Commissioners discuss policy on hitchhikers

The Decatur County commissioners talked with the sheriff about the office's policy on hitchhikers at their meeting last Tuesday.

"We aren't a taxi service," said Sheriff Ken Badksy

If there is a hitchhiker who is causing trouble, he said, a deputy may give him or her a ride to the county line. A few weeks ago, said Sheriff Badsky, the Norton County Sheriff's Office dropped someone off at the county line.

Dispatch got a call on him. The man got a ride into town, said Sheriff Badsky, and his office gave him a ride on to the next county line.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine said he had heard from a person who spotted a hitchhiker in front of their house. The citizen was concerned,

Sheriff Badsky said he had heard of the situation. He said the person in the home let the hitchhiker in to get a drink and his wife found out, and that's when the problem started.

Mr. Gallentine asked if a deputy couldn't have moved the hitchhiker "five miles down the road."

If he wasn't doing anything wrong, that would violate the person's liberties, said Sheriff Badsky.

It's like getting a ticket book, said Sheriff Badsky, and writing a ticket for something someone might do.

Sheriff Badsky said last week the idea of paying Jeanne Pachner, who works for dispatch and the sheriff's office, mileage for delivering papers was brought up.

County Clerk Colleen Geihsler shut off.

about the mileage.

Sheriff Badsky said the issue had never come up before. There was some talk about whether Ms. Pachner should use a county vehicle to serve the papers.

The sheriff said that won't work, because she keeps the papers in her car and serves them when she sees the people. Sometimes, he said, people who are served won't always answer the door.

So she doesn't want mileage? asked Commissioner Stan McEvoy. No, said Sheriff Badsky.

At the beginning of July, said the sheriff, the fee for a vehicle inspection is going to increase from \$10 to \$15. It will increase again to \$20 at the beginning of July 2012.

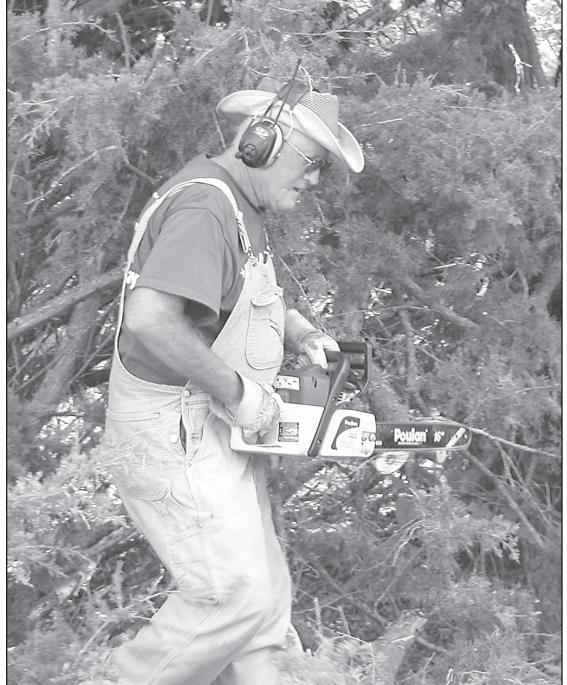
He said he would like to take the 90 percent the county gets to keep in a special equipment fund. It makes more sense, he said, to use this kind of fee to replace equipment, and not tax dollars.

The fee increase, the sheriff added, is set by state law.

Mr. McEvoy said he's OK with that unless the department gets to the point where it needs that money to operate. A couple of years down the road, the department is going to need two vehicles, said the sheriff.

In other business, the commissioners and sheriff talked about changing to one plan for cell phones for the county.

With the recent change, they said, texting and Internet service has been



Men trim trees at park

AT SAPPA PARK LAST WEDNESDAY, Gary Anderson (above) cut and picked up limbs off a cedar tree during a scheduled work night. Ken Shobe (left) used his chain saw to help cut down a tree that had split.

> Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes

Health nurse to purchase copier

The Decatur County commis- had a phone with Verizon and the sioners approved the county health nurse buying a new copier for the health department at their meeting last Tuesday.

Health Director Marilyn Gamblin said there's about \$6,500 left in bioterrorism money. Ms. Gamblin said she checked and was told she can use the money for a copier.

The money, which comes from a grant, has to be spent by August,

Ms. Gamblin said she checked with Office Works in Colby and found a copier for about \$4,500.

new contract is through Nex-Tech. Ms. Gamblin said she's fine with changing companies but needs text messaging. She said she receives texts and e-mail notices and has to be able to respond to them.

The commissioners suggested she stop by Nex-Tech and get the phone she needs.

In other business, the commissioners heard that the department needs a medical advisor. Ms. Gamblin said she wanted to ask Dr. Charles Hardison, with Docs who Care, to be the interim advisor. She The commissioners approved the said the current term will expire at the beginning of July, which will Ms. Gamblin said she needs some leave the county without an advisor guidance on her cell phone. She for a few days.

Violence organization asks city for money

A representative with Options, formerly known as Northwest Kansas Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, asked the Oberlin City Council for \$500 for

Daniel Blake said the organization changed its name because they give the victims options on what they are going to do.

In 2009, said Mr. Blake, during the council meeting on Thursday, June 16, the agency served nine victims in Oberlin and in 2010 that decreased to four.

It's not common in the 18 county region to have decreasing numbers, he said. The biggest increase in the region was from three to 25

Mr. Blake said he doesn't think domestic and sexual violence is really decreasing in the county, but it's just not being reported.

The group runs a hot line for victims to call a shelter in Hays. It's one of the only extended-stay programs in the state, said Mr. Blake.

Are there lots of repeat victims? asked Councilman Rob McFee. Yes, said Mr. Blake, the national average is seven times that a victim will return to their abuser. In the region last year, he said, there were

Mr. Blake said the service is asking for \$500. The city didn't give them anything last year, he said.

He said the nonprofit agency asks for money from the cities and counties it serves and then also receives The council didn't make any

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31

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