



THERE WERE SEVERAL VARIETIES to check, and P.T. Shirley was looking at all of them during the annual wheat tour sponsored by Twin Creeks Extension and the May Family Farms last Wednesday.

Agency on Aging asks county for money

The Decatur County commissioners received budget requests from the Northwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging to help with services for the elderly as well as the meal site at the Golden Age Center at their meeting last Tuesday.

Executive Director Michelle Morgan said 11 Area Agencies serve parts of Kansas, focusing on senior services.

In 2010 in Decatur County, she said, they received 145 phone calls or visits from seniors with questions about programs.

With all of the programs, she said, the agency put out a total of \$148,000 in services for this county. Of that, they ask the county to give \$4,800.

With some of the programs, she said, the money helps pay local providers to go into the home of the senior. Pam Turner, with the agency, said the nice thing is that the providers are from your county.

When people eat at the meal site or get a meal on wheels, where does the money they pay go? asked County Attorney Steve Hirsch. That money, said Ms. Morgan, goes to help pay for the food. Over half of the money to run the meal site comes from donations from those eating there, she added.

Kristen Schmidt, nutrition director, said last month, they averaged

\$2.50 a meal.

The nice thing about the meal site, Ms. Morgan added, is that no one is turned away.

Leaders of the senior center here have discussed using the kitchen at the Golden Age Center to prepare the food for the meal site, instead of driving to Atwood to pick it up from a central kitchen.

If the kitchen was used at the center, said Ms. Schmidt, it would cost about \$7,294 more a year, plus \$8 an hour, seven hours a day for a cook. There would also need to be a budget for small equipment and repair, she said.

With everything, it would cost \$11,888 in local money, she said, to use the kitchen here.

If the kitchen isn't used, said Ms. Schmidt, they are asking for \$2,525 to keep the satellite site in Atwood and the meals coming over.

Ms. Morgan said she knows the seniors here have wanted a kitchen here for quite some time. It will be more expensive, she said.

Also, the meal site kitchen receives commodities that are only delivered once a month, so the kitchen would have to have more freezer space.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy asked if they have been able to fill the spot of someone driving back and forth to Atwood to pick up the

food. Site manager Helen Gee was picking up the food, but said she was no longer going to do it the last time she was at a commissioner meeting.

If the kitchen was used at the Golden Age, said Ms. Morgan, there would need to be a more costly license and inspection.

One of the reasons they want a kitchen here, said Mr. McEvoy, is the quality of food. If they can relay some of the concerns or things they don't like about the food, said Ms. Schmidt, they could address them. She said she hasn't received any calls about the food. As far as she knows, there aren't any problems.

Personally, Mr. McEvoy said he doesn't see any way for them to have their own kitchen. It would be nice, but everyone is cutting things and all of that trickles down to the local government level.

"To me," said Mr. McEvoy, "There is just no way feasible to open a kitchen here."

While the county has been paying the requested money for the agency, said Ms. Morgan, it hasn't had to supplement the lunch program for 10 years.

The commissioners didn't make any decisions about the budget request, which will be dealt with in discussions later in the summer.

Farmers check out plots with several wheat types

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Despite temperatures in the low 60s and a constant wind, several area farmers ventured out last Wednesday to check on this year's Extension wheat test plot.

Each year, the Twin Creeks Extension District and the May Family Farms plant several varieties of wheat on a plot 2 1/2 miles west of town. In early June, they host a tour to look at the wheat and how it's doing. Prior to the tour, the Mays put on breakfast at the 4-H Building at the Decatur County Fairground.

Roger May said the varieties were planted no-till on Oct. 3 at 80 pounds per acre. Thirty pounds of phosphorus and nitrates were put on the fields as well.

His son, Ryan May, is working on a plot as a 4-H project with treated seed, untreated seed and seed treated with a fungicide. Ryan said he's trying to determine if it's worth the cost to use the fungicide.

Brian Olson, area Extension agronomist, said the wheat along U.S. 36 from east to west is the best across the state. The wheat here might not be great, he said, but it's not bad compared to the rest of the state, where farmers report poor stands and crops that have been destroyed.

Southwest Kansas, said Mr. Olson, is hurting pretty bad. He said they lost the wheat plot in Ness County. It was zeroed out, he said, showing just .6 bushels per acre.

Unlike most years, he said, northwest Kansas had no good rains in September or October. The moisture was really spotty, he said, and that has made a difference.

There is some strip rust, leaf rust and some wheat streak mosaic in fields, said Mr. Olson.

Farmers might not harvest as much as they did last year, he added, but hopefully they get twice as much in price as they did last year.

Mr. Olson went through most of the varieties of wheat planted in the field to talk about some of their characteristics and what he sees so far. The varieties included:

- Danby, a white wheat.
- Hatcher, a variety from Colorado State University adapted to this area. Since the variety was developed for the Front Range of Colorado, said Mr. Olson, it has



SHARING A LAUGH and some information, Roger May talked with other farmers during the annual wheat tour last Wednesday at the family farm. — Herald photos by Kimberly Davis

some drought tolerance. It has a good performance record.

- Post Rock, an AgriPro variety that came out in 2006. It's a good blending variety, he said. It's been grown over a large range of environments and done well.
- Smoky Hill, a variety that won't be widely marketed to Kansas. It has a different maturity and will be moving up into the Dakotas.
- Winterhawk, the bluest wheat out there. It has a blue tint to it all the time. It has good drought tolerance, and it is fairly susceptible to leaf rust and stem rust, but resistant to stripe rust.
- T-158 has the potential to be the replacement for T-81. It is drought tolerant and has a good disease package.
- TAM 111 also has a good drought tolerance package. It seems to be widely grown in western Kansas

and resists stripe rust.

- Sy Gold is a newer variety from Kansas State University. Up until last year, it had a good disease package, but it is susceptible to stripe rust.
- Bill Brown, another variety from Colorado State, is very drought tolerant, but shorter. Mr. Olson said he wonders if it's strength is doing well in dry conditions.
- WB Cedar, a sibling to Aspen, which is a white wheat, is a hard red. It has pretty good potential for this area.
- Art is an AgriPro variety that has some potential for this area. It has average drought tolerance and is an OK variety, he said, but there are others that are better.
- Armour had a stellar year last year, he said. It doesn't have the drought tolerance like the TAM varieties do and is also shorter.

Old bus free to good home

The Decatur County commissioners decided last Tuesday to list the old transportation van on a free website to give the vehicle away.

At the meeting, Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman asked about the old white minivan that served as the transportation bus. Something needs to be done with it, he said, adding that he wasn't sure

if the county has a sale coming up or if the commissioners want to sell it to someone.

If the commissioners want to sell the van, said Mr. Stallman, he thinks they need to disclose what's wrong with it, including a bent frame and a back door that doesn't want to close.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy

suggested loading it and hauling it to a salvage yard. Mr. Stallman called some salvage places and got a guesstimate of \$200 to \$360 for scrap value.

Mr. McEvoy suggested putting it on a free web listing to see if they get any offers to take it.

Guess when first wheat comes in

Entry slips are out at area merchants, and it's anyone's guess on when the first load of wheat will be cut and delivered in the Oberlin area.

With the recent hot weather, some of the wheat fields in Decatur County are already starting to change color.

Anyone who wants to try to guess when the first load of wheat will be brought to a Decatur County elevator can enter the Oberlin merchants' annual Harvest Countdown contest. It's time to put your knowledge of agriculture — or luck — to work.

The annual event gives anyone 18 or older the chance to make an educated guess on the minute, hour and day that the first load of wheat will arrive at a participating elevator, including the Decatur Co-op locations in Oberlin, Kanona, Jennings, Herndon, Danbury, Neb., Ludell, Lenora and Edmond, and Hansen Mueller Grain in Oberlin

or Cedar Bluffs.

People who have won in the last five years and anyone who has delivered the first load in those years are ineligible. Also, relatives of the person delivering the first load and employees of the newspaper and their immediate families aren't eligible to win prizes.

Entries can be made at participating businesses, with no purchase required.

The contest is put together by *The Oberlin Herald*. Sponsoring businesses include the Decatur Co-op Association, Decatur County Title and Abstract, Fredrickson Insurance Agency, Hansen Mueller, Hometown Family Radio, KFNF, Stanley Hardware and Ward Drug Store.

The contest will close at 4 p.m. on Friday, July 1, or whenever the first load comes in.

Winners will receive \$50 for first, \$35 for second and \$15 for third. All

prizes will be in scrip which can be spent only at sponsoring businesses. No change will be given.

City Council to preview budget work

The Oberlin City Council will preview the 2012 city budget during its meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

The council will be starting budget meetings next month, said City Administrator Karen Larsen, and

this will be its opportunity to recap and review.

Also on the agenda is getting untended property mowed before the Fourth of July holiday so the town will look good for out-of-town visitors.

The city should be getting a report from David Traster of Wichita, the environmental lawyer retained to look at the water treatment facility project and plans for disposal of uranium.

Preventive healthcare services may now be more affordable than an apple a day!

Some diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and diabetes are often preventable, yet account for seven out of ten American deaths each year.

The good news is that under the new Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), insurance companies are required to offer full coverage for preventive health care services to those who meet gender, age and frequency guidelines.

This includes screenings for:

- Breast cancer
- Cervical cancer
- Cholesterol
- Colorectal cancer
- Depression
- Diabetes
- Osteoporosis
- High blood pressure
- HIV for those at risk of the disease

Also included are counseling services for such issues as:

- Dietary needs
- Tobacco Cessation
- Obesity and weight loss

Some benefits for pregnant women, infants, and children are also covered.

Find out more!

We encourage you to contact your individual insurance provider to find out what preventive health care benefits are covered.

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*Only new plans sold after September 23, 2010 are required to follow the requirement for free preventive care. Plans that have not significantly changed their benefits or premiums since the health reform bill was signed into law on March 23 are exempt.