

# Walks may get repairs

## City would help pay for concrete

**By KIMBERLY BRANDT**  
The Oberlin City Council talked about starting a plan to repair some of the sidewalks downtown at a recent work session.

At a goal setting meeting on Thursday, May 20, City Foreman Dan Castle said it isn't just the sidewalks that have cracks in them and spots that need to be repaired, but the curbs and gutters as well. There are several places on the west side of Penn Avenue where the curb has popped up.

Councilman Jay Anderson said if the city sells bricks with people's name on them to repair the sidewalks, they could help pay for the work and maybe even make a profit.

What about the requirements for the American Disability Act? asked Councilman Stan McEvoy. Will there be problems, said Mr. Castle.

The biggest problem would be Ray Jewelry, said Mayor Ken Shobe, because the ramp would have to stretch across the street to have the correct incline. He said he thought the building would be exempt.

City Administrator Gary Shike said there are some places that are so bad that people are falling. Property owners are liable for injuries, he said. Maybe the city could go half with the businesses where the sidewalk is a safety issue.

Mr. Castle said he would like to see the curbs and sidewalks fixed to prevent an accident. The city needs to work out a cost share project with the businesses, said Mr. McEvoy.

Councilman Patrick Pomeroy asked how much it would cost to get the hazardous areas taken care of. Mr. Castle said he would talk to Wayne Hackney at Oberlin Concrete and get an estimate.

There has been some objection in the past to removing the areas with names in the sidewalks, said Dr. Anderson, because they have some historical meaning.

Would the city save money by putting in more wheel chair ramps? Mr. McEvoy asked. They would lose parking spots, said Police Chief Wade Lockhart.

Mr. Shike said he thought if the city helps repair the worst spots, they are looking at a few thousand dollars. He asked if the council would want the city to assume the responsibility of half of the cost for the work. Councilman Ray Ward said the city should help out downtown businesses.

Mr. McEvoy said the city could order the businesses to fix the sidewalks, but that wouldn't be extending a hand.

Mr. Shike said he and Mr. Castle will need to prioritize the areas that need to be fixed.

Councilman Joe Stanley said they might want to check with the owners of the businesses and see if they would be interested in sharing the cost.

Mr. McEvoy said he didn't think they should open too big a hole at any time, since they don't know what they will find.

Mr. Castle and Mr. Shike said they would try to list some areas that need work the most.



## C'mon, go in the can, ball!

AT A CARNIVAL held to mark the end of the year on Tuesday at Oberlin Elementary School, one girl tried to win a prize with the toss of a bean bag (above) while Kiah Blau (right) got a tattoo from a classmate. The students and those who are still too young for school had the chance to play games, including the animal walk, in which they could win cookies, cakes or other sweet treats. The kids were able to buy prizes at the general store with tickets they had purchased or won.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Brandt



# Road crew finds washout under bridge

The road and bridge crew recently fixed the Kolsky bridge in Alton Township after finding a small hole in the approach.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman told county commissioners last week that after looking at the hole, the crew saw that the dirt underneath had been washed out by water. There was only a small amount of sand left, he said.

The bridge, located three east and two and half miles south from Kanona, was closed over the weekend until the crew could get it fixed. It has been reopened.

Mr. Stallman said drivers should

look for the holes on bridge approaches. He said if they see a hole, they should be careful driving over the bridge because there might be a washout under the surface. He said people should call the road and bridge office at 475-8111 to report any problems.

Mr. Stallman said if a hole is reported they check them right away.

The commissioners talked about a directive from the City of Dresden. It said the city wanted Mr. Stallman to put up "children playing" signs on the county road that goes through the town. Mr. Stallman was told to put the signs up and then bill

Dresden for them.

The crew is done mowing and workers are putting gravel on the county roads, he said, anticipating more traffic for the holiday weekend.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Heard the county township directory has incorrect landowner maps in it. The books have maps of each township and who owns what land. In the rural areas, people get a free book, and others can buy them from Decatur County Abstract. County Clerk Marilyn Horn said she would let the appraiser's office

know that several pieces of land in Alton Township are incorrect. When the appraisers office sent the information Central Publishing of Iola mixed up some of the information.

- Heard that Paragon Geo Services has been working in the Kanona area. Mr. Stallman said he thought they are doing some kind of search for oil.

- Heard Mr. Stallman report that he sent Glen Strong, Justin Scott, Brad Marcuson and Lynn Groneweg to hazardous household waste training. The state pays for the hours.

# Grant could help pay for work on city water wells

The Oberlin City Council approved documents needed to re-drill well No. 9 east of town so the engineer could apply for a state-federal grant to pay for the project.

At a meeting on Thursday, May 20, engineer Thaniel Monaco said there are two requirements for the grant, which could pay for 100 percent of the work up to half a million

dollars. If the project is deemed a modification to the existing system, he said, the city could still get \$150,000.

The situation has been addressed as a drought, he said. The United States Department of Agriculture has a lump sum of money, he said, and once it is allocated, then it is gone until next year. Although it is a federal program, he said it is run through the state.

Mr. Monaco said he thought it would be a good idea to close Phase I of the water project, because there is money left there that could be used on the current project. The city holds a portion of the money for a year to

pay J Corp and there is extra money in that account to pay J Corp.

The city hasn't used all the money in Phase I? asked Mayor Ken Shobe. No, said City Clerk Deanna Castle, because it is still going through the closing process.

Mr. Monaco said the grant could cover everything from a variable speed pump for well No. 10 to the test holes already drilled. A variable speed pump will vary the amounts of water pumped so No. 9 and No. 10 could be pumped together.

Mr. Monaco said for the grant application to be sent in, an agreement for engineering and preliminary engineering is required.

## Council will meet

The Oberlin City council will hold its first monthly meeting Thursday night at The Gateway.

The meeting will be held in the meeting room upstairs at 6:30 p.m. and will be on cable local access channel 7.

## City studies cemetery needs, makes plans to build a wall

The Oberlin City Council talked about needs at the cemetery during a goal-setting meeting Thursday, May 20.

All trees which were for sale to plant as memorials at the cemetery have been taken except one. Mayor Ken Shobe said he didn't know what was going on with the fence.

Councilman Jay Anderson said the cemetery committee hasn't talked much about the fence for the new section. He said they have been talking about replacing hedges. On Martin Avenue, he said, there will eventually be a row of trees planted

on both sides between the old and new sections.

City Foreman Dan Castle said the bid for a new wall along the street and on the north of the new part was around \$43,000.

Mayor Shobe said the council had budgeted around \$30,000 this year for the project.

Does the council want to do the west side, too? asked Dr. Anderson. Councilman Stan McEvoy said he thought they needed to get a new bid since it has been a while and it may have changed.

# County will back play area

The Decatur County commissioners discussed a playground which will be built near the concession stand at the ball fields in Oberlin with the help of the Oberlin Rotary Club, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, the county and the city.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said the Rotary club purchased the playground equipment and it is being stored. Thrivent has a matching grant which will pay for the curb, fencing and getting the equipment installed.

The commissioners talked with Road and Bridge Director Tim Stallman about putting sand in for the playground. They estimated the cost at \$500.

Mr. Stallman said summer recreation director Joe Dreher has asked for some work on the pitchers mound. He said dirt taken out of the playground area could be used on the mound.

Someone suggested that the city could do the dirt work for the playground. Commissioner Unger called City Administrator Gary Shike, who said the city could do the dirt work and possibly the pitchers mound.

Mr. Unger said the playground is for kids under 100 pounds. Basically, it will be set up for kids who aren't in the ball program so they have something to do during games.

He said the playground will be locked and either the recreation director will have a key or there will be one in the Lions Club concession stand.

# Students need help at ballpark

**By KERRIE OLSON and RENA UNGER**  
The Decatur Dictator

Join your fellow community members, young and old, to help build a safe play area at the Oberlin ball park on Saturday, June 12.

Join Hands Day is a national day for youths and adults to tackle a local problem together. The activity will begin at 8 a.m. and continue throughout the day, with lunch and snacks provided.

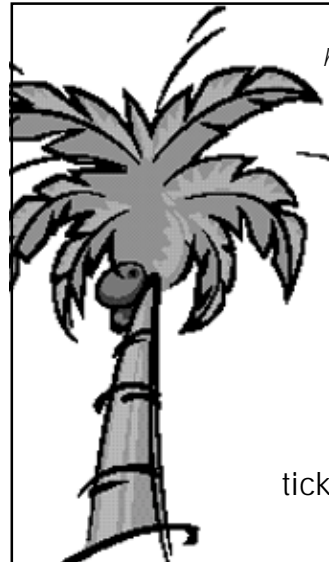
The event is sponsored by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, youth groups from St. John's and Faith Lutheran churches, the Oberlin Rotary Club and the Decatur Community High chapter of the National Honor Society.

The Oberlin Lions Club has offered to supply the meal and Rotary donated a play set to put in the fenced area.

The sponsors would greatly appreciate your volunteered efforts, plus it should turn out to be a fun-filled day. The group is still short of the budget necessary to build the project, so money cans for donations will be set out at Oberlin businesses.

To learn more about of Join Hands Day, log onto [www.joinhandsday.org](http://www.joinhandsday.org).

# Internet tonight 475-2206



Rodgers & Hammersteins'

**"South Pacific"**  
Country Dinner Playhouse  
Denver, CO

Saturday, July 10, 2004  
\$89 per person  
departs Oberlin, Atwood

Includes deluxe motorcoach transportation, Dinner, ticket for **"South Pacific"**, rolls & juice enroute.

Reservation deadline June 10

Heartland Tours & Travel  
1-800-488-3509

**2004 Kansas Senior Olympics**  
Sept. 23-26 and Sept. 30-Oct. 3  
Topeka, Kansas

Open to all seniors who will be 50 years old or before December 31, 2004. There are 16 different sports to compete in.

Registration Packets available beginning July 8th.

For more information call (785) 368-3798