

## Jurors selected for murder trial

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
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The Decatur County courtroom was tense and quiet before the judge came in Monday morning, quiet, as if it were a library, and tense with the knowledge that Dylan Coryell was sitting right there – and just who would decide his fate remained unknown.

None looked more tense than Mr. Coryell himself, his Irish-red hair, pale skin and rosy cheeks set tight. He's been in jail for over a year now, awaiting this moment, and Monday had his first day in court after being charged with the killing of Airman Corey Cook on Oct. 22, 2011.

The defendant faces felony charges of murder in the first degree, aggravated battery and aggravated burglary, said District Judge Preston Pratt, who is presiding over the trial.

While Monday and Tuesday were designated for jury selection days, said Ron Keefover, education-information officer for the Kansas Judicial Department, only one day was needed. He said opening

statements from the prosecution and defense would begin at 9 a.m. Tuesday. The jurors were to have been announced Tuesday as well.

At least two people were dismissed because of physical impairments, and while others noted various financial or time hardships, all said they were ready and willing to perform their civic duty.

Potential jurors were called into the courtroom 25 at a time to answer questions from Judge Pratt; the prosecutor, Assistant Attorney General Nicole Romine; and defense attorney Justin Barrett. Mr. Coryell didn't speak in court, but occasionally turned to speak quietly to his lawyer.

As the door opened to let in the first group of prospective jurors, they were pointed to seats in the jury box and the well of the courtroom and their names were called. All were familiar names, all Decatur County residents.

Of 150 possible jurors, said Mr. Keefover, only 39 were in the final pool. Then defense and prosecution got to strike 13 names, leaving 13

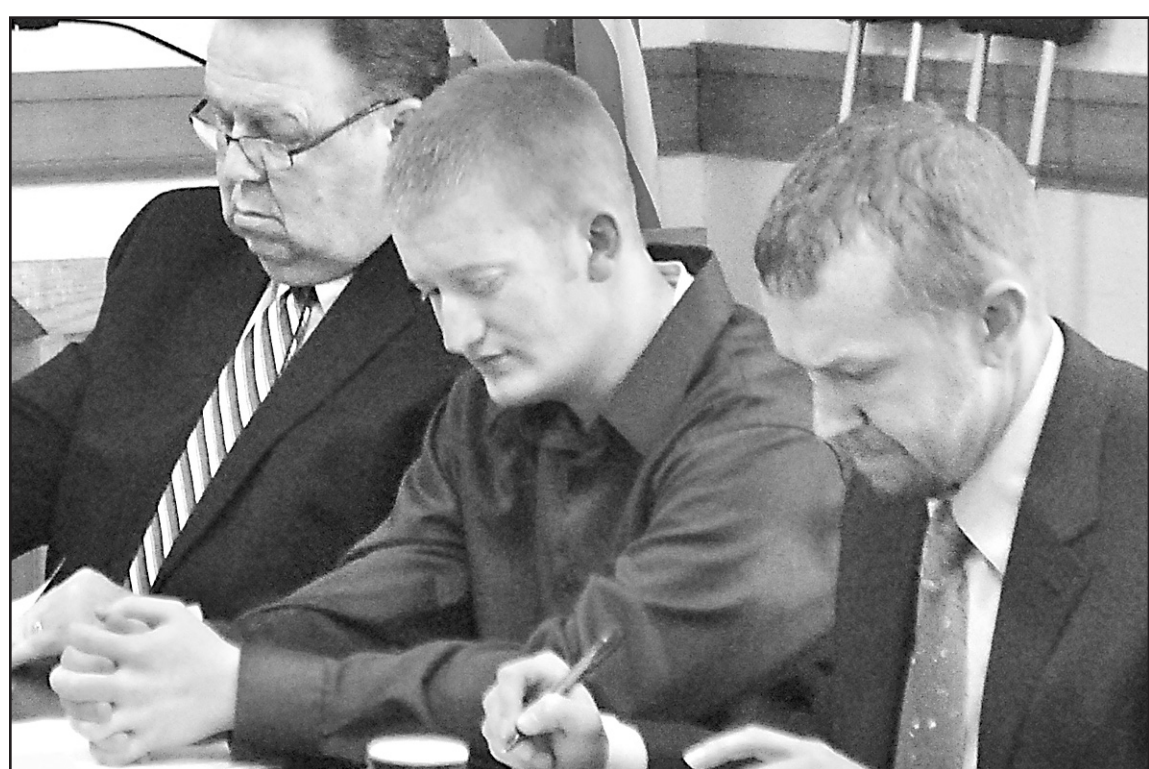
behind. Twelve people will sit on the jury, with one remaining as an alternate.

After the opening statements Tuesday, Judge Pratt explained to those assembled in court, he will give jury instructions. Both sides then will present their evidence in the case, which he said is expected to take over a week. After that will come more jury instructions, then the closing arguments by both sides. After that, the jury will deliberate.

The jury will have to make a unanimous decision about Mr. Coryell, and determine whether the state has proven beyond a reasonable doubt that he is guilty, Mr. Barrett said later.

Every person called to be interviewed as a juror was sworn in and testified that they were over age 18, a U.S. citizen, a resident of Decatur County, understood English as their primary language, were competent, had not been convicted of a felony within the last 10 years and were not breast feeding mothers.

Prosecutor Romine did the bulk (See JURY on Page 8A)



DYLAN CORYELL sat between lawyers Calvin Williams (left) and Justin Barrett at the first day of his two-week trial Monday, as potential jurors were being questioned.

— Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp



## Ready for some fair-weather fun!

MAIN STREET FINALLY saw some good old-fashioned play time with last week's warm weather, which peaked at 82 degrees on Saturday. It was perfect for selling Girl Scout cookies, as (from left) Kaitlyn and Emily Howland and Alana Raile set up their wares outside Ward Drug. Their first customer of the afternoon was Connie Olson. Up by First National Bank, Alex Redklinker and Lucas Diederich palled around with their daycare group, which went out to enjoy the sunny day.

— Herald staff photos by Stephanie DeCamp



## Fugitive man caught by Oberlin police

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
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A fugitive in a car pulled over by the Oberlin Police Department early last Tuesday morning bolted on foot, leading officers on a two-hour chase through farm fields that resulted in his being caught about four miles away.

Police Chief Troy Haas said officers got a tip from residents of Oberlin that the man, Eugene Grenier, 31, of McCook, was headed here. The tipster described the car he was riding in, the chief said. The man has several aliases, he said, and was wanted on two warrants for contempt of court – one from Decatur County and the other from the City of Oberlin.

After his arrest, he was booked into the county jail; he posted bond and was released on Friday.

Tuesday morning, Officer Beau

Downing was waiting on U.S. 83 near The Gateway, and stopped the car at 1:36 a.m., Mr. Haas said. While he was running the driver's license and registration of the woman behind the wheel, Mr. Grenier fled. Mr. Downing called for help, and the dispatcher called the chief and Officer Scott Zeigler at home. The chase ended two hours later with Mr. Grenier's arrest.

"Scott and I came out and did a perimeter search," Mr. Haas said, "and tracked him to the north part of town, just north of CPS fertilizer. There's a field out there. He ran off again into a small draw, and he had a large lead on us. We continued the search and were able to track him over four miles north of town, in a field off 83, where he was arrested. He resisted and was combative."

The woman who was driving (See MAN on Page 8A)

## Power, gas co-op wants your vote

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
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Midwest Energy customers may have been surprised last week to receive a letter from the company urging them to vote "yes" for self-regulation, something that they may not have even been aware they could do – or what self-regulation even means.

However, every customer of the firm is also a member/owner, since Midwest is in fact the largest electric and natural gas cooperative in Kansas. If you're a customer – the company is the natural gas supplier in Oberlin and several other area towns – you're also a voting member.

So what does "self regulation" mean, and how would it change things for someone living here? And how does that translate into savings?

Well, it wouldn't exactly, the company says. Rates won't go down for customers if the measure is passed, said Mike Morley, director of corporate communications for the co-op, but they should see an increase in efficiency and "transparency," or flow of information, Mr. Morley said.

The savings would be realized in the cost of doing business and the speed with which the co-op can make decisions, he said. Right now, a change in rates can take up to a year when it runs through the Kansas Corporation Commission, and that generates up to \$400,000 a year in costs. With self-regulation, a change could be made by the next board meeting.

"A lot of the hesitation over self regulation probably would center around rates," he added. "The

way they are currently set is pretty complex at the KCC, not unlike a court case where you file a paper and people introduce testimony, and then a decision is made.

"With that process occurring in Topeka, ratepayers don't have an opportunity to petition the (decision) directly. You might not even know that a rate change is being proposed in the first place.

"Under self regulation, we're required to mail every member a notice 10 days before a meeting where a rate increase is voted on, and that meeting would be open to the public, so members would be able to contact the board and come to the meeting to make their feelings known – and that's something that doesn't happen right now.

"First and foremost, it's about local control. Basically, what we're looking to do is get decision-making authority back to our member-elected board of directors, who are also all customers. They have the (interests of customers) in mind, much more so than someone in Topeka. So by having the board make decisions for customers, they'll make decisions faster, in a more transparent manner and a more cost-effective manner."

And if the customers decide they don't like the change, he said, they can always petition to return to the commission.

A lot of the push for self-regulation is about bureaucracy and cost, Mr. Morley said, adding that Midwest is one of only two of the 29 electric co-operatives in Kansas that haven't voted to become self-regulated. The company has about 49,000 members, with each household getting one vote.

## New feed business plans grand opening

Fowler's Feed and Supply opened as a new business at 802 N. Penn Ave., and to celebrate the occasion, owner Ron Fowler plans a grand opening and open house from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday. Lunch will be served.

Mr. Fowler, who also owns Ron's Tire Service and Crossroads Ex-

press, said the business handles Purina products, including pet and livestock feed, Hutchison Western gates, farm and fencing supplies, Besler bale beds, Gallagher electric fencing and livestock watering supplies.

He said he has been in business for 40 years in Oberlin, having

opened Ron's Tire Service at 201 E. Frontier Parkway Feb. 1, 1973. He is a 1973 graduate of Decatur Community High School and his wife, the former Sondra Carter, graduated in 1971. She is a registered nurse, and they have three daughters, Amy Wesley, Oberlin; Melissa and Brant Taplin, Abilene; and Krista

Fowler, McCook, along with five grandchildren.

Assisting him with the new business are longtime employees at Ron's Tire Service, Brian Klima, Wade Jones and Brenda Ploussard. To check out products at the new store, call (785) 475-3342.

## Paper delivery late due to postal changes

Changes in delivery for subscribers to *The Oberlin Herald* this month are mostly due to the closing of the postal sorting "plant" in Colby and transfer of the work to North Platte, Neb.

"Subscribers in the Colby zone, those with 677 Zip codes, are mostly getting their paper on time," said

Herald Publisher Steve Haynes. "The Postal Service is doing a great job of handling their papers for on-time delivery.

"In-county subscribers also should see an improvement. We have fixed most of their problems by delivering papers directly to the Jennings, Norcatur and Norton post offices.

"However, anyone east of there in Kansas continues to have problems. Their papers are being routed to

North Platte, then off to Omaha and Kansas City before coming back to Wichita for sorting. That apparently can take up to a week.

"We are trying to get permission to mail Kansas papers through Norton, which we think could save those subscribers five to six days. That may take a little while, however.

"Farther away, the service appears to be about the same, as always, that is, slow and unpredict-

able. However, one reader in California reported his paper arrived through North Platte more than a week earlier than usual."

People whose service has changed should continue to report when their paper arrives, he added, so the staff can try to solve the remaining problems. E-mail oberlin.herald@nwkans.com or call (785) 475-2206.

