

MORNING NEWS

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Panel Discusses Computer Needs

By Tony Hernandez
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FAYETTEVILLE — Washington County's antiquated computerized network is at a crisis that will cost the county more than a quarter-million dollars to pay for six new information technology employees, administrators said.

County Judge Marilyn Edwards and John Adams, IT director, asked the Quorum Court's Personnel Committee on Monday to approve three new computer technicians, a computer programmer and two network/computer administrators that could cost \$316,328 to fund.

Adams said he did not know how much it would cost the county in software and equipment to update hundreds of county computers. He does not have the time to put together the cost estimate, given the size and workload of his three-person department, he said.

Today, Adams supervises two employees and is waiting for a fourth to be hired.

That fourth position was approved by the Quorum Court last month. One of Adam's employees is on medical leave and is out for an unknown amount of time, Adams said. The fourth person, yet to be hired, will mostly work with the county assessor's computers because the position will be funded by the assessor's budget.

"If we make a wrong decision, I'll stand behind it to make the right decision," Adams said. "So if we made the wrong decision to hire too many people, I'll be the first to recognize that and be able to take appropriate action."

Staff productivity is hindered by the old computers, Edwards wrote in a memo to the Quorum Court dated last Friday.

Assessor Jeff Williams said last month slow computers affect services to taxpayers that visit his office. Almost one in three county computers use antiquated Microsoft software that can no longer be updated.

Convincing the full Quorum Court might take more work than what was presented to the committee Monday, despite the five-person committee's unanimous approval of the positions with no recommendations to the Quorum Court.

Justice of the Peace Micah Neal, who motioned to approve Edward's request, wants the full 13-person Quorum Court to vote on the issue at a later date.

Justices of the Peace Eva Madison, Candy Clark, Gary Carnahan and Rick Cochran said they hope Adams

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9/11 ATTACKS

Victim's Sister Feels Relief

LOCALS REACT TO BIN LADEN'S DEATH

By Larry Henry
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Alyson Low began sobbing with relief when she heard U.S. forces had killed Osama bin Laden.

The Fayetteville resident's sister, Sara Low, was an attendant on hijacked Flight 11 that slammed into one of the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, 2001, killing her and all on board.

"He took my sister's life, and he

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• VIDEO: ALYSON LOW'S REACTION
www.nwaonline.com/osama

needed to pay," Low said Monday. A self-described news junkie, Low said she was watching cable news at home late Sunday when broadcasters broke in to say President Obama would speak to the nation in minutes. She watched as the president, in a rare Sunday night

address, declared U.S. operatives killed the al-Qaida leader in a raid on his compound in Pakistan.

Low said the intensity of her emotions caught her off-guard. "I began to cry out of relief," she said. "My reaction was more intense and raw than I anticipated."

Low is one of many in Northwest Arkansas with loved ones connected to the 9/11 terrorist attacks or who since served in the military in Afghanistan or Iraq.

News of bin Laden's death brought a sense of relief for some, but also concerns about violent

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STAFF PHOTO SARAH BENTHAM
Alyson Low stands for a portrait in Fayetteville on Monday.

CUTTING NEW PATHS



STAFF PHOTO J.T. WAMPLER

Phil Hays walks on Monday near where the overflow from Lake Elmdale cut a swath in the landscape last week during flooding. The material from this cut is now seen downstream, including on Hays' property.

Floods Erode Lake Elmdale

GRAVEL FILLS CREEK

By Steve Caraway
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SPRINGDALE — Brush Creek disappeared last week near Phil Hays' home a half-mile below the Lake Elmdale dam.

The water didn't disappear,

but the creek bed filled up with red dirt and gravel, forcing floodwater out of the banks. The water rose within inches of his house.

The gravel comes from a gash in the earth — 40-to-50-feet deep — cut by floodwater at the foot of the lake's emergency spillway, Hays said Monday. The area received 12 to 15 inches of rain last week, according to the

National Weather Service office in Tulsa, Okla.

"There was no place for the water to go," Hays said. "It was cutting new paths anywhere it could."

Hays is a hydrologist who teaches at the University of Arkansas. Hydrologists study and try to solve water-related prob-

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Soggy Weather Stymies Area Craft Fairs

WAR EAGLE MILL, SHARP'S SHOW CANCELED

By Caleb Fort
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Craft fair operators hoped they could go ahead with events planned for this weekend, despite flooding last week at War Eagle Mill.

But organizers announced Monday

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NORTHWEST ARKANSAS CRAFT FAIRS
http://nwacraftfairs.com/

that they are canceling spring installments of the War Eagle Mill Craft Show and the adjacent Sharp's Show of War Eagle.

Although the mill was no longer

flooded Monday, the rain made the field designated for parking too wet to be useable, said Doug Walsh, the mill's general manager.

The area received 4 to 5 inches of rain in the past seven days, according to the National Weather Service.

"It's heartbreaking, and it's heartbreaking to tell these crafters, because they're depending on these shows too," said Lucy Sharp, an owner and promoter of the Sharp show.

The mill will still have live music and other activities for Mother's Day.

Walsh said canceling the spring show hurts, but is equivalent, in business terms, to missing a good weekend. He said he did not know how much money the mill will lose because of the cancellation.

The spring War Eagle Mill and Sharp shows draw about 150 vendors and 10,000 visitors, Walsh said.

The fall show, including the War Eagle Fair, draws about 400 vendors and 100,000 visitors, Walsh said.

Raymond Burns, president and CEO of the Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce, said he expects that cancellation of the two fairs could hurt the local economy.

However, Allyson Twigg Dyer, director of the Rogers Convention and Visitors Bureau, said in an email

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