DEAR EDITOR,
In regards to your article in Saturday's paper about Delphos moving to a state wide radio system, I would like to add some insight, to the actual substance of the article itself and the statement by Mr. Berquist that the radios we received were free. The radios we received cost $280,000 and yes they have been setting on a shelf for at least a year because city council would not approve the $10,000 per year fee to put them to full function. Did the city of Delphos pay $280,000 for those radios? No but the tax payers did. Federally funded? The taxpayers also probably paid for those radios we may (or may not) communicate with in Cleveland and Indiana, more on this later.
I have no problem spending $280,000 on radios if we needed them, but we do not! We have a perfectly functional radio system for our police, fire and EMS. We can reach Lima and Van Wert consistently. If we need to communicate with Cleveland we have the phone system, which brings me to my second point. The system being forced upon us operates at a frequency of 800 megahertz. The reliable distance for radios at this frequency is about 5 miles. The technology for us to talk to Cleveland on this system relies 100% on the internet. I'm not even sure we would have consistent and reliable contact with Lima or Van Wert without it. If the phone system is down because of any catastrophic event, like the June 29 storm that hit Delphos, my guess is we will not have the internet either, which we did not. This would leave us to ourselves. I have not and will not support any part of this system.
Council has been led to believe that the $20 per month per radio to operate this system was going to drop to $5 per month, either way, right now our system only costs us the maintenance to operate the radios, and, we are in control. If we keep stretching our general fund, taxes will have to go up, but not with my vote.
Just as a side note. How do we get 16 trillion dollars in debt? Free radios!
Jim Knebel
Councilman 3rd Ward