

Development board needs three volunteers

By BRANDI DIEDERICH
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Three seats will be open on the board of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. in January.

The openings include one city position, one county appointment and one at-large seat which is filled by the rest of the board. Members serve two-year terms.

To apply for a position, contact the city administrator or county clerk. The city will appoint one member, as will the county commissioners.

Connie Grafel, marketing director for the agency, said if you live in town, contact the city, but if you live outside the city limits, you have a better chance of being appointed by the commissioners.

To apply for the at-large seat, contact Ms. Grafel at the Economic Development office, (785) 475-2901. She said board members already have visited with one possible candidate.

Board members' tasks include a meeting once a month, reviewing revolving loan applications during the year, supporting ribbon cuttings, business openings or special events,

and working with the Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau on tourism and community events.

Also, she said, most of the board has worked at the bowling alley when the manager is unavailable or needs help.

The agency also offers training through the Small Business Development Center offices in Hays and Bird City. Ms. Grafel said they are looking for a webmaster for the community website.

They hope to look for a plan for a new motel as the New Year gets under way, she said. Anyone interested in investing should contact the board.

Members Sid Metcalf, Kevin Rippe and Tom Mullen have served their two years and are leaving the board, she said.

Mr. Metcalf said board positions are volunteer, and he hopes he will be replaced this month. He said the last big task for the outgoing board members was the development of the new recreation center downtown as a new home for the Golden Age Center, Sunflower Cinema and the bowling alley and recreation center.

Youngster battles against leukemia

By BRANDI DIEDERICH
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Little Payton Agan, son of an Oberlin man, is fighting for his life after being diagnosed with leukemia as his family struggles with more than \$100,000 in expenses.

Payton, 3-year-old son of Ryan Agan of Oberlin and Michaela Goos of Broken Bow, Neb., was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia on Oct. 7.

His grandparents are Daren and Charlene Agan of Oberlin and Donna Boucher of Cambridge, Neb. Great-grandparents are Dennis and Darlene Agan and Catherine and Varlan Neal, all of Oberlin.

To help the family with medical bills and the cost of driving to Omaha for treatments, Deb Bryan, a family friend and coworker of Ryan and Charlene Agan at Cedar Living Center, has organized a benefit dinner and dance for Payton. The hamburger feed will be served from 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday at the American Legion Hall, with a dance from 8 to midnight. The Oberlin Jaycees will do the dinner, she said, and deejay Jonathan Fick of Jam Session is donating the dance.

A story in the *Burwell Tribune* in Nebraska detailed some of the challenges the family is facing. Payton's mother took a leave in absence without pay from her job to be with him in Omaha and care for her son. He can't go to daycare for six months to a year because of his weak immune system, which means she will continue taking care of Payton at home.

The article said his mother started seeing bruises that any normal, busy toddler would have from falling and playing, but they seemed never to heal. She decided to take Payton to their family doctor.

Blood tests showed that Payton's white-cell count was high and his

platelets were low, and his blood lacked the ability to clot. Doctors sent Payton to Children's Hospital and Medical Center in Omaha.

Before he got to Omaha, though, Payton's doctors noticed an enlarged liver and spleen, symptoms of leukemia. After tests at Children's, he was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia, which his mother told the paper was known as one of the most treatable types of the blood disease.

"The shock of hearing the words 'Payton has leukemia' may never go away," his mother said. "This whole thing is overwhelming, physically, emotionally and spiritually."

Payton started chemotherapy right away, and doctors said he responded well. After a whirlwind three weeks, he was released to go back home to Broken Bow on Oct. 31.

In November, Payton was able to stay at home with weekly trips to Omaha for procedures and chemo.

Payton's aunt, Raeleen Beal of Burwell, created a page at www.caringbridge.org to help others follow his progress. Updates are posted by his mother and aunt.

As of the middle of November, the page says, doctors declared Payton in remission, but his treatments will continue for three years. The frequency will depend on his response. His aunt said in January, he'll go every seven days.

Donations by check can be mailed to Mrs. Beal at Box 129, Burwell, Neb. 68823, and made out to Payton Agan Medical Expense. Anonymous donations can be delivered or mailed to his account at the Union Bank, Box A, Taylor, Neb. 68879 or at the Pathway Bank, Box 250, Burwell Neb. 68823. Those that come to her box will get a thank-you card, she said.

County sets up appreciation dinner

The Decatur County commissioners talked with several county workers about an employee appreciation dinner planned for January.

At least 123 people signed up for the meal, said County Clerk Colleen Geihlsler at the meeting Dec. 20.

Gaylen Huntley, noxious weed control director, said everything is set for the dinner on Saturday, Jan. 14, at the American Legion.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said they appreciate those willing to serve on the committee, including Mr. Huntley, Kari Ketterl, register of deeds, and Tim Stallman, road and bridge supervisor.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Held a five-minute closed session for non-elected personnel with custodian Bob Berls. There was no action taken afterward.

- Held a closed session for 10 minutes for attorney-client privilege with the county attorney, commissioners and clerk. There was no action taken.

- Approved purchase of a new computer for the register of deeds' office for \$1,149 from Mortensen Computer Services of Norton. Mrs. Ketterl said she has the money in her budget.

Council to meet on Thursday

The Oberlin City Council will hear about the continuing campaign to upgrade "nuisance" property at its first meeting of 2012, starting at 7 p.m. Thursday in the upstairs meeting room at The Gateway.

City Administrator Karen Larson said Jan Ackerman, the city's code enforcement officer, plans to do a

wrap-up of last year's activities for the council.

Mrs. Larson said the council might talk some about the repairs to the electrical substation and the continued search for better water.

The meeting is open to the public.

Following the leader



LIKE A MOTHER DUCK leading her ducklings, day-care owner Joni Marshall marched her charges back from an outdoor play session Thursday at the elementary-school playground. The weather was warm and bright and the kids seemed to be having a good time.

- Herald staff photo by Steve Haynes

Fee set for scrap-metal dealers' license

The Decatur County commissioners set a fee for people to get a scrap-metal dealer's license.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch said at the meeting Tuesday, Dec. 13, that as of Jan. 1, cities and counties will be licensing scrap-metal dealers. The state has been under pressure to regulate the dealers since theft and sale of items such as scrap steel and, especially, copper wire and pipe have become a big issue both in cities and rural areas.

Undersheriff Alan Marcum said scrap metal is taken quite frequently from farmsteads, although often the owners don't notice it missing right away. He said many times, deputies don't file a report at the request of the owner.

Dealers will get a 10-year license, Mr. Hirsch said. The minimum fee the county can charge is \$100 and the maximum is \$400.

Those wanting a license will have to fill out a form and the county will

have to do a background check. The city will be responsible for licenses in the city limits and the county for the ones outside the city.

This is similar to a cereal malt beverage, or beer license, said Mr. Hirsch; it's patterned after that law.

The charge for a beer license, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy, is \$25 a year. With that in mind, he suggested a 10-year license for \$250.

Mr. Hirsch said this is to license

the business, not to say where the business can be located. The commissioners approved the \$250 fee.

In other business, the board: After a 15-minute closed session called for attorney-client privilege, asked the clerk if she would contact applicants for hospital board vacancies to come for interviews.

Decided not to join the League of Kansas Municipalities, which is mainly a city organization, for \$327. The county didn't join last year.

Businesses report shopping up and down

By BRANDI DIEDERICH
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Christmas shopping at businesses in Oberlin was like a roller-coaster this year, owners report.

Vicky Ray, manager of Ray Jewelry, said the Men's Shopping Night turned out better than the ladies night for them. She said men wanted jewelry for their wives and girlfriends.

A new line of toys was also one of their best sellers this year, she said. She said business seemed to be slower this year, and thought maybe that might have been because of the nice weather.

Ladies Shopping Night was a big hit next door at Home Planning Center. Manager Dana Marintzer said the hot items included tools and tool sets. She also said her business was slower this year.

The Dresser had a successful ladies night. Violet Shaw, a sales associate, said as many as 18 women jammed the store at one time that night. Customer favorites were tops and jewelry. Manager Amanda Grafel agreed, adding that the men's night was better than in the past. She said business during December was about average compared to other years.

"Women's night was unbelievable," said Laurie Wasson, owner of Prairie Petals.

At the beginning of the month, she said, decorations were a good seller, but toward the end of the month, gift items became more popular. She said food items are always a best seller.

Mrs. Wasson said she stayed busy all season with floral arrangements. She said this year's season, compared to other years, was "just weird." She said there weren't really words for it.

Joe Stanley at Stanley Hardware said both men's and women's shopping night had been good. Their best seller this year was their line of toys.

Rocking 'R' was busy on ladies night but had better sales on men's shopping night, said owner Karen Chambers. She said she sold a sad-

dle in the first five minutes of being open on Men's Shopping Night. She said both nights went well for her, and overall the month of December was great.

"Women's night was excellent," said Gary Anderson, owner of the LandMark Inn. The women enjoyed the light buffet and then started their Christmas shopping, he said.

He said he had a lot of out-of-

town women who came to shop. There weren't as many customers for men's night, but Mr. Anderson said they still did well.

Overall sales were basically the same as last year, maybe a little lower, he added. He said the week after Christmas was actually his busiest of the season.

Dale's Fish 'n Fun reported a good turnout during the holidays.

Co-owner Joe Dejmal said they had a lot of out-of-town customers. He said everything sold well, ranging from firearms to clothing and gloves. He added that they sold a lot of gift certificates. He said customers really like to give gift cards because the recipient can come in and use the amount or put it down toward a larger item they might have been saving for.

RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR

707 Grant Atwood, KS 67730 (785) 626-3211

Bringing Specialized Healthcare To Your Community

January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Dr. Rubinowitz Oncology	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	11 Dr. Frankum Surgery	12	13	14
15	16	17	18 Dr. Curtis Cardiology	19	20	21
22	23	24 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	25	26	27	28
29	30 Dr. Rubinowitz Oncology	31				

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A VISITING PHYSICIAN, PLEASE CALL (785) 626-3211 Cheryl Banister, RN Specialty Clinic Director