

Payout jumps for landowners in federal project

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
sdecamp@nwkansas.com
 Starting Monday, farmers, ranchers and landowners can sign up for the federal Conservation Reserve Program, which offers both sign-up payments and incentives for conservation practices for those looking to keep Decatur County's wildlife habitat healthy.

Alex Heeger, a "farm bill" biologist for the wildlife group Pheasants Forever based in Oberlin, said that this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has increased the amount it will pay for Conservation Reserve land by a "sizable jump" to try to compete with rising commodity prices.

People can sign up most land for the program through June 14, Mr. Heeger said. Continuous sign-up will be available, but that is focused more on those with smaller tracts.

The program, Mr. Heeger said, helps farmers use environmentally sensitive land for conservation benefits.

"Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion, and develop wildlife habitat," he said. "The Farm Service Agency administers the program, while technical guidance is provided by the Natural Resource Conservation Service and other partner agencies, such as Pheasants Forever.

"In return for involvement in the program, the FSA provides annual payments and cost-share assistance for contracts ... of 10 to 15 years."

Mr. Heeger said that the program protects thousands of acres of topsoil from erosion and creates prime habitats for wildlife, which hunters can then take advantage of.

"The more habitat we have on the landscape," he said, "the more wildlife we will have, and in turn the more hunting opportunities are available for everyone. Upland hunting is a very large tourist attraction in our part of the state, and continued protection and creation of new habitat will only market our community for the better."

As a biologist, Mr. Heeger said, he is particularly fond of those parts of the program that benefit pollinators like bees and butterflies.

"Over the past few years," he said, "pollinators have seen a large decline on our landscape due to increased use of pesticides and degradation of their habitats. Pollinators are often overlooked, but they provide an extremely valuable ecosystem resource that is responsible for the survival of about 80 percent of all flowering plants and affects 1 out of every 3 bites of food we consume."

If you're interested in finding out more about or signing up to participate in the program, call Mr. Heeger at (785) 230-4262.



SPEAKING TO STUDENTS at Decatur Community High, Historian Debra Goodrich Bisel talked about Kansas' pivotal role in the Civil War last Monday. Later, she signed books at

the Last Indian Raid Museum, where you can still pick up a copy of either "Kansas Forts and Bases" or "The Civil War in Kansas."
 — Herald staff photos by Stephanie DeCamp

Civil War historian talks to students

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
sdecamp@nwkansas.com
 What's more impressive — a renowned historian coming to speak at a small town, or a small town receiving a well-known historian?

Historian Debra Goodrich Bisel said it was the latter.

Mrs. Bisel spoke to Decatur Community High School students and Last Indian Raid Museum members last Monday, regaling both with her tales of the Sunflower State's pivotal role in Civil War history.

"I was so impressed," Mrs. Bisel later said. "The high school is beautiful, and that auditorium was gorgeous. The students were really wonderful; they were fun and paid attention, I just enjoyed them so much."

"Sometimes you come to something like this, and the kids are

obviously bored or uninterested, but that wasn't the case here. The teachers and principal were so nice, too. I was just so impressed with Oberlin overall. I'm going to spread the word all about it."

Mrs. Bisel gave her listeners an overview of the tumultuous period of Kansas history right before the Civil War known as "Bleeding Kansas," and how Buffalo Bill's father was one of the first martyrs to the cause. Bleeding Kansas, she said, is a term for the period when Kansans and Missourians fought over whether or not Kansas would enter the Union as a free or slave state. It was basically a proxy war, she said, between the northerners and southerners, before the actual Civil War kicked into gear.

These events, she said, were put into motion by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which put into practice the concept of popular

sovereignty. This law said each new state should be able to choose whether or not it would be a free or slave state, but that resulted in people traveling across borders to vote in elections.

"Now why would someone in Missouri want to come all the way over to Kansas and vote for it to be a slave state?" Mrs. Bisel asked. "It's because Missouri was a slave state then, and as a slave owner, you didn't want your slaves to be able to cross the border and suddenly be free. So all sorts of people, from all over the country, were traveling to Kansas to illegally vote in this big election to determine its future."

In January of 1861, she said, Kansas was added to the Union as a free state. And this was less than three months before the Civil War began with the shelling of Fort Sumter, in Charleston, S.C.

After speaking at the high school,

Mrs. Bisel then went to the museum, where a crowd of about 20 had gathered to hear about her two books, "Kansas Forts and Bases" and "The Civil War in Kansas."

"At the museum, it was just great," she gushed. "There was just a wonderful group of folks that came in, and I talked about history and how wonderful it is for small groups like this to preserve their part of the bigger piece of the Civil War, and so many people came west afterward. To know that small towns are preserving their history ... I was just so impressed, and very well received."

"That museum is a treasure, and the LandMark Inn is just wonderful. Oberlin is such a beautiful town, and has such good folks."

Mrs. Bisel's books are now for sale at the museum for \$20 each, Director Sharleen Wurm said.

Walkers, runners wanted for 5K

Helping Hands for Health Care, which raises money to help people with big medical bills, will hold its annual "Rainbow 5K Run" fund raiser at 9 a.m. Saturday, June 1, at Sappa Park.

The runners will meet at the shelterhouse and run from the road to the highway and back. They are encouraged to wear white T-shirts. That's where the rainbow comes in!

As they pass each kilometer marker of the race, the runners will be doused from head to toe in colorful paint, finishing up at the end with a rainbow outfit that promises to be as colorful as it sounds.

"People should also wear their craziest outfits if they want to," said organizer Chris Dempewolf, "since there will also be a crazy costume contest. And if you don't have a

white T-shirt to wear, there will be some for sale at the event."

Entry fee for the race is \$30, she said, or if you put together a team of five or more, \$25 a head. Kids under 5 are free, and all money goes toward the Helping Hands mission. Full Throttle DJ Service will provide tunes for the event.

You can pre-register by calling Ms. Dempewolf by Monday at (785) 470-7307, or register at 8 a.m. the day of the event. Entry fees and registration forms can be mailed to Ms. Dempewolf at 101 S. York, Oberlin, Kan., 67749.

Helping Hands was formed in 2008, Ms. Dempewolf said, and began giving out financial assistance the next year. As of March, she said, 51 people have been helped through donations.



BULL SALES

KETTERL'S
5K
ANGUS

Calving Ease

Growth

SELLING REGISTERED YEARLING ANGUS BULLS



Image Maker

SIRES INCLUDE
 Packer 547
 Bennett Performer
 HA Image Maker 0415
 Upside Consensus 7229
 WK One Way
 WK Rocket



Performer

Vernon Ketterl
 (785) 475-3636

Todd Ketterl
 (785) 470-7208

All with top carcass performance



Coyote Ridge Ranch

Registered Yearling and 2 year old's Gelbvieh and Balancer Bulls Blacks and Reds



Kendal Fisher
 (785) 470-7461

•16 miles south of McCook, Nebraska

Sires Include:
 TC Total 410
 Profit Agent 46N
 Mr. Krugerrand 70M
 Red Angus Max

Monitor your own health with Decatur Health System's Direct Access Testing, available starting May 1

Did you know you can order lab tests without a doctor's order? Direct Access Testing has been growing in popularity over the past few years. There are many benefits to direct testing:

- No doctor's order required
- No insurance or Medicare involvement
- Confidential results directly to you
- Tests offered at a discounted rate
- Walk-ins welcome

Just print the testing form on our website, www.decaturhealthsystems.org, fill it out at home and bring it in, or ask for a form at the hospital front desk. No appointments are necessary. The following tests are available:

- DAT CBC..... \$25
- DAT CMP \$25
- DAT Lipid Panel (fasting) \$25
- DAT PT/INR \$20
- DAT Glucose \$20
- DAT TSH (thyroid) \$20
- DAT Alcohol \$20
- DAT PSA \$35
- DAT Hgb A1C \$30
- DAT Urinalysis..... \$15
- DAT Urine Pregnancy Test... \$15
- DAT Strep Screen \$20
- DAT Mono Screen \$25
- DAT Blood Type and Rh \$25
- DAT Urine Drug Screen \$50
- DAT Influenzae Screen \$30



Tests will be performed on-site in our CLIA-certified, full-service laboratory and mailed directly to the patient. Direct Access Testing will be available 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, holidays excepted.



For more information about this new service, visit www.decaturhealthsystems.org or call laboratory manager Jodi Votapka, MT (ASCP), at 475-2208 x256.

Decatur Health Systems
 810 W. Columbia
 PO Box 268
 Oberlin, KS 67749