commissioners agreed to let the road and bridge supervisor buy a high-pressure steam cleaner at their meeting Tuesday.

Supervisor Tim Stallman said he has one, but the heater part is broken. The washer is old, he said, and he can't get parts for it anymore, so he wants to get a new one.

The one he is interested in is from Hays Pressure Washer Sales and Service. It has a three-year warranty on the coils, seven on the pump and a year on the whole machine. Mr. Stallman said it will cost \$4,100.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said it was a good idea to have a heated washer when working with machines to get the grease off. The old one, said Mr. Stallman, lasted 15 years.

In past years, said Mr. Stallman, he's held a road meeting in March with the township officials. He said he's going to have a hard time getting that scheduled for this month and wondered if it could be done in April instead.

With no pressing matters, he wondered if 30 minutes of a commissioner's meeting could be set aside for the road meeting, if it was advertised ahead of time.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch said legally that would be OK. No date was set for that meeting.

Mr. Stallman said the road crew and contractors are progressing on the demolition of the senior center and theater. He said Ron Fowler, with Ron's Tire, has been good about fixing flats for the crew working on the project at no cost.

Where are the metal trusses taken out of the building going? asked Commissioner Gene Gallentine.

## County roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Talked with the treasurer and attorney about setting up a special account for the \$300,000 the county received for the general obligation bond issue for the recreation center downtown. Story on Page 6A.

- Approved hiring the same summer recreation director this year. Story on Page 6A.

- Approved the road and bridge supervisor buying a high-pressure steam cleaner to clean machinery. Story at left.

Mr. Stallman said Dave Bose, who has been helping with the demolition, plans to take them out to his field.

With the buildings down and concrete picked up, he said, next is cleaning up the loose dirt, and getting the ground leveled out and packed down.

Mr. Stallman said he thought that phase would start that day.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Approved the purchase of 55 gallons of antifreeze for \$508.

- Heard the 1981 Fiat Allis bulldozer needs lots of little repairs that will probably add up to over \$500. The commissioners approved getting the dozer fixed.

# Oakley lions and tigers get new homes

By ANDY HEINTZ  
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Three lions and two tigers that have been living near the Free Breakfast Inn, a motel near the north Oakley exit off of Interstate 70 on U.S. 83, will be moving to new homes soon.

Lisa Wathene, a captive-animal specialist for the animal-rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), said the lions will be heading to the Detroit Zoological Society by the end of the month. The tigers will be moving to the Carnivore Preservation Trust in Pittsboro, N.C., at the end of the

month or the beginning of April. Thomas County Sheriff Rod Taylor said Thursday that the lions should be taken to Detroit on Monday, March 30. He said the tigers would either be taken to North Carolina that day or a couple days later.

A statement from the Detroit Zoo said the lions have passed the required medical testing to ensure they will not transmit diseases to other animals and are due to arrive at the end of the month. Once they arrive at the zoo, the lions will be in quarantine for 30 days to ensure they are healthy and acclimating

well before joining the others at the lion habitat.

The animals' current owner, Jeff Harsh, has agreed to sign a release for the animals, Taylor said. As a condition of the zoo accepting the animals, Harsh must agree not to acquire exotic animals in the future, Taylor said.

The animals became mini-celebrities in Thomas County after Lady, one of the female lions, attacked Bradley Buchanan, a man who lived and worked at the motel, on Feb. 21. Taylor said the man apparently was intoxicated when he stuck his arm into the lion's cage. In a statement,

Harsh said he was loading meat for the cats when he heard a scream at about 7 p.m. that night.

He said after seeing the perimeter around the lion enclosure was open, he ran to the cage. Buchanan had his arm over the door, stuck into the enclosure, and the lion had one arm in her mouth, Harsh said.

"I then began to beat the animal with a steel pipe until the animal released the arm," said Harsh.

He said he drove Buchanan to the Citizens Medical Center. The man was later flown to the Swedish Medical Center in Denver, said Harsh. He was eventually released.

# Outhouses need work before summer season

By CYNTHIA HAYNES  
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While outhouses weren't on the Oberlin City Council's agenda Thursday night, the council learned that the ones at Sappa Park need more than some air freshener.

Connie Riedel, who enjoys walking and hunting in the park, told the council that several big events will be happening in the park in May and June, including the Decatur County Hospital's annual community walk in May and a wedding and a vintage camper rally in June.

The outhouses are in disrepair, she said, with missing doors and screens and broken or missing seats.

Those coming to the events realize that they must bring their own drinking water, she said, and that electricity may not be available. However, at least primitive restroom facilities are needed.

When asked about the camper rally, Mrs. Riedel said she didn't have any idea how big it might be. Large rallies of this type bring in around 200 vintage campers, but in Oberlin there will be at least five. She said she would let the council know how many are expected after notices and invitations have been sent out.

"If you want the shelterhouse, you might reserve that," Mayor Joe Stanley said, noting that the outhouse maintenance was the city's responsibility and the problems would be repaired.

In other business, the council:

- Approved the mayor's reappointment of Duane Dorshorst to serve a two-year term on the library board.

- Agreed to donate \$500 to the Northwest Kansas Domestic and Sexual Violence Services.

- Heard that all lots in the old part

of the cemetery have been sold and the city is opening the 64-lot new section up. The cemetery committee has been working on making the burial area look more park-like, Councilman Jay Anderson said.

- Learned that City Administrator Austin Gilley has brought in some new furniture for his office, which he purchased himself.

- Looked at a possible city letterhead logo, which was designed by The Gateway staff.

- Heard that the city has settled amicably with Munisoft Computers, the company it had a contract with for billing software but canceled at the request of the staff. The owner has promised to help with conversion to the new system, Mr. Gilley said.

- Gave Mr. Gilley the authority to choose the cheapest and best insurance policy for the city from bids expected from Fredrickson's Insurance, which has the city's policy, and Bridges Group, since the policy expires on April 1, which is before the next council meeting.

- Learned that the city plans to send out a short survey on how citizens feel about city services with required state water quality notices this week. Mr. Gilley said he's hoping for 200 responses.

- Heard that a Nebraska hotel developer no longer interested in Oberlin.

- Learned that the state's water settlement from Nebraska will be lot less than expected and drilling a test well into the Dakota Aquifer would quite expensive.

- Heard from Mr. Gilley that it might be a good idea to change priorities on the airport and look at extending the old runway and apron to help with medical flights before trying to get a new 5,000-foot to 7,000-foot runway.

# Masons offer to do cornerstone ceremony

The Decatur County commissioners talked with a member of the Oberlin Mountain Slope Masonic Lodge about a cornerstone ceremony for the new senior center, bowling alley and movie theater.

At the meeting Tuesday, March 10, Jerry Lohofener brought in a pamphlet about a cornerstone ceremony the Masons have done elsewhere with the suggestion that it be used for the complex. He said a stone or plaque could be used.

Mr. Lohofener said the mem-

bers of the lodge would be happy to do a cornerstone ceremony. However, he said they need a decision fairly soon because a new grand marshal being installed this month and his schedule is filling up fast.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine said he's been asked why the Masons would do the ceremony instead of the county.

Mr. Lohofener said it can all be done at once. It's an impressive ceremony, he said, and if the commissioners or mayor want to speak, that can be arranged.

# student of the week



**We've nominated this student because:** He works hard to do his best and is always pleasant and smiling.

**Student Comment:** I feel proud.

**Activities involved in at school:** Track, Cross Country.

**My choice of movies, books, and games:** Action games and movies and adventure books.

**After I leave Decatur Community High School I intend to:** Go to college and get a job.

**And 10 years from now, I think I'll be ...:** In my own house.

**Favorite Quote:** "Don't give up."

**Name:** Matthew Wittman  
**Parents:** Jody and Gary Shike  
**Grade:** 9  
**Age:** 15



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for  
**STEPHEN E. HORN**  
OBERLIN CITY COUNCIL

Let's change the way we spend our tax dollars in Oberlin!

Please go to the Polls and cast your vote  
at the City/School Election Tuesday, April 7, 2009  
Paid for by Stephen E. Horn, treasurer