

Teachers dislike way school board operates

Editor's Note: This letter was written by teachers to the Oberlin School Board in the wake of recent decisions on teacher contracts. Many of these teachers also attended a special meeting of the board last week. A copy was provided to *The Herald*.

Letters to Editor

We, as a unified faculty, are writing this letter to extend our complete support to our district and building administrators.

We are greatly disappointed and dissatisfied with the recent action of the school board that has diminished our administrators' decision-making ability. We are aware that the board has ignored Mr. Matson's recommendation for a teacher contract renewal, and by doing so, has, in our opinion, overstepped its traditional boundaries and assumed the role as administrators of our building.

We are also aware that the board has acted unethically when they chose to make their votes known against hiring personnel before the board meeting was even held. Community members, including students, knew of their decision before the teachers directly involved knew. We are disappointed in this manner in which the board has chosen to conduct district business. As professionals, we do not discuss students in public or in front of our own children. We expect the same consideration.

We are proud of the school system we teachers have helped to build. We are stable, qualified staff with a low turnover rate and are an integral part of this community. Twenty-six out of 28 of us have been hired and rehired on Mr. Matson's recommendations, and we have served this district well. Apparently, however, Mr. Matson's recommendations and evaluations are insignificant. A school board, scheduled to meet monthly, is making decisions based on what they hear from students, rather than considering the opinion of a trained administrator with 12

years of teaching experience and 22 years of administrative experience and who is in daily contact with students and staff. His qualifications should speak for themselves. He has set high academic standards for our school, which we are meeting as indicated by state assessments, ACT scores and college graduation ratios. We question whether the board has considered these things.

It is our professional opinion with many years of combined teaching experience, that the board return to Mr. Matson, as well as to our other administrators, the latitude to make the decisions they are qualified and paid to do. We support the professional integrity with which Mr. Matson, Mr. Dorshorst and Mr. Steele run our buildings and our district. This is our life's work and our opinion should count. We are confident in the abilities of our administrators. We would like to be assured of the same qualities in our Board of Education.

Teachers of Decatur Community High School: Brenda L. Breth, 16 years teaching; Rhonda Barth, 17 years; Candace S. DeJmal, 24 years; Leigh A. Davis, 20 years; Linda Glaze, 10 years; Randy Olson, 25 years; Jim Andersen, 14 years; Maria Guadalupe Sanden, 16 years; Carol A. Morford, 31 years; Marlene Moxter, 25 years; Traci Uehlin, five years; Judy D. Wittman, 15 years; Amanda B. Jones, five years; Susan Nelson, 22 years; Tim Breth, 10 years; Keith H. Grafel, 24 years; Terri Wooley, 25 years; Pat Dorshorst, 20 years; Joe Dreher, six years; Richard Ahlberg, 26 years; Sharon Addleman, 18 years; Nita Lavielle, 25 years; Mark Bricker, seven years

Running a little hot



OUTSIDE FARMERS BANK AND TRUST in the heat of the afternoon Friday, the engine of a pick-up owned by Angela Black caught fire, melting some wires. Mick Glaze doused the flames. The vehicle was driven by William Black.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Brandt

Truck suffers 'key' scratches

Last weekend someone "keyed" a 1993 Chevy truck is owned by Marvin Hansen's Plumbing truck parked behind the building on East Commercial. Hansen; damage was estimated at \$1,500.

Police Chief Wade Lockhart said it happened sometime between Saturday, April 21, and Monday, April 23. The

truck has scratches, which look like they were made by a key, on both sides, the chief said.

Commission looks at old county shop

By **KIMBERLY BRANDT**

Decatur County commissioners looked at the old county shop and the metal building to the west last month after the undersheriff asked for a secure place to store impounded vehicles.

Undersheriff Randy McHugh asked commissioners April 16 if there was a way to split the old shop to make the area where they store the impounded cars secure.

Sometimes, he said, impounded vehicles contain evidence or dangerous items, and they need to be locked away.

Commissioner Ralph Unger asked how much room they need for one or two vehicles.

Mr. McHugh said the west end is the biggest and right now has two or three vehicles in it.

He asked what the building to the west of the shop is used for and suggested the sheriff's office just put the impounded vehicles in it, because they would be the only ones to use it.

Now the other building is used to store Christmas supplies, he learned. The commissioners looked at both buildings, but didn't make any decisions.

Mr. McHugh told the commissioners that Luna, the county's drug dog, has been trained and brought up to speed, but doesn't need to be certified. He said Kansas Law says the dog doesn't actually have to be certified, just trained.

Commissioner Doyle Brown asked what he meant by not certifying the dog. Mr. McHugh said the dog can be used without having a sheet saying she is certified.

If her evidence is used in court, then they have to prove to the judge she can find drugs.

He said he can get her certified, which Commissioner Unger said they should do since they have gone this far. Commissioners Brown and Pat Glenn agreed.

Mr. McHugh said he had a car do-

nated to use in training the dog. Two other officers from Kansas, with their dogs, will come use the items he is building to train her on.

In other business, commissioners:

- Closed a road in Center township after no one disapproved. Letters were sent to the township board

- and anyone who has adjoining land. The road is a mile south of U.S. 36 and runs east and west.

- Both sides of the land are owned by Jerry Fortin.

- Heard the hazardous clean-up collection day went well, although Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman said he thought they would have had more people if it hadn't been scheduled over Easter weekend. He said they had about 29 people, when they usually have 40 to 50.

- They collected 362 pounds of oil paints, 36 of latex, 159 of dried poisons, 73 of liquid poisons, 57 car batteries and other things.

- He said now he consolidates it and sends the items to Ellis County, where Clean Harbor picks it up and disposes of the hazards properly.

- Heard the 1977 Caterpillar scraper is in Colby having work done because of a hydraulic problem.

- Heard the ballots and public notices are in for the Oberlin School District bond issue election on June 5. Reading over the information, County Attorney Steve Hirsch found the language to be different in the ballot and the notice.

- He called Ranson and Associates, the bond firm out of Wichita which is handling the issue.

- They said they would fix the error and mail new information. County Clerk Marilyn Horn said there will only be two polling places for the election, the courthouse and the Norcorat City Hall. People may vote in advance.



Analyst seeks new bill passage

To the Editor:
At a hearing for a forfeiture reform bill currently in the Kansas Legislature, many law enforcement officials testified against the bill.

There are some legitimate uses for property forfeiture — such as confiscating stolen goods and taking back profits obtained by criminal acts. The aspects of the law that the Kansas Bureau of Investigation is trying to keep, however, only harm Kansas citizens.

Under current law, officials get to

keep most of the property that is forfeited, creating an incentive for police to go after property, not criminals. Further, current law requires no conviction in order for property to be forfeited.

It is sad that law enforcement officials oppose a bill that is necessary to protect the basic rights of citizens. The House Judiciary Committee should look beyond their testimony.

Kat DeBurgh, legislative analyst
Marijuana Policy Project
Washington

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Oberlin Cleanup

Wednesday - Thursday
May 16 — May 17

★ The City will offer free trash pickup (small trash, limbs & vegetation) on east side, Penn to East city boundary Wednesday, May 16. West side; Penn to West boundary, Thursday, May 17. No large, heavy items, please.

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