

## School board agrees to increase taxes

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
Residents in the Oberlin School District may be paying higher taxes next year to make up for state budget cuts and a drop in enrollment after the board passed a resolution Monday night to increase the local option budget 5 percentage points.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt said the local option budget is at 13.11 percent of the total general fund budget now. An increase of 5 percent would bring it to 18.11 percent. The state allows the number to go to 25 percent of the general fund, but Mr. Glodt said

he didn't want to go to the maximum. At that point, he said, the district would have nowhere to go except to start cutting things in an emergency.

The board had to choose between two resolutions. The board chose the first, which would set up the local option budget for a fixed amount of time. The other choice was a permanent resolution to increase it to 25.

If the valuation for the district stays the same, Mr. Glodt said, the 5 percent increase will be a little over 6 mills on property tax levy. Each mill brings in around \$27,000.

That means the resolution could bring in around \$162,000 more in taxes.

It may seem like a lot, Mr. Glodt said, but it will just cover increases in "fixed" costs which the district has no control over.

Those include business, health, unemployment and workers' compensation insurance, utilities, heating and fuel. The district figures those will increase by \$161,659.

Mr. Glodt said those he has talked with seem OK with the increase, although he hasn't gotten numbers on what it would cost for farm land or the average house.

Board Member Dan Wasson said he thought the increase should be done. He said the board should tell its facilities committee to prioritize building needs over the next few years. The district won't pass a bond issue and increase the local option budget, too, said Mr. Wasson. He suggested increasing the rate by 10 percent.

If the district goes 10 percent, said Mr. Glodt, that brings it up to 23 percent.

"I don't think we should ask the community for more than what we need," said Board President Chris Bailey.

Another option, said Board Member Barb Olson, is to figure out how to cut \$161,000 from the budget. Those would be major cuts, dropping programs and people, said Mr. Glodt.

The board approved the resolution to increase the local option budget 5 percent. The resolution is only good for five years and then would have to be renewed.

Voters have 30 days to protest the change. If 5 percent of the voters protest it, Mr. Glodt said, then it will have to go to an election and the board will have to foot the bill.

## Schools look at ways to save without cutting

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
The Oberlin School Board adopted some cost savings ideas for the district at its meeting last Monday night.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt said he asked staff members to brainstorm cost-savings ideas, and they came up with some ideas, including doing double-sided copies, using less colored copies and less color copying. He said those were adopted right away.

For others, Mr. Glodt and staff members have done some research to see if they would work and if they would save money.

Mr. Glodt said what he doesn't want is for the district to start cutting programs or cut teachers to save money.

The list was made up of things that are already taking place, policy things the board needs to act on, opportunities for grant money, and some changes the district has not chosen to pursue at this time.

Together, it adds up to a lot of money, said Mr. Glodt, but just about everything on the list could start to hurt kids eventually. Mr. Glodt said he has cut teacher budgets for instructional supplies from \$500 to \$300. The teachers said they could handle that, but most likely

### School round up

At its meeting last Monday night, the Oberlin School Board:

- Adopted cost saving ideas for the district, some of which had been discussed at a previous meeting. Story at left.
- Approved a resolution to increase the local option budget by 5 percent, which would mean an increase in property taxes for people in the district. Story above.
- Discussed a new social studies curriculum for all grades, although it won't be approved until June. Story on Page 3A.

they will be spending money out of their own pockets to make up for it.

Some of the ideas the district has already acted on or will next year:

- Develop a package of energy-saving ideas.
- Reconfigure the elementary staff rather than replace a fifth-grade teacher.
- Limit field trips.

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## Clubs, farmers work to get sign for The Gateway

With the help of local organizations, three area farmers and four committee members, a sign for The Gateway is a little closer, but the group may still need more money.

Connie Grafel, Gateway marketing manager, who sits on the committee, said they have received \$325 from clubs including the American Legion Auxiliary, PEO Sisterhood, Monday Evening Club and Pi Alpha. The committee has also received pledges from Oberlin Rotary, Oberlin Arts and Humanities, the Oberlin Business Alliance, Oberlin Lions, Decatur Professional Women and the Decatur Community High Alumni.

So far over \$1,500 has been pledged.

The committee looked into

grants, including one from Wal-Mart which would match the \$500 the Oberlin Lions are offering, and a "sustainable agriculture research and education" grant through the U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service.

Ms. Grafel said the group hasn't heard back on either grant.

To apply for the government grant, farmers Rod Bryan, Robbie Henningson and Dan Grafel agreed to lend their names to the effort. If the grant is received, the money will go through the farmers, she said.

The applications will be reviewed between June 18 and 20 and the committee expects to hear by mid-July.

(See SIGN on Page 5A)

## Veterans to march to Oberlin Cemetery

**OBERLIN**  
Lt. Col. Robert Strevey, U.S. Army (retired), will speak at Memorial Day services at 10 a.m. on Monday at the Oberlin Cemetery.

Vietnam Veteran John Stanley once again asks veterans to march together to the cemetery for the services. Veterans of all eras, men and women, are encouraged to meet at 9:30 a.m. at J&R Trailer Repair on U.S. 36 in military uniform or caps, if possible. They will be escorted by the Oberlin Fire Department.

Master of Ceremonies will be Commander Gary Allen of the Oberlin American Legion Post. Elisabeth Orr will sing the national anthem, Dr. Don Harrier will give the opening and closing prayer and the American Legion and Sons of

the American Legion place the wreath. The American Legion Auxiliary and Junior Auxiliary will be in charge of the Gold Star Memorial. Commander-elect Walter Pennell will present awards.

Other participants will be the American Legion and Auxiliary Color Guard, Auxiliary Color Guard, Herndon Veterans of Foreign Wars Color Guard, American Legion Firing Squad and Girl Scouts. Allie Moore will play "Taps."

An open house will follow at the Oberlin American Legion.

**NORCATUR**  
The 114th observance of Memorial Day at Norcaturn will begin at 2 p.m. on Sunday. All veterans, Boy

(See VETERAN on Page 5A)



**AFTER HE RECEIVED** his diploma, Kyle Inman stopped for Superintendent Kelly Glodt (above) to move his tassel to show he had graduated. Andrea Marshall (below) pre-

sented a selection on her flute before the graduates marched into the gym.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Brandt

## Oberlin high school graduates 43 seniors in 100th ceremony

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
Dressed in gray and red, the Class of 2003 marched into the gym at Decatur Community High School on Sunday to receive their hard-earned diplomas.

The gym was packed with friends, family and alumni eager to see the newest graduates of Oberlin.

The 43 seniors represented the 100th class to graduate from the high school since county high schools were approved by the Legislature in 1903. During the ceremony, the senior class student council presented the school with a red banner that said "100 Years of Quality Graduates."

The ceremony included the announcement of the top two stu-

dents as salutatorian and valedictorian.

Salutatorian Grant Reichert started the speeches, and his tongue-in-cheek talk kept the audience laughing.

Principal Charles Haag listed some of his accomplishments, including being an active member of the football and wrestling teams, member of National Honor Society and D Club, and vice president of the science club and Student Council.

He was also the homecoming king and a member of the state champion Quiz Bowl team.

Mr. Reichert said the days leading up to graduation have been good, no matter what kind of therapy the seniors have needed. Now that school is over, he said,



everyone has to go their own ways, adding:

"Dear God I hope so."

Mr. Reichert gave the class three items of advice from Homer Simpson. First of all, "cover for me," second "good idea boss" and third, "it was like that when I got

here."

Mr. Haag said Valedictorian Janna Stef was the secretary of the National Honor Society, on the Kayette Board and competed in math relays.

Miss Stef said it is a great honor

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## Townsend scholarships help pay for college

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
It was during the year of 2000 when the first two seniors from Decatur Community High School had their lives touched by Col. Delbert Townsend.

Last Wednesday night, Col. Townsend announced that the program is not only fully funded for now and future years, but the pipeline is full with eight graduates from Oberlin to receive the four-year scholarships. The two newest recipients, Grant Reichert and Sarah

Olson, were honored with a dinner at The Gateway.

The scholarships will pay for full tuition for four years and set each student up with a computer. The students have to pay their own room and board.

Col. Townsend said he grew up in the area and graduated from Decatur Community High School in 1938. He said he believes it was the last class to graduate from the original location of the high school, which stood where Good Samaritan Cen-

ter is now.

Although he didn't go to college right away, he made it to Kansas State University and graduated in 1942.

He later went into the Army, which gave him a chance to travel. In 1961, he said, he was accepted to flight school and passed the physical. That meant spending a year in Alabama learning how to fly, after which he switched to choppers.

In his career, Col. Townsend went to Vietnam for two tours as a com-

mander. If he lives to this July, he adds, he will have beat the system and been retired longer than he worked.

After attending his 50th high school reunion here, he said, he decided to set up a scholarship program for a relative, but it didn't work. Col. Townsend then looked at the bigger picture and contacted the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and started the Nebraska Foundation in 1995. Through it, two stu-

(See TOWNSEND on Page 5A)

# \* Veteran to give speech

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Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and school children are asked to meet at the bank corner at 1 p.m. to form the parade for the march to the Norcatcur Cemetery.

A volunteer band will play "The Star Spangled Banner." Area veterans will be in charge of the services. This will be the 31st consecutive year that the Avenue of Flags will be on display.

Mike Helm will give the Memorial Day address and the salute will be fired over the grave of Jerry Brooks, the last buried veteran. The Commercial Club will be catering lunch at the Norcatcur School Multi-Purpose room starting at 11:30 a.m.

**BIG TIMBER, JENNINGS**  
The Jennings American Legion will be in charge of a 10 a.m. service on Sunday at Big Timber Cemetery.

Services on Monday will begin at 10 a.m. at the Jennings Cemetery, with the Jennings Legion post in charge.

A potluck will follow at 12:30 p.m. at the Jennings Senior Center. Beverages will be provided but those attending are asked to bring their own table service.

The Czech Museum will be open from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday for Memorial Day weekend. Tours by request will be made on Monday by contacting Neoma Tacha at 678-2470 or Jessie Davis at 678-2322.

**HERNDON**  
Memorial Day services will be held at 2 p.m. Monday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in Herndon. Lee Tarrant of Atwood will speak. Opening prayer will be given by Richard Cole. The National Anthem will be sung by Kendra Solko.

The Oberlin American Legion will join the color guard and firing squad. Anikka Martin and Nik Martin will play "Taps." A social will follow at the post home.

**LYLE**  
The Lyle Community will observe Memorial Day on Sunday. The Jack Helt American Legion Post of Lebanon, Neb., will provide services at 10 a.m. at the cemetery and a potluck dinner will follow at the Community Building.



**AT THE ANNUAL DINNER** for new recipients of the Col. Delbert Townsend scholarships, teacher Brenda Breth was made an honorary Townsend scholar by the colonel. — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Brandt

# \* Townsend money helps eight

(Continued from Page 1A)  
To get the scholarship, applicants have to be legal residents of Kansas and graduate from Decatur Community High School. The program looks at scholastic and leadership records, including recommendations from people in the student's life.

Col. Townsend said the program is funded through investments and his savings. Each year, he travels back from his home near Washington to have dinner with the new recipients and then with all of the recipients.

The plan with the Kansas Foundation is to keep eight students at K-State until it or the high school here closes.

Need is based on size of family, parents' occupation, siblings in school and several others factors. Grades and attendance are also considered.

Although the dinner was to honor the new recipients and give Col. Townsend a chance to visit with them, he said there were three other people he wanted to say thanks to and make them hon-

orary Townsend Scholars: Plaques went to Kent Sedlacek, who helped set the Kansas Foundation up, high school counselor Nita Lavielle and a woman he said he met on the internet.

In mid-December 1999, said Col. Townsend, he received a message from a woman who is a faculty member at Decatur Community High School. Since then, she has helped on a one-on-one basis with the program. Brenda Breth received a plaque and letter from Col. Townsend.

Mr. Reichert said he is undecided on a major while Miss Olson said she wants to go into account-

# \* Seniors hear from fellow graduates

(Continued from Page 1A)  
to be recognized but she said she must be humble herself because she knows she wouldn't be in this spot without the encouragement of teachers, family, the community and the grace of God. She said she knows God has a plan for her and her classmates.

Five years ago, when she moved to Oberlin, she wasn't sure living in a small community was something

positive. Now, she said she hopes that none of her classmates take for granted growing up in a small town.

She said most of the class has grown up together, and as they have grown, each one has evolved and found his or her own identity.

The Class of 2003, said Miss Stef, is one of the best and most well rounded classes.

God has so much planned for each

member of the class, she said, and all them need to go out and find it.

Miss Stef quoted two Bible verses, one of which was Isaiah 40:31, which she said they can read each time they get discouraged.

Class President Ramsey Meitl presented keyboarding teacher Sharon Addleman with a gift for her years as a teacher and class sponsor. Mrs. Addleman is retiring this year.

At the beginning of the year, said

Mr. Haag, he challenged the seniors to be positive leaders. He said he didn't know what an easy and simple challenge that would be for them.

The Class of 2003 has set high marks for future classes to meet with their achievements, he said.

Before the ceremony was over, he asked the parents and the grandparents of the graduates to stand to be recognized.

# Streets to get sealed and a few blocks repaved

The Oberlin City Council approved a street sealing bid from B&H Paving from Scott City for 58 cents a square yard, and had enough left over to repave a block or two in town.

The council had budgeted \$70,000 for street sealing this year, but with the bid of 58 cents a square yard, the price tag will come out to about \$40,000, City Administrator Gary Shike said at the meeting Thursday, May 1.

The council might want to try to catch a contractor already doing a job and see if they would be able to pave a street with the money that is left, said Mr. Shike.

Councilman Stan McEvoy agreed it would be a good idea.

# Alliance to hold fry

The Oberlin Business Alliance will host a burger and polish fry from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday in front of Stanley Hardware on Main Street.

The alliance will match the money raised up to \$500 to go towards buying a lighted message sign for The Gateway.

The alliance will be sponsoring a hospitality house for alumni weekend. It will be open from 1 to 4 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the building north of Stanley Hardware.

The council approved the bid. Councilman Patrick Pomeroy said he didn't feel comfortable with only one bid. Mr. Shike said that is just how it is; the city has been getting only one bid for years. He said he isn't sure if there are many companies that will do small jobs like this one.

If the administrator is confident this is the lowest bid the city can get, said Mr. Pomeroy, so is he.

The council accepted an agreement with Clarence M. Kelley Youth Detention Services to operate the Sappa Valley Youth Ranch for the next three years. City Attorney Steve Hirsch said the company agreed to the city's suggested changes except for a 30-day termination clause. The city asked that it be changed to 90 days and the company countered with 60 days.

Mr. Hirsch said from a legal standpoint, 60 days is acceptable. The contract was approved by all. In other business, the council:

- Presented Bob Shuler, a street

department employee, with an engraved pocket watch for 25 years of service to the city.

- Agreed to purchase a lawn mower for \$24,095 from Decatur County Implement.

• Re-appointed Mr. Hirsch as the city attorney and City Clerk Deanna Castle as the freedom of information officer, designated agent for the Kansas Public Employees Retirement System and group leader for Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

• Held 30-minute and 10-minute closed sessions for attorney/client privilege. There was no action taken.

• Talked with Police Chief Wade Lockhart, who reported that officers received training from a methamphetamine awareness program, storm spotter class and the crisis drill at the high school.

• Heard that the city purchased a copier from Northwest Office Supply for \$3,042.

• Received a bid from Roofmasters, out of Colby, for The Gate-

way roof for \$7,487.

• Heard that Carolyn Rippe had been hired as the city treasurer after Mrs. Castle was promoted to clerk.

• Approved keeping Blue Cross/Blue Shield for May while trying to make a long-term decision on health care insurance at a special meeting on Tuesday, May 29. The city will pay the difference for the employee increase. The vote was 4-1 with Mr. McEvoy voting against.

# \* Board looks at savings ideas

(Continued from Page 1A)  
• Lengthen the rotation for replacing sport uniforms.

• Reduce the overall athletic inventory.

• Double up on bus travel to events.

• Eliminate C team football.

• Use old uniforms as practice uniforms.

• Have students provide their own practice clothes for sports.

• Buy instructional supplies in bulk this year.

• Install programmable thermostats at the elementary school.

• Reorganize to eliminate unnecessary overtime.

The board decided to raise some fees at the schools and also ask students to do more fund raising. The board approved eliminating money for reward and fun trips the students take. That doesn't mean that students can't still take the trips. The district will still provide a bus, but the student organizations will have to raise the money to pay for the gas and driver.

If a student organization has an overnight trip, students will need to raise money for sponsors' expenses. The district will continue to pay all staff expenses.

There will be a \$20 rental fee for musical instruments to cover repair costs and a \$5 technology fee at the junior high and high school.

Any child who is on the free lunch program doesn't pay the fees, Mr. Glodt said.

The board agreed to make slight increases to the student supply lists and also asked if the lists at the elementary school can be reviewed since some of those students bring

home supplies at the end of the year that haven't been used.

There was some discussion on doing away with the towel service, but the board decided to keep it and maybe get some of the work-study students to wash the towels, which would save some money on a janitor having to do it.

The board also agreed to increase meal prices at both schools by 20 cents. At the grade school, breakfast will cost 90 cents and lunch \$1.45. At the high school, breakfast will be 90 cents and lunch \$1.75. Adults will pay \$2.50.

The food service, said Mr. Glodt, loses \$8,000 a month, or \$72,000 a year.

The board agreed to the increase in fees and also to eliminate second servings.

Other opportunities the board discussed were grants and increasing fund raising while still avoiding competition with businesses.

Mr. Glodt said at this time last year, the district had 35 percent of the general fund left, but this year there is only 22 percent. Some items which have been purchased from the fund will have to be paid for from capital outlay by the end of the year, meaning money will have to be transferred.

Mr. Glodt said he doesn't want to see the district cut teachers or programs, but if it came down to it he said he would lay off teachers before cutting programs. Once programs start getting cut, the district is shooting itself in the foot, he said, because kids will start going elsewhere. If the district can hold onto programs and spend money wisely, kids will start coming here.

# \* Sign committee works on grants

(Continued from Page 1A)  
Ms. Grafel said the committee includes, besides her, Kem Bryan, who works part-time at Oberlin Library and Lohoefer Grain; Peg Smith, who works for Hirsch and Pratt; and Karen Larson, who works at Dr. Gary Fredrickson's office.

They have looked into other avenues for financing the sign. They have contacted two energy co-ops, she said, Midwest Energy and Prairie Land Electric Cooperative.

The committee has information for three signs, all of which have an electronic board which would tell passersby what is happening at The

Gateway. Although the committee hasn't decided on a brand, the price ranges from \$30,000 to \$35,000, she said, with the message board being the high-dollar item.

On average, there are 27 events at the civic center monthly, she said, and with a sign, people will know what is going on each day.

There will be cans set up in the hospitality room for alumni weekend if anyone who wants to give. Donations can also be mailed to Ms. Grafel at 1 Morgan Drive, Oberlin, Kan., 67749.

# Most to close for holiday

Most Oberlin businesses will be closed Monday for Memorial Day, including federal, state, county and city offices and all banks and financial institutions.

The Oberlin Herald will print a day late next week, so copies may be picked up on Wednesday afternoon, with mail delivery mostly on Thursday. The Herald office will be closed on Monday.

Deadline for the Country Advocate will be noon on Friday as usual.

The Decatur County Museum will be open from 1-5 p.m. Sunday.

Raye's Grocery store will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday and Monday. The Meadowlark Grill, Frontier Restaurant, Crossroads Express, Ampride, Pizza Hut, A&W, LandMark Inn, and Dollar General will be open Monday.

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