

# Writers group to visit

## Business Alliance asked to help welcome visitors

The Oberlin Business Alliance talked with Dale Bryan about a writer's convention that will be held at The Gateway on July 23 and 24. Mrs. Bryan said she is part of the group, Inland Sea Writers in McCook, which each year has a workshop or a conference for writers. She said she is the only member from Kansas.

This year, Marsha Prestonke, editor of a magazine "Bylines," will be the guest speaker.

Mrs. Bryan said she suggested The Gateway for the conference. They are hoping for between 50 and 100 people, she said.

On the first night, there will be an open microphone in McCook for people to share things they have written, but on Saturday the people will be here all day, said Mrs. Bryan. She asked the group, all business people and owners, if they could provide something for the packets the group will be handing out to promote both Oberlin and McCook.

Mrs. Bryan said they are also looking for money, if the alliance members have any ideas.

In other business, the group discussed naming chairmen for the four quarters. Connie Grafel, marketing director of The Gateway and the Economic Development Corp., who was running the meeting last Wednesday, said that Laurie Wasson, owner of Prairie Petals, wasn't interested in being president for another year.

The group decided to meet in the basement of Stanley Hardware at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 20, to hash out the year. Then members talked a little about the holiday shopping season.

Karen Chambers from Rocking R said the store did really well when other businesses downtown stayed open late, but when she tried to keep the store open on its own, there wasn't a lot of business. She said she stayed open on Christmas Eve and did well, though.

Joe Stanley said it sounded like Sundays went well.

However, Kurt Vollertsen, owner of Ward Drug Store, said Sundays seemed like a total waste of time and so did the late nights. Rusty Adleman, owner of Adleman Drug Store, seconded that.

Mr. Vollertsen said there just wasn't any traffic at all. He said it wasn't the weather, because there were a lot of nice days.

Gary Anderson, owner of The LandMark Inn, said on days that things were going on at the restaurant, then business was good in the adjacent Oberlin Mercantile. Other days things were slower.



**IT WAS LIKE A STEP BACK** in time Friday as the 80 pair of cows and calves and three bulls neared the top of the hill. The dust flew behind them while two riding horses and one on a mule kept the herd together. The Shaw family was moving the cattle from milo and sunflower stocks south of U.S. 36 to the JVR Ranch on Ralph Shaw's place two and a half miles north of the highway. Rich Shaw said this is done several times a year, but this is the only

time that the cattle have to cross the highway. Men with the Decatur County Sheriff's Office parked their truck facing the west to stop cars as the cattle crossed the pavement. Mr. Shaw said the cattle are led by a truck and then a truck and trailer bring up the tail end just in case a calf gets too hot. He said one calf had to be picked up about a mile from the ranch and was put in the trailer.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Brandt

## County to purchase tools at Benkelman auction

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
The Decatur County commissioners said Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman could spend up to \$5,000 at an upcoming hardware auction in Benkelman, Neb.

Mr. Stallman said a hardware store is going out of business and he thought they would be able to pick up some shop tools. He said he didn't know how the commissioners felt about this kind of thing.

Commissioner Ralph Unger asked how they could pre-approve the expenditure.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch said the problem would be paying for it. The suggestion was for the employee to write a check and then get reimbursed.

Sometimes auction companies, said Mr. Stallman, will hold things if they know it is for the county.

Mr. Stallman said he is also looking at a farm sale for a mobile fuel container.

The commissioners agreed the auctions need to be approved one at a time.

Mr. Stallman said he needed to get

about seven barrels of pre-diluted antifreeze.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said they probably need to get bids.

Mr. Stallman said he had prices from CAT at \$367, Oldham at \$370, All Pro at \$335 and John Deere at \$280. Each price is per barrel. Mr. Stallman said NAPA couldn't get that kind of antifreeze.

The commissioners agreed \$280 a barrel from John Deere is the best price.

Mr. Stallman said he needs five barrels to use on machinery and two

for stock. Mr. Stallman said the 1987 Chevy truck Darroll Banzet drives is in need of an overhaul. The truck has close to 100,000 miles on it and is using a lot of oil.

He said there will be an order for a long block coming up although he isn't certain what the cost will be.

Mr. Stallman said he ordered grader blades at good end-of-year prices as he tries to keep some in inventory.

Norman Tompkins of Vance Brothers called about using the

Jennings shop for storage again when they do road work in Jennings. The company pays \$300 a month for storage.

The commissioners approved the use of the shop.

Mr. Stallman said with the resolution about purchases over \$500 having to be approved means that every time he buys fuel he has to talk with the commissioners.

Commissioners said the reason for the resolution was so department heads would discuss future plans with them.

## Citizen worries about sewer

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
Only one person showed up and talked to the Oberlin City Council during the Oberlin City public hearing and public meeting for the waste water treatment plant.

The meeting and hearing are needed for the city to apply for loans from either the U.S. Department of Agriculture or State Revolving Loan Fund.

Pastor Charlotte Strecker-Baseler of Faith Lutheran Church said she has been following the water and waste water problems in the city.

She said she has a biology and chemistry degree from Bethany College and did her internship project on a waste water project. She then spent nine years working at a

secondary treatment plant. Like most residents in Oberlin she said she didn't realize there was anything wrong with the waste water plant until October 2002. She said before that she knew there was trouble with the water.

A community of this size with that amount of waste water could use ponds and lagoons for household waste, but the city is desperate for economic development. The council knows in this area there isn't enough water for a big industry.

Pastor Strecker-Baseler said with lagoons and ponds there is up front costs.

She said she has worked with mechanical plants before and if they go that way, the city will have to be

proactive. Things can't just be used until they break down.

She said she doesn't know about population projections. No one wants Oberlin to become a ghost town because people can't pay the bills.

The Environmental Protection Agency with its regulations could cause the extinction of a community of this size, she said. Fear and anxiety, she said, is a quick way to kill a community like Oberlin.

She asked the council to be proactive and not to make any decisions because of what the agency might impose down the road.

There were no other comments on her remarks and the council didn't make any decisions.

## Chamber to sponsor homeshow

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
The Oberlin-Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce has decided to hold the annual home show this year the weekend of March 20 and 21.

The show had been organized by former Oberlin resident, the late Royce Wilson. Mr. Wilson continued to set up the show even after he moved to North Platte, Neb., even after he became ill with the complications of diabetes and West Nile virus infection.

After his death last year the Chamber was asked by Oberlin merchants to take over the organization

of the show. Chamber Manager Glenva Nichols said she will be sending out letters to businesses about booths.

The Chamber board said the rental prices for the booths will be for a 10-foot-by-10 foot space will be \$75 and for a 10-foot-by-20-foot space will be \$125.

Anyone interested in getting a booth should contact the chamber at 475-3441.

There is room for 48 spaces in the arena at The Gateway.

The board discussed whether the show should include crafts. Some didn't see a problem with that while

others thought it should include just booths for the homes.

Mrs. Nichols said that KFNF Radio will co-sponsor it and do an on-site broadcast. She said she talked with a representative at the station about doing interviews with people at the booths for an extra fee on the booth price.

The group talked briefly about the holiday events. It was agreed that the soup supper went well.

For the lighting contest Mrs. Nichols suggested splitting the town in four sections with two judges for each. There would then be four winners.

## State offers park permits at discount

Anyone wanting to purchase a vehicle permit for Kansas parks may want to buy them before the end of March and save a little money.

Park permits are \$34.50 if purchased between January and March, they then go up to \$44.50 from April to September and then go back to \$34.50 in October until December.

For a second vehicle the price is \$19.50 for the first three months of the year and the last year months.

From April to September it jumps to \$24.50.

It is the same for seniors or disabled people who purchase the permits. For the first three months and last three months the annual vehicle is \$17.25 and from April to Septem-

ber it is \$24.50. The second vehicle tag is \$9.75 the first and last three months of the year. In April it goes up to \$12.25.

Permits are available at the Decatur County Clerk's Office on the second floor of the courthouse.

### ESTATE AUCTION

Saturday, January 17, 2004 • 10 a.m. *Lunch will be served.*  
Location: Oberlin American Legion, 114 S. Rodehaver Ave., Oberlin, KS

**SELLER: ALICE CLARK ESTATE AND OTHERS**

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## Some close for holiday

All banks and financial institutions, state and federal offices, including the post office, will be closed on Monday for Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Most other Oberlin businesses, city and county offices, and Oberlin schools will be open.

The Oberlin Herald will be open as usual, so news and advertising copy may be left at the office by noon on Monday.

## Need help paying off those HOLIDAY bills?

Then give SITES a call to learn how you can help pay off those bills and earn a great wage?

Pat or Gail can be reached at 308-345-5600 or stop by 302 East 1st in downtown McCook.

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