

Selden student hurt in crash dies

One of three young men injured in a car crash last Wednesday near Leoville, Jaime Labrado of Selden, died Saturday at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita.

Funeral services for Jaime, a junior at Golden Plains High School in Rexford, will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 12, 2012, at the Golden Plains Grade School Gym in Selden, with burial in the Selden Cemetery.

Golden Plains Superintendent Mary

Ellen Welshon said today the district will dismiss classes at 12:30 p.m. so teachers and students can attend.

She said until then, the district was trying to keep things "as normal as possible."

Meantime, the other two youths continued to improve at Wesley. Colten Wachendorfer, 17, who had been driving that night, and Jesse Mumm 18, Vian, Okla., went from critical to fair condition. Monday, both had been upgraded to good condition, the best

report, a nursing supervisor said. Both remained in the hospital, however.

"We have support people for the kids to talk to," said Mrs. Welshon at the school. "We're just really trying to do everything we can for the families, the kids and the community."

"We just want to support our kids ... the best we can. We're trying to keep things as normal as we can."

While outside counselors have come to

help, she added, it seems like the kids mostly have been talking with each other and with the Golden Plains staff, teachers and others they know. She said the mood was "very sad, very concerned" Monday morning.

"We'll continue to have support for our kids," she added.

The three teens were flown to the Wichita hospital Wednesday night after their car skidded sideways through a stop sign and rolled into a ditch about seven miles east of

Selden on K-23.

Trooper John Gizzarelli of the Kansas Highway Patrol reported that Wachendorfer, 17, was driving north in a 2002 Pontiac Firebird about 9:45 p.m. As he approached the end of the pavement northbound at the intersection with K-123, he apparently realized he was about to run the stop sign and hit the brakes.

The car skidded sideways through the in-

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Electric rates to go higher due to demand

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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Oberlin's city electric rates will be going up by 4 to 5 percent because the demand has increased so dramatically over the summer, the City Council decided at its meeting Thursday.

City Administrator Karen Larson said Sunflower Electric Power Corp. of Hays is the only electricity supplier available to the city, and when the city renewed its seven-year contract with the company last spring, it didn't foresee the coming drought. Come budget time last month, the city found itself \$90,000 short on what it needed to keep up

electricity.

Mrs. Larson then said that after looking the budget, she'd hired a company called Power System Engineering, which has worked with Prairie Land Electric of Norton in the past, to go over the rates the city pays and the city's current charges to come up with a rate plan that would be fair for everyone.

Based on the firm's recommendations, the council approved a new rate schedule for the city Thursday.

Currently, residential customers pay a \$5 service charge and an average of about \$81.58 a month for

(See RATES on Page 5A)

Loan will pay for well project; bills will inch up

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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The Oberlin City Council has decided to take out a loan with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to pay for the water project, which could save \$4 million, but will increase household water bills by about \$1.30 a month.

The council met with Miller and Associates, the McCook engineering firm handling the project, at a special meeting Aug. 30 with the council, city staff and crew and the city's engineers, to hear updates on the progress of the project as

well as make decisions on money, hear about deadlines and decide on things like blending wells and how the city should pipe in the new water.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture has offered to give the city the loan for the project," explained Chris Miller, who ran the meeting. "With a 2.5 percent interest rate over a term of 40 years, the loan would result in a total payment of about \$8.4 million."

"With the KDHE loan," Mr. Miller said, "the repayment will be over a 20-year term and result in a

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Volunteers to help property owners

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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The City Council heard Thursday that a volunteer task force is being organized to help people who say they can't afford, or aren't able, to meet the terms of the city's blighted property ordinance, but Code Enforcement Officer Jan Ackerman would be staying.

The move was framed as a response to people who were upset with the way the city has been enforcing the ordinance. Many people who attended the last council meet-

ing, Thursday, Aug. 16, had called for Mrs. Ackerman to step down. The council stopped short of this, but offered some compromises to ease tensions.

City Administrator Karen Larson said she and Police Chief Troy Haas met with Eric Swegle, who had made an impassioned speech against the ordinance at the Aug. 16 meeting, and Mike Gawith, a member of the Decatur Tomorrow Beautification committee. The four reviewed what people said needed

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School Food



WHILE SECOND HELPINGS of a main dish are no longer allowed during school lunches, youngsters like Ashley Treese (above), a student at Decatur Community

High, are allowed as many servings as they like from the salad bar.

- Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp

Lunch program makes changes

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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If you hear your kids grumbling about school lunches this week, you can blame the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which has changed the school lunch program in an effort to curb childhood obesity.

A lot of parents are upset about the changes, saying their kids are coming home hungrier than ever.

"I don't like when the government mandates how I can raise my kids, and how they're fed," said Susan May, whose two children attend Oberlin schools. "There's no way any football player or athlete is able to go from lunchtime to

6:30 p.m. after practice with the small portion they're feeding them.

"And when they don't get fed, how can they perform academically to the high standards they're expected to? I've read studies that say hungry children don't perform academically."

"It's a one size fits all plan, and my children aren't obese. They exercise daily. Kids have physical education at school, and if they're obese, the parents need to step up and take care of that. I don't think the school or government should have to solve every problem in our lives."

One of the big problems that parents are upset about is that there is now a cap on the

amount of protein and calories that students can have at any given meal. They are no longer allowed to go for seconds if there is food left. They are, however, allowed as many servings as they like from the salad bar.

"Honestly, I think it's stupid," said 14-year-old KeAnn Jacobs at Friday's hamburger tailgate. "The servings are about as big as my fist - I'm not a big fan of it. I'm a person that likes meat. If I don't have enough, I start shaking."

According to a statement from Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback, who attended a summit on obesity in Topeka on Thursday, almost one

(See SCHOOL on Page 8A)

Mini Sappa Antique show ready to run

The 32nd annual Mini Sappa Antique Thresher and Engine Show is gearing up for this weekend, beginning at 9 a.m. at the fairground, and will feature everything from antique cars and farm equipment to games, demonstrations and tractor pulls.

"It's all about friendships and just the camaraderie that we have as a group," said Vickie Lippel-

mann, secretary of the Mini Sappa Antique Thresher and Engine Club. "We have some really neat people involved."

The show will include raffles for a club-made quilt and a 1948 John Deere Model A tractor. Both projects were started in January by club members, Mrs. Lippelmann said, and the drawing will be held

after the parade on Sunday.

The show will feature quilts, vintage tractors, cars and trucks, antique farm machinery, farm toys and model displays, demonstrations, tractor pulls, parades twice a day, and more, she said. Food will be available all day, she said, "and the lady that makes the ham and beans can't be beat."

For the past two years, Mrs. Lippelmann said, they've had weather problems, with one day being cold or rainy and the other being fine, so they're hoping it goes better this year.

"We're hoping for two really good days," she said. "That helps with the crowds. It's really a nice family environment."



Hydrants show up in patriotic colors

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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If you've been looking around as you drive lately, you'll have noticed something patriotic - and I'm not just talking about all the stars and stripes in store windows. Someone has been sneaking around, painting Oberlin's fire hydrants.

Paint Oberlin Patriotic is a group of women who decided it was time to bring back some of the excitement of election year. Instead of partisan bickering and negative television ads, they started a contest for the home, business or public building with the most patriotic decorations,

which would win a \$100 prize come election day.

And that's where the fire hydrants came in. Marcia Lohoefer, a member of the club, said that the members thought of the idea, got permission from the city and then made an announcement at Decatur Community High, looking for volunteers. Then art teacher Terry Woolsey organized the group of students who went out to put their own mark on that often overlooked city staple. Some of the kids are even getting points with the National Honor Society for their work.

(See HYDRANTS on Page 10A)



Legion nominates man for national job

Michael D. Helm of Norcat, an Army veteran who served during the Vietnam War, has been nominated by the Department of Nebraska as a candidate for national commander of the American Legion.

A 41-year member of the Jack Helt American Legion Post in Lebanon, Neb., Mr. Helm served with the 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, N.C., and earned his Ranger tab during the winter of 1972.

(See VETERAN on Page 5A)



Mike Helm



* School food gets healthier

(Continued from Page 1A)

third of children in the U.S. are overweight or obese, and the statistics for Kansas reflect that average. The rate of obesity in adults, he said, has doubled in the last 15 years, and obesity is second only to tobacco in preventable causes of death.

Cafeteria Manager Linda Weber creates the food plans and serves the kids breakfast and lunch.

"What we fix here," Mrs. Weber said, "I'm fixing for my children and grandchildren. And if it's not good enough for me to eat, it's not good enough for these kids to eat. I try to make food that the kids will like and will be healthy for them. I have my granddaughters here and four great nieces and nephews here. I am fixing for family, and all the other kids are family, is how I look at it."

The school still serves protein every day, she said, and serving sizes haven't changed much. Also, she said, kids can always go back to the salad bar for extra helpings.

The biggest changes, Mrs. Weber said, is that there are more fresh fruits and a greater variety of vegetables, and less salt. Salt, she said, is what she said she hears the kids grumble about the most. Unfortunately, that's also what is going to change the most.

Each year for the next 10 years, Mrs. Weber said, the total amount of salt will go down.

But that doesn't mean much else will change. The school, she said, passed its nutritional audit last year with flying colors. The breakfast menu hasn't changed, she said, and won't until next year. Even then, it will change even less than the lunch menu did.

"Basically," said Principal Ben Jimenez, "the guidelines for school cafeterias are undergoing a huge change right now, and all this change is due to the health and wellness plan that's been enforced ever since

Obama took office. It's a tiered plan where they gradually move toward healthier lunches."

Joe Dreher, the high school's athletic director, said that the new lunches "aren't bad for them; it's all healthy. The main thing is that they get ample opportunity with the fruits and vegetables."

"Kids grumble about it, but they're bringing side food along, which helps out. And there's a microwave in there now ... and we try to start practice at 4 p.m., so they have about 20 minutes to eat beforehand."

"As much as these football guys have been working out, they need lots of water and stuff. The average athlete is going to need about 3,000 calories a day. The main thing is to start off with a big breakfast. It's the main meal of the day - don't skip that one. It gets the metabolism going."

"I know it's not the school's decision," said parent Dawn Diederich, echoing other parents. "It's one that was forced upon them. And I personally don't agree with (the new plan). I don't think childhood obesity is a result of school lunches, but parental choices - the activity they don't encourage their kids to do. If you encourage an active lifestyle, they can eat cookies and soda sometimes."

Mr. Jimenez said that the federal program is a big transition, but it's something that's going to happen whether the kids and parents like it or not.

"I think anytime you're trying to create healthier menus, it's important," he said. "Can it be drastic sometimes? Yes, but I think (childhood obesity) is a national concern, and that's why they brought it into the light. When the federal government makes a plan for the schools, we have to abide by it as a government institution."



AN ATTRACTION in the Mini Sappa Antique Thresher and Engine Show this weekend will be this 1916 Ford Speedster, which has been restored by Jim Plotts of Norcat. His daughter-in-law, Charlotte Plotts, tried to help him drive during a test run.

- Herald staff photo by Carolyn Plotts

Restored 1916 Speedster ready for parade

By CAROLYN PLOTTS
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A 1916 Model T Speedster, bought for \$10 in 1959 by Jim Plotts of Norcat, has found new life as an attraction and will be entered this weekend in the Sappa Antique Engine and Thresher Show at the Decatur County Fairground.

When Mr. Plotts was 14, he said, he bought the Speedster from Orville Smalberger and drove it in area parades. In 1961, he left home

for college and parked the car. It sat in his dad's pasture and over the years the tires went bad and the battery died.

In 1992, he decided to refurbish the Speedster and had a friend, Larry Lyon, sand blast and prime the frame. Again it went into storage, this time inside a garage, where it remained until 2002, when work began in earnest.

The biggest improvement came with a new brass radiator, followed by new tires, and wooden spokes for the wheels. During the

process, he disassembled the engine, cleaned and polished all the parts and put new bands in the transmission, then built the wooden frame and reupholstered the bright red seats.

Mr. Plotts said he made the vehicle a speedster by lowering the steering column and putting the gas tank behind the two bucket seats.

He has also driven the vehicle at the Selden Antique Show, the Jennings Firemen's Fun Day and the Norton Veterans Day Parade.

* Water bills will increase to pay loan

(Continued from Page 1A)
total payment of about \$4.4 million. The city will need to hold a public hearing within 30 days to explain the loan process, and in the short term, it would cost more."

Mayor Rob McFee asked everyone what they thought of the payments.

The council also learned that once the project, which involves drilling new wells outside of town, and piping the water to the city, is over, it will have cost about as much as if they had gone ahead with the water treatment facility that had been planned. The city abandoned that project when they discovered

that the cost to store and transport the uranium collected by the plant would result in an extra \$100,000 a year.

"Within the time frame of the project," Mr. Miller said, "the city is a little behind, but it's not bad. Currently, the city is at steps 14 and 15 (of the 26-step plan)."

The steps that need to be accomplished before residents are able to drink the new water includes surveying where the new pipeline will be made, how the city will store the water, preparing legal descriptions of land for wells and easements and obtaining permits.

The city is waiting to hear from

the state, which is reviewing its application for water rights where the new wells have been found. It can be a long wait, Mr. Miller said, because the state will make sure that the project won't interfere with Sappa Creek and any other waters.

Mr. Miller reported that the first deadline the city will meet is June 1, when it will need to submit its final plans and specifications. Drinkable water will have to be coming from the wells by Aug. 1, 2014, which is also the date the city will have to start paying back the loans.

The council reviewed the levels of arsenic, uranium and manganese, the three compounds now con-

taminating Oberlin's water, and approved a plan to blend the new wells with those now in service to have a larger supply available, particularly in the summer. By the end of the project, all water in Oberlin will be up to the federal drinking-water standards, Mr. Miller said.

Dave Sporn, the city's water specialist, said that on its peak days, the city can consume as much as a million gallons of water. This, determined the group, is what the new wells should be able to pump, if not more. Mr. Miller said that with these wells and the blending that the city agreed on, the system would be able to cover that demand.

* Blighted property owners to get assistance

(Continued from Page 1A)
to be changed at that meeting, and together decided on the accommodations that Mrs. Larson announced at the Sept. 6 meeting.

"We decided that the letters are going to change," Mrs. Larson said, addressing the prime subject that had so many people angry to begin with. "Now people will be getting a letter that is uniform and worded clearly, so that people know exactly what the violations are. We also have been working with Jan (Ackerman) on this."

"It was very apparent that some people didn't know how they had violated the ordinance, so we're also going to have her write a letter that lays out the steps needed to rectify the situation."

Also included with the new letter, said Mr. Gawith, is a form asking if you need help working on your property and bringing it up to code. Those who are disabled, elderly or

low on money need only to fill out the form and return it to the city office.

The city will be taking donations for supplies, like paint, wood or just money to help people renew their homes and lawns. Those who cannot do the work themselves, Mrs. Larson said, would now be able to ask the city for help. Anyone interested in working with the voluntary assistance committee, she said, should go to the city office to sign up.

"It will take a lot of people to make this happen," said Mr. Swegle at the meeting, "so anyone who wants a tidier Oberlin needs to donate their time or money. It's too much for just one small group to be stuck working on."

The council is thinking, Mrs. Larson said, that perhaps the first Saturday of every month could be the day that volunteers meet and

go to the homes of those who have asked for help, but no days or times have been set.

Mrs. Larson also reminded those gathered that the city and county have agreed that the first week of October will be a "free dump week," in which people can take their furni-

ture, tires, and other trash to the city landfill free of charge. The city will have a truck downtown, she said, for those who don't have the means to take their trash to the landfill themselves. The landfill hours are from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday to Friday and 8 a.m. to noon Saturday.

Students injured in one-car wreck

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tersection at about 75 mph, went into a ditch to the north, rolling until it came to rest on its wheels. At that point, the paved highways run east and west from the intersection, but a gravel county road continues to the north.

The trooper said the driver was conscious when he arrived about 10:12 p.m., and admitted he'd been going too fast. Some substance abuse may have been involved, he added.

The victims were taken to the Sheridan County Health Complex in Hoxie, then flown to Wesley, Jaime and Jesse Mumm,

18, Vian, Okla., who was not a student at Golden Plains, were passengers in the car. Both were wearing seat belts.

Jaime was born Aug. 16, 1995, in Chihuahua, Mexico, to Jesus and Margarita (Miramontes) Labrado. He grew up in Denver and northwest Kansas.

Survivors include his parents, of Selden, and two sisters, Gabriela Labrado of Scott City and Maria Miramontes of Selden.

The family suggests memorials in his name in care of the funeral home, 121 N. Penn. Oberlin, Kan., 67749. Condolences may be left at www.paulsfh.com.

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of Decatur County will meet on Tuesday, September 25, 2012 at 10 am at the Office of the Decatur County Commissioners on the 3rd floor of the courthouse, for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax. Detailed Budget Information is available at the Office of the Decatur County Clerk and will be available at this hearing.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2013 Expenditures and Amount of 2012 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2013 Budget. Estimated Tax Rate* is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

FUND	2011		2012		Proposed Budget 2013		
	Prior Year Actual Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate	Current Year Estimate of Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate	Expenditures	Amount of 2012 Ad Valorem Tax	Est. Tax Rate*
General	1,209,081	29.275	1,359,555	23.392	1,423,555	706,332	20.231
Debt Service	122,858	0.930	184,156	1.177	152,697	87,015	2.492
Road & Bridge	1,004,791	11.745	1,050,000	13.969	1,100,000	377,469	10.812
Special Bridge	93,941	2.000	130,000	2.000	136,000	69,840	2.000
Home for the Aged	31,156	0.490	40,000	0.574	40,000	23,834	0.683
Fair Premiums	3,993	0.107	4,000	0.110	4,000	3,522	0.101
Fair Maintenance	14,903	0.373	15,000	0.413	15,000	13,256	0.380
Conservation District	19,000	0.559	19,000	0.462	19,000	11,944	0.342
Hospital Maintenance	197,154	5.203	200,000	5.452	231,450	209,454	5.989
Health Nurse	110,226	1.060	117,500	1.121	110,000	37,255	1.067
Mental Health	23,695	0.618	23,500	0.647	23,500	20,660	0.592
Mental Retardation	25,342	0.662	25,500	0.695	27,000	24,247	0.695
Noxious Weed	129,310	2.255	145,000	2.004	155,000	70,035	2.006
Election	31,542	0.273	50,000	1.143	50,000	27,377	0.784
Employee Benefits	565,864	15.156	808,500	19.801	885,000	566,289	16.220
SR Citizen	32,574	0.784	37,000	1.045	37,000	31,703	0.908
Museum / Historical	20,360	0.541	20,500	0.564	20,500	18,013	0.516
Economic Development	16,893	0.444	17,000	0.467	17,000	14,983	0.429
Spec Alcohol/Drugs	1,052		3,734			7,910	
Spec Park/Recreation			1,327			2,424	
Wireless E911	36,134		36,234			56,000	
911 Phone	1,167		41,798			37,697	
Nox Weed Cap Outlay			15,000			22,959	
Health Nurse Cap Outlay			7,343			20,000	
Non Budgeted Funds A	358,412						
Non Budgeted Funds B	4,444						
Non Budgeted Funds C	639						
Non Budgeted Funds D	60						
Totals	4,054,591	72.475	4,351,647	75.036	4,593,692	2,313,228	66.257
Less Transfers	358,334		216,000			241,000	
Net Expenditures	3,696,257		4,135,647			4,352,692	
Total Tax Levied	2,465,081		2,491,275			xxxxxxx	
Assessed Valuation	34,033,544		33,201,174			34,912,652	
Outstanding Indebtedness as of January 1st							
	2010		2011		2012		
G.O. Bonds	405,359		347,315		287,463		
Revenue Bonds	628,527		606,095		582,737		
Other							
Lease Pur Princ.							
Total	1,033,886		953,410		870,200		

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The position is an immediate opening for a professional administrator who manages DHS in accordance with state and local regulations.

Job requirements: BA or equivalent minimum, Master in Health Administration preferred, 3 years experience in health administration, sound decision-making skills, organizational experience in operations and planning, experience in fiscal management and budgets, recruitment and retention skills necessary. DHS is an equal opportunity employer. Contact Natasha at (785) 475-2208 or nweishapl@decaturhealthsystems.org