

Norcatur road to be repaired

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

Some Norcatur-area residents are going to have to find an alternate way home for about a week this spring as a low spot on one of the main roads in town is repaired.

Decatur County Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman told the county commissioners last Tuesday that he plans to pour a slab of concrete on the road, County Road 322, on the south side of the railroad tracks and west of the Decatur Cop elevator. It's a low spot, he said, and water runs in there and causes problems.

While the area is in Norcatur, he said, it is part of the county road.

Mr. Stallman said he hopes the concrete will act as a low-water bridge, letting the water run off and into the ditch.

He said he has talked to Oberlin Concrete about pouring a 24-foot-by-25-foot area in a gentle U shape. The cost will be about \$5,000, he said, and although the concrete will be put down one side at a time, the whole area has to be excavated and then the pavement needs to cure for a while.

The concrete should be about eight inches thick, he said, reinforced with half-inch rebar.

He said traffic will have to use an alternate route for a week while work is being done.

While Mr. Stallman was at the meeting, the commissioners held a hearing on a proposed road closing in Alton Township. The road, R Lane, runs from the west side of the Kanona Cemetery to the west border of the township, Mr. Stallman said.

"It's a grassy trail," he told the commissioners, adding that the same landowner has the property

on both sides of the road.

Since no one showed up for the hearing, which has been announced and published, the commissioners agreed to the closing.

Later that morning, Mr. Stallman told both the commissioners and members of several township boards that the county has upgraded its road equipment, getting rid of equipment from 1980 through 1996 and replacing it with equipment made between 1998 to 2007. This was becoming necessary, he said, because it was getting hard to find parts for some of the older equipment and it was becoming unreliable.

He also said that over the next year or so, he plans to replace six older county bridges with steel bridges 30 feet long and 26 feet wide.

He said that there are four programs going on with the landfill.

The first is the Household Hazardous Waste program. It's free, he said, and items are taken at the landfill all year around. The county works through Ellis County to get rid of the items which can't be recycled. However, lots of things are set aside for people to pick up and use.

The second is the recycling center, which is at the old county shop. The recycled material is taken to Colby, he said, and the county takes paper, glass, pop cans and plastic.

The third is recycling for used concrete. Mr. Stallman said he has been saving large chunks of concrete to use as riprap and hopes to get a crusher out sometime to turn the rest into road and fill material.

The fourth is a compost pile which mostly benefits Oberlin residents, he said, but seems popular with them.

*Petition needed to make changes

(Continued from Page 1A) current board (of commissioners)," he added.

To change the management of the roads would take a petition of 10 percent of the voters in a township and then it would need to go to a general election, Mr. Hirsch said.

Mr. Stallman said that he doesn't charge different rates to the townships that contract with the county or those that just need help now and then.

Those townships that have their

own operator and equipment need to pay for workers' compensation and liability insurance, Mr. Hirsch said. The workers compensation is a requirement of state law, he said, and the liability insurance is just good sense.

Mr. Stallman said, with Mr. Hirsch's help, he would work out an agreement and send it out to all 75 township board members. However, he said that will probably not happen until sometime this summer.



4-Her's show off skills

AT COUNTY 4-H DAY on Friday, members of the Star Valley Club including Sierra Hendrickson (above left), Patience Carman and Moriah Carman performed in a skit called "Little Late Riding Hood." Jacie Fortin (right) showed her gymnastic skills.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



Administrator updates group

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

Hospital Administrator Lynn Doeden gave the Decatur County commissioners an update of improvements at the hospital and clinic last Tuesday.

Mrs. Doeden apologized for not visiting with the commissioners earlier about some improvement projects.

"I didn't know I needed to come to the commissioners whenever we did something," she explained.

The hospital and clinic are getting three renovations, she said. In the clinic building, the walls of a storage closet and two unused offices have been removed to create a conference room. This work is

almost done, she said, with just the carpet left to be laid.

The hospital is getting a new CT scanner, she said. Since it is larger than the old one, a wall will have to be moved to accommodate it.

Thirdly, the hospital is getting new supply cabinets in the patient rooms. These were suggested a couple of years ago by the fire marshal, she said, but the hospital is just getting around to doing the work. The fire marshal didn't like the old ones, she said, because they could allow smoke from a fire to get through the walls from room to room.

The cost will be about \$16,000.

The cabinets hold things like bed linens so that nurses and housekeepers can get to them quickly and

easily, she said.

Creative Dimensions of Oberlin is making the cabinets, Mrs. Doeden said.

"It's nice to know what's going on," Commissioner Stan McEvoy told her.

Mrs. Doeden also said that the hospital's satellite clinics in Jennings and Norcatur have not been as well attended as hoped. However, she said, the hospital and staff are not ready to give up on them.

In other business, the commissioners looked over a new ambulance from Wheeled Coach in Salina before their meeting. The county hopes to buy a new ambulance and has been checking with several companies.

Relay for Life needs sponsors

The Relay for Life committee is looking for sponsors for this summer's event.

The walk to help raise money to fight cancer will start at 7 p.m. Friday, June 15, at The Gateway, although registration will be open for the two hours prior to that.

Co-Chair Ralph Unger has sent out letters asking sponsors to return their information by Tuesday, May

1, so that the T-shirts for this year's event can be ordered.

The event has five levels of sponsors, starting with the contributor at \$25 to \$49, bronze level at \$50 to \$99, silver \$100 to \$199, gold \$200 to \$499 and platinum \$500 and above. Donations can either be cash or in-kind.

Anyone who wants to be a sponsor can mail a check to Mr. Unger

379 T Lane, Oberlin, Kan. 67749.

Sponsors also need to send in a camera-ready copy of their corporate logo or business name for the T-shirts.

Those who want to set up a walking team can contact Pat Fringer at 475-3184, said Mr. Unger. Teams are starting to sign up now.

City waiting on insurance company

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkansas.com

Oberlin and its insurance company are still working out how much the city will get for an electric transformer that was damaged in a fire at the end of last year.

At a City Council meeting March 15, Mayor Bill Riedel told members that the insurance company, Hartford, asked the city to get more bids on repairs for the damaged transformer.

The city checked with two other companies that do that type of work,

he said, one in Oklahoma and one in Minnesota. Neither company, Mr. Riedel said, was interested in doing anything with the transformer.

The insurance company also complained that the city did not inform it in a timely manner about the fire, which occurred near Christmas.

However, he said, the city called the company right way, and an adjuster was out to look at the damage two days after the fire. The blaze was started by a raccoon getting into the city's substation.

The insurance company backed down, he said, but now would like the city to get a bid on a new transformer.

Mr. Riedel said the process is frustrating, but he understands why the firm is being careful because it could have to pay up to half a million dollars to help pay for the damage.

In the meantime, Mr. Riedel said, the city is racking up some large bills for the repair work.

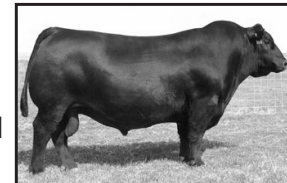
"We've been spending a lot of money," he noted.

BULLS

RICK NEMETH

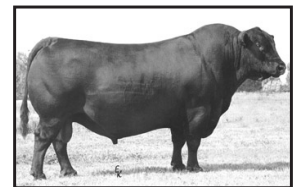
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