

Chamber agrees to take money collected for cart track

By KIMBERLY BRANDT
The Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce board agreed to set up a fund for the Amusement Authority to collect money for a go-cart track it wants to put in at the fair grounds. Lynn Groneweg, representing the authority at a Chamber board meeting on March 15 at A&W, said since the authority isn't a recognized non-profit organization, donations to it aren't tax deductible. He asked the chamber to set up a fund so the donations can be tax free. Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development

Corp., said this is similar to what the chamber did for Wheat Ridge Terrace Apartments. The track and related work will cost about \$40,000 and won't be done for the fair this summer. With the other work the authority does from June on, they won't have time to do the track, said Mr. Groneweg. The goal is to have it ready for 2002. He said the group would like to keep the track open two nights a week during the summer also to help keep kids in town on weekends. Mr. Groneweg said the authority might try to do a fund-raiser and Chamber Board President

Doug Brown said the chamber would be willing to help. Ms. Grafel told board members that the economic development board had a proposal for what they would pay for the chamber starting April 1. She said they would pay \$180 for rent and then half of the phone bill, which last year was around \$50. Ms. Grafel said the chamber looks like it is financially in shape and the economic board wants a flat fee every month. Before they paid half the rent, half Mrs. Gee's salary and a quarter of the federal tax withholding, which was around \$600. The total varied from

\$400 to \$600 to how much she worked. Chamber board member Mick Glaze said he wasn't very happy about the change but the board has to accept it. The cut will leave the chamber short about \$2,000. Mrs. Gee said they need to try to get new members, which she said brought up a question about the Oberlin Business Alliance and chamber connection. She said the alliance recently had a social where they offered a discount on memberships, but they didn't make those people join the chamber too. Mr. Glaze said the two groups started out of

the one, the chamber and the alliance used Mrs. Gee as a contact point. She prepares the agendas and takes the minutes for the group. In other business, chamber board members:
• Received \$600 from the Seeds of Hope Telethon.
• Held a closed session for 10 minutes to talk about Mrs. Gee's salary.
• Decided to send half the money to purchase ornaments with the Pioneer Family statue on them to see if they want to order 96 of them to sell. The ornaments will be a fund-raiser for the chamber.

Bureau inspects new center

By KIMBERLY BRANDT
The Oberlin Convention and Visitors Bureau met last Wednesday at the new tourist information center at U.S. 36 and U.S. 83, which members said will be open soon. The two-room building, which used to house the police department and, before that, a state port of entry, now holds a desk, chair, file cabinet and two brochure racks which are being filled with information about the county and the area. Most of the items have been donated to the bureau for the center. Helen Gee, manager of the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce, said two women have been found to work at the center. Doris Fringer and Donna Kempf have been hired through Green Thumb to work at the center. She said details are almost all worked out, including a phone, which will cost the bureau \$25 a month for its share. Mrs. Gee said she has called crafters in the area to put their items for sale in the second room. She said the tourist center will get 15 percent from each sale, which is the way Petro Pal used to sell their items.

For Tourism Week, which is the second week in May, Connie Grafel, marketing director of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., said she has arranged for popcorn provided by Gold Bank to be handed out at the center. The center will hold an open house on Thursday and Friday, May 10 and 11. Hours will be 9:30-1:30 and 2-6 Monday to Friday and from 9-1 Saturdays.

In other business, bureau members:
• Heard the group needs to update the antique brochure since there are several people listed who no longer sell the items in the area and some who need to be added.

Ms. Grafel said it was on the computer in the chamber and Mrs. Gee said she would look for it.

• Heard that Oberlin won't get the inside cover for advertising in the Northwest Kansas Hunting Guide like they did last year. Ms. Grafel said she told the organizers of the guide Oberlin would take the back page then. They have enough ads for a whole page.

• Talked about books about the area written by Ralph Moody. Mr. Anderson said lately he has had people come to visit here because they want to see the area those books are written about. He said one couple was from Minnesota.

Ms. Grafel said they should refer to the books on the Chamber web site. Mrs. Burtis said if there are people interested in them, the women at the tourist center need to be prepared to answer questions about the books.

Sorting out the bad stuff



CHECKING OUT CHEMICALS brought to a hazardous materials drop-off Saturday, county Road and Bridge employee Joe Graham was one of six helping to keep dangerous stuff out of the landfill. The drop off is being held every six months, and 362 pounds of oil-based paint, 616 pounds of latex paint, 450 gallons of used oil, 159 pounds of dry poisons (herbicides and fertilizers) 75 pounds of liquid poisons and 57 car batteries were brought in. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Council cuts chief's pay recommendation

The Oberlin City Council did not take Chief Wade Lockhart's recommendation of starting the newly hired police officer at \$9 an hour or at least higher than \$8.68. Instead the council settled on \$8.65 for the first three months.

Chief Lockhart said \$8.68 is what Sappa Valley Youth Ranch pays their starting employees and the city needs to be competitive. The last officer started at around \$8.35 an hour, he said, but that was also about four years ago. The lowest paid officer now is \$9.68.

Robert Gregory, the newest patrolman, has almost 17 years' experience in law enforcement, but may not be certified because he has been retired for the last five years. Chief Lockhart said Mr. Gregory will take the certification test without any training and see if he can pass it. If he does, he won't have to attend the police academy again.

Councilman Marvin Matchett suggested \$8.75 an hour and Councilman Stan McEvoy suggested \$8.65 for the first three months to see if Officer Gregory needs to be trained. In 90 days, the

council will review the wage. All voted in favor of the hourly wage.

The council approved a request from Chief Lockhart to purchase a radar gun for the fourth patrol car. He said they allocated \$6,000 for a new repeater and will only end up using about \$2,000 because the county will pay for half.

The surplus money may be used to buy an extra camcorder for the officers, but Mr. McEvoy said he wanted to see some prices first.

Chief Lockhart said he will probably be starting with letters about moving

untagged and junk vehicles out of the city soon. He said he wanted to wait until the winter was over so people could move the cars without worrying about the snow.

In other business, council members:

• Looked at a plan drafted by Councilwoman Leslie Bartels for access to The Gateway. She suggested instead of putting in a circle drop-off drive in the front of the building or to the west, to use a pull off from Morgan Drive which would be curved. That way, the walkway would be shorter and they could put up a hand rail. The drive could also have two benches for people to wait for their rides. Other parts of the plan included paving the dirt lot to the west and putting a sidewalk from the current parking lot to Elm Street

• Agreed to pay first-time summer staff \$5.50 an hour and those returning 50 cents over what they got last year.

• Decided to pay \$6.50 an hour for work at the cemetery.

• Approved a beer license for Ron Fowler's business on the corner of U.S. 36 and U.S. 83.

Trucks collide at U.S 36-U.S. 83 corner

During the rain showers about 8:40 a.m. last Wednesday morning, a truck driver from Oklahoma failed to stop and look at the sign at the intersection of U.S. 83 and U.S. 36 and pulled out into a truck driven by a St. Francis man.

Oberlin Police reported that Walter David Welter, 35, was traveling south on U.S. 83 and said he stopped, but then failed to yield to Stanley Peiker, 43, who was eastbound on U.S. 36.

Mr. Peiker's truck had over \$500 worth of damage to the passenger side and the semi tractor had pieces on the passenger side hanging on the ground.

Mr. Welter was given a ticket for a stop sign violation.

On Friday, Tyler Woolsey, 20, Oberlin, was driving a Dodge Intrepid by looking out the driver side window since his windshield was covered in ice. From Frontier Parkway, he turned onto Penn Ave. and hit a Chevy Scottsdale driven by Todd Tompkins, 41.

Mr. Woolsey's car had extensive damage to the front, while Mr. Tompkins had minor damage to the rear of his car. Mr. Woolsey was given a ticket for driving with an obstructed windshield.

Sunday, Ryan Leitner, 20, drove through a wire fence around a corn field at Sappa Park. His Camaro received damage to the entire driver's side.

Mr. Leitner told officers he was driv-

ing in the park and got distracted, then drove across the road and into the fence. Officer Troy Haas said he got a ticket for inattentive driving.

Friday afternoon, officers were called to Sappa Valley Youth Ranch after a young man there got angry with one of the staff members and put his hand through a window.

Officers are working on a case against Shawn Orcutt, 24, from Colorado, for false writing of a check with an unauthorized signature. Mr. Orcutt had been given a check by his employer and used it at Ampride for a sale of \$262. Police said he was not authorized to sign the check.

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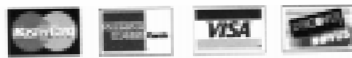
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338 N. PENN AVE. OWN ONE OF OBERLIN'S CLASSIC HOMES! This Jazz Age cottage w/barrel-vault portico is sited on a choice corner lot in Oberlin's historic district. An eye-catching lush lawn w/new underground sprinkler system is bordered by a double car garage. Completely renovated, the home showcases extra-large rooms. The spacious oak kitchen features eating bar, top-of-the-line built-in double ovens, cooktop and dishwasher and opens to a sunny dining space w/sliding patio doors leading to a covered deck. The lg. laundry room has its own exterior door and the washer and dryer stays. The oversized master suite boasts His and Her walk-in closets and the bath includes both tub and shower. Two guest rooms share a second bath and flow into the open L dining-living room highlighted by a brick gas fireplace. Lots of thermo-pane windows make this home a sunny delight!



702 N. NEILL AVE. QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD, this 1978 modular home, accented w/Linden stonework, features an open kitchen, dining and living room space. The master suite is highlighted by His and Her closets and lg. bath w/whirlpool. Two additional bedrooms with bath are on the main level plus lg. family room w/woodburning stove, bath and storage room on lower level. Extras include a home office, main-level laundry, double car garage and spacious deck. Move right in - the tulips are already blooming!

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