

County ponders pests

The Decatur County noxious weed director talked with the commissioners about a recent push to put prairie dogs on the endangered species list.

Director Gaylen Huntley said he attended a meeting in which the Kansas Fish and Wildlife officials made the proposal. Mr. Huntley said he thinks they will hear more about the movement in the future.

"It sounds like if counties go together and put together some kind of policy, then they will abide by that," he said.

In Decatur County, said Commissioner Ralph Unger, the animals are technically the responsibility of the townships.

At a recent commission meeting, Mr. Huntley told the commissioners that the lift in Bus 22 isn't working very well and neither is the door that opens for the lift.

He said they might have the opportunity to pick up an old school bus with a lift that works. Commissioner Gene Gallentine said he thought it was worth pursuing.

"It looks like the county will have another load of recycling ready to go," said Mr. Huntley. "I think there will be a load every month."

"So far we have been able to use the forklift from the Decatur Co-op and there haven't been any problems. It might be a good idea if there is some type of compensation for the co-op."

Mr. Huntley said they normally know a couple days in advance when the trailer is coming so they can arrange to use the loader.

"The county could offer something," said Mr. Unger.

Since the program started, he said, he estimated, around 500,000 pounds of items have been recycled from the county. All of that could have wound up in the county landfill.

"We're a throw-away society," he said.

Mr. Huntley told the commissioners at the meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 13, that he is getting ready to mount the roadside sprayer on the truck road and bridge bought. The commissioners approved spending up to \$800 to get the truck outfitted.

The commissioners approved and signed a contract with the state for the county to spray weeds on highway rights of way, as they have done in the past.

City discusses pool job

The Oberlin city foreman asked the council about getting the swimming pool sandblasted and painted before it opens this summer, but the group made no decision except to ask for a new bid for the sandblasting and to see if the old bid is still good.

Foreman Dan Castle said at the meeting on Thursday, Jan. 8, that the council had set \$50,000 aside in the budget. When the project is done, he said, there might be some patching needed, too. Mr. Castle asked if the council would like to get the project started.

He said he's received two bids, one for \$48,000 and one for \$52,000. Mr. Castle said he's put the bidders off twice.

He said he needs the council's permission to contact the man out of Colorado who gave the original bid.

Mayor Joe Stanley asked Mr. Castle to contact him and get a current price for the project.

The roof on the bath house at the pool leaks, said Mr. Castle. He said he talked with someone from Aqua Shield Roofing, who said it would cost \$5,500 to repair. Mayor Stanley asked the foreman to get more bids on the roof project at the pool.



DICK BOYD worked at his famously messy desk in Norton last week. He received the Oscar Stauffer Award for sports writing.

— Herald photo by Brandy Leroux

Sports writer wins award

Dick Boyd, longtime Norton newspaperman and former owner of *The Norton Daily Telegram*, has been selected as the 2009 winner of the Oscar Stauffer Award for Sportswriting.

Mr. Boyd took over the newspaper in 1970 and has, since that time, spent considerable time on Norton Community High School athletics. When he sold the newspaper to Steve and Cynthia Haynes in 2002, Mr. Boyd stayed on to cover Norton Blue Jay sports.

The Kansas State High School Activities Association recently told Mr. Boyd of his selection. This award is given annually to recognize excellence in covering high school athletics.

Mr. Boyd was nominated for the award by Norton School District administrators in recognition of his many years of covering high school athletics and for "the consistent high quality of his work."

He will be recognized at an upcoming state high school tournament of his choosing.

"The Board of Education congratulates Mr. Boyd on this well-deserved honor and thanks him for the tireless coverage of Blue Jay athletics he has provided over the years," said Superintendent Greg Mann.

"There is only one Dick Boyd. Period," said *Norton Telegram* Publisher Tom Dreiling. "Dick is unique in the world of sports writing. He strives for perfection and

comes mighty close to achieving that unachievable goal.

"Dick," said Mr. Dreiling, "is a favorite of the staff."

"We always await his 'quiet' arrival," he said. "I stress 'quiet,' because you know Dick has arrived when the office door closes behind him, much like a great crescendo bringing a classical favorite to its last note."

"One of Dick's long-remarked traits is his unique method of filing things. If you've never been in the office to see where he places stories of the past, clippings from other publications, photos, notes and whatever he needs or needed in the past," he said, "it is 'neatly' scattered over several desks, several feet high, but ask him for something, and he will hesitate for a moment or two, reach into a stack of papers and pull out whatever it is you are looking for."

"Dick," said Mr. Dreiling, "has a real knack for remembering the past."

"It's not unusual for some young man or woman, who Dick covered when that person was participating in sports for the Blue Jays maybe 20 or 30 years ago, to come into the newspaper office and strike up a conversation with detailed information."

Mr. Boyd sometimes takes a friendly ribbing for the length of his stories, but that's not about to change anytime soon. Mr. Boyd also is a stickler for quality photographs. It isn't just a hit-and-miss thing with him. He stays focused, he knows his camera's capabilities and his instinct goes to work and generally results in some outstanding action shots.

Mr. Boyd has moved into the computer age. Gone is the Underwood typewriter that got him through all these years.

"We people at *The Telegram* are extremely proud of Dick's selection for this honor," Dreiling said. "He is so deserving."

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Water not up to federal standard

The City of Oberlin received a letter from the state noting that its water source has too much arsenic and uranium to meet new, tighter federal standards.

Administrator Austin Gilley said the city will working with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Upper Republican Basin Conservation Project Alliance on a possible reverse osmosis filtration system for Oberlin.

He said the alliance is doing research on reverse osmosis treatment plants for some cities in the area.

The City Council has known about the water being over the allowed limit for uranium and arsenic for some time. So far, the state hasn't levied any fines or issued an order requiring the city to do something, said Mr. Gilley.

After several months of delay prompted by the cost — estimated at more than \$4 million — the council has moved to get a federal loan to build a water treatment plant.

It's possible the city will receive an order from the state this year, said Mr. Gilley, but the city is working towards getting something done so there probably won't be consequences attached to the order.

The council didn't vote to do any-

Council roundup

At a meeting Thursday, Jan. 22, the Oberlin City Council:

- Approved raises for some jobs after comparing the pay here to other cities in the state. Story on Page 1A.

- Heard that a questionnaire is ready to be sent out to first responders in the region asking about a proposed training center at the former youth ranch in Sappa Park. Story on Page 3A.

- Received a letter from the state noting that the city's water source contains too much arsenic and uranium to meet federal standards. Story on Page 1A.

- Heard that revenues and expenditures for the city have been erratic over the past few years. Story on Page 1A.

thing with a water treatment plant or with water in general, he said. Basically, the council wants to keep an eye on the reverse osmosis idea. Lots of things would have to fall into place for that to happen here.

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