



THIS BLACK ANGUS cow delivered triplet calves last week. She belongs to Dave and Patty Stapp, owners of Long Branch Farms near Norcatour. — Herald photo by Carolyn Plotts

Cow gives birth to rare triplet calves

By CAROLYN PLOTTS
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The proud mama stood guard as her three babies romped and played in their pen. They were just days old, but already tipped the scales at 50-60 pounds each.

Saturday, Feb. 7, a nine-year old Black Angus cow belonging to Dave and Patty Stapp,

owners of Long Branch Farms near Norcatour, delivered the triplet calves. It was Mrs. Stapp's birthday.

Mrs. Stapp said her husband had checked on the cow early in the day and discovered two calves. Later, when he checked her again, there were three. She said they have never had triplets on the farm.

All three calves — two heifers and one bull — are healthy and doing well, said Mrs. Stapp. "I doubt if she can continue to feed all three," she said. "She probably won't have enough milk."

Mrs. Stapp later reported that one calf had been placed with a heifer that had lost her calf.

Board ponders use of office area by alumni group

The Oberlin School Board decided to table a decision last Monday on whether to let the alumni association use the district office as its mailing address so members could get more information.

Superintendent Pat Cullen said Pete Zander, association president, contacted him about using the district office for mail. Although the board didn't see a problem with the magazines and that kind of mail coming to the office, members questioned having to receive banquet reservations and checks.

Member Barb Olson asked if the coupons out of the paper and the checks would be mailed to that address. It might not be a good idea for those to just sit around the office in a box, she said.

It would probably be fine to use the address, Mrs. Olson said, but the

association members need to know that the district isn't responsible if a reservation or check gets lost.

It would be good public relations to work with the alumni, said Dr. Cullen.

It's a two-edged sword, said Principal Duane Dorshorst, who will become superintendent in July. Handling the regular mail isn't a big deal, but handling the money and reservation forms could be. Maybe that would need to be mailed to the president.

The board could approve use of the address and then see how it goes, said member Monte Moore. The board agreed that they need more information and tabled the idea.

Member Dan Grafel suggested someone with the alumni association come to the next meeting.

School board checks policy book for needed updates

The Oberlin School Board continued working on the district policy book at its meeting last Monday.

The board members have been taking turns going through sections of the book since the beginning of the year.

The members approved the second reading of sections IA through IE in a unanimous vote. Members went through that part at the January meeting.

Member Barb Olson went through section IF through ING for the first reading last Monday. The section included lots of forms, including one for field trips. She said the building principals need to have the forms on hand in case they are needed.

The board approved the first reading in a unanimous vote.

Superintendent Pat Cullen said the district might have a chance to sell the old handicap bus at the end of the year. He said that the county is interested in the bus, but no action was taken.

In other business, the board:

- Held 10-minute and five-minute

closed sessions for personnel with board members only. There was no action taken.

- Held 15-minute and 10-minute closed sessions for personnel with the board and administrators. There was no action taken.

- Appointed member Monte Moore to work with member Dan Nedland as a negotiator after member Jerry Chambers said he wouldn't be able to serve.

- Heard from Dr. Cullen that the idea to combine the Northwest Kansas and Mid-Continent leagues might not work, as some of the districts in the Mid-Continent league aren't on board. High school Principal Charlie Haag said he plans on attending a meeting this month on the topic.

- Held 10-minute and five-minute closed sessions to discuss negotiations with the board and administrators. There was no action taken.

- Accepted the resignation of Tim Thornton, who teaches kindergarten at the grade school. This is his third year of teaching in Oberlin.

Commission locks in natural gas price

The Decatur County commissioners Tuesday approved locking in a price for 40 percent of the county's estimated gas use from November to next March.

Jeff Younger, with Seminole Energy Services LLC out of Hays, said the price is a little under \$7 a million British thermal unit, which will save the county about \$1 a unit compared to the price locked in last year.

The commissioners agreed it was a good idea to lock in part of the natural gas cost. It seems these are some of the lowest prices seen

in the last two to three years, said Commissioner Ralph Unger.

The county is looking for an emergency management director, said Commissioner Gene Gallentine. Is there anyone who is already working for the county who can do the job?

It's suggested that the director shouldn't be someone already hired for law enforcement or as an emergency worker, said Mr. Unger, because the jobs really overlap.

The county has received one application, Clerk Colleen Geihlsler

said, although no ads have run for the job. The commissioners agreed they would talk about the position at the next meeting.

The commissioners talked briefly about a request from dispatch for a new logger/recorder, which would cost \$19,900.

After looking at the paperwork, Mr. Gallentine said, it looks like there's a \$9,500 grant available for the item, but there's a \$4,765 yearly maintenance.

The commissioners tabled the item.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Briefly discussed writing a memo to the department heads urging them to make sure money is being spent on priority needs.

Just because something was done in past years, said Mr. Unger, doesn't mean that it has to be done every year. Mr. Unger and Mr. Gallentine said they would wait to discuss the idea again and take action when Commissioner Stan McEvoy is present.

County questions vehicle use

The Decatur County commissioners asked the county attorney last Tuesday if they had any say over a voucher to reimburse the sheriff for mileage to an out-of-town meeting.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine said he had a question about the voucher for a little over \$300 to reimburse the sheriff's office. It looks like the sheriff took his own car and charged mileage for the trip to Topeka and back for a meeting, he said.

The sheriff's office has a nearly

new Dodge Charger, said Commissioner Ralph Unger, and one reason to buy it was to drive to meetings so they wouldn't have to take a four-wheel drive truck.

The department has five vehicles, he said.

Mr. Gallentine asked if the commissioners had any authority in the situation.

Mr. Unger said they need to talk with County Attorney Steve Hirsch, who wasn't at the meeting at that time.

"They have enough vehicles,"

said Mr. Unger, "and if not, they should be driving the county van or car, not their own."

The time to address issues like these is now, said Mr. Gallentine. Budget cuts are coming from the state, which will mean less money for the county. It's the commissioners' duty to look at these items.

Later, Mr. Hirsch said the commissioners didn't have much authority on the issue as long as the sheriff is within his budget.

Flight safety seminar set

A Federal Aviation Administration safety seminar for pilots will be held in the terminal building at Colby's Shalz Field Municipal Airport from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 28.

The program will include technically advanced aircraft; the New Wings program (a training program that counts towards pilot safety training); airport operations class B, C, D, E and G; and the sport pilot program (a new program); and medical issues (FAA requirements for fitness).

Lunch will be free. For information, contact Mark Ostmeier at (785) 460-4438 or check www.faasafety.gov.

The event is sponsored by the Federal Aviation Administration Safety Team/Wichita Flight Standards District Office, MC Aviation Service, Great Plains Spraying, Friends of the Colby Airport, CBK Flyers and Dillon Stores.

City may decide on airport grant

The Oberlin City Council will look at a grant opportunity for \$150,000 from the Federal Aviation Administration at a meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

City Administrator Austin Gilley said the grant offer is to seal the existing runway and design rehabilitation of paving on the apron. The council will discuss whether to accept the \$150,000 grant. Mr. Gilley said he's been told by the agency

that the sealing project would probably be done this year.

The council will talk about a proposed wind-power ordinance again. Mr. Gilley said he received a sample ordinance from another city. At the meeting on Thursday, Feb. 5, Mr. Gilley said two bills in the Legislature could negate any action taken by cities. Those restrictions, he said, have been taken out.

At the same meeting, an engineer-

ing contract with Miller and Associates, out of McCook, was brought up. Mr. Gilley said the council will look at that this week also.

The council will also talk about the possibility of doing a city newsletter and purchasing accounting software for the office.

The meeting will be upstairs in The Gateway. Like all city meetings, it is open to the public.



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