

Seniors want to go on trip

Class hopes for stronger bonds with day-long visit

The Decatur Community High School senior class president asked the Oberlin School Board to approve a trip to Denver for the class to go to an amusement park at the end of the semester.

Serena Stacy said she talked to some of the students who graduated in 2010 and 2011, and they said they don't keep in contact very well.

An idea they came up with to help this year's class bond, she said, was a senior trip. The idea would be, said Miss Stacy, to leave at 6 a.m. on Thursday, May 17.

The students would be able to go to the amusement park in Denver from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. They would head home around 9:30 p.m.

It would cost about \$23 each for over 15 people. The park will provide one free ticket for every 15 people, she said, and tickets would cost around \$300. She said the class has money in its account to cover the trip.

Miss Stacy said they have three sponsors lined up, including teachers Brenda Breth and Dana Juenemann.

Principal Ben Jimenez said the class wants to make the trip before graduation so they would be accountable for their behavior.

Miss Stacy said the class still needs a bus and a driver. The class has the money to pay the expense, she said.

Board member Abby Hissong asked if there would be a problem staffing the two teachers' rooms who will be sponsors. Mr. Jimenez said they could figure that out.

What's scheduled that day of school? asked board member Monte Moore. Practicing marching for graduation, said Mr. Jimenez, pictures and turning in books.

Superintendent Duane Dorshorst said they need to find out about liability coverage. The board doesn't have to make a decision now, he said; it could wait until March.

The board talked some about students who would miss practice before state track and golf.

Miss Stacy said there are a few students who don't want to go and will stay here.

The board thanked her for doing the work, but put off a decision.



REPRESENTING OBERLIN students, Ryan May (left) was told by Dr. Welden Sleight that people need to put their arm around him and ask him to return to Oberlin after college. And, the college dean added, be sure not to marry a girl who doesn't want to live here.

— Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Farmers, friends attend dinner

More than 175 farmers, ranchers, friends and sponsors gathered for the almost annual Farmer and Rancher Appreciation Banquet on Saturday at The Gateway.

The dinner, with a speaker and door prizes, had been put on by the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce and merchant sponsors for five years, but the Chamber skipped it last year because of a poor economy, said Manager Carolyn Hackney.

This year, however, the tradition returned and so did the participants. After a roast-beef dinner served by The Gateway staff, the participants heard Dr. Welden Sleight talk about economic development.

The best way to keep your town alive, he told the crowd, is to put your arm around each high school senior and tell them that you want them back. Show them how they can take over businesses when the owners retire, he said. Let them become owners in-

stead of hired help, and they will keep the community from dying out when the older generation wants to retire but has no one to replace them.

The Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis, where Dr. Sleight teaches, has a program to provide low-interest loans to students to buy 100 cows to start a herd. The students then work with ranchers to feed their animals and take care of other herds at the same time.

Red cedar trees are removed from pastures, allowing more animals to graze and giving the rancher an opportunity to help the students without hurting his herd, Dr. Sleight said.

After introductions, door prizes were given away. Participants won dozens of gift certificates and prizes from area merchants. Brad Uehling won the grand prize, a computer from Carman Computers.

Board offers help with budget

The Oberlin School Board appointed three members, Dan Nedland, Doug Brown and Dan Wasson, to a budget committee during its monthly meeting last Monday.

The board members talked briefly about the idea at the December meeting. Mr. Wasson said Monday he thought it was a good idea. The budget isn't just Superintendent Duane Dorshorst's responsibility, he said, "It's all of ours."

Gary Juenemann, a member of the high school site council, talked to the board a little about the group.

He said he and Lee and Jane Gilliam are the only members who don't work for the district.

He said they have done things like go through the school handbooks and discuss the lunch policy. Hopefully, said Mr. Juenemann, they can give some different ideas and views.

High School Principal Ben Jimenez said he uses site council a lot. It's good to have different views and ideas, he said.

In other business, the board:

- Received a letter from Allen

County Community College giving the district permission to use the Power Devil mascot, which originally came from the college. It's the logo of just the face with the pointed chin, which the district is already using.

- Held a five-minute closed session to discuss teacher contract negotiations with the superintendent. There was no action taken.

- Heard that the Northwest Kansas Technical College in Goodland is working on getting portfolios on students when they graduate.

- Approved the resignation of a social studies teacher J.D. Johnson as head football coach at the high school and D-Club sponsor. Mr. Johnson will continue to teach.
- Hired Marilyn Mack as a part-time custodian.

Health department has busy schedule

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
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There's a lot of events coming up for the county Health Department, Director Marilyn Gamblin told the Decatur County commissioners on Tuesday.

Ms. Gamblin, the county health nurse, gave the commissioners a rundown on what she and her part-time assistant will be doing over the next couple of months.

- Join health-care providers and the hospital at a community-needs assessment meeting from 7 to 8:30 a.m. Monday, March 5, at The Gateway.

- Help with a fitness and health awareness evening at the Oberlin Elementary School from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Monday, March 19.

- Do blood draws for an upcoming health fair on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 20 and 21.

- Do physicals for kindergarten screening at the grade school on Wednesday and Thursday, April 4 and 5.

- Put on a county health fair from 2-7 p.m. Friday, April 13, at the Golden Age Center.

Ms. Gamblin asked if she could purchase a reverse-osmosis filtration system to provide water for meetings held at her offices since the drinking fountain hardly works.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said he would come over and see if he could clean some of the lime out of the fountain before going to the expense of buying a filter system.

"It doesn't matter to me," Ms. Gamblin said. "I just need to get some good water down there for meetings and such."

She also told the commissioners that during the last big power outage, the department's backup generator started up, then quit.

County roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, Decatur County commissioners:

- Learned that snow can be hard on roads whether it's moved or not. Story to come.

- Received a new five-year lease for the Good Samaritan building. Story to come.

- Talked with County Health Nurse Marilyn Gamblin about upcoming events. Story at left.

- Discussed what radio equipment the county will need as it goes to a new system this year. Story to come.

She said this is the second time the department has had trouble with it. Circutech Electric came out, she said, found an oil leak and replaced the generator at no cost. Some emergency lights were also replaced, she said, and the batteries for them will need to be replaced.

Terms for two members of the health department advisory board — Janice Shobe and Rhonda Wildeman — are expiring, she said. The commissioners had already received Mrs. Shobe's request to go back on the board but will check with Mrs. Wildeman to see what she wants to do.

Finally, she asked the commissioners to talk to the legislators about a bill in committee that would allow more parents to opt out of having their children immunized before they could attend school.

"That would be a disaster," she said, noting a recent measles outbreak in Finney County. "We could have a terrible mess."

Voters need to have photo ID to cast ballots

Voters will need to provide identification before casting a ballot in this year's elections under a new law pushed by the secretary of state's office.

County Clerk Colleen Geishler, who serves as county election officer, said the Kansas Secure and Fair Elections Act will require voters to show a photo ID before voting.

They may use a state driver's license or identification card, a concealed carry handgun license, a U.S. passport, an employee badge or identification issued by a government agency, a U.S. military or student ID card or a

public-assistance identification card, she said.

Voters who request an advance ballot by mail will have to provide their driver's license number or copies of identification documents.

The law provides for the state to issue a free ID card to those who cannot afford one and have no other valid identification so they can vote. These cards are available at the county treasurer's office. Anyone needing an ID has to provide a voter registration card and fill out the needed paperwork.

District will help with Spanish trip

The Oberlin School Board agreed to pay for food, travel insurance and tips for the Spanish teacher during a trip to Spain in March, and to provide a van and driver to and from the airport.

Teacher Carol Brown plans to take nine of her students to Spain from Friday, March 9, to Tuesday, March 20, the board heard.

At the board's monthly meeting last Monday, Mrs. Brown asked for the financial help. Her trip is already paid for, she said, adding that the food would cost around \$300, insurance \$90 and tips around \$100.

During past Spanish-class trips, asked board member Dan Nedland, didn't the district pay for all of the sponsor's trip?

Yes, said Mrs. Brown, adding that this is only her second trip.

"Does the Spanish Club have any money for this?" asked board member Abby Hissong.

No, said Mrs. Brown, probably not.

Mrs. Brown said she is also asking for a van and driver to take the students to Denver and back.

AG PRO Crop Insurance Welcomes Russ Frack



The AgPro Team — (back) Jason T. Pfeifer and Manager Joni Jackson; (front) Tonya Dechant and Russ Frack

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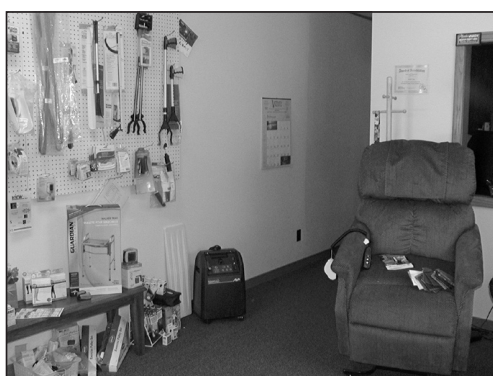
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