

Teams plan to walk in cancer relay

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Decatur County Relay for Life kicks off at 7 p.m. Friday with two laps walked by those who have survived their battle with cancer.

Survivors and their caregiver are invited to dinner beforehand at 6 p.m. at The Gateway. At 6:30 p.m., the public is invited to the barbecue dinner, which will be sold for a donation.

After the survivor laps at 7 p.m., the relay committee asks the survivors' caregivers to

join them for a lap before members of the five teams take to walking. One member from the five teams will then be on the floor until 7 a.m. Saturday.

This year's teams are from Decatur County, the Decatur Professional Women, Jennings and Decatur Health Systems, with two teams.

There are several reasons to hold a relay, said Ralph Unger, a committee member, including showing support for those who have fought cancer and honor those who are fighting it. People need to know they

don't have to fight cancer alone, said Norma Unger, another committee member.

The relay also helps educate people, said Mr. Unger, and raise public awareness, including the importance of catching cancer in the early stages and what steps can be taken to do that.

Team members also raise money through donations and by selling luminaries in honor of survivors and in memory of those who succumbed to the disease.

There is room for a few more teams, said Mr. Unger, though they wouldn't be able

to order T-shirts. There are more than 52 sponsors for this year's relay, he said, and the group appreciates them all.

At 10 p.m. Friday, volunteers will conduct a luminary ceremony. People can still purchase luminarie for \$10, but the names not submitted by last week won't be printed in the relay pamphlet.

Throughout the night, baskets of goodies filled by the team members will be given away. There will also be snacks and refreshments available for walkers.

Doyle and Kay Brown of Jennings, will

be the featured speakers this year, as they are both cancer survivors and caregivers.

Mobile Music Express plans to play music throughout the evening.

Committee members include the Ungers; Marilyn Horn, former county clerk; Melinda Grafel, who lives near Traer; Carla Deperschmidt, grade school secretary; Jean Hale, county treasurer; Linda Schroer, who works in the road and bridge office; Charlie Haag, high school principal; Pam May, with May Family Farms; and Rhonda May, a geologist and city council member.

Elevators getting ready for harvest

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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With the recent cool weather and rain, the start of wheat harvest is anyone's guess, but that hasn't kept local elevators from getting ready.

At Hansen Muller Grain in Oberlin, office manager Janice O'Hare said they have room for 1.3 million bushels at the Oberlin and Cedar Bluffs locations combined. All of the wheat from last year is gone, she said.

In the past year, she said, they have built bins at a new location north of U.S. 36 in Oberlin, allowing 1 million more bushels to be taken in and stored. Dirt work for the new facility started in February, she said, and the company held an open house on Friday.

The facility, said Mrs. O'Hare, was open for fall harvest with covered bunkers available to store corn, but the big steel bins are new.

She said the firm upgraded the elevator in Cedar Bluffs after a storm last year damaged a leg and conveying equipment. That's been upgraded and replaced.

All of the wheat for this year's harvest will be taken to the new facility, she said. In the past, it's been accepted at the elevator downtown.

At the Decatur Co-op, General Manager Kurt Anderson, said he thought they are probably as close to

empty as the facility has ever been. That includes two new locations in Lenora and Edmond recently purchased from Hi-Plains Co-op.

In all, he said, he estimated the co-op has room for 6.5 to 7 million bushels. The elevators have been cleaned out in anticipation of a big crop, he added.

The co-op had a train in last week, moving some of the wheat that was sold earlier in the year. That's just part of the normal operations, said Mr. Anderson.

Besides getting the elevators cleaned out, he said, the co-op has added seasonal help as they have in the past.

The wheat looks good, said Bryan Olson, area agronomist for Kansas State University Research and Extension. The heads are filling out, he said, and with the cool weather, there should be some very plump berries.

Some of the crop, he said, is starting to turn. It's taking longer than he thought it would with the recent cool weather slowing things down.

Although the wheat crop looks good, said Mr. Olson, some farmers are starting to get concerned because it's been too wet to get corn, milo and sunflowers planted. Some will have to trade their seed for varieties that can be planted later, or switch crops.

County covered by big rainstorm

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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It rained Sunday night, and then it poured, dropping anywhere from 30 hundredths of an inch of water to around two inches around Decatur County.

Although it was a loud storm, as of Monday morning, there weren't any reports of damage. Sheriff Ken Badsky said he had heard of some possible flooding near the Nebraska state line, but there hadn't been anything official on it.

Jeremy Martin, a meteorologist, with the National Weather Service in Goodland, said the office didn't have any reports of severe weather in Decatur County or around Oberlin. The service had received a report of large hail to the west, in Sherman County.

The rain amounts Sunday night ranged from 30 to 40 hundredths in Jennings, an inch and 30 hundredths

in Norcat, around two inches in Traer and a little over an inch in Oberlin, he said.

The summer months normally have the highest chance for precipitation in this area, said Mr. Martin. In Goodland, he said, they have had eight days with measurable precipitation recently.

Looking at the drought monitor, said Mr. Martin, all of northwest Kansas is out of the drought zone.

It looks like across the area, some places are above the normal precipitation for this time of the year, he added, while others are below.

In Goodland, he said, they are 1.26 inches above normal while McCook is 26 hundredths below.

Mr. Martin said the service didn't have those numbers for Oberlin, but the rainfall had been fairly similar in the past few days.

The area is moving into more of (See RAIN on Page 5A)

Circle drive engineer to talk with council

The Oberlin City Council will talk with the engineer who designed the two driveway options at The Gateway when it meets at 7 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

The engineer with W Design of McCook submitted a drawing for a circle drive on the south side of the building or a longer one on the west side so people could drop others off closer to the doors.

The council members have asked for public comment on the drives, getting one letter stating they liked the option on the south better.

At the meeting on Thursday, June 4, the council asked Administrator

Austin Gilley to see if the engineer could come talk to them.

Mr. Gilley said he is working on a 2009 budget recap for the meeting, which will serve as a preview to the budget process.

The administrative ordinances will be on the agenda again.

The council will talk about an ordinance allowing golf carts on city streets, said Mr. Gilley, since the state law on the carts changes July 1.

The meeting, in the upstairs meeting room at The Gateway, is open to the public.



INSIDE THE NEW COMMUNITY CENTER Sunflower Cinema, the Golden Age Center, a bowling alley downtown, Bruce Wendelin (above) carried a piece of decking to his boss, Kevin Brown, (above) who was working on the installation of the roof on what will be

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Center needs money

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The roof is on, and walls are going up on the new senior center, movie theater and bowling alley in downtown Oberlin.

In no time at all, the walls will be done and the finish work will be going on the inside, although those passing by won't be able to see the changes as easily.

The project is being paid for through donations, loans, a county-issued bond and fund raisers.

Organizer Greg Lohofener, who has been working on the project for the Economic Development Corp. since it's inception, said the total money needed is at \$1.2 million, with \$900,000 of that already raised. To finish the entire project, the group needs \$300,000.

The building at 220 N. Penn Avenue includes a new senior center, 110-seat movie theater, youth recreation area and a six-lane bowling alley.

Of the total project, he said, the money has been raised to complete the Golden Age Center, minus the bricks, stucco and some sidewalks on the outside of the building. The center will use about a third of the building and have a setup similar to the former senior center on the same site.

The new center will have a larger eating and meeting area. The senior meals will be served at the center and will be prepared here in the new kitchen, said Mr. Lohofener.

The center will have its own heating and cooling system, he said. The current senior board, which was been involved with



planning this project, will continue to be involved and in charge of the center, while the county owns that part of the building.

The middle part of the building will house the theater, said Mr. Lohofener, with new seats, sound system, a 3D screen and digital equipment. It will also have a stage.

This part of the project, he said, is \$125,000 shy of being finished.

The cinema will share restrooms, a snack bar and youth room with the bowling alley. The cinema part can be locked off, said Mr. Lohofener, when it's not in use, yet the youth recreation will still be available, along with the concession stand. Students from the high

school came up with ideas to put in the recreation area those ideas included dart boards, pool table, foosball and video games. He said they will try to incorporate everything that the group can afford.

Mr. Lohofener said the Sunflower Cinema board will stay in place. Both the theater and bowling (See GROUP on Page 5A)

Board approves English

New curriculum set for next year

The Oberlin School Board approved new language-arts, or English, curriculum for the district at its meeting last Monday with minor adjustments of what will be taught at each level.

Principal Duane Dorshorst, who starts as superintendent in two weeks, brought a sample of the new curriculum to the meeting. Kansas doesn't have any standards for this area, he said, only for reading and writing, and the curriculum covers those.

Teachers from kindergarten through twelfth grade headed up by Leigh Davis and Carol Dixon worked on the standards.

Mr. Dorshorst said there weren't any significant changes from what the district has had in the past.

Some of the standards include that the student recognizes an incomplete thought, attempts paragraph divisions or uses correct spelling even with more difficult words.

The standards are different at each grade level.

The other area where a new curriculum is needed, said Mr. Dorshorst, is technology, but that one is not yet written.

The board approved a bid for \$1,511 from Decatur County for an old handicap-accessible bus. The minimum bid, said Superintendent Pat Cullen, was \$1,500.

The county plans to use the bus as its new transit bus. The county hasn't assigned a number to the bus yet.

The board approved a bid to replace the water and gas valves in the science rooms used by teachers Randy Olson, Caleb Howland and Mark Bricker.

The district received a bid from Trenton Electric Co. and L&L Plumbing and Heating out of McCook for \$15,503 and from Garrett Plumbing Heating and Electric Co. of Norton for \$18,100, or if the district does all three rooms, for \$17,195.

The board approved the low bid from Trenton Electric.

They also received a bid for \$2,197 to install four urinals and four p-traps from Garrett. The other bid was from Trenton Electric and L&L was \$3,521.

The board approved the low bid.

The board also agreed to lease a water softener to be put on the new boiler at \$20 a month from Culligan Water Co. The installation cost will cost \$180.

The other option was to buy the softener at \$1,125.

In other business, the board:

- Approved purchasing fifth-grade social science text books for \$2,763.

- Approved joining the Schools for Quality Education group again for \$300. President Dewayne Jackson said it's a small-school group that does a good job. Board member Barb Olson said she gets the group's newsletter, which is interesting. The group has lobbyists and they watch items for small schools.

- Approved scheduling a special meeting to make the end-of-the-year transfers and pay bills at 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 30.

- Approved the Student Assurance catastrophic insurance, which costs \$450 a year. The insurance covers any student injured at a school event after the costs exceed \$10,000.

- Heard that the Northwest Kansas League had voted and plans to stay the same for sports as they are, which includes playing teams from Goodland and Colby. This will leave the league as it is for next year and then Goodland and Colby will leave the league and Oberlin will then be in a league of six.

- Heard that the work on the stage floor and junior high gym floor is done and looks great.

- Heard that Dr. Cullen had 14 and a half days of vacation left, so he was planning to take them starting Tuesday with a half day. His contract as superintendent expires on June 30.

- Held a five-minute closed session for teacher-contract negotiations with the board, superintendent and administrators. There was no action taken.

- Presented plaques to Mr. Jackson for his 12 years of service, board members Chris Bailey for 10 and Jerry Chambers for one. All are leaving the board this month. Past board members will also receive plaques, including Jeanie Martin for eight years, Kurt Vollertsen for eight and Delayne May for 20.



Buyers find deals

BETH HARMON was having a hard time deciding whether or not to buy an item (above) at the United Church on Saturday during Oberlin's citywide garage sales. While Mrs. Harmon may have had some problems making up her mind, Maggie Kehler (below) of Culbertson, Neb., had none. She got a monster stuffed moose.

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes



Advocacy center asks for money

A representative with the Western Kansas Advocacy Center asked the Decatur County commissioners for \$5,000 or whatever the county can do to help with next year's budget.

Kelly Robbins, co-founder of the center, said whether the county helps pay for the program or not, it will still help people in the county who need it.

The center opened in 2005, she said. They help with cases that are usually hard to investigate and hard to prosecute because they deal with sexual abuse and maltreatment of kids.

One in four girls, said Mrs. Robbins, and one in six boys will be sexually molested.

Mrs. Robbins said she is originally from Larned and had served with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation.

Over the years, she said, she's learned there's very few resources for these kind of cases. The center has three mobile centers that have traveled 30,000 miles in the last two years. There's also an office in Scott City, where the center is based.

When there's a need, she said, the center can bring a mobile unit into town with child advocates and people trained to do interviews with the kids that can be used in court. This keeps the kids from being interviewed over and over again,

said Mrs. Robbins. The center works with law enforcement and the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services from the beginning of an incident.

This service is provided to families at no charge to them, she said, and the center is paid for by grants and donations.

She's out talking with city and county boards in the 29-county coverage area, asking them for help with next year's budget.

Are the grants coming from the state? asked Commissioner Ralph Unger. Some are from the governor's office, some from attorney general's office and the center has qualified and used the tax credit program twice, Mrs. Robbins replied.

How is the center notified of an incident? asked Commissioner Gene Gallentine. Normally, law enforcement calls for the service, said Mrs. Robbins. Sometimes the center gets a call directly, but then it's taken through the proper channels.

The state is cutting aid to counties for next year's budget, said Mr. Unger, although no one knows for sure how much or how it will affect the county. He added that they couldn't make a decision on a budget request for next year until later.

If Decatur County can't do anything for next year's budget, said Mrs. Robbins, she will be back next

Demolition bill gets OK

The Decatur County commissioners last week approved transferring almost \$20,000 from the general fund to the road and bridge department to pay for the labor and equipment to help demolish the former Golden Age Center and Sunflower Cinema.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said

the cost for labor and equipment was \$19,621. The landfill bill would be \$2,855 for what was hauled after demolition.

Although the county needs to reimburse the road fund, said Mr. Unger, it doesn't need to repay the landfill because it's in the general fund.

*Group needs donations to finish job

(Continued from Page 1A) alley will be owned by the development corporation.

The last part of the project is a six-lane bowling alley. He said, they are \$110,000 short on money to finish. The project also needs \$65,000 for the bricks, stucco and exterior work for the bowling alley portion.

The corporation bought bowling alley lanes and equipment from the old bowling alley south of town. That equipment will be refurbished, he said. This part of the building, too, can be locked when not in use, said Mr. Lohofener.

Money raised so far includes \$373,000 from Decatur County, which included the county issued bond; \$50,000 from the Hansen Foundation; \$36,000 from Decatur Co-op, which donated equipment from the old restaurant at the Ampride station; construction services from Dave Bose, Mick Barth and Southwest Builders Inc. included in the \$36,000, \$10,000 from the City of Oberlin for donated transformers, \$18,000 from the Golden Age Center, \$2,086 from the Good Samaritan Center Rock-a-Thon, \$1,544 from a Thrivent matching grant, \$1,050 from a Decatur Tomorrow auction for youth recreation items, \$257,000 raised by the corporation from over 65 people and organizations, bequests and memorials and

a \$150,000 loan.

The corporation is not only looking for more donations, he said, but for volunteers who would like to help with interior painting, putting up ceiling tiles and other items for the Golden Age Center or cinema. They are also looking for people to help move the bowling lanes and equipment into the new center, he said.

Work will start in the middle of July. Anyone who wants to work can contact Mr. Lohofener at 475-3459 or Connie Grafel, city marketing director, at 475-2901.

Donations can be made through the Decatur Area Development Fund Inc, under the chamber, and should be tax deductible.

Mr. Lohofener said the Decatur Co-op, Hansen Mueller, High Plains Co-op and D&S Grain have all agreed to take wheat donated by area farmers to help raise money for the building. The crops would need to be taken to one of the participating elevators under the corporation's name, he said.

The support to get this project done, said Mr. Lohofener, has been wonderful. The public is enthusiastic about it, but the corporation still needs help with raising the needed money and with labor.

Anyone with questions can call Mr. Lohofener at 475-3459.

County purchases used school bus

The Decatur County commissioners ratified a bid last Tuesday to buy a used handicap-accessible bus from the Oberlin School District to serve as a county transportation bus.

Commissioner Ralph Unger asked for the ratification of the bid for \$1,511 at the meeting last Tuesday. The school board opened and approved the bid at its meeting last Monday.

The commissioners asked Clerk Colleen Geihlsler to get a check prepared for the district. The county is using a regular minivan for the on-call transit service, but it's not built well enough to carry a wheelchair lift. The lift apparently has damaged the frame.

Noxious Weed Director Gaylen Huntley suggested setting a limit on the distance that the bus will travel, for instance 60 miles round trip.

Mr. Huntley added that he talked with Brian Simonson, the school district's transportation director, who said he would call when the bus was ready to be picked up.

The service light is on in the current transportation bus, Bus 22, said Mr. Huntley.

The county has had problems with the 2002 Chevrolet Activan since it was purchased using a grant from the state Department of Transportation. The commissioners have talked about doing something with

the van many times, but it can't be replaced through the grant program until it has 100,000 miles on it. The van has almost 70,000 miles on it, said Mr. Huntley.

The commissioners asked who pays for the repairs. Ms. Geihlsler said the county does, but the state will reimburse part of the expense.

An inspector from the state came out a few months ago to check the van out, she said. The inspector said everything was wrong with it and then signed a sheet stating that it was in good shape, she said.

The commissioners decided that if the service light is on, it's probably just a sensor that needs to be fixed, which they agreed to do.

*Rain falls in county

(Continued from Page 1A) a summer weather pattern, said Mr. Martin, with temperatures expected to warm up in the middle of the week. Another storm system should move into the area Thursday and Friday, and then things should dry up over the weekend.

The forecast shows a high of 93 with a slight chance of thunderstorms today and then 92 on Thursday and 88 on Friday, the forecaster said.



THE OBERLIN HERALD

and the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce welcome Hansen-Mueller's new facility to the business community

The Chamber Board congratulated Hansen-Mueller personnel from Oberlin and Omaha on their new grain facility on U.S 36 during an open house and ribbon cutting ceremonies on Friday.