

Flu found in state

Officials rename virus

Kansas has six probable or confirmed cases of the H1N1 flu virus, which was renamed after people associated the swine flu with eating pork.

None of those six is in Decatur County or the western part of the state, said Marilyn Gamblin, director of the county Health Department.

The first positive test results for swine flu were reported more than a week ago. Since then, the disease has been named the H1N1 flu virus, said Ms. Gamblin, because people heard the name swine flu and were avoiding pork. It's safe to eat pork, she said; people shouldn't be panicking about that.

Ms. Gamblin said Kansas has two confirmed cases in Dickinson County and one "presumptive" case in Sedgwick County and one in Johnson County. On Monday, she said, she got a call about two more cases, but didn't hear where they were.

All of the positive or presumptive cases are in people who have travelled to areas where there has been known transmission of the virus, she said.

None of the probable or confirmed cases of the flu strain is here, she said. Although one person was tested for the virus in Decatur County, it came back negative.

Ms. Gamblin said travel, especially to Mexico, where the virus has been spreading, isn't recommended.

The best thing for people to do is to remember to wash their hands, cover their mouth when they cough and stay home if they are sick. It's the same as during cold and flu season, she said.

There is no vaccine for the newly mutated H1N1 virus, said Ms. Gamblin. The symptoms — pretty much the same as any other type of flu — are being handled with the usual treatment, while doctors using some antiviral drugs on the

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Another skunk is killed

Another rabid skunk has been killed in Decatur County, this time near downtown Oberlin.

On Friday, an Oberlin police officer shot a skunk during the day at Commercial and Griffith, just east of downtown, said Health Administrator Marilyn Gamblin.

People need to watch out for skunks, which commonly carry rabies, she said. If you see one out during the day, that's not normal behavior. Call animal control and back away. Skunks are nocturnal animals, and they aren't usually out during the day.

People should not leave dog or cat food out in their yards, said Ms. Gamblin, because that can attract skunks.

Rabies is a serious disease, usually fatal unless treated with a series of shots. Regular vaccinations protect pets, but the disease is found in many wild populations, especially skunks.

So far, she said, four rabid skunks have been reported in the county, along with one fox. The fox was killed in Dresden in the middle of the day back in January, she said.

Pet owners need to have their animals vaccinated. If an animal gets bitten and it hasn't been vaccinated, it would have to be confined and watched for six months or destroyed.

People need to be aware of what's going on, she said, adding that she isn't sure why the rabies has been bad this year.



EVERYTHING is in bloom inside the greenhouse holding the annuals at Mona's Market in Dresden. On Friday, owner Mona Amlong checked on some of the flowers. Mrs. Amlong sells the plants out of six greenhouses on the property.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

Home business flowers for Dresden couple

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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A blanket of color sits on tables a few feet off the ground.

The blossoms, tiny, small and large, are in shades of red, pink, yellow, orange and purple, with some blue, all different heights. Plants are packaged in groups of four or six, or some by themselves.

Each one is ready to be placed in a flat box and taken home to decorate a yard or planter.

And the flowers at Mona's Market in Dresden seem to be in full bloom just in time for spring planting.

Ramona Amlong said she started selling annuals and perennials, shrubs and vegetables out of a small shed on property belonging to her and her husband, Robert, in Dresden in 2003 and the business has grown since then.

In 2005, they built the first greenhouse, and now the couple runs Mona's Market out of six buildings near their home.

Mrs. Amlong chuckled as she said she started the business because she couldn't afford to go to greenhouses to buy plants anymore. Her father taught her how to start plants from seed, she said. She started growing some plants and had more come

up than she wanted, so she said she would sell them.

Now the couple has a greenhouse full of vegetables, ranging from hot peppers to bell peppers, squash to melons, tomatoes and more. This year, Mr. Amlong put together some hanging tomato gardens using five-gallon buckets.

In another house are annuals, mostly with pretty colored blossoms on them. In still another, all perennials, and yet another has shrubs and roses. Each greenhouse on the property is used to house a different kind of plant.

Outside, the yard is landscaped with tu-

lips, shrubs and other plants. Mrs. Amlong said she does the flowers and plants in the yard, while her husband does the vegetable gardening.

"I grow vegetables because I have to," said Mrs. Amlong, "and flowers because it's fun."

She said she hopes to be able to offer trees in the near future, but they are expanding the business slowly.

The couple moved to Dresden in 1981 from Iowa. Mr. Amlong said she needed a job and went to work with Poe Oil Well Servicing. Now she and her husband work

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Oberlin runner in top 15 percent

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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An Oberlin woman finished in the top 15 percent of the women during the Boston Marathon in April.

Peggy Pratt, regional director of Juvenile Justice Authority for Northwest Kansas, said she finished the 26-mile run in three hours, 34 minutes and 16 seconds, which meant she ran an average of 8 minutes, 11 seconds for each mile on Monday, April 20. She said she ran the Boston Marathon several minutes faster than she did the qualifying race in Texas.

There was a head wind during the race in Boston, she said, but nothing

like the wind in Dallas during the qualifying run. Other than that, the weather was perfect for running, 40 to 50 degrees.

The marathon started in waves, said Mrs. Pratt, so she didn't even cross the start line until six minutes in. For the first four miles, she ran in a pack of people and then the field started to open up.

Two days before the race, she said, she picked up her number and a clip that she put on her shoe and checked in. The clip worked with an electronic grid that was set up every five kilometers. The system tracked how fast she ran, when she crossed each marker and allowed people to

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AT OBERLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, John Juenemann (above) helped one of his grandsons, Jeff, assemble his team's Lunch Box Derby car. Mason Ahlberg and Max Diederich used a starfruit (below) with olive eyes and nose as the driver in their car, made out of a watermelon.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Kids build racing machines

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Brightly colored fruits and vegetables turned into racing machines last week at Oberlin Elementary School.

Fourth- and fifth-grade students used their imaginations to build the race cars out of the fruits and vegetables donated by Raye's Grocery.

This was the 16th year for the Lunch Box Derby, originally sponsored by the Washington Apple Commission and Raye's. When the commission dropped the derby, the grocery continued it. Without a national sponsor, though, there no longer is anything other than local competition.

Owner Kirk Brown said it'd be tough to give up the derby: the kids



love the event, parents love it and the community loves it. The store has continued to furnish the fruits,

vegetables and the trophies each year.

Last Monday, store employees hauled boxes of apples, oranges, strawberries, bananas, cucumbers and more to the school cafeteria.

Students in the two grades had partnered up and most already had an idea of what they were going to use to build their race cars.

Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles came to the school and helped the kids put the vehicles together.

For the most part, students use cucumbers or bananas for the body of the cars. This year, though, one team used a hollowed-out watermelon.

In the afternoon, the cars faced off in a race which started on a wooden slope.

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Students get ready for big prom night

The dresses are picked and the tuxedos are pressed, ready for a night on the town.

On Saturday, juniors and seniors from Decatur Community High School, along with a few guests, will take their finery out of the closet for the annual promenade on Main Street, followed by the prom dinner and dance at The Gateway.

For the last 75 years or more, students from the high school have paraded down Penn Avenue before prom, showing off their outfits before heading to the dinner and dance. In days past, the students would wind their way in and out of the stores downtown, although now they start on the north end and walk south to the intersection of Hall and Penn before turning back around and marching to their cars.

The walk will be led by Prom Marshal Jordan Tally, a senior, who was chosen by his classmates, and his date. Students

are asked to meet at 6:45 p.m. on Saturday, in front of the former Sunflower Cinema for the promenade, which starts at 7 p.m.

After the walk, the promgoers need to be at The Gateway by 7:30 p.m. for a dinner of parmesan chicken prepared by the staff.

The theme for the dance is "Twilight," and the arena will be decorated with stars and moons, said Wendy Scott, junior class sponsor. The theme was chosen by the juniors.

Anyone who wants to see the prom decorations before the dance starts can do so from 6 to 7 p.m. on Saturday.

The prom king and queen will be announced at the dance from the senior class, said Mrs. Scott.

The Oberlin Rotary Club will sponsor an after-the-dance party at The Gateway to give the kids something to do during the wee hours.

*Oberlin runner competes in Boston race

(Continued from Page 1A) track her time on the Internet.

Mrs. Pratt said she got to Boston on Thursday, April 16, which gave her time to acclimate and to drive the course before race day, giving her an idea of the layout. She added that she wished she had done that in Dallas.

Mrs. Pratt said her two aunts, husband Preston and her kids, Brett and Whitney, travelled to Boston to cheer her on during the race.

The family members stationed themselves around a grade known as Heartbreak Hill, said Mrs. Pratt, from mile 20 to 22. The kids were on the top of the hill while Mr. Pratt and her aunts were at the bottom.

She said she had read in a marathon training book to take water or sports drinks each chance she could, and she did that.

Mrs. Pratt said she also used four energy gels throughout the race, which she hadn't done before. She said it was kind of like drinking syrup, so she would eat one right before she got some water.

The last five kilometers of the race, she said, were her fastest. She said she had lots of energy

and sprinted at the very end.

The race ended in downtown Boston, she said, so the family went shopping. There were lots of people doing the same thing.

Mrs. Pratt said she felt fine after the race. She got up and jogged the next two days after the race, before coming home.

The family also did some sight-seeing while in Boston, she said, as it was her first time there.

One of the awesome things about the Boston Marathon, she said, was that some of the people who were running it will be one day running in the Olympics. There was a woman who ran it in six-minute miles.

There was also a wheelchair category and people who were participating to raise money for different organizations.

Mrs. Pratt said she wants to run in the race again and possibly the one in New York, too. She said she's thought about doing a triathlon, with a 56-mile bike ride, a mile-and-a-half swim and 13.1-mile run. She said she's never done a full triathlon before. The difficult part would be the swimming, but she thought she could maybe get ready for it at Red Willow Lake.



OUTSIDE of the Cheers restaurant in Boston, Peggy Pratt (above) stopped to have her picture taken. Mrs. Pratt was in New England to run in the Boston Marathon.

County to start putting up signs

The county road and bridge supervisor talked with township officials about putting address signs at homes in the county during the annual road meeting last Tuesday.

Only about 25 people represented the 25 townships at the meeting, which the county holds every year. The attendance was a little lower than normal, but there weren't any big issues. The meeting has to be offered.

The county has developed a "911" addressing system, said Supervisor Tim Stallman. With that done, he said, he wants to start putting up signs. He said the county would like to start with address signs at the homes, so that when emergency crews get called out, the people know they are at the right house.

The signs, said Mr. Stallman, will be on the right-hand side of the road where a vehicle would leave the public road and enter the private drive. That doesn't mean that the sign will be in front of the home, he said, but on an entry road or at the driveway, to get to the house.

At the annual meeting last year, he said, the general feeling was that the township boards would pay for the signs at the homes and install them. Mr. Stallman said he thought the signs would cost roughly \$40 each, with 10 to 15 signs needed for each township.

Mr. Stallman said he would like the county to install the signs and then do the maintenance on them. He said he would like to start putting the signs up soon.

The only thing on the vertical signs will be the house number, said Commissioner Ralph Unger. The road name, he said, won't be on the sign.

Mr. Stallman said he does hope to put up road signs at intersections, but not yet.

There was some talk about what will happen in the unincorporated cities, like Cedar Bluffs. Mr. Stall-

man said he thought they would probably put a sign at each residence.

The commissioners, he said, are moving forward on getting an overall county map made.

There was some discussion about county roads that are on the county lines, with one side in Decatur County. On the Decatur/Norton County line, someone said, Norton County road signs are on the Decatur County side. Mr. Unger said someone will have to talk with Norton County about that.

On all four of the borders, said Mr. Unger, there will be different names on each side.

He said he hopes the county will be able to get signs put up along the state highways, too.

Signs from the county's old system which give the mileage and direction from Oberlin, like RD 11S for eleven miles south, said Mr. Unger, were never really road names. Those signs were just mile markers.

Mr. Stallman mentioned during the commission meeting earlier that he would like to keep those signs up, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy, so they can be used as a point of reference. It depends though, because the state has new regulations on the size for numbers and letters on the signs and those aren't large enough.

By a show of hands, all of the township officials said they were in favor of paying for the signs at each house.

With several new township officials, Mr. Stallman went through some of the basics for them to know, including how to get a road changed to minimum maintenance, updating the maps for roads that are closed, that townships can buy some things through the county, including culverts, and that the county bills townships for road maintenance quarterly.

*One tested for swine flu in county

(Continued from Page 1A) positive cases.

In this county, said Ms. Gamblin, everyone is working as a team. Representatives from the clinic,

hospital, emergency management, the Good Samaritan Center, ambulance service, school district, Cedar Living Center, the health department and a commissioner met last

week to talk about the virus and form a plan of action just in case.

"We are working as a team in the county," said Ms. Gamblin, "to make sure that the citizens are

taken care of."

The most important thing, she said, is that people don't "freak out" and just stay aware of what's happening.

*Plants grown and sold in Dresden

(Continued from Page 1A) in the greenhouses together.

Mona's Market is open in April, May and June and then again in September, she said, although since they live right there, she will make arrangements if people want some-

thing at another time. All they have to do is call.

The bulk of the planting is done by February, she said, so the items are ready to be sold in the spring. Geraniums are started on Dec. 20 and then there's a lot that are planted the first two months of the year. She orders a variety of types

based on what she wants to plant and what people have asked her to do.

The market is open from 9:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday and from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday. Anyone wanting to get in touch with her can call 475-3921. Mrs. Amlong said she also has a

website that lists the plants at www.monasmartket.com.

Mrs. Amlong sells flowers to Raye's Grocery for resale.

This year, the planters on Penn Avenue in downtown Oberlin will be filled with flowers from her greenhouses.

*Kids race food cars

(Continued from Page 1A) Winners in the fourth grade:

• Cerys Davies, Kelsey May and Madison Macfee, first. Their car, the Sassy Chassie Machine, went 48 feet, 9 inches.

• Jeff Juenemann and Tabor Erickson took second with their car, the Yumminator Nator Nator, going 36 feet, 3 inches.

• Gatlin Hissong and Quinton Cook took third, with the Big Mean Jalapeño Machine going 32 feet.

• Mason Ahlberg and Max Diederich won the award for the most creative design. They made their car, called the Loco Moco Green Bean Machine, out of a watermelon.

Winners in the fifth grade:

• Sabryn O'Gara, Ara Singleton-Marine and Braden Wasson, first with the Funk Machine going 32 feet, 3 inches.

• Kaitlynn Fisher and Kassidie Jensen took second with the Convertible Banana car going 29 feet, 4 inches.

• Caitlin Gault and Shylo Shields took third, with their car, the Cucumber Cruiser, going 28 feet, 5 inches.

• Kade Grafel and Noah Nelson won most creative for their car, the Suburnator, which they also made out of a watermelon.

Health section inside paper

Inside today's paper is a special Norton County section of the 2009 Rural Health Care edition. When the editors were putting the edition together, we left out the Norton County stories and pictures, although we did get the advertising in.

We put together a special supplement to Rural Health and including in it the stories, pictures and ads from Norton County. Please put it with the one you got last week.

Prayer day will be Thursday

The Decatur County Ministerial Association will sponsor the annual National Day of Prayer service over the noon hour on Thursday on the steps of the Decatur County Courthouse.

People are invited to meet on the south steps of the courthouse from 12:20 to 12:40 p.m. to pray for a "moral rebirth" for America. Those who can't make it are urged to pray where they are.

BUZZ-WORTHY DEALS

<p>'07 CHEVY COBALT #711</p> <p>\$9,950 Only 7,000 miles</p>	<p>'07 CHEVY MALIBU LS #695</p> <p>\$11,950 Local One Owner, Leather, Sunroof</p>	<p>'04 CHEVY IMPALA LS #9082A</p> <p>\$9,950 53,000 miles, Clean trade</p>	<p>'04 PONTIAC SUNFIRE #685A</p> <p>\$7,950</p>	<p>'04 PONTIAC BONNEVILLE GXP #9052A</p> <p>\$14,950 V8 Power, Leather, Local One Owner</p>
<p>'97 PONTIAC TRANSPORT #710A</p> <p>\$3,950 Clean, Local trade</p>	<p>'01 CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY #693B</p> <p>\$4,950 V6, AT, Loaded</p>	<p>'98 DODGE CARAVAN #536D</p> <p>\$1,950 V6, AT, A/C, T/C</p>	<p>'01 DODGE CARAVAN #8182C</p> <p>\$6,950 V6, Loaded</p>	<p>'97 PONTIAC TRANSPORT #9008H</p> <p>\$3,950 V6, Loaded, Clean Local Trade</p>
<p>'98 FORD EXPEDITION XLT #7024B</p> <p>\$4,950 V8, Loaded, 3rd Seat</p>	<p>'05 GMC ENVOY SLE #729</p> <p>\$14,950 Local One Owner</p>	<p>'08 CHEVY TAHOE LT #738</p> <p>Choose From 2</p> <p>\$38,950 Navigation, TV/ DVD, 20" Alum</p>	<p>'05 CHEVY SUBURBAN LT #9072A</p> <p>\$18,950 Quads, TV/DVD, Leather</p>	<p>'06 JEEP LIBERTY #709A</p> <p>\$15,950 Leather, Sunroof, Chrome Wheels</p>
<p>'06 GMC 1500 CREW 4X4 #736</p> <p>\$23,950 271, 23,000 mi, Extra Clean Unit</p>	<p>'08 GMC 2500 CREW SLT 4X4 #735</p> <p>\$33,950 Leather, Loaded With Equipment</p>	<p>'03 CHEVY 2500HD CREW 4X4 #15002A</p> <p>\$15,950 Diesel, Long Box, One Owner</p>	<p>'01 CHEVY 2500HD 4X4 #8162A</p> <p>\$10,950 Diesel, Auto, Loaded</p>	<p>'93 GMC 1500 4X4 #8212B</p> <p>\$1,950 V8, 5spd, A/C</p>

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