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Activities Budgets Discussed By School Board

MAY 19TH 2011 BY NEWS

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*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

School bells will, indeed, ring this summer in the Dexter schools as the district proceeds with summer school plans.

Questions concerning the funding of the summer school program were resolved when the Missouri General Assembly recessed last week and did not reduce funding for in the district for summer school programs.

Supt. Dr. Thomas Sharp informed members of the Dexter Board of Education that students participating in summer school will report for classes on June 2 and classes will continue until Jun 29. Core subjects will be the focus o the district's summer school program as well as credit recovery for high school students.

In addition, Sharp reported that Driver's Education would be offered this summer as it has traditionally been in the Dexter district. Students will not need to pay for enrolling in Drivers Ed this summer. Students and parents interested in the program should contact the high school office.

At its monthly meeting recently the board considered and gave its approval to a new plan for budgets for the high school activities. Each activity group – athletics, choir, band and others – will now have a set balance of funding instead of being clumped together in an

“activities” account.

“Right now it’s just in a big hodge-podge and it’s not a good way to budget,” said Sharp. “It really needs to be broken down individually. Starting off on next year’s budget we’ll have a budgeted amount for them to spend and then we’ll keep track of it. We want to keep it realistic but also give them something to shoot for.”

Sharp said the activities budgeting needed to be “more itemized and less catch-all.” He added they he would consult coaches and staff members on setting a realistic budget.

“I think it’s a good idea to do,” said board member Betty Keirse. Keirse is the “dean” of the school board, having served the longest of all the current members. “Everyone has to start watching what we’re spending.”

Sharp said he felt the new budgeting system will help reduce costs and allow administrators to have a better handle on spending.

“We can’t just keep on having negative balances in the activities budget,” Sharp commented. “We need a chance to set some guidestones and make it work. It’s the right thing to do.”

Sharp and Assistant Supt. Dr. Kim Flowers also explained a restructuring of the district’s Professional Development Committee to help facilitate better planning for district in-service programs for the teaching staff.

The new system for PDC will incorporate each of the building representatives who are also certified teachers in the development of the professional development programs. The adjustment will not cost the district, but instead will improve the professional programs to better fit the needs of the classroom teachers.

Sharp announced the district will receive two \$700 Summer Asthma Grants through the efforts of the nursing staff. The first grant will fund opportunities to educate middle school coaches about asthma education and training. The second grant will fund opportunities for education high school students and parents on asthma management.

Both projects are to be completed by Sept. 30 and are funded by the Missouri Department of Health.

Executive Session

During Executive Session the board accepted the retirement of a high school English instructor and the high school head custodian.

English teacher Julia Galloway submitted her retirement resignation and it was accepted by the board. Galloway taught a total of 27 years, 15 at DHS. She previously taught 12 years in Chillicothe. “Mrs. Galloway has been an asset to the high school, teaching freshmen and senior upper level classes,” said Matthews. Matthews said Galloway was involved in a number of student activities and “provided meaningful guidance to the English Department.”

High school head custodian Robert Rushing also submitted his retirement resignation. Rushing began working as a night custodian in 1998.

In other business the board:

- Approved Melissa Whitaker and Peggy Potts as co-sponsors of freshman football and basketball cheerleading and middle school cheerleading.
- Hired Don Goodwin as a bus driver. Goodwin is a former DHS teacher.
- Renewed the assignments of coaches and activity sponsors wishing to continue their extra-duty assignments.
- Tapped Chris Bolin for cross country and assistant girls basketball; Leonard Morse as head girls softball; Marc Thrower as freshman football assistant coach and middle school wrestling coach.
- Approved an amendment to the district’s sick leave policy.
- Approved a change of the district’s life insurance carrier and subsequent coverage.

Photo Above: Dextr superintendent Dr. Thomas Sharp (right) discusses with board members a change in budgeting high school activities. At left is board present Herman Morse.

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GIRL SCOUTS: Latonka Summer 'Suspended'

MAY 18TH 2011 BY NEWS

GIRL SCOUTS: Latonka Summer 'Suspended'

A SMT News Report

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. - Girl Scouts in Southeast Missouri will have look to another spot for summer camping experiences this summer, as the regional Girl Scout Council has suspended activities at Camp Latonka until flood damage at Lake Wappapello can be cleared.

The Girl Scouts of Missouri Heartland announced Wednesday that all activities at Latonka will be suspended.

Camp Latonka was opened in 1951 by the former Cotton Boll Girl Scout Council and has been the summer home for thousands of girls and young women in Southeast Missouri. However, flooding at Lake Wappapello this spring has forced the new Girl Scout council to suspend activities.

In a news release sent late Wednesday afternoon, the council said that with water levels at Wappapello 35 feet above normal earlier this month, the decision to suspend activities was made this summer.

“It is unfortunate that the historic flood has created this tough decision,” states Jennifer

M. Orban, CEO for GSMH, “but parents depend on us as an organization to provide a safe environment for their girls.”

All activities hosted at Latonka are now suspended until the water recedes and clean-up and restoration at the property can be completed. Latonka is located in Wayne County and home to summer, troop and family activities, as well as council-sponsored activities, such as summer resident camp.

Girl Scouts of the Missouri Heartland is offering summer camp at three additional locations, including Cherokee Ridge Program Center, near Sam A. Baker State Park and also located in Wayne County.

Valarie Moseley, Chief Membership/Leadership Program Officer for GSMH understands the disappointment for the girls.

“I know that many girls were looking forward to an outdoor camp experience this summer,” Moseley said. “Therefore, we will be adding additional weeks of resident camp at the Cherokee Ridge facility for those who would like to participate in activities such as horseback riding, aqua sports, and the science behind the solar system.”

Girls Scouts and their families may visit the Council’s website at www.girlscoutsmoheartland.org for more information on the additional sessions added at Cherokee Ridge.

Orban also said that individuals, companies and organizations that would like to offer donations to help with the clean-up and restoration of Latonka Program Center, may contact Angie Sullivan at 877-312-4764 ext. 1343.

Cotton Boll and four other councils in Missouri merged three years ago. Girl Scouts of Missouri Heartland is based in Springfield; regional service centers are based in Dexter and Cape Girardeau.

Photo Above: The Dining Hall at Camp Latonka (Latonka Program Center). The Girl Scouts of Missouri Heartland has suspended activities at the traditional Girl Scout camp due to flooding at Lake Wappapello. (SMT file photo by Annabeth Miller)

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Mayer Announces Town Hall Meetings

MAY 16TH 2011 BY NEWS

Mayer Announces Town Hall Meetings

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

State Sen. Rob Mayer announced Monday that he will be holding a series of Town Hall meetings throughout the 25th Senatorial District in Southeast Missouri.

“I will be available to answer questions about our session’s successes and look forward to your input on how we can better serve you in Jefferson City,” Mayer said. “I hope to see you at one of the town hall meetings will be holding town hall meetings.” A Town Hall meeting will be held in Dexter on at 4:30 p.m., Thursday, May 19 at the Dexter Chamber of Commerce building on Market Street. The complete list Town Hall meetings includes:

Thursday, May 19

Portageville

When: 10 a.m.

Where: Portageville Police Station, 201 E. Main Street

New Madrid

When: 1 p.m.

Where: New Madrid Community Building, 1199 Mill Street

Dexter

When: 4:30 p.m.

Where: Dexter Chamber of Commerce, 515 W. Main Street

Monday, May 23

Malden

When: 10 .m.

Where: Malden Chamber of Commerce, 607 N. Douglas

Dexter

When: 12 noon

Where: Dexter Kiwanis Club Meeting, American Steakhouse

Kennett

When: 2:30 p.m.

Where: First United Methodist Church, 300 College Street

Caruthersville

When: 4:30 p.m.

Where: Caruthersville Community Center, 1101 Carlton Street

Doniphan

When: 10 a.m.

Where: Caring Communities Building, 209 Highway Street

Tuesday, May 24

Poplar Bluff

When: 1:30 p.m.

Where: Three Rivers College

Piedmont

When: 4:30 p.m.

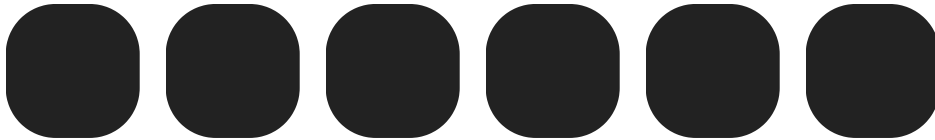
Where: Piedmont Chamber of Commerce, 215 S. Main

Photo Above: State Sen. Rob Mayer of Dexter (right) discusses status of legislation on the floor of the Missouri State Senator with State Sen. Mike Kehoe.

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Chamber Meets; Learns About Foundation

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Chamber Meets; Learns About Foundation

*By Annabeth Miller,
ShowMe Times Editor*

When members of the Dexter Chamber of Commerce gathered recently for a full-membership meeting, they gathered at facility that has long been a landmark in the community – first as Cox’s Market, then Patricia’s Tea Room, and now as Cox Corner, part of the Regional Healthcare Foundation’s network of programs.

Chamber president Ed Gargas called the meeting to order, and informed those attending that the Chamber has hosted seven ribbon-cutting celebrations at new businesses/new chamber members since January 1.

“That’s good for Dexter,” Gargas commented.

Following a lunch buffet, Diane Mitchell, executive director of the Regional Healthcare Foundation, spoke concerning the programs of the Foundation.

Mitchell began by reminding Chamber members that the Foundation owns the building and grounds at the Missouri Southern Healthcare. She explained that the Foundation leases the facility to SunLink Corp., which is a for-profit.

“Let me make it clear: Our lease requires SunLink to maintain the building,” Mitchell stressed.

The Foundation has developed several programs to help in creating a healthy environment in the region, including what Mitchell calls the “flagship” programs: Suicide Prevention, Mother-To-Mother, and Prescription Drug Assistance.

“We have had, in some shape or form, suicide prevention almost since our very beginning,” she said. She said the program now focuses on suicide prevention programs in junior high/middle schools. The program extends into several Southeast Missouri counties and Rebecca Musgrave leads that program.

Musgrave goes into schools and does a program called “Signs of Suicide.” Mitchell said Musgrave gives students a pre-test, shows them a video, talks with the young people and finally does a post-test.

“During that process she is able to identify students that she believes are at risk of suicide or have friends that are at risk of suicide,” Mitchell said. That data is reported to the

school counselor. Musgrave is also available to assist in local schools if there is a situation that occurs with students.

The second flagship program is the Mother-to-Mother program, with coordinator Yvonne Hall.

“Mother-to-Mother is an incentive based mentoring program for pregnant and parenting young women. Mitchell said the program emphasizes the health of the young mother and baby, as well as parenting skills.

“In recent years it has begun to emphasize education for the mother. What we realized was that we needed to help these young mothers break the cycle of poverty,” Mitchell said. She said the program tries to help these children of young mothers grow up and not become a part of the cycle of poverty.

Mitchell said every drug manufacturer today has some sort of prescription drug assistance program. However, each program is different, and the maze of programs and requirements can be difficult to navigate. Thus, the third flagship program for the Foundation – the Prescription Drug Assistance program.

“We have advocates who work with the pharmaceutical companies, fill out the applications, keep up with the refills” and help individuals navigate the programs successful. Mitchell said that in 2010, the Foundation’s Prescription Drug Assistance program was able to secure about \$5 million in prescription drugs for participants.

The Chamber Board of Directors will meet at noon, on May 24 at the Chamber of Commerce office Conference Room.

Photo Above: Regional Healthcare Foundation Executive Director Diane Mitchell spoke to the members of the Dexter Chamber of Commerce at a recent luncheon meeting.

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Team Completes 'Perfect Set' of Seasons

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Team Completes 'Perfect Set' of Seasons

By Annabeth Miller, ShowMe Times Editor

They might be called the “most successful and best behaved gang of girls” at T.S. Hill Middle School. And the title would be right on the mark.

The Dexter 8th Grade Girls Volleyball team had more than just a successful season this year – they’ve had a highly successful, fun-filled pair of seasons on the volleyball court.

Undefeated in everyway – from regular season games to tournaments– the girls are a close-knit group of young ladies who have fun on the court, are great examples of good sportsmanship, determined and truly enjoy victory!

The team was recognized Friday afternoon during the school’s spring sports recognitions assembly.

“They are undefeated in the Stoddard County Tournament in both the 7th and 8th grades,” said Coach Melissa Hahn. “And the amazing thing about this team is that they have never

lost one set.”

The girls’ statistics are staggering – never lost a sing set in two years of middle school play; outscored their opponents 1775-868 during the 7th and 8th grade years, won every tournament.

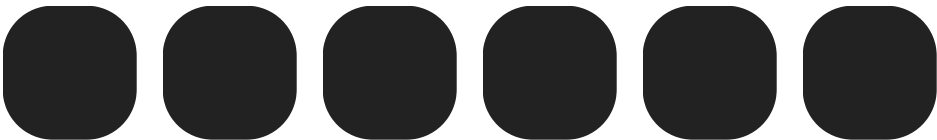
State Sen. Rob Mayer and the Missouri State Senate honored the team with a resolution. Brad Jarrell, a member of Mayer’s staff, presented the resolution to the team on behalf of the state senator.

The resolution noted that the the Lady Cats “gave their many fans good reason to cheer as they beat the Advance Lady Hornets during the hard-fought championship game” of the Stoddard County tournament 25-11 and 25-17, and praised the girls and coaches Hahn and Kara Lummukka.

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