



**CHECKING OVER** one of his many creations, woodcarver Ty Yahne of Jennings pointed to the eye of a carousel goat. He makes many works with simple carving tools.  
— Herald staff photo by Carolyn Plotts

## Daughter's disappointment leads man to life-long hobby

By CAROLYN PLOTTS  
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With nothing more than simple carving tools, Ty Yahne of Jennings makes works of art. Some of his work is on display at the Czech Museum in Jennings, from small comic characters to full-size carousel animals. Totally self-taught, Mr. Yahne said he began his art career on a dare. He said it all started years ago when his daughter, Caroline, spotted a small doll in a gift shop. "She really wanted that doll," he said, "and I found a little wooden duck. Since I had always called Caroline 'Baby Duck,' I wanted to hang it in my truck." In the end, he didn't buy either the doll or the duck, and his disappointed daughter cried. He told her he would carve her one, and when she doubted that he could do it, he proved to her that he could. And, he said, he's been carving ever since. Mr. Yahne said when he was in a high school art class, he carved an African ritual mask. "Got first place on it, too," he said. When asked where he gets the ideas for his pieces, he said, "Right out of La-La Land." When he starts a piece, he said, he just carves away what doesn't look

like it. His favorite woods to work with are basswood and butternut, although he has carved all types of wood and even stone. The trademark of his cowboy characters are their exaggerated turned-up toes. Many of his pieces illustrate his whimsical sense of humor. He has sold a few carvings, he said, but he never set out to make a living from his hobby. "If I tried to make this into a job," he said, "then my enjoyment would leave. However, if somebody wanted something, I might make it for them." Wood carving is a time-consuming endeavor, he noted. A small boat took him 1 1/2 days, a decoy-size duck three weeks, a full-size carousel goat about 1,000 hours and his prize piece, a carousel tiger, more than 1,200. The carver's talents are not limited to wood. He also makes his own knife blades and sheaths. Mr. Yahne said he had ties to northwest Kansas because his family originally lived in the Dresden area. But "life happened," he said, and after living all around the United States, he moved to Jennings in 1999. "There are good people here," he said. "If you need help, there's always somebody to help you. I like

the relaxed, slow, laid-back pace. Jennings is a place with old-time values, where people care about each other." His motto is, "If it can be done, I've done it. If it can't be done, I've at least tried it."

## Several at hospital shifting positions

The hospital administrator told the Decatur County Hospital Board about changes in staffing at the June meeting. Amanda Fortin's last day as finance manager in the business office was to be June 19, Administrator Lynn Doeden said at the meeting June 18. She said they were still looking for someone to fill the job. Leslie Jones in radiology quit, said Mrs. Doeden, because she wants to become a nurse. Ms. Jones said she will come back once a week to do mammograms, however. Sherry Kyte, in the radiology department, said she will do mammograms on Saturdays. Amber Scott has taken the chief nursing spot at the hospital. Her job as utilization review and education coordinator is open. Terese Vontz, insurance clerk in the business office, has resigned, said Mrs. Doeden, but the admissions clerk has moved to that spot. Stephanie Chadwick, who was working part-time at the Family Practice Clinic, has moved to the admissions position and will work part-time. So, said Mrs. Doeden, there is a part-time position open at the clinic. In other business, the board: • Heard the hospital will receive a distance-learning and telemedicine grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Mrs. Doeden said they applied for the grant two years ago

but the application was denied. It was pulled back out this year, and she was notified about it. She estimated that the hospital will receive \$169,100 from the grant. • Heard the hospital received \$403,000 in a medicare reimbursement. That was part of the money that was shown as a loss in last year's budget. • Heard that hospitals in Hays and Garden City have both called regarding affiliation with the Decatur County Hospital. Mrs. Doeden is still getting information. • Heard that a check for \$96,178 went out to pay off the bond for Wheat Ridge Terrace senior apartments. The hospital has managed the independent living facility since 2004. The hospital used the rent money from Wheat Ridge Terrace apartments to pay off the debt. • Heard that the annual fund-raising golf tournament will be Saturday, Aug. 18, at the Decatur County Country Club. So far, said Mrs. Doeden, 16 teams have signed up. Board members said they were interested in paying for half of a shopping spree at Raye's Grocery again this year. For the last few years the board has sold chances to win a shopping spree at the store with the board picking up half and the store the other half. The winner is announced during the golf tournament. • Heard that Dr. Alexander Platz is still waiting on his Kansas license.

# Commissioners decide speed important in bids

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP  
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County commissioners got only one bid for each project involved in courtroom repairs, but they approved both on Tuesday. Steve Stacy won a bid for the plaster work project at \$1,700 and Jim Sporn won a bid for sheetrock repairs at \$1,384. "The big thing is time," said courthouse custodian Roger Robinson. "Most guys I called can't do it until the end of August." The major issues with the courthouse involve soundproofing the walls between courtrooms and

installing a quieter, more efficient air conditioner in the jury room. The county needs to have the work done before the Coryell murder trial the last two weeks in August.

In other business, the commissioners: • Learned that Leslie Jones has resigned from the Health Department advisory board. Anyone interested in the position should contact County Clerk Colleen Geihlsler. • Closed an alleyway between two houses in Traer. • Approved an order for hydraulic system repairs and culverts for Road Supervisor Tim Stallman for

\$7,850. • Purchased a fire truck for \$99,751. The county will receive a discount of \$950 if the chassis is paid for on arrival and another \$900 discount if 50 percent of the truck body is paid for within 30 days of the contract signing, commissioners were told. The balance will be due on pick up. The truck was bought from Weiss Fire and Safety in Salina and will serve in the Norcat unit, with delivery in approximately six months. Fire Chief Bill Cathcart said this is the first of nine trucks the county fire departments need to replace.

## City getting a new website

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP  
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The City of Oberlin is getting a new website. City Administrator Karen Larson told the City Council, allowing people to keep up with events and do business with the city online. The website is being designed and constructed by Deb and J.W. Smith, who also run J.W. Smith & Sons Custom Knives and put on the Sappa Creek Knife and Gun Show last month. They were hired a few weeks ago by the City Council, which decided an online

bill payment should be an option, Mrs. Karen Larson said. The whole project will cost roughly \$750, she said. "We'll still keep a page on the county's and economic development (sites)," Mrs. Larson said. "It's a website that has several pages," Mrs. Smith told the council at its meeting June 19. "We're just kind of integrating the new system of paying your utility bills online, and it's a lot more personable. The other one wasn't very user friendly." Both city and Gateway events will

be on the calendar of the new site, she said, and can be updated within minutes. You can even make reservations for The Gateway on it. "There's a news feed on it too, so the next five events will be at the top of the page at a quick glance." The site will also list every business in Oberlin, with links to their business web pages, Mrs. Smith said. "It will all be linked up together," she said, "so no one will actually leave our site, but just go to the page where it's at. We can build banners for the businesses that have an event to publicize, too."



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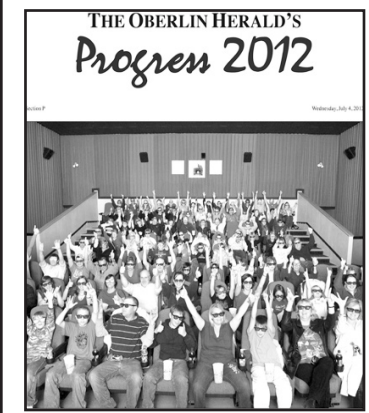
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**Progress inside paper**

Inside today's newspaper is *The Oberlin Herald's Progress* section. The section covers changes in Oberlin over the past four years, since the last Progress section came out, from business to government and public institutions.