



THE RECENT RAIN has once again created a lake on the Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher grounds east of Bird City.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

Offer made to buy bank

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The Bank of Oberlin has made an offer and is asking for state and federal authorization to buy three branches of First National Bank of Goodland.

The Bank hopes to acquire the Colby, Bird City and Quinter branches of First National and has placed legal notices in the Oberlin Herald, Colby Free Press, Goodland-Star News, Bird City Times and the Gove County Advocate in Quinter as part of the purchase process. Publication was to begin today.

The Bank President Gary Walter said that the first step in the purchase was to reach an agreement with First National to buy the assets and liabilities of the three branches.

The second, he said, is to get permission from the state Banking Commissioner and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp., which insures both banks.

The third step, required by law, is to publish a notice in the local newspapers of the three branches — Colby, Bird City and Quinter — and two home offices — Oberlin and Goodland — of the affected banks for four weeks.

During and after the publication period, people have a chance to comment on the sale and say if they have some problem with it, he said.

If everything goes right and there are no huge problems during the comment period, the state and federal agencies will either OK the application or ask for additional information.

Mr. Walter said he couldn't say how long the process will take but estimated 60 to 90 days if all goes well.

"It's completely dependent on approval of the regulators," he said. "I'm hoping for the end of June."

It would be good for both banks, he noted, if the sale could go through by the end of June because banks have to put out a call report, or statement of condition, each quarter and that would be the end of June.

First National has branches in Goodland, Colby, Oberlin, St. Francis, Bird City, Quinter and Kirk, Colo.

Mr. Walter said the decision to buy just the three branches is purely a business decision and he couldn't really comment on it. Nor would he say how much The Bank has offered for the

three. Both those items, he said, are covered under a confidentiality agreement signed by both banks.

In Goodland, Dwane Timm, president of First National Bank, said that he could not comment on whether any of the other branches were for sale or not. A deal to sell the entire operation to a Colorado firm fell through last year.

While the approval process is going forward, Mr. Walter said, The Bank's people are working to make sure the information systems between the two can work together. This could take quite a bit of time, money and manpower, he noted, since computer and software systems of two businesses are seldom compatible.

However, he noted, the The Bank officials are optimistic that the sale will happen and want to be as ready as possible to make an easy switch over.

Customers of the affected branches shouldn't worry, he said.

"The only thing people will notice is a name change on their checks and the sign on the building," he said.

The Bank will buy back any checks that still say First Nation-

al from the customers in those branches that change, he said. That's just one of the liabilities that The Bank will assume along with things like contracts for postage machines.

Mr. Walter noted that it will be 10 years in May since The Bank bought the Colby, Norcat and Oberlin branches of Gold Bank. At that time, he said, people didn't notice much change and they won't again.

In fact, Gold Bank had just purchased the assets of Farmers National Bank in Oberlin and Norcat not long before, so those customers had a change of banks twice in just a few years.

The Bank today has branches in Oberlin, Jennings, Norcat, Oakley, Colby, Winona, Selden, Atwood, Herndon and Norton. With the addition of the three branches, it will have 10 full-service branches because the Colby locations would be counted as one and two part-time branches — Norcat and Herndon — have no loan officers on site.

As a bonus, Mr. Walter said, The Bank customers will be getting more electronic banking services, although it may take six months to a year to get them put into full effect.

Options for water line replacement proposed

Chris Miller, Miller and Associates, presented available options for a water line replacement plan at the Bird City City Council meeting on April 2. Mr. Miller compiled water leak and repair information to create a map indicating where the leaks have occurred. He explained that because the leaks have not presented a pattern to show the area of most need, he was unable to adequately determine the best plan of action. He said the best way to determine which lines may have slow leaks is by isolating individual lines and monitoring the pressure. But, they have been unable to perform the tests due to not knowing where the valves are located.

Mr. Miller suggested the city concentrate on the area inside Fourth Street, Bird Ave, and Third Street as a starting point, or phase 1. He estimated the project, to replace main lines, distribution lines, new water meters, and valves, in that quarter alone could cost as much as \$1.1 million.

Discussion turned to the council's desire to focus on street improvement projects this summer and concerns that the water line project

could destroy some of the street improvements. Councilman Dennis Wright wanted to know if the main goal is just to fix the bad areas or to replace everything. Mayor Troy Burr replied that the whole system is approaching one hundred years old and his idea is just to replace everything; to update. He said he would like to see a plan in place to have the whole system renewed.

Mr. Miller suggested leaving the main lines alone and only focusing on the distribution lines since the leaks have only occurred in those.

Discussion led to the suggestion of holding a "workshop" session in order to discuss the water line project and street improvement projects and how to coordinate them both. The council decided to hold the workshop session from 5-8 p.m., Monday May 7. The regular council meeting will begin at 8 instead of 7 p.m. Chris Miller will attend.

Mr. Miller requested that Mr. Schneider begin testing meters by pulling five random meters, running at least 200 gallons through them and documenting the results so that he can use the information for the workshop.



WORKING ON the wellness center were Joshua Keltz and Connor Hazuka on the ladder.

Times staff photo by Norma Martinez

Plans are being made for the upcoming thresher show

By Norma Martinez
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Plans are in progress for the 59th Antique Engine and Thresher Show coming up on July 26-28.

The stencil is being designed for buttons, shirts, hats and other items. This year's design represents both a steam engine and tractor. With the steam engine in mind, thoughts were drawn to a very detailed pencil sketch drawing of a 1908 Nichols and Shepard Steam Engine with a flag waving on the front and wheat stalks drawn on the side. The details were sketched with very minute details even of the driver and owner in overalls by David Pattison.

Mr. Pattison produced this pencil sketched drawing from a photo he took of this steam engine during the 2004 Tri-State Antique Engine and Thresher Show.

In March, DeAnza Ambrosier, daughter of Mr. Pattison, had a copy of this drawing along with a framed copy of an article she wrote when she was the co-editor of the *Bird City Times* September 1, 2005 newspaper. This article, which appeared in the September 1, 2005 issue, was one of her last articles she wrote before losing her father.

At that time she took credit for the article as DeAnza Church, but did not reveal she was his daughter.

Following, part of the article is reprinted:

Ms. Ambrosier began the article with this statement: "Things happen for a reason. Sometimes, the most mundane task or the simplest change of mind can create an impact on a person that will last a lifetime. The moment of truth or knowledge of this impact causes a stir and leaves one to wonder how it all came to be."

DeAnza's father, David had attended many previous thresher shows setting up his booth and selling his framed pencil sketches. He was so proud of the particular sketch of the 1908 Nichols and Shepard steam engine and the fine detailing down to the overalls worn by the tractor driver, that this year he even produced T-shirts with this drawing on it.

He came to the Thresher show with great anticipation of meeting the tractor driver. Because DeAnza was living in Bird City, he was sure she could help him recognize the man in the overalls. However, while she could not help him out, she was anxious to help him locate the driver as he wanted to thank him for being the model for his drawing.

Drawing people was not in his expertise as an artist. DeAnza said. Within an hour's time, someone told him they knew the driver to be Mike Smith from Colby, but he was unable to attend the show

that year as he was hospitalized battling cancer. This made him realize this drawing was much more than a piece of art.

Very shortly after finding out this information, Mr. Smith's niece came by and purchased a framed print. One-by-one, more of his family came by the booth and studied the intricate detail of the pencil drawing, and left with tears in their eyes thanking him for giving them a treasure that they didn't know existed before that day.

Mr. Smith died just weeks after the show. His wife called Mr. Pattison to thank him for the gift he unknowingly created for his family, and that her husband was able to see the drawing before he died. She asked him to send her 100 copies of his drawing so she could send them to all his family and friends. Knowing the drawing was meant to be as a memorial to his family and friends, Mr. Pattison was happy to do this.

Mr. Pattison also suddenly died just one month after the article and a photo of him looking at some of his work was published.

Her final words in this article left a legacy of remembrance as well as the sketching: "Some things really do happen for a reason. The moment of knowledge causes a stir that remains. It leaves one to wonder how it all came to be."