

# Recycling could cost county more

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
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Two representatives of the Northwest Regional Recycling Organization asked the Decatur County commissioners to up the county's contribution to the program for this year by \$1.50 per county resident.

The market for recycled materials has tanked this year, they said, leaving a big hole in the budget. The organization is asking all the member counties to increase their contributions.

Jack Benton and Marilyn Horn, board members representing Decatur County, talked with the commissioners about the program at their meeting Tuesday, June 23.

The county has had a recycling program since 2005, starting with a trailer parked near the noxious weed control building. Last year, county employees started to move the trailer, placing it in Norcat, Dresden and Jennings throughout the month. At the same time, the county opened a building near the shop south of Oberlin as a permanent recycling center.

Currently, the county pays \$1.25 for each resident to belong to the recycling organization. The organization has the county's census numbers from 2000 at 3,472, which means the county pays \$4,340 a year, said said County Clerk Collen Geihlsler.

The increase of \$1.50 per capita would cost an additional \$5,208.

That doesn't include the cost to haul the items to Colby, move the trailer to the smaller towns or for supplies, said Mrs. Geihlsler. From December to May, the county has spent at least \$7,062 on those items, she said.

People are using the service more, keeping tons of trash out of the landfill, the board members said. In 2008, Mr. Benton said, the county recycled 85 tons of materials, while in 2007 the county recycled just 42 tons.

Mr. Benton said they would like the commissioners to increase the per capita contribution, as the organization isn't making as much selling the recycled items. Some of the prices, he said, are up a little since January, but not all.

He said he talked with Director Lynette Koon that morning, and almost all of the rest of the counties have agreed to the increase.

"What would the impact or perception be if we didn't have this?" asked Commissioner Gene Gallentine.

All of the items would go in the landfill, said Mr. Benton. It sounds like at some point, he added, that

counties will be required to recycle.

It was mentioned that maybe the county should monitor how full the trailer gets when it's moved to other towns. Mrs. Horn said she was at the recycling building recently and it was full.

At the meeting on Tuesday, June 16, the commissioners received a letter about electronic waste from the recycling organization, saying that the group may begin charging for those items. E-waste collection at a site in Colby is a separate program, however, started with a state grant.

The letter requested 25 cents per pound on televisions and old computer monitors and 15 cents per pound for other items. That doesn't include mileage, which was also requested.

The county might have to start charging people for electronic waste, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

The other thing about electronic waste that people need to be aware of, said County Attorney Steve Hirsch, is that when the recycling center sells old computers, they aren't necessarily wiping the hard drive clean of data.

Although the recycling center does sell computers in Colby, said Director Lynette Coon, the hard drives are removed and then sent to another spot to be shredded. She suggested that if people don't like that option, they can remove the hard drives and destroy them before they recycle those items.

Mr. Unger said he's not in favor of writing a blank check to the recycling center.

The e-waste, said Mr. Benton, gets sent to prisons and prisoners are paid to break it down and then the parts and pieces are sold.

The county might get hammered hard by the state in budget cuts next year, said Mr. McEvoy, with them taking away money, possibly including \$250,000 from road and bridge. If that happens, he said, it might be hard to keep programs like the recycling.

The program really needs volunteers, said Mrs. Horn.

One question is if people will pay to drop off their e-waste, everything from computers to old televisions.

"I'm just not sure how long the county can make the program feasible," said Mr. McEvoy.

The commissioners didn't make any decisions. Mr. McEvoy asked the clerk to send a letter to the recycling director asking for more information.



**BEFORE LUNCH** on Monday, the Decatur County Rural Fire Department put out a fire in this combine east of Jim Barrett's house on the Sappa Creek Road southwest of town. — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

## Fire wrecks custom cutter's combine

A fire just before lunch Monday burned up a combine belonging to a custom cutter out of Oklahoma.

The blaze, about half a mile east of Jim Barrett's house, caused about \$300,000 in losses.

Fire Chief Bill Cathcart said the blaze reportedly started in the engine compartment in a 2008 model Case IH belonging to Paxton Harvesting out of Oklahoma, which was cutting wheat in Mr. Barrett's field.

Chief Cathcart said the Decatur County Rural Department was at the scene for an hour and a half. The pump on the first engine failed when the first crew arrived, and the chief had to call for another pumper from the station.

## Council tweaks golf-cart ordinance

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
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The Oberlin City Council tweaked ordinances to allow golf carts, all-terrain vehicles, "micro-utility" vehicles and work-site utility vehicles to be driven on the city streets last week, planning to look at them again Thursday night.

The council is considering separate ordinances for each type of vehicle, setting out requirement to be allowed on the streets. The council didn't vote on the ordinances, but decided to wait until the meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

City Administrator Austin Gilley said since the first discussion on the vehicles he had not received any comments.

The proposed ordinances say that none of the vehicles can be driven on state or federal highways, other

than for crossing from one city street to another. The vehicles could be driven on any city street.

The proposed golf cart ordinance provides that:

- Drivers have to be 17 or older and have a valid driver's license.
- Carts must be insured for the same limits required for cars.
- People driving or riding in the carts must be seated in spots designed for seating.
- They must have adequate braking capabilities, brake lights, adequate steering, a rear-view mirror, reflectors on the front and back, turn signals and a slow-moving vehicle symbol on the rear.
- Seat belts.
- Operated only in daylight hours, between sunrise and sunset.
- Drivers must follow all traffic rules and regulations.

• Have an inspection by the police department and have a confirming sticker attached to the cart. There will be a fee charged for the inspection.

• Violations treated as traffic infractions.

• No riders under 12 allowed. Councilman Rob McFee talked about the age limit in case grandparents wanted to take their grandkids somewhere in the golf cart, saying that the kids would have to be in a seat belt.

Councilman Bill Riedel said he was the one who first suggested that, saying 12 was an arbitrary number. The council talked about kids riding on scooters and motorcycles with bicycle helmets and an age was suggested for these vehicles.

Councilwoman Rhonda May said she would be in favor of leaving

the age in the ordinance and then see how much "fussing" the council hears. Councilman Ray Ward agreed, saying that kids are a little more protected in a car than just in a seatbelt in a golf cart.

The proposed ordinances for the other three types of vehicles are similar.

For all-terrain vehicles, people under 18 would have to wear helmets and everyone has to wear eye protection. Eye protection is not required if the vehicle has a wind screen, however.

The vehicles don't have to have a slow moving vehicle sign or the orange flag, though that was proposed.

Micro-utility vehicles would be allowed to carry children, with seat belts on, unlike the others.

## Lucky shopper will win \$1,000 in scrip

One lucky shopper will get the chance to win \$1,000 by entering the annual \$1,000 Shopping Spree sponsored by Oberlin businesses and *The Oberlin Herald*.

Anyone 18 or older can enter the spree without making a purchase. Just fill out the small entry form at participating businesses and drop it in the box.

Boxes will be delivered to the sponsoring businesses this week. There's no purchase necessary to

win. The deadline to enter is 4 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 11.

The drawing will be at the Chamber of Commerce Back to School Picnic in City Park at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 12. In case of bad weather, the picnic will move inside to the high school cafeteria. The drawing will also be in the cafeteria if that happens.

The lucky shopper must be present to win. Names will be drawn until a winner is found.

The one lucky person will receive \$1,000 in scrip money and has from Wednesday, Aug. 12 to Monday, Aug. 31, to spend the money at participating stores only. No change will be given. The shopper has to notify *The Herald* so a photographer

can go with them.

Sponsors for this year's Shopping Spree include Dale's Fish 'N' Fun, Culligan Water, Ward Drug Store, Stanley Hardware, Raye's Grocery, Shear Creations West and Day Spa and Rocking R.

The scrip is good for merchandise only, and only at sponsoring businesses.

## Golf, dinner benefit planned for hospital

The Decatur County Hospital has a full slate of teams for its ninth annual golf and auction benefit next month.

Administrator Lynn Doeden said they have 27 teams signed up with four on a waiting list.

The benefit is scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 15, with the tournament at the Oberlin Golf Course and dinner and an auction following at the American Legion.

The hospital is looking for business partners who might want to

help with the cost of lunch for the golfers, prizes for the winners, auction items or sponsors for the team.

Dinner is open to everyone, with tickets costing \$30. These can be purchased at the hospital.

## Prices for recycled items down

With the sale price of recycled items down, the Northwest Regional Recycling Organization is asking cities and counties to make up for the deficit, already at \$20,000 this year.

The organization is asking for an additional \$1.50 for each resident this year from counties. Director Lynette Koon said the increase is based on the county population from the 2000 census.

For next year they are asking for as much as \$4 per capita, with \$2 per capita at the beginning of the year. Then in May they will look at the budget and if it's needed, ask for another \$1 starting in July. In August, she said, the budget will again be revisited and an addition \$1 could be requested if needed in October.

Those two dollars will only be requested, said Ms. Koon, if they are needed for the program. She added that they don't want the program to "dollar the counties to death," but as the markets drops, the majority of the income has disappeared.

With the price increases, she said, she is a little concerned about losing counties, but every county has to have a solid waste management plan. The counties are supposed to be reducing what goes to the landfill, and the recycling program helps with that. Items that are recycled are trash, so commissioners need to look at what it costs to put a ton in the landfill and what it costs to recycle it.

Ms. Koon said the price for used cardboard has dropped from \$77 a ton to \$13. Plastics too are down from \$160 a ton to near zero.

Last year at this time, Mrs. Koon said, sales were at \$30,000 while at this time sales are at \$10,000.

"The market is inching up a little," said Ms. Koon, "but not nearly enough to meet the budget needs. The commitment from counties is still strong, and I have heard from all but one county that they are willing to kick in \$1.50 per capita to help keep us going to the end of the budget year."

The Thomas County commissioners agreed to a budget supplement of \$4,095.

The Decatur County commissioners haven't yet committed to the increased price. The organization started an electronic waste pilot program taking in computers, televisions and other items. Mrs. Coon said there is an e-waste store where people can buy useable items.

The store is located at the e-waste drop-off site in the former Lang Diesel building at 1190 S. Country Club Drive in Colby.

*A Tribute To*

# World War II VETERANS

*Please join us as we honor World War II and all military veterans at the*

## Jennings Opera House-Masonic Hall

### SUNDAY, JULY 19<sup>TH</sup> / 2:30 PM

- ★ Extensive WWII Memorabilia: Viewing Begins at 1:30pm
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Sponsored by the Jennings Historic Building Preservation Committee and the Royal Neighbors of America, Lodge #1893. All proceeds to be used for improvements to the Jennings Opera House-Masonic Hall. Please call 785-678-2664 or 785-678-2470 for details and directions.

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**RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
The Hospital is Celebrating the 4th of July on July 3rd. No Ultrasound, MRI or Cardiac Rehab that day.			1 Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	2	3 	4
5	6 Cardiac Rehab	7	8 Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	9 Brandi Ihrig Dietician	10 MRI's Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	11
12	13 Cardiac Rehab	14 Dr. Frankum Surgery	15 Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	16 Dr. Reeves Podiatry Dr. Saba Orthopedics	17 MRI's Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	18
19	20 Bone Density Cardiac Rehab	21	22 Mammograms Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	23 Dr. Curtis Cardiology	24 MRI's Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	25
26	27 Dr. Rubinowitz Oncology Cardiac Rehab	28 Dr. Miller Cardiology	29 Diabetic Clinic Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	30	31 MRI'S Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	

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