

Gateway events filling up

The Gateway civic center had a good 2012, and so far, this year is shaping up as well.

"The League of Kansas Municipalities will have a program here on March 27," said City Administrator Karen Larson at the City Council meeting Jan. 17. "I've been on them to use The Gateway, and this year, they are."

"And there are a few more things going in February. We have a lot more people that are calling about using The Gateway, so that's encouraging. Another thing I thought was encouraging is that at the end of the year, we had \$66,000. Though most major repairs come out of (The Bremer family's) donation, day to day, this is amazing. We've never ended a year with that much."

"That's a hell of a change there for The Gateway," agreed Mayor Rob McFee.

In other business, the council:
 • Heard that there will be a community meeting at 7 p.m. tonight at the senior center with John Grace, who is leading a study on Decatur County's services for the elderly for his consulting firm, Grace Team.

"Mr. Grace is going around town doing a study on how we treat our seniors ...," Mrs. Larson said. "There are 909 people in the county 65 or older, and it's projected that there will be 817 at the end of 2013. That's a 10 percent loss in one year. He's finding that most people with the biggest income are the seniors, and that's interesting because there aren't a lot of high-paying jobs to come back for."

• Learned that the cemetery received an anonymous donation of \$3,500. The donation, Mrs. Larson reported, was given to help pay for 11 new headstones for Civil War veterans. Sextont Jeremy Tally said that he has ordered the stones, which measure 12 by 20 inches.

• Received a new cash flow report. Mrs. Larson said the city's debt totals \$3.1 million.

• Approved a motion to appoint Chris Koerperich to the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Planning Commission.

• Decided to hire a new officer for the set wage of \$13.50 an hour.

• Agreed to hire a new water assistant, to be trained to do sewer and water treatment, by the end of the year for \$11.50 an hour.

• Made the final payment of \$49,041 to Bryant and Bryant Construction for the street-paving project.

• Went into closed session to discuss non-elected personnel for 25 minutes; nothing was declared afterward.



IT WAS A ROWDY good time at the Morgan Theater in The Gateway on Saturday, as the comedy/musical group Branson on the Road (above) filled the joint with their country, bluegrass and rockabilly tunes. The band featured bass player Brian Capps (left), lead singer and guitarist Debbie Horton and jack-of-all-trades Donnie Wright.

— Herald staff photos by Stephanie DeCamp



Country club to have membership drive in spring

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
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Sunny days and high temperatures may spell hardship for some, but for others, it only spells one word: golf.

This year, the Oberlin Country Club and Golf Course has taken its member prices down a notch to encourage people to join, and is already open for those who like to play.

"The (price for) singles has gone from \$500 to \$425 a year," said club President Bill Goscha, "and for families it's down from \$550 to \$500. We're trying to encourage people to re-up or become new members."

But it's not all par for the course. The club has discounted its memberships because it's already facing a tough year.

"Basically, we're running real close, money-wise, to keeping our course open and operating," he said. "Our course is in excellent shape right now, but it takes a lot of money to keep all the mowers going and the bills paid, and our membership is down to a point where we're barely making it. So we're trying to do a membership drive, starting now, for this spring to get our numbers built back up."

Mr. Goscha said that the club had about 57 members last year, and needs to get that number back up between 65 and 70 to run smoothly.

"It takes a certain amount of overhead to have the course in the condition the people want and expect," said club treasurer Gary Walter, president of The Bank. "I think our budget is right around \$80,000 to \$85,000...."

This past year, because of repairs and the drought, and a lot of those extenuating circumstances, we transferred a lot of money out of savings, around \$12,000. Thankfully we had the ability to do that. And that's on top of about \$4,000 in donations.

"In 2011 we transferred a lot into savings and didn't need to transfer out much. In 2012, unfortunately, that wasn't the case. It's expensive."

Both Mr. Walter and Mr. Goscha said the board plans tournaments, benefits and other events to help support the course, but nothing has

been scheduled yet.

Mr. Walter said that a lot of people think of the golf course as something they like to have, but not necessarily support.

"For example," he said, "I don't go to the cinema very often, but when I do, I want it to be open. Unfortunately, if it isn't supported by people who will keep it up, it won't be there."

"Now, this is an open course we have, and you can pay \$25 to play all day, but we don't have enough cash to have everybody be able

to say, 'No, I won't be a member, I just want to pay green fees.'

"If that happens, then we won't be able to keep it open for when people want to play. It's just like anything else here that relies on participation."

And just like the cinema, museum and other activities, for those who love it, it's a passion.

"Golf is something where you can go out into the fresh air and enjoy other people and company," said Mr. Goscha. "You can go

out and actually relax. I go out and golf, and it takes my mind off all the problems of the world and everything. You can just put your mind at ease."



RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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10	11	12	13 Dr. Frankum Surgery	14 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	15 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	16
17	18	19 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	20 High Plains Cardiologist	21 Kirsten Angel Dietitian	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

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