

Volunteering her time



ON SATURDAY, Rhiannon Davies and other students from the high school helped clean kitchen equipment and paint trim for the new recreation center downtown. — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

*County budget approved with increases

(Continued from Page 1A) cash from tax dollars. The department had a \$35,533 cash balance at the end of July. Some of that money is bioterrorism grant money, the director said.

"You know where I am going to go for it," said Mr. McEvoy, "that \$50,000 for the airport. It's not going to happen for a few years. I'm just being realistic."

The county keeps budgeting every year for the airport, said Mr. McEvoy, but none of that has been paid out.

Commissioner Gene Galletine said they probably need to do something with the health department, besides no one knows the impact the "swine" flu will have.

When the time comes, the county will have to decide about the airport money, he said.

If the department loses the state grant money this year, Mrs. Gamblin said, it's gone for next year, too.

"I don't think we can take a cut there that will cripple us or put us out of business," said Mrs. Pomeroy. "The community needs a health department. I understand budget cut, but don't think any department should take the majority of the hit."

The fire department, said Chief Cathcart, also took a substantial cut, around \$25,000. He said he's looking at replacing trucks and has been transferring money to the equipment reserve to help with that project.

Mr. McEvoy suggested the chief bring in a plan with the prices. He added that he was a little shocked by the cut, since others weren't taking a decrease like that.

The county can add \$25,000 to the fire department budget, keeping it the same amount, said Mr. Hirsch, and not have to raise taxes.

That could come from the other half of the airport money, said Mr. McEvoy.

"If we are going to give money to the airport," argued Mr. Unger, "then I think we need to put some money aside this year."

The county is spending down its cash balances this year, said Mr. Hirsch. He pointed out that the fire district is bigger than the county. It's supported by taxpayers in the whole district, not just the county.

Mr. Huntley talked about getting rid of the cost-share program for spraying weeds, which would shave a little bit off his budget. Both Mr. Unger and Mr. Galletine said people might not spray their weeds without the program.

One of the weed department employees, said Mr. Huntley, works in the recycling department. He said he talked with the county clerk about getting that employee paid for his work out of another budget.

Mr. McEvoy agreed that needs to be done so they have a better idea of what is being spent on the recycling program.

The commissioners did approve the budget with the two increases, but decided to wait to publish it.

*Local channel shuts off Friday

(Continued from Page 1A) computers and telethons.

In February 2008, the volunteer group held its last telethon because the sound on the cable channel wasn't what it used to be.

The channel, he said, is run live out of The Gateway. Besides the telethon and the ads, there's been a variety of items shown on the cable, including Oberlin City Council meetings, the hospital forum, candidate forums for people running for office and more. Those events, he said, were run live.

For the past nine years, Mr. Benton said, the channel also has run a tape of the United Methodist Church Sunday services.

There's only a few paying customers left, he said, with nonprofit and others not having to pay for their advertising. The money that comes in through business ads, said Mr. Benton, is hardly enough to pay the monthly phone bill.

While the technician here for Eagle Cable has done a great job, he said, others from the company come in, the channel has just gotten worse. He said fine black lines run through the picture now.

Unless someone in town wants to help run the channel, he said, the committee plans to pull the plug on Friday.

Mr. Benton said he's not sure if there is any money left in the account. If there is after the phone bill is paid, he said he thought it would be given away.

Mr. Benton was a broadcast engineer for 45 years before retiring and helping start the cable channel.

*Music teacher remembered

(Continued from Page 1A) Before Mr. Buchholz's funeral last Wednesday, said Mr. Hirsch, his class got together and watched their sixth-grade play and then attended the funeral together.

Principal Duane Dorshorst said what he will remember most about Mr. Buchholz is his passion for teaching kids music.

"He was a bit of a perfectionist," said Mr. Dorshorst, "when it came to performances and if the kids weren't ready, he would pull the song out of the concert."

Earlier in his career, said Mr. Dorshorst, he asked Mr. Buchholz why he didn't take the fifth and sixth graders to Hays to perform at the Northwest Kansas Music Educators Association competition. Mr. Buchholz told the principal that the kids here were more advanced, able to not only sing the melody, but the harmony of the song.

"We will miss his passion," said Mr. Dorshorst, "his humor and his love for music at our school."

Besides music, Mr. Buchholz also was interested in trains (real and model), yard work, basketball and the Decatur Area Theater Association.

Treasure Hunt coming soon

The annual 400-Mile Treasure Hunt along U.S. 36 is just 2 1/2 weeks away.

Anyone who wants to sell wares along the highway or from somewhere in town can get on a map being made by the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce for \$5, said Chamber manager Carolyn Hackney.

Carolyn Applegate, with the highway group, said Ms. Hackney planned to get the information on the Internet, and for that, it needed to be into the Chamber office by Tuesday.

Anyone who wants to be on the map needs to turn in their name by Monday, Sept. 14, said Ms. Hackney.

The maps will be handed out at a Chamber information booth set up at Stellar Sales during the weekend of Friday, Sept. 18, to Sunday, Sept. 20, or people can pick one up at the Chamber office.

There is no charge for maps, Ms. Hackney said.

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