

# County will pay for flu vaccine for employees

The Decatur County commissioners approved paying for flu shots for county employees and the volunteer ambulance crew last Tuesday.

Health Administrator Marilyn Gamblin said the county has paid for the shots for employees in the past. Last year, she said, she gave 22 shots to them. Each costs \$25.

With a switch in health insurance the county has for the employees, Commissioner Ralph Unger wanted to know if Blue Cross/Blue Shield would pay for vaccines. Ms. Gamblin said it depends on the person's deductible and if they have met it for the year.

When the county started paying for the vaccine for the employees, said Mr. Unger, it was because of the county's health insurance plan, but that has changed.

Without the county paying for them, there could be fewer employees choosing to receive the vaccine, said Commissioner Gene Gallentine. Ms. Gamblin agreed.

In the long run, the county could pay more in sick leave than for the flu shots for the employees, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

Mr. Gallentine asked about the H1N1, or swine flu, vaccine. Supposedly, said Ms. Gamblin, the government is supposed to be paying for those vaccines and the supplies to give them. Then there will be a \$2,000 grant along with that which will help pay for labor.

That program will be different because the target demographic will be pregnant women, health care workers, caregivers, babies 6 months and younger, and then six months and older.

She said she's been in contact with the Oberlin School District's nurse about ideas to get the vaccine to the kids.

The \$25 for the flu vaccine, she said, includes an administration fee. She added that she could probably make the county a deal.

It's important to get those shots available for the county employees who want it, said Mr. Gallentine. The commissioners agreed with a 3-0 vote.

The volunteer emergency medical technicians are the first ones to work with people, she said. Last year she had a few come in and wanted to know if the county would pay for them, too. The commissioners approved.

Ms. Gamblin said she would probably start giving the shots next week, adding that she would like to get as many done in September as possible. So far, she said, she's only received half of her vaccine. She's waiting on the other half.

She also brought in the contract that needed to be signed for her bioterrorism grant through the state. The grant, she said, has been renamed a preparedness grant. The department got \$9,100 this year.

With a question on some language about the kind of audit that has to be sent in for the grant, the commissioners decided to wait to talk with the county's auditors. It's the same contract as last year, said Ms. Gamblin.

She said she might use some of the money to buy a second refrigerator for vaccines. The fridge the department has now is pretty much full, she said, and with new vaccines, they will need more space.

## UPCOMING EVENTS in Kansas

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**Kansas City Renaissance Festival**  
September 5-October 18, Bonner Springs  
Weekends, Labor Day & Columbus Day, 10a-7p 15 minutes & 500 yards from downtown KC. Just off I-70 at exit 224 then north on K-7 (800) 373-0357, krenfest.com

**Collyer Fall Street Festival**  
September 12, Collyer  
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The fun starts at 10 AM, ends at 5 PM  
(785) 769-5205 or (785) 769-4268

**Haskell Indian Art Market**  
September 12-13, Lawrence  
Native American artists from around the country exhibit and sell their art during this outdoor market. Food, entertainment.  
(785) 843-6830, haskell.edu

**Walnut Valley Festival**  
September 16-20, Winfield  
World-famous bluegrass and acoustic music festival. Contests, concerts, arts and crafts, camping and more.  
(620) 221-3250, wvfest.com

**Midwest Deutsche Oktoberfest**  
September 19-20, Hays  
Join the fun with polka music, dancing, games and entertainment, presentations & wonderful German food and drink.  
(785) 625-5394, midwestdeutschefest.com

**Fredonia Homecoming Festival**  
September 24-October 3, Fredonia  
Old Iron Days, talent show, golf tournament, carnival, grand parade, food & craft vendors, dance.  
(620) 378-3221, fredoniachamber.com

**Kansas Championship Ranch Rodeo**  
September 25-26, Medicine Lodge  
Celebrate ranching heritage and the American Cowboy! Wild cow milking, doctoring, branding, bronc riding and more.  
(620) 886-9815, peacetreaty.org

**Wagonmasters Chili Cook-Off**  
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## Checking out the corn crop



**AMONG THE DEALERS** at a Mycogen Seed event last Wednesday east of Rexford was Oberlin's Jim Reeves (center). The dealers spent the morning learning about the

company's latest offerings, then had lunch. That evening, they were ready for a field day at the test plots along U.S. 83, owned by Bill Dible. — Herald staff photo by Steve Haynes

# County looks to insure seniors

At the request of the commissioners and one of the Golden Age Center board members, the county attorney plans to check into how the senior board can come under the county, which would help enable them to get liability insurance.

The county's insurance company won't provide insurance for the senior center because the board doesn't fall under the county. The building is owned by the county and the county's policy does cover the building.

Board member Max Carman, said the Golden Age Center board tried to get liability insurance quotes and came up empty handed.

"We are kind of between a rock and a hard place," he said.

The only sources of income for the board are renting the rooms out, fund raisers, donations and

## County Roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Approved the budget with a .093 of a mill increase in the property tax levy over the previous week's budget, but planned to talk about the tax rate again at their next meeting. Story on Page 1A.

- Talked about the Golden Age Center board coming under the county, which would help the group

memorials.

If the facility isn't covered with liability insurance, said Mr. Carman, no one is going to serve on the board. The board would essentially be defunct.

get liability insurance. Story at left.

- Gave the appraiser the OK to paint his office on the second floor of the courthouse. Story below.

- Approved the county paying for flu shots for county employees and volunteers on the ambulance crew. Story at right.

- Approved a carpet bill of \$4,628 for the new Golden Age Center. Story on Page 2A.

The board would have to be appointed by the commissioners, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

He said he thinks then the county would be responsible for the budget, too.

When the Kansas Counties Association Multi-lined Pool, the county's insurance company looked at liability insurance, said Commissioner Ralph Unger, it wasn't under county control. Since the group didn't fall under the county's umbrella, said Mr. Unger, the insurance representative said it couldn't provide the coverage.

The question is if the county wants to run the center, said Mr. Carman.

It's not a campaign for the county to run it, said Mr. Unger.

In order for the senior board to become an instrumentality of the county, said Attorney Steve Hirsch, the board would have to be appointed.

He said he would get some information and then the commissioners could talk about it again.

## Appraiser plans to spruce up office with new paint

The Decatur County commissioners gave the appraiser the go ahead to paint his office on the second floor of the courthouse at their meeting last Tuesday.

Appraiser Alan Hale said it's probably been 25 to 30 years since the offices have been painted, and the walls are peeling.

He said he would check into the cost of paint and then they would do the labor during the week if that was OK. He said they would still

take care of customers.

It's important to keep the building up, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

The commissioners approved the job.

Mr. Hale said one or two computers in his office need to be replaced in the next year or two. With the budget situation next year, he said, he wasn't sure if this isn't the year to do them, while there is money in the budget.

He said he'd been holding off to wait to see what happens with the new computer system that's coming. Decatur County probably won't start with the new system until next year or 2011 and the new computers will be needed then, he said.

He said he is just trying to plan

for the future, adding that he might check into some numbers. It might be a good time to see if there are other departments that will need new computers. Maybe the county could get some kind of deal for buying several machines at the same time.

## \* Water plan updated

(Continued from Page 1A) water rationing, which has been an unpopular necessity many times in the past, Mr. Gilley said.

The council chose the cheaper of the whole-town plans, which is still a bit more expensive than a previous plan, which would not serve everyone.

Councilman Ray Ward said that the council wanted to get away from rationing as well as improve the water quality.

The cost to average citizens will probably be \$10 a month more in water bills, Mr. Gilley said. The average bill is now \$32 a month and

the city will be required to raise that to \$42 to pay for the plant.

The council agreed to go with the plan that would provide better water, do away with rationing and satisfy the government.

Mayor Joe Stanley told those at the meeting that he and the council members have never been in favor of building a new water plant.

"This council has fought against these new regulations and spending this money for at least three years," he said. "It's being shoved down our throats.... The council has not wanted to spend your money at all."

## \* County approves budget

(Continued from Page 1A) that back is to take a sharp pencil to the budget, he said. There was still \$24,000 budgeted for the airport project and money for recycling, both areas the commissioners have talked about cutting.

The commissioners approved the budget, with the 67.214-mill levy. After the meeting, Noxious Weed

Director Gaylen Huntley said he didn't think he was going to be able to live with the \$33,000 cut to his budget. Clerk Colleen Geihlsler said the commissioners told her not to publish the budget so they can discuss it again. One version appears on Page 10A of today's paper, however.

## \* Petition may hurt airport

(Continued from Page 1A) to pay for additional ground for the airport.

Mayor Joe Stanley said that the city has two airport projects going on, the runway extension plan, and a project to reconfigure the present runway to create better safety zones at each end.

The federal government will be paying 95 percent of the cost of the plan to shift the existing runway

north to comply with government regulations on space around the ends of airport runways.

"You don't have a vote and we don't have a vote," Mr. Stanley said. "We were forced to buy it (the land)."

Mr. Black replied that he wasn't happy about the whole thing.

"We've had a lot of things crammed down our throats here lately," he said. "I don't like that."

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