

Court repairs needed

County taking bids on 30-day deadline

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP
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 County commissioners are taking bids to repair the courthouse before the Coryell murder trial, scheduled for August, with a sharp deadline of 30 days to complete the work.

Custodian Roger Robertson told commissioners that the work needed includes insulating the walls of the courtroom. Many old radiators stored in the back hallways need to be hauled out and sold for scrap, he said, and sheet rock will be put on various walls.

"I just need someone with the knowledge," he said, "and I can help them finish it."

Commissioner Gene Gallentine said the deadline would be August, and Commissioner Ralph Unger said it should be within the next 30 days.

"Strip it, paint it and don't re-panel it, is what I'd say," Robertson said of walls that transmit noise easily. "That's all I can do for now, and I'll try to get this as quick as I can."

A week before, County Attorney Steve Hirsch gave commissioners a tour, showing them what needed to be done.

Mr. Hirsch said to proceed with the murder trial, set for the last two weeks of August, the courtroom needs a new projector screen, paint and plaster for the walls, sound insulation and a better, quieter air conditioner for the jury room.

Mr. Hirsch took commissioners from room to room as he pointed out the troublesome areas and they deliberated various ways of keeping the cost of the upgrades down. Most of the cost would have to come from the county's general fund, he said. Someone suggested that instead of a projector screen, the county could save money by painting a wall of the courtroom white.

Harder to manage is the sheer volume of storage throughout the courthouse. Walking through back passages, the walls are lined on either side with old filing cabinets, records, police radios and huge, heavy radiators that haven't worked for years. The county even has "lunacy" records dating back a century.

Because of the sensitivity of the murder case, Mr. Hirsch said, more adequate facilities will be needed to keep the parties involved separated from each other. He said the court uses the Juvenile Justice room and even the commissioners' room when needed.

"These are maintenance things we should have been doing all along" the county attorney said. "The air conditioner will probably be the most expensive, but it gets loud and hot in there ... and you don't want a jury deciding your fate in those conditions."

In other business, the county commissioners:

- Approved the purchase of grader blades by Road Supervisor Tim Stallman. The total was 300 seven-footers and 80 eight-footers. Mr. Stallman said he was able to take advantage of a spur-of-the-moment deal and saved the county 15 percent, or about \$2,900.

- Heard that the road department has been helping the noxious weed control department spray along highways and county roads in all 25 townships for bindweed and other weeds.

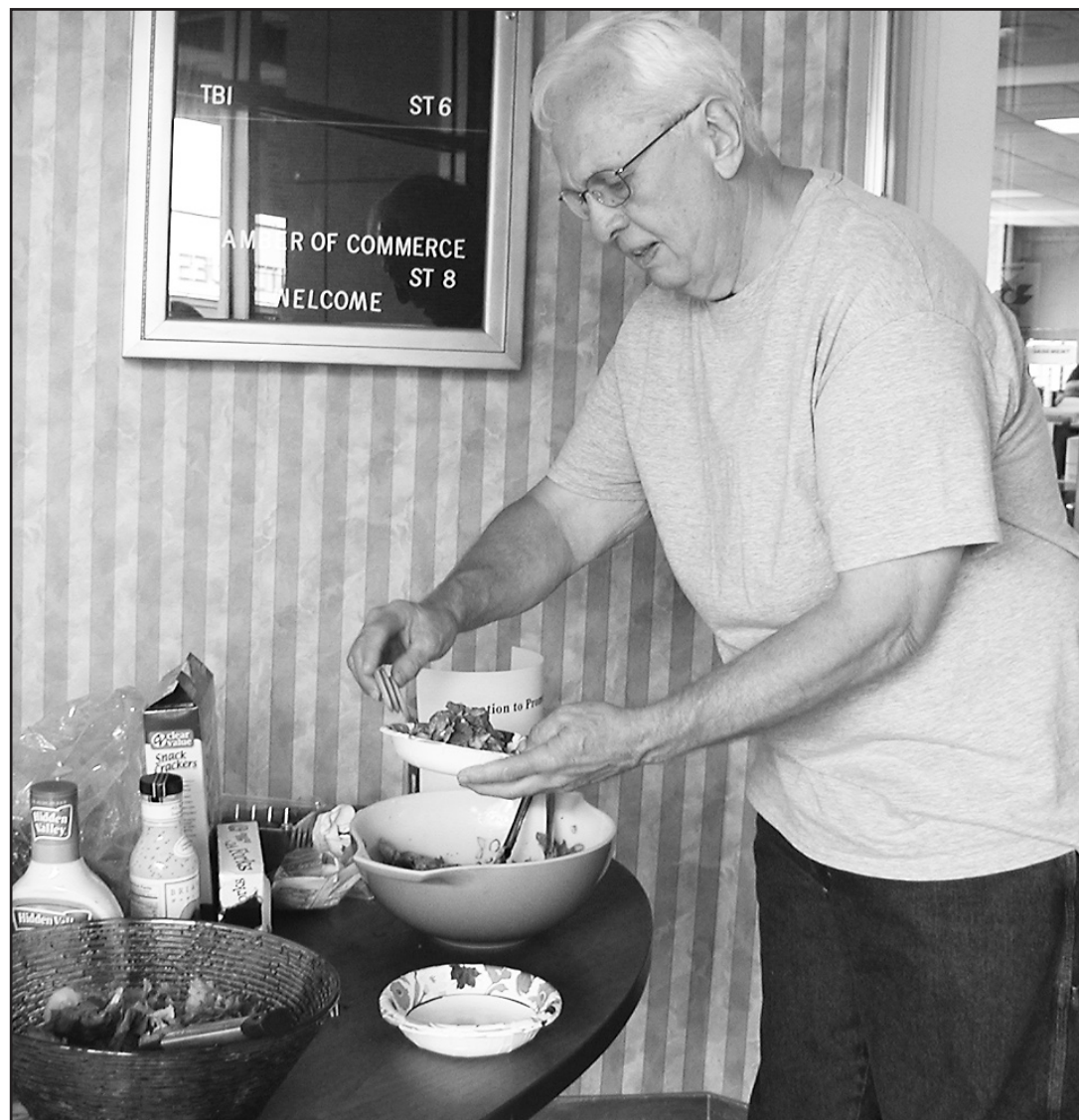
- Heard from Chris Koerperich, an emergency medical technician, that a new ambulance has been ordered and should be here around the end of July.

- Looked for someone to represent the county on the Oberlin Arts and Humanities Commission. Anyone interested in the position should call County Clerk Colleen Geihlsler at 475-8102.

- Voted to spend \$500 on this year's Fourth of July fireworks

- Noted that Joe Dreher, who had been the county's summer recreation director the last few years, was not fired, but had not reapplied for the position. The county hired the only applicant, Melda Downing.

Farmers' market offers fresh alternatives



PUTTING TOGETHER A SPINACH SALAD with strawberries and almonds, Galen Olson helped kick off the first Farmers' Market put on by the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce last Wednesday. The salad sampling was one of three demonstrations planned to show ways to use home-grown fruits and vegetables. The next demonstration will feature stir-fry vegetables with chicken, beef or shrimp on Wednesday, July 11.

— Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

City to look for productive well sites closer to home

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP
sdecamp@nwkans.com

One of the city's four test well sites is not working out, an engineer told the Oberlin City Council on Thursday, and it's time to start looking for more drilling sites closer to home.

"That well is a bust," said Chris Miller of Miller and Associates, the McCook engineering firm which does most of the city's work.

He said the well at site 2 produced mostly mud.

"It wasn't just the formation; it's the mud, too," Mr. Miller said.

He said the contractor will be drilling and test-pumping site three on Monday, and they are predicting that it will show similar results.

"The best sites are Nos. 1 and 4," Mr. Miller said. "If we can get more wells like them closer, we'll save money on piping."

"We're not ready to scrap this project yet. We'll keep looking. We're not ready to give up just yet."

Right now, the two sites that are working are just far away, and we'd like to find something closer."

In other business, the City Council:

- Confirmed for Councilman Rusty Addleman that \$500 has been set aside for the city's Fourth of July fireworks. Mr. Addleman said that the swimming pool will be having its usual "Fun Day" on the Fourth, and the American Legion plans to read excerpts from the Declaration of Independence leading up to the fireworks at the fairgrounds.

- Reviewed how the city may be able to qualify for a federal grant aimed at helping cities fix blighted property and rehab homes.

"The state is giving away \$2.7 million to people whose houses need to be upgraded and can't afford it," City Administrator Karen Larson said.

Steve Zodrow, the city's administrative assistant, will be going to Colby this week to get the details, she said.

- Discussed how to fix The Gateway's sprinkler system, that is

not working and hasn't been for a couple months, Ms. Larson said. Basically, water isn't able to get to the sprinkler system in the event of an emergency, she said.

"The cheapest we can find for replacement is \$6,315, from a company in Colorado," she said. "I don't think there's any recourse on this. Chris (Ward, The Gateway manager) has called and called, and this is the cheapest we can find."

The city will be using money from the Bremer fund to make the repairs, she said. The Bremer fund

is a large donation that was given to The Gateway by Fred and Henrietta Bremer when they passed away, and is specifically for upkeep and repairs of it.

- Confirmed with retiring Police Chief Wade Lockhart that a grant to buy new bullet-proof vests will be completed this week. The grant requires a 50 percent match; the money will be used to replace the department's current 6-year-old vests. Six years is the standard lifetime of a bullet-proof vest, the chief said.

Decatur County Land Auction

(160 +/- Acres)

Sellers: G.R. Addleman and Ruth Ann Ingold

Friday, July 20, 2012 - 4:00 p.m.

SALE LOCATION: Oberlin American Legion, 114 S. Rodehaver Ave., Oberlin, KS 67749

LAND LOCATION: From Selden: 5 miles West on 130 N, 3 1/2 miles North on 130 W.
 From Oberlin: 13 miles South of Highway 36 on Highway 83, then 6 miles West, 4 miles South, 2 miles West and 1/2 miles north.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: The Northeast Quarter (NE1/4) of Section Twenty-eight (28), Township Five (5) South, Range Thirty (30), West of the 6th P.M., Decatur County, Kansas.

MINERALS: Sellers are reserving 100% for 5 years and 50% for 5 years.

TAXES: \$358.00, based on 2011. Seller will pay 2012 taxes based on 2011 and prior years; Buyer pays 2013 and subsequent years.

POSSESSION: March 1, 2013 on open land, after harvest on 2013 planted wheat, 1/3 of 2013 wheat going to buyer. Buyer pays 1/3 of fertilizer on 2013 wheat.

FSA Information: Cropland Acres 142.7

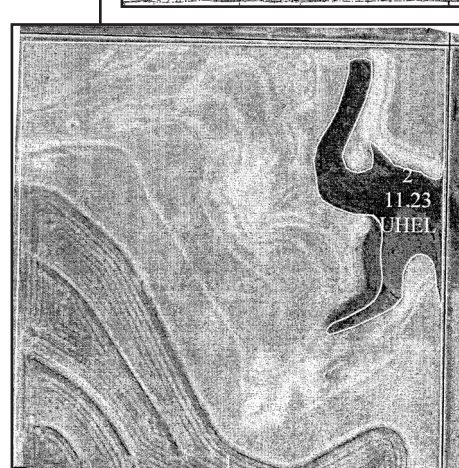
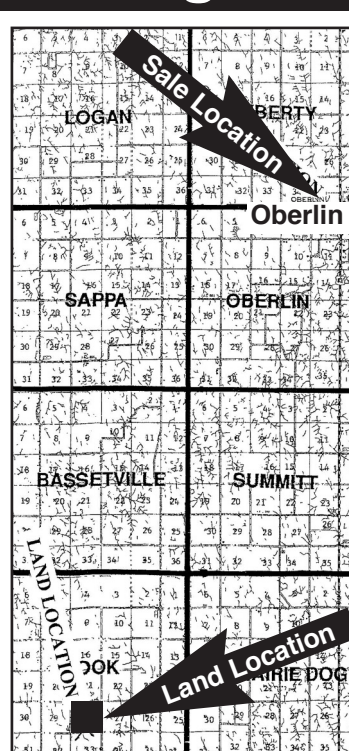
	Yields Direct	Base
Wheat	35	37.7
Corn	50	13.9
Sorghum	45	47.8

Survey will be furnished to determine the boundary.

TERMS: 10% Down day of sale, balance at closing with certified funds, on or before August 20, 2012.

AGENCY: Johnson Realty, Inc. and its Agents are representing the Seller and not representing the Buyer. **Announcements day of sale take precedence over printed material. Not responsible for accidents.**

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: This is a very productive quarter section and well-maintained.



Businesses to close up for Fourth

For the Fourth of July holiday next Wednesday, all area banks, schools, credit unions and federal, state, county and city offices will be closed.

Raye's Grocery will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Dollar General from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. in Oberlin.

The Teller Room at The Land-Mark will be closed and so will the ReLoad. Pizza Hut will be open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Subway from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Information on the Frontier Cafe was unavailable.

Oberlin's two convenience stores will be open their regular hours. Eagle is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and CrossRoads Express from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The Oberlin Herald will be made up on Monday, its normal day, and printed as usual on Tuesday. Readers will find it on local news stands Tuesday and in their mail boxes Thursday. The newspaper office will be closed on Wednesday. Happy Fourth of July!



Man's hearing postponed

A preliminary hearing for an Oberlin man charged with 11 felony counts, including child endangerment and kidnapping, which had been set for Friday, has been continued with no new date set yet.

Chris Kelley was arrested Tuesday, June 12, for one count of aggravated battery against a law enforcement officer, four counts of aggravated endangerment of a

child, five counts of kidnapping and one count of interfering with law enforcement. This will be the second time his preliminary hearing has been continued.

Mr. Kelley was being held in jail at \$500,000 bond before being ordered to the Valley Hope Treatment Center in Norton for alcohol treatment.

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