

# Vandals strike at equipment parked by roads

Someone is vandalizing Decatur County's equipment while it's parked out along the county roads.

The commissioners decided last Tuesday to offer a reward to anyone who can lead them to the arrest and conviction of the person or people responsible for the damage.

Someone broke some windows and lights on a grader parked at Rock Hill, in the Traer area, said Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman. A broken beer bottle was also found in the area.

He added that this has happened before, to the same grader.

Undersheriff Allen Marcum has been to the scene and investigated, he said.

The road grader, a 2001 Caterpillar, is back in town to get fixed, said Mr. Stallman. It will probably cost around \$400 just for the materials. That doesn't include the cost for the labor to fix it or to go pick up the grader.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said he's noticed more signs being shot at on the county roads. In some places, he said, if the vandal missed the sign, they could easily hit a farmstead.

Maybe the county could offer a reward and run an ad in the newspaper, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

It would be good idea for the equipment and the signs, said Mr. Unger. (The ad appears on Page 3B of today's *Oberlin Herald*.)

Mr. Stallman said he talked with Dan Grafel, with D&S Grain, who said the county could park graders with his trucks.

On another issue, Mr. Stallman said an engineer with Penco condemned one of the off-system bridges. The county has a contract with Penco to inspect the bridges on the township roads every other year.

The condemned structure is a two-span wood bridge on the north side of Sid Metcalf's farm, which

## County roundup

At the meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Talked with the ambulance director, who asked if the department could get a credit card so the crew could pay for fuel at the pump, especially at night when they are in other towns. Story below.

- Talked with the Blue Cross/Blue Shield representative about changes for the next year, including a 2.77 percent increase in premiums. Story below.

- Approved buying a new refrigerator for the county health department to store vaccines. Story on Page 10A.

- Heard that someone is vandalizing county equipment parked in the country. Story at left.

is 18 miles northeast of Oberlin in Harlan Township. The whole bridge, said Mr. Stallman, is leaning to the east. It was probably put in sometime in the 1950s, he said.

The crew went out and put up "road-closed" signs, said Mr. Stallman, and he's talked with the township board members and Mr. Metcalf.

Mr. Stallman said he's going to look at all the replacement options and prices before deciding how to fix the bridge. It could possibly be a concrete box culvert instead of a bridge, similar to two put in south of town last year, he said.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Heard that the road crew had put up the "icy bridge" signs.

- Talked about advertising two used dozers for sale in the *Country Advocate* and another publication.

# County insurance to take small jump

The county's health insurance representative with Blue Cross/Blue Shield talked with commissioners about changes coming for the next year, including a 2.77 percent increase in premiums.

The county now pays \$31,045 a month for the health insurance for its employees. A 2.77 percent increase will mean \$833 per month more next year. That's 6 to 7 percent below what the medical trend is, said Charlie Krull of Hays. He said this is open enrollment time for the county, and employees sign up for the insurance or add relatives to be covered in December.

Mr. Krull said one of the changes for next year is that some diabetic supplies will now be covered, outside the member's deductible.

Another change at the beginning of January is that dental implants will be covered.

He said he thinks the county employees with the plan are happy with it.

There have been a few problems, said County Clerk Colleen Geihlsler. Although some of the people had told that the sleep apnea test would be covered if done at the hospital in McCook, the test actually is covered by Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska at the McCook hospital, but not Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Kansas. There were some other issues, too, she said.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy agreed that they couldn't say that everyone is happy with the insurance.

# U.S. farm program increases loan limits

The Guaranteed Loan Program, run by the U.S. Farm Service Agency, has increased its loan limit to \$1,112,000, effective immediately, based on the "Prices Paid to Farmers Index."

The program will allow commercial and Farm Credit lenders to make loans to qualified applicants. Farmers interested in guaranteed loans should apply through a lender.

The agency also offers the Direct Loan Program for those unable to obtain financing from commercial sources. The loan limit for loans under this program is \$300,000, except for emergency loans. Farmers interested in applying for a direct loan should contact the Norton County office of the Farm Service Agency at (785) 877-5156.

## And the beat goes on



AT THE HIGH SCHOOL on Monday, Dakota Soderlund practiced with the high school band for an upcoming concert. See the story in the Decatur Dictator, Page 6B.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

# Nebraska loss hard on pigskin pickers

Nebraska's loss to Iowa State confounded most of the contestants in this week's Pigskin Pick-em contest.

That was the only miscue for Gary Anderson and Travis Raile of Oberlin.

Both guessed six out of seven winners, but missed the Nebraska loss.

The tie breaker was checked and, while both felt K-State would beat Colorado, Mr. Anderson's scores were closest to the Wildcats 20-6 victory over the Buffaloes.

He wins first place and will receive \$15 in scrip spendable at

participating businesses. Mr. Raile will receive \$10 in scrip for his second-place finish.

Seven contestants got it right on five out of seven games. Most of those miscued on Norton's loss to Scott City or Pittsburg State's victory over Fort Hays State.

Cheri Kastens, Herndon, takes third place with five correct guess and the closest to the K-State-Colorado game score. She will receive \$5 in scrip.

Others guessing five out of seven were Owen Wilson, Linda Hollowell, Ryan Leitner, Norm Wendelin, Ivis Hanson and Valisha Raile, all

of Oberlin. Guessing four out of seven right were Mabel Zimmerman, Jim Hollowell and Kelly Brown, Oberlin, and Amanda Adams, Danbury, Neb.

The money won in the contest can be spent only at the sponsors: Ward Drug Store, the LandMark Inn, Fredrickson Insurance Agency, Stellar Auto Sales, Farm Bureau Financial Services, D&M Sinclair and *The Oberlin Herald*.

Each week for the next five weeks, the official Pigskin Pickem entry blank with the football games for that week will be in the paper.

Other entry blanks are available at sponsoring businesses. Only entries from the paper or from the sponsors are eligible to enter the contest. No copies will be accepted.

Other scores of this week's games were:

- Pittsburg over Fort Hays State, 59-41.
- Scott City over Norton, 14-6.
- Oklahoma over KU, 35-13.
- Iowa State over Nebraska, 9-7.
- St. Francis over Leoti, 49-20.
- Oakley over Oberlin, 46-6.
- Atwood over Syracuse, 42-14.

# Ambulance crews need a credit card

The Decatur County emergency medical services director talked with commissioners about getting a credit card so the ambulance crew could pay at the pump for fuel when they are in other towns, especially at night.

Director Linda Manning said the gas cards the department has don't always work since they're for a specific oil company. If a town doesn't have that brand, then drivers have to use their own cards.

It would be good to get a Visa or other some other kind of credit card, said Ms. Manning.

The card wouldn't be used that often, she said, but would be good to have. There were two times last week ambulance workers could have used the card.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said another option would be a prepaid card. Whatever kind of card they get, said Mr. Unger, Ms. Manning needs to tell the drivers to keep the receipts.

On another issues, Ms. Manning said she's having some problems with oil leaking out of ambulance No. 3, the 2006 ambulance. The two front tires are "chopped out" in

the center, she said, even though the truck had an alignment a year ago.

She said she's taking the vehicle in to be looked at and doesn't plan to use it until it's fixed. Ms. Manning said she's ordered a part to fix the oil leak.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Held a five-minute closed session for non-elected personnel, with no action taken afterward.
- Approved transfers from Bassettville Township for \$11,419, from Finley Township for \$7,454, from Logan Township for \$4,276,

from Oberlin Township for \$7,048, from Olive Township for \$7,618, from Sherman Township for \$5,858 and from Summit Township for \$4,748. The money was transferred from the township road budgets to the county road and bridge department for work done under contract by the county crew.

• Learned that Commissioner Stan McEvoy and John Miller, a Norton County commissioner, have been named to serve on the board of the Kansas County Commissioners Association.

# Annual holiday meal set for Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is almost here, and volunteers at St. John's Lutheran Church are getting ready for their traditional community dinner.

The meal is set for noon on Thanksgiving, Thursday, Nov. 26, in the basement of the church on Wilson.

Teresa Diederich, who is in

charge of organizing the dinner with Marvin May, said they are looking for people who want to donate pies and salads. Anyone who can help should call her at 475-3525 or Mr. May at 475-2443, she said.

People who want to volunteer their help at the meal can call them, too.

# Veterans Day parade planned for Nov. 11

The Oberlin American Legion plans a Veteran's Day parade downtown for the holiday on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

Magistrate Judge John Bremer said the parade will start at 11 a.m., with participants meeting at the Good Samaritan Center. The tentative route is to walk down Main Street, turn at The Bank and end up at the Legion on Rodehaver Ave.

Veterans, family, auxiliary members, Sons of the American Legion and supporters are invited to join.

The Oberlin Elementary School plans a Veteran's Day program at 10 a.m. at the school. Veterans from the county are invited to the program, said Principal Duane Dorshorst. They plan to be done in time for people to also participate in the parade.

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**November is Military Family Month**

Show your support for our military families this November through action!

**Join Operation: Military Kids (OMK)** for the statewide Awareness to Action campaign to organize and participate in local projects that support military families and youth.

Civic groups in Kansas communities are encouraged to lead awareness and action events with the resources of Kansas OMK. Information about how your group can be involved in the campaign is available at:

**www.KansasOMK.org**

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