

Owner convicted of arson

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
k.davis@nwkansan.com

After two days of listening to witnesses and lawyers, a 12-member jury convicted an Oberlin business owner of arson in a fire that destroyed Oberlin's bowling alley nearly four years ago.

The jury found Kenneth Morgan guilty of "arson in that he intentionally damaged Centennial Bowl and Red Crown Lounge, a building or property in which either Farmers Bank and Trust had an interest because it had a lien thereon, or of which Lloyds of London was an insurer."

The jury, made up of school district workers, farmers and ranchers, business people and retirees from Decatur County, found Mr. Morgan not guilty of another count, "arson in that he intentionally damaged a building or property described as the Centennial Bowl and Red Crown Lounge, in which Maurice Zodrow and/or Zodrow and Morgan Inc. had an interest."

The trial started last Wednesday with jury selection. The attorneys, Andrew D. Bauch, with the state attorney general's office, of Topeka for the state, and David O. Baumgartner of Phillipsburg for the defense, asking questions to pick 12 members.

The trial ended at 7:38 p.m. Thursday after the jury deliberated for over two hours before returning the verdicts.

Judge Bill Elliott released Mr. Morgan on bond that had previously been paid. Sentencing in the case was set at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 24.

After jury selection, the trial started with the state calling numerous witnesses, one of whom was Jerry Stein, who is a volunteer fireman who had also worked at the lounge in the past.

Mr. Stein said when he arrived at the fire in the early morning of May 30, 2005, the visibility in the building wasn't above a crawl level.

Mr. Baumgartner asked Mr. Stein various questions from which the jurors learned that Mr. Stein had been at the bar that night before the fire. Mr. Stein had a key to the business

Man faces the jury

Ken Morgan sat to the right of the judge, facing the jury of his peers, answering questions.

Mr. Morgan, who later was found guilty of arson, took the stand Thursday afternoon, as the last witness for the defense.

While under oath, Mr. Morgan said he'd lived in Oberlin for 15 years. In that time he and Maurice Zodrow formed a partnership and bought the Centennial Bowl and Red Crown Lounge south of town.

The building was in poor shape when he bought it for \$70,000, he said, and the men borrowed \$10,000 for updates. He added that he had about 11 years of "sweat equity" in the building.

Mr. Morgan's lawyer, David O. Baumgartner of Phillipsburg, asked about a fire that had taken place prior to the May 2005 fire, for which the defendant was on trial.

The first fire was in the kitchen, in the fryer, said Mr. Morgan. The building was closed for a month, and there was lots of clean up work, a lot of hours worked primarily by Mr. Morgan.

Financially, said Mr. Baumgartner, (See MAN on Page 5A)

and had closed in the past, although he wasn't working that night.

He told the jury that Mr. Morgan didn't appear angry or worried that evening, but seemed tired.

Mr. Stein said he saw Mr. Morgan at the fire after the call came in. He (See SENTENCING on Page 5A)

City nixes wind for making power

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkansan.com

After looking at ordinances that regulated windmills and generators from several other towns, the Oberlin City Council voted Thursday to ban wind-powered generators in the city limits.

The council has been going over ideas for several months on how to regulate wind-powered generating equipment, both for esthetics and because the city's electrical system is a primary source of income.

After discussing a 14-page document, which is how the City of Sterling regulates privately owned electrical generation systems, Councilwoman Marcia Lohoefer proposed an ordinance to ban wind-powered electrical generators.

Mrs. Lohoefer said she thought this was the right way to go because:

- The state of Kansas is lagging behind in laws dealing with electrical generation by wind power.
 - The city's income from its electrical system would decrease if people started generating their own power.
 - The expenses of maintaining the system and taxes would have to increase if there were fewer people using it.
 - The citizens of Oberlin wouldn't like a bunch of towers around town.
- Councilwoman Rhonda May agreed that an ordinance against using wind power would simplify

the problem for the council. Councilman Ray Ward agreed, saying that he didn't think the city could afford for people to have their own generation units. If people start putting in wind generators to decrease their bills, the (See WIND on Page 10A)

Council roundup

At its meeting on Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Passed an ordinance banning wind-powered electrical generators within the city limits. See story at left.
- Learned that City Administrator Austin Gilley would like stop a contract to purchase software from a Phillipsburg vendor and use a different firm. See Story at right.
- Was told that the new sewer lagoons south of town stink. See Story on Page 10A.
- Decided to ask for proposals from developers for building a motel in town. See Page 3A.
- Agreed to buy equipment for an automated weather observation system at the airport even though it might be a while before it could be put into use, and decided to go with a federal grant to put a slurry seal on the runway. See Story on Page 3A.



Tearing down old center

ON THURSDAY, contractor Dave Bose (above) extended the long arm of his backhoe to knock down the front wall of the old Golden Age Center. Demolition on the project started on Monday, with men taking out the windows of the center and Sunflower Cinema. Mr. Bose (below) moved some debris by hand on the second day, after he put a hole in the back wall of the center. Mick Barth (bottom) moved debris last Wednesday to get it ready to load into the county dump trucks. By Monday, all of the walls, except the one shared with the theater, were down and the men

were removing the concrete floor.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Administrator wants to drop software vendor

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkansan.com

Oberlin City Administrator Austin Gilley asked the City Council on Thursday to back out of an agreement it had made in November for computer software and go with a different vendor.

Mr. Gilley said that the Muni-

soft program for utility billing, fund accounting and payroll provided by Computer Business Systems out of Phillipsburg is outdated and not very user friendly.

He said that he has looked at software the Kansas League of Municipalities suggests for (See SYSTEM on Page 10A)

State trooper's stop nets 200 pounds of dope

The Kansas Highway Patrol arrested two people and confiscated over 200 pounds of marijuana during a stop last Wednesday.

At 4:43 p.m., the patrol said, a trooper stopped Francisco A. Duenas-Castaneda, 35, and Laura Y. Salcido Cruz, 31, because there was no expiration date on the temporary tag on their 2001 Honda van. According to the booking

log, Ms. Cruz's ID said she is from Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. Mr. Duenas-Castaneda didn't have an ID on him.

Trooper Phil Henrickson stopped the two near milepost 94 on U.S. 36 in Decatur County, according to a press release. At the stop, the 264 pounds of marijuana was found in the vehicle.

(See TROOPER on Page 10A)

*Man testifies in case

(Continued from Page 1A) gartner, how was business? Good, said Mr. Morgan, adding that it was his only source of income. He had purchased his house with what he made and had money in the bank.

Although his house had been paid off, he added, he recently had to take out a mortgage on it to help pay some expenses.

Would it be accurate to say the weekend of the fire was a busy weekend? asked the lawyer. Yes, said Mr. Morgan. It was alumni weekend, which is also Memorial Day weekend.

Mr. Morgan went through what happened the morning of the fire. He said he closed the bar at 1 a.m., counted the deposit, which was mostly made up of \$10s and \$20s, adding up to about \$4,000.

He said he restocked the shelves, cleaned and took the deposit to the bank at 2 a.m. Monday morning.

He said he learned about the fire when Mr. Zoderow called him at home and said the bowling alley was on fire and would be a total loss.

How did that affect you? asked Mr. Baumgartner. Almost unable to talk, Mr. Morgan said it was tough. Mr. Baumgartner handed his client a box of tissues.

What was going through your mind? Mr. Morgan said he was wondering what it was like on the inside because he had gone through a fire before.

"It was like hell to go through," he said.

At the scene, he said, he walked around and watched. He said he wanted to see how bad the inside was and so he walked up to the aluminum-framed door on the south side of the building. It was moving a little, so he held it to steady it and looked inside. Mr. Morgan said that was how he burned his hands.

Mr. Morgan said he walked into the entryway of the building and someone yelled at him to get out.

Mr. Baumgartner asked him if he said anything to anyone about his burned hands. Mr. Morgan said he didn't. Instead he put them in a puddle. He said he drove himself home. His hands started to hurt and he went to Community Hospital in McCook, which is where he said he normally doctors.

He added that he didn't remember much about the trip or the doctor's visit.

"I just kept thinking, 'How are we going to clean it up,'" said Mr. Morgan.

Is there any explanation for his giving the wrong name, birth date and Social Security number at the hospital? asked Mr. Baumgartner. No, said Mr. Morgan. He said he hadn't told anyone that he spilled gasoline on his hands, either.

Showing the defendant photos from inside the office in the building, Andrew Bauch, with the state attorney general's office, asked if Mr. Morgan left the desk and file cabinet doors open. He said he hadn't.

It came out that there was \$300 in rolled quarters missing that hadn't been located.

Jurors learned that beer and alcohol were unaccounted for as well. There was a cooler filled with unmarked rib-eye steaks wrapped in foil. A sledge hammer was found in the ruins.

A key for the south door to the business was kept in the office, said Mr. Morgan, adding that it hasn't been recovered.

There had been break-ins previously where beer and liquor were taken and someone tried to pry the cash register open, he said. A security system had been installed, but it wasn't working the night of the fire.

"Did you set this fire?" asked Mr. Baumgartner.

"No," said Mr. Morgan.

He and his partner were trying to sell the business? asked Mr. Bauch, the prosecutor. Yes, said Mr. Morgan. In your words, the reason given to the fire investigator was that you were tired after 10 years? he asked.

Mr. Bauch then asked if Mr. Morgan remembered telling fire marshal's investigator Melvin Dale that he never crossed the threshold of the building that morning. Right, said Mr. Morgan. — Kimberly Davis



IN THE COURTROOM Thursday afternoon, defense lawyer David Baumgartner (above left) sat next to defendant Ken Morgan while prosecutor Andrew Bauch, with the state attorney general's office, sat at a separate table to the side. A picture of a cooler full of meat was showed on the wall as a piece of evidence. Fire marshal Melvin Dale (below) took pictures at the scene of the fire on May 30, 2005.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis and Steve Haynes

Lawyers address jurors

Lawyers for the state and defense each took 20 minutes Thursday to sum up their cases and tell the jury why they should cast a guilty or not guilty verdict before the 12-member crew headed for the juror's room to deliberate.

The state has the burden of proof, said Judge William Elliott, so he can split his 20 minutes. Andrew D. Bauch, from the state attorney general's office, decided to start with 15 minutes. The defense lawyer, David Baumgartner of Phillipsburg, got his 20 minutes and then turned the floor back to Mr. Bauch for five more.

The defendant, said Mr. Bauch, burned down the bowling alley on May 30, 2005. In the defendant's own words, it was always someone else's time to have fun. On May 30, 2005, he made the decision that it was his turn.

The building had been up for sale for \$250,000 with little to no interest, he told the jury. The insurance policy was for \$250,000. The defendant was ready for a trip to England or wherever else he wanted to go so that he could have a good time.

Mr. Morgan was alone in the building, the prosecutor said; he closed at 1 a.m. and says he made a deposit at 2 a.m. There's no way to prove that deposit was made at that time, however.

He had enough time to stage the scene and make it look like a burglary. He had the motive to torch the place.

If this was a random crime, said Mr. Bauch, how would someone know that the good meat in the freezer was wrapped in aluminum foil. It was not marked.

The defendant got a call from his partner at 3:52 a.m. and it took him 15 minutes to get to the scene. What was he doing for 15 minutes? he asked. Was he having a hard time getting dressed because his hands were fried?

No one saw the defendant touch the aluminum door or even get close enough to be burned, he noted.

The defendant claims he was so emotionally distraught that he went to the hospital in McCook and gave the wrong information. That shows he was trying to cover up, said Mr. Bauch.

"Convict him of the crime," said Mr. Bauch, "because that's what the evidence shows."

No one knows how they will respond to stress, Mr. Baumgartner said. The stronger the stimulus, the stronger the reaction can be.

The jurors need to ask themselves how they would feel if they came home and found the house engulfed in flames. What if it was their only



livelihood engulfed in flames? he asked.

Business was good. The building was insured, the defense lawyer said, but in recent years the men had dropped \$50,000 of that coverage. The building was underinsured.

The trip to Europe had already been planned, Mr. Baumgartner said. Besides, if he had planned the fire, then wouldn't Mr. Morgan have left a bank bag to be burned and taken most of the \$4,000 cash deposit?

Instead he took the deposit to the bank.

"He didn't burn this building," said Mr. Baumgartner.

The focus, he said, was on his client early on because his hands were burned. If he had walked into the emergency medical technicians that morning and told them he had burned his hands on the door, they wouldn't be here.

Where did the ice chest found in the kitchen come from? he asked, or the sledge hammer?

It was Undersheriff Randy McHugh's responsibility to find out, he said, and in this case, the officer had "tunnel vision." There were other lapses, he said. It was lousy police work, he said. Melvin Dale, the state fire marshal's inves-

tigator, delegated work and nothing got done.

"One question," said Mr. Baumgartner. "If this was your family member, would you want them to be convicted after an investigation like this?"

He added that he hoped the jury would return a verdict of not guilty.

Loose ends with the case, said Mr. Bauch. Yes, the investigator did say that, but that doesn't take away from the evidence presented.

What random criminal knows which food is the expensive food? he asked

The defendant and his partner were stuck with the bowling alley and wanted to get out. The insurance money was \$250,000, although they didn't get that much.

Why make the cash deposit at the bank? asked Mr. Bauch. Probably so as not to cheat his friend.

Mr. Dale said the burns on Mr. Morgan's hands were not contact burns, Mr. Bauch said, and he has investigated over 700 fires. Gasoline was found at the scene, and it could have caused the burns.

The state has proven the case beyond a reasonable doubt, he said.

"Convict him."

— Kimberly Davis

*Sentencing scheduled for March

(Continued from Page 1A) was walking in circles, mumbling to himself and making sobbing noises.

There had been a fire earlier at the lounge, he said, which started in a fryer in the kitchen.

Wouldn't it be a lot of work to repair the place again? asked Mr. Baumgartner. Yes, agreed Mr. Stein.

Next came a string of witnesses who testified that Mr. Morgan had showed up at Community Hospital in McCook that morning for treatment of burns to both hands. Witnesses said he gave the hospital what turned out to be a false name, Social Security number and address.

Lois Petty, an emergency medical technician who works at the McCook hospital, was first up.

Mr. Bauch asked her if someone had come in at 5:05 a.m. on May 30, 2005, with burns on his hands. Ms. Petty said someone did, but the hands were wrapped. She identified that someone as the defendant, describing what he was wearing that day.

Ms. Petty went on through the check-in procedure. She said she took the defendant's name, which he gave as Gary Marks, and address, which he gave as Route 3, Box 12 in Danbury. Mr. Morgan also gave a birth-date and Social Security number which were put into the hospital computer. Later, the jurors heard a witness state that Mr. Morgan came in later to have that information changed because it was wrong.

What did the defendant say happened to his hands? asked Mr. Bauch. Ms. Petty said he said he was lighting a stove in his house to take the chill off. He was pouring gas on it and a flash-back burned his hands.

Ms. Petty said she hadn't talked to police or the Kansas fire marshal's investigator, Melvin Dale, until recently, but she had made notes.

About three months ago, during the pretrial period, she said, she learned of the arson charges.

At check-in, she said, she didn't ask to see the defendant's identification because he couldn't reach into his pockets because of his burns.

How can you recall this information? asked Mr. Bauch.

"There are just some cases that stand out," Ms. Petty replied, adding that this one was unusual.

Next was Brandy Henson, a registered nurse at the hospital. She too recalled the burn patient, and identified the defendant.

Mr. Bauch showed Ms. Henson her nurse's notes to refresh her memory on the name and what happened.

Ms. Henson said one of his hands was wrapped and another was in

water when she saw him. She said he said he burned his hands while lighting a wood stove.

The patient received Demerol for the pain, she said, so he couldn't drive home for four hours.

She said a call was made to the next witness, Crystal Cook, another nurse at the hospital, to make a bed ready for him. Mrs. Cook of Oberlin, who works in McCook, said she recognized the defendant, not as Gary Marks, but as someone she knew as Kenny. She identified Kenny as the defendant by his clothes. She added that she knew him from the bowling alley.

Mrs. Cook said she commented that she wouldn't have known him by the name Gary Marks and the defendant smiled and chuckled. She said she thought maybe Kenny was his nickname.

She said she ended up giving the defendant a ride home, as her shift ended before his four hours after getting the narcotic was over. On the drive to Oberlin, said Mrs. Cook, Mr. Morgan told her the bowling alley burned. He said that the appliances in the kitchen were explosive and that he had gone in to get something and burned his hands.

On the ride home, asked Mr. Baumgartner, did Mr. Morgan smell of gas or smoke? Smoke, said Mrs. Cook.

Later, through another witness from the hospital, the jury learned that Mr. Morgan returned that week to pay his bill and change the name, address and pertinent information on the account.

Fonda Farr said the company she works for, Fredrickson Insurance Agency, wrote an insurance policy through a brokerage for the building. A firm with Lloyd's of London actually carries the policy, which is renewed yearly, she said. The building was insured the day of the fire, she said, and Maurice Zoderow, Mr. Morgan's partner, called in a claim that day.

When Mr. Morgan was in the office after the fire, she said, she talked to him about the burns on his hands. Mrs. Farr said he had grabbed a door on the south side of the building and that was how he burned them.

On the second visit to the office, later in the week, she said, she noticed that his nose was blistered. She said he told her he had been out in the sun.

Had the owners had the insurance policy for a while? asked Mr. Baumgartner. Were the premiums paid? Yes, said Mrs. Farr.

He talked with her about the building being underinsured for what it would cost to replace. Mrs. Farr said without the policy in front of her, she couldn't say for sure how much the building was insured for.

Fire case lasts four years

A fire call came in around 3 a.m. 3 1/2 years ago, and now the case is just about over, with a guilty verdict and an Oberlin man waiting for sentencing next month.

On Monday, May 30, 2005, Dale Heyen, who lives in the apartment above Oberlin Tire, just west of the bowling alley, got up in the middle of the night to use the restroom. He said he stopped at the kitchen table, where he kept a glass of water to get a drink and heard the roaring noise of the fire.

In an article in *The Oberlin Herald* on Wednesday, June 1, 2005, Mr. Heyen looked out the south window and could see the flames. He called 911.

Fireman pried open the back doors to the kitchen and bowling alley and the front door to the lounge so they could knock down the flames.

Fireman Patrick Pomeroy, who was second on the call, said a large stained-glass window on the west

side of the lounge was bulging. An explosion shattered the front, or south door of the bowling alley. It blew glass and score sheets 90 to 100 feet across the parking lot.

Volunteers who worked all morning were called back later to help move debris and shovel up the floor when Melvin Dale, a state fire marshal's investigator, arrived.

Authorities suspected arson from the start. Fire Chief Bill Cathcart told the paper, "About all I can tell you right now is that the bowling alley is a total loss. The origin is suspicious. The state fire marshal is going over it now."

Mr. Dale worked for hours, taking pictures and gathering evidence.

At the time, he said, he didn't find the source for an explosion, but it could have been the result of the rapid buildup of heat from the fire.

Before he left, he did call the fire arson, saying the cause was still unknown. — Kimberly Davis



Mary Ann W.

Go Painlessly™



MAXIMUM STRENGTH
THERA-GESIC
PAIN RELIEVING CREAM



Tom W.

Once for Ounce – Compare and Save!

The top-quality & top-value pain creme

* System too old administrator tells city council

(Continued from Page 1A) ies, and Munisoft is not one of the products on the list. He said that he has talked to other cities. Those using the Munisoft system are not happy with it, he said, and would like to change but those using the software suggested by the League are satisfied.

"Munisoft offers great support," Mr. Gilley said. "We've been using it every day. And that's not good."

Mr. Gilley said he can't say enough good things about the efforts of Munisoft designer and owner Ken Artz. Mr. Artz has been in Oberlin numerous times, he said, and has been available by phone night and day.

He suggested that the council offer to pay Mr. Artz for his time and for some hand-held meter reading devices he had ordered for the city.

The administrator also invited Mr. Artz to address the council, which he did.

Mr. Artz told the council that he felt his system, which is Windows based, was not the cause of the city's problems. A hardware crash was the problem, he said.

In November, he said, the city's

computer system crashed and it was discovered that the latest backups were from September.

"I gladly availed myself nights and weekends and helped rebuild and merge systems," he said.

"I've tried my best to provide top notch service," Mr. Artz said.

The city accepted his proposal in November, he noted, and said that he was taken aback when Mr. Gilley told him he was unhappy with the system when Karen Larson and Patty Skubal, the city clerk and city treasurer, have said they were happy.

He noted that the company Mr. Gilley proposes to use instead of his, Asyst, is in Texas and service help may be harder to get.

Mayor Joe Stanley said that he and two council members would discuss the problem and make a recommendation. Members Rob McFee and Rhonda May volunteered to be on the committee.

Mr. Artz said he had just gotten the new system installed a week ago and is ready to start training the staff on it. He said he also refurbished some old hand-held meter readers for the city.

* Wind energy won't blow in city

(Continued from Page 1A) city will have to start raising taxes, he said, adding that he didn't think people would be saving money in the long run.

Mayor Joe Stanley asked if the ordinance would only cover wind energy and not solar power.

Ms. May said she didn't think the electrical generation using solar power was a big deal right now.

Councilman Rob McFee disagreed with the ordinance.

"You're eliminating peoples' right to do with their own property what they want to," he said.

Mrs. Lohofener agreed that was so.

Ms. May added that the council has been working towards this for some time.

"If we don't want them to have it," she said, "just say we don't want them to have it."

However, she added, if technology improves, the city might want to revisit the ordinance.

The ordinance passed with Mr. McFee voting no.

Sewer raises stink

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkans.com

The Oberlin sewer lagoons stink, council members heard at their meeting on Thursday.

No one seemed surprised — or to disagree.

The city has had trouble keeping the bacteria which break down organic material alive over the last couple of winters, City Administrator Austin Gilley said. When the organisms don't do their job, the lagoons stink.

Mr. Gilley said he received a letter of complaint about the smell and is looking for a way to solve the problem before next winter.

Councilwoman Rhonda May agreed that the pond odor could be detected in town.

"It smelled pretty bad last spring," she said.

Councilman Rob McFee agreed.

"It smells now," he said, "but that's the nature of poop."

In other business, the council:

- Looked over a proposed one-page newsletter Mayor Joe Stanley put together with the suggestion that the city send one out every three months with the city utility bills. The council agreed that the newsletter was a good idea, but Councilwoman Rhonda May wanted to know who would write it each time.

- Was told Mr. Gilley had reviewed the city's contract with Miller and Associates, it's engineering firm, for a water treatment plant. The contract, signed in October 2006, can be terminated for cause or convenience, he said, adding that he has found no cause and, at this time, it isn't convenient for the city to terminate since Miller hasn't had a chance to do any work on the plans after a pilot study was completed. Miller has not charged the city, he said, even though the city has defaulted on the timeline in the contract.

Making beautiful music



CELLO PLAYER HALEY KISTLER, Colby, concentrated on her music during a concert at the Morgan Theater in The Gateway on Sunday afternoon during a concert by the Pride of the Prairie Orchestra, which has more than 30 members from all over northwest Kansas and eastern Colorado. The orchestra played tunes ranging from "The Star Spangled Banner" to "The Lord of the Dance" and "Piano Concerto in A Minor."

— Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Chamber gets final OK for furniture

Members of the Oberlin Convention and Visitors Bureau voted Thursday to pay one-third of the cost of new furniture for the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce office.

Manager Tina Watson said the Oberlin Business Alliance already had agreed to pay for a third of the cost as long as the bureau said yes, too. Each group would then pay just over \$427, with the Chamber board paying the other third.

Sharleen Wurm, museum curator and a bureau board member, moved to approve the purchase. The Chamber provides office services for the alliance and the bureau, which make regular payments to the Chamber.

Surely, said Carolyn Burtis, owner of Metcalf Real Estate, there won't be other entities coming to the group asking for something like this. Should the Chamber be raising the money for the furniture,

she asked.

Gary Anderson, owner of the LandMark Inn, said he too had some concern with helping pay for the furniture, but that office is a window for visitors and it does reflect on the group.

If the bureau helps pay for this for the Chamber, said Mrs. Burtis, will there be something else down the road?

The group came to a consensus that this would be a one time thing.

The bureau pays the chamber \$350 every quarter for office services, said Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp.

No matter how the groups are separated, said Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener, people will go to the Chamber office to get information.

County invited to center

The Decatur County Good Samaritan Center's administrator invited the commissioners to a facility assessment scheduled for Monday morning.

Administrator Janice Shobe said the center will pay for the assessment, but since the county owns the building she wanted to let the commissioners know what's going on and invite them.

All Good Samaritan places are having facility assessments done, she said, and the plant assessment is just part of that. The purpose is to look at the capital needs for the center, census, staffing ability, demographics, market potential and other things.

The assessment will be done by JPS Associates out of Illinois, said Mrs. Shobe. The results will probably be done in May.

What's the center's census now? asked Commissioner Ralph Unger. Mrs. Shobe said there are 46 residents now. The center has one open bed, but there's a waiting list, so it will fill.

* Trooper finds pot

(Continued from Page 1A)

County Attorney Steve Hirsch, who wrote the release, said the two have been charged with one count of possession of hallucinogenic drugs with the intent to sell. The two were still in the Decatur County Jail as of Monday. On Thursday, they had a first appearance before District Magistrate Judge John Bremer who set the bond at \$300,000.

Trooper Allan Lytton, public relations, said he isn't sure where the two are originally from or where they were going. Two hundred and sixty-four pounds of marijuana is a large amount, he said. There hasn't been a stop with that amount in this area for a few years, he said, except along I-70.

Deveny Motors
5x 11.25
full color ad
in GDN