



**ALL THREE UNITS** of the Decatur County Rural Fire Department – Jennings, Oberlin and Norcat – came to Wednesday’s fund raiser. The Oberlin volunteers here converged on their own table before chowing down. — Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp

## Firemen’s fund raiser brings 300 people together for picnic

**By STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
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As many as 300 people showed up for a fund raiser for the Decatur County Rural Fire Department on Wednesday at City Park, eating 180 hamburgers, 110 polish sausages and 32 hot dogs.

“It was a really good turnout,” Fire Chief Bill Cathcart said at the event. “I’d just like to thank everybody who came down for their support.”

During the picnic, Kimberly Davis, assistant publisher of *The Oberlin Herald*, presented Chief Cathcart and Ambulance Director Linda Manning with checks for \$756 and \$300, respectively. *The Herald* also gave \$300 to help pay for the meat for the fund raiser, for a total of \$1,356.

At the beginning of July, Mrs. Davis said, *The Herald* produced a four-page fire extra edition on the July 3 and 4 wildfires. The special was sold for a donation, with that money being donated to the fire department and ambulance service.

Mrs. Davis thanked the fire and ambulance volunteers for continuing to answer the call of duty time and time again. The special fire edition raised just under \$1,400, she said. All of that money has been given to benefit the emergency departments. Advertising revenue went to pay production costs.

Volunteers from all three county fire departments – Oberlin, Jennings and Norcat – came in their blue uniforms.

The Oberlin Area Concert Band played for the pic-

nickers, and Dianne Bremer, one of the organizers, set up a table to collect donations for the firemen’s equipment fund, raising over \$8,000.

“Donations are going to the Rural Fire Department; that’s who checks should be assigned to,” said Mrs. Bremer.

She said that when it came time to set up for the event, volunteers “just showed up” as if by magic. Her stand featured a photo of her family’s one-of-a-kind, 95-year-old barn that was lost in the largest of the fires, alongside a shot of it burning during that awful week.

It was a sober reminder that though no homes or lives were lost, much valuable property was. Everyone had come together to celebrate the firemen and other emergency workers, and to do something for them.

“We never appreciate our old buildings until they’re gone,” said Linda Wade as she gazed at the photos. Mrs. Bremer said the family plans to build a new barn by next spring, but more modern, not in the same style as the old one.

Shirley Shields, Joyce Hartzog, Teresa Shaughnessy, Mrs. Wade and Mrs. Bremer put together the event. Mrs. Bremer said she would like to thank everyone who gave money, time and materials.

“They helped make it a success,” she said.

Mrs. Bremer said she also will be taking donations at Firemen’s Fun Day on Saturday, Aug. 25, in Jennings.

## Decatur County Fair

Although things started over the weekend, and the carnival opened on Tuesday, there’s still plenty of time to take in this year’s Decatur County Fair and home-owned carnival. The schedule includes:

**Today**

- 8 a.m. – Bucket Calf Show.
- 8 to 10 a.m. – Open Class and 4-H floriculture entered, judging to follow.
- 9 a.m. – Dairy/Beef Show at livestock barn.
- 5 p.m. – Sheep Show at livestock barn.
- 5 p.m. – Register for Kids Tractor Pull, sponsored by Farm Bureau, south of the livestock barn.
- 5:30 p.m. – Kids Tractor Pull starts.

- 6 to 10 p.m. – Exhibits open.
- 7 to 11 p.m. – Carnival open.
- 8 p.m. – Tough Trucks, in front of the grandstand.

**Thursday**

- 9 a.m. – Swine Show, in the small arena on the south side of the fairground.
- 11 a.m. – Interviews and photos with owners of Grand and Reserve Champion livestock, livestock barn.
- 3:30 p.m. – Senior and Intermediate Round-Robin Showmanship contest at livestock barn.
- 4 p.m. – Mud volleyball, in front of the grandstand.
- 6 to 10 p.m. – Exhibits open.
- 6:30 p.m. – Livestock Auction (location to be announced).
- 7 to 11 p.m. – Carnival open.

- 8 p.m. – Trivia Challenge Game Show, in front of the grandstand.

**Friday**

- 8 a.m. – Clean up livestock exhibits.
- 1:30 p.m. – Pet Parade at Good Samaritan Center.
- 5:30 p.m. – Public Fashion Revue at The Gateway.
- 6 to 10 p.m. – Exhibits open.
- 7 p.m. to midnight – Carnival open.
- 8 p.m. – Demo Derby, grandstand.
- 9:30 to 10 p.m. – Release of all exhibits.

**Saturday**

- 7 p.m. to midnight – Carnival open.

## Chamber board member, new residents prepare for fair

Two of Oberlin’s newest residents got together with a Chamber of Commerce board member Friday night to talk about ways to convince former residents attending this week’s county fair and home-owned carnival to move back.

Christina Gizzarelli, wife of Oberlin’s new state trooper; Stephanie DeCamp, new reporter for *The Oberlin Herald*; and Ruth Miesner, a Chamber board member, focused most of their energy on putting together a display featuring Oberlin’s “greatest hits.”

Pictures of the Eight Wonders of Decatur County, as well as photos of the city on Memorial Day, the Decatur Community High promenade and the airport littered the table as the women discussed how Oberlin was changing and how they wanted to be involved in that.

Neither Miss Decamp nor Mrs. Gizzarelli have been to a small-town fair before, and they were excited to volunteer for the booth, which will have someone on hand to answer questions all week. The women talked about what it was like when they moved here, how they felt when they did and how others might

feel about moving back.

“I know when I was first thinking about moving here,” said Miss Decamp, “I was afraid that nothing would be going on. I was always up to something in Denver, and I thought I might get bored out here. But it’s been the exact opposite.”

Mrs. Miesner agreed, and said that there were plenty of things to do here; you just have to go looking for them.

“It’s been a breath of fresh air,” Mrs. Miesner said of the new residents. “We’ve had so much fun tonight, putting together the pictures and talking all about Oberlin.”

In other business earlier, the Chamber board:

- Heard that Painting Oberlin Patriotic, a promotion extending through election day that challenges residents to decorate their homes and buildings for a \$100 prize, will be extended through Veterans’ Day.
- The board made it a subcommittee of the Chamber for advertising purposes.
- Decided that root-beer float Fridays will end after fair week, but with a bang. This Friday, the board members will be serving

farther south on Main Street, by the Dresser, and will be offering ice cream sundaes as well as floats. Everyone is welcome to come for the ice cream, which will be served for a donation.

- Decided that from now on, when an emergency comes up, such as when the wildfires raged through the county in June, the Chamber will set its office up as a drop-off and pick-up point for donations and supplies.
- The board set up a calling tree to use when another incident occurs.
- Heard that the Back-to-School Picnic will begin at 6:30 p.m. next Wednesday at City Park, featuring hamburgers for a donation. People are encouraged to bring side dishes to the potluck.
- The annual Holiday Arts and Crafts Show will be Saturday, Nov. 24, at The Gateway. Rental of an 8-foot-by-8-foot booth will cost \$25. Admission is free, and The Gateway staff will serve morning coffee and treats as well as lunch.
- The Chamber will have a drawing for two \$25 gift certificates to be used at the show.

## Emergency rates could rise

**By STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
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Decatur County’s ambulance director asked that rates for ambulance service and the amount paid to volunteers for each call be increased for the first time in four years at Tuesday’s county commissioners’ meeting, but no decision was made.

Director Linda Manning asked

that both the amount that is paid to volunteers for each call and the amount charged to a patient for each loaded mile of transportation be increased. She told commissioners she’d like to see the rates closer to the standard set by neighboring counties, which she said charge a lot more.

Charges now are \$7.50 per mile, while volunteers get \$20 per call. She wants to raise them to \$9.50 and \$35. Norton County gets significantly more money per mile and per call than Decatur, she said. A patient transfer from here to Norton, she said, is \$525. But from Norton to Oberlin, it’s \$800.

Almost all Decatur County ambulance workers are volunteers, she said, people with other jobs who answer the call when someone is hurt or ill. Ms. Manning pointed out that fire department volunteers get \$25 a call, which Fire Chief Bill Cathcart confirmed.

The ambulance department is on a tight budget right now, Ms. Manning said, while they are catching

up on billings from January on. The service pays the volunteers out of its budget, she said, and an increase in fees could really help keep things running smoothly, as well as keep Decatur competitive with other counties for medical personnel.

Mr. McEvoy said at the least, they could raise the payment for each run to equal to that of the fire department. Ms. Manning pointed out that the cap set by the federal government on per-mile patient transport is \$10.

“We have the lowest rates of anybody,” she added.

Mr. Unger said he thought that both emergency medical and fire department rates should be reviewed. Commissioner Gene Gallentine said he would like to see how increases on these rates might affect the county’s budget. Ms. Manning said she would do more research on what other counties charge.

In the end, the commissioners and Ms. Manning agreed to revisit the matter later.

## County’s audit shows the best results in years

**By STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
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Decatur County’s audit report for 2011 is the best it’s had in years, county commissioners heard last Tuesday, though one item did go slightly over budget.

“Everything went smoothly, and very well,” said Bryan Thompson, a certified public accountant with the Norton accounting firm of Mapes and Miller. “This is the earliest it’s ever been done, and there is nothing out of the ordinary.”

The county accrued no new debts for the year, he said, and the one item that went over its allotted budget was the Wireless 911 fund, which comes from a 53-cent monthly tax on wireless and home phone lines. He said expenditures went over by \$1,000 due to a “simple oversight.”

The year-end cash levels of most funds were bumped up a little, Mr. Thompson said, which is good, and the general fund stood at about \$114,000.

Every one of the funds ended up in the black, Mr. Thompson reported, with the exception of Economic Development and Rural Fire District funds, which zeroed out.

The Economic Development Corp. usually zeros out its fund, he said, and the board asked the commissioners at their July 25 meeting for \$12,000 to \$13,000 for 2013. Board Member Greg Lohoefer said the agency has a significant amount of equity, just not a significant supply of ready cash. The corporation eventually hopes to be self-sufficient.

“Other than the property tax,” he said at a previous meeting, “we’re

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## Senator to visit Oberlin

There’s still time to make a reservation for the Decatur County Farm Bureau’s annual dinner meeting, which will feature an appearance by U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts.

The dinner starts at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 16, at the Oberlin American Legion Hall, and people

**Rawlins Clinic in Atwood**

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**Dana Jewell, PA-C**  
**Michael Dorsch, PA**

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