

# Having a casino here could help town survive

By SHAYLA WILLIBY

Legalized gaming, survival of a small rural town and the battle of morality will all play parts if Oberlin wants to be a contender as one of the sites for a destination resort casino. Rural communities across Kansas have watched as their towns, once viable and teeming with activity, take on the appearance of ghost towns from western novels. This is not fiction; it is a sad reality.

Families have migrated from their rural roots to urban areas, not because they wanted to, but because they sought jobs and opportunity. The migration has left rural schools with reduced enrollments, while some are just empty buildings, the sounds of school bells and children's laughter gone.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius wants gaming legislation to raise money for schools and to bring tourists and gamblers to Kansas. If a bill passes, there will be three destination resort casinos authorized in the state.

While Kansas already has a couple of casinos in the northeast, they are on Native American land and do not pay taxes. Four casinos in Kansas City, Mo., draw many Kansas residents. An estimated 40 percent of the Kansas City riverboat play is by Kansans.

According to the Missouri Gaming Commission, the four Kansas City riverboats paid nearly \$169 million in gaming tax and admission fees in 2003. Kansans' 40 percent

equals \$67.5 million that could have gone to the state of Kansas if casinos were allowed here.

The amount spent at Kansas tribal casinos is not published, but it is only common sense assumption that a significant amount of those gaming dollars are from Kansans. The amount of lost taxes could easily total \$100 million a year.

Western Kansas, namely Oberlin, should be a definite consideration for one of the new destination resort casinos. Oberlin is at the junction of U.S. 83 and 36, and relatively close to both Interstate 80 in Nebraska and Interstate 70 in Kansas.

Predictions are that each destination resort casino will add 1,500 construction jobs and 2,000 permanent jobs to a community. The proposed law would allocate 4 percent of gaming revenues to the three chosen communities, possibly totaling as much as \$10 million dollars a year for each destination resort casino.

A destination resort casino in Oberlin would draw people not only from Kansas, but also from Nebraska and Colorado, bringing tourists into our side of the state. Placing a casino here would benefit surrounding towns. Families moving in would add enrollment to OUR schools, and boost existing businesses, medical facilities and churches.

Opponents point to negative social consequences as the primary reason not to allow gambling.

Those against casino gambling will say that problem gamblers, large debt created by gambling and family problems will cause an increase in suicide. According to the National Public Sector Gaming Study Commission, a study examined mortality rates in six counties prior to and after the introduction of gambling to the counties, five of six counties actually showed death by suicide decreased after legalized gambling was introduced.

The morality issue is perhaps the most volatile to address. Ministers might view gambling itself as immoral and be wary of a casino. Forward thinkers would look realistically at the numbers and statistics. The average age of a casino employee is 36, the age of families with children.

Families that would fill now-empty pews. Families want to live and raise their children in communities where the children can attend quality schools, churches and grow up with strong values.

Gamblers and tourists would come to our prairie mini-Vegas, spend their money, helping our community to regain economic stability, while the employees would make our communities their home, keeping the ghost town syndrome away and allowing Oberlin sustainability for the future, our future.

Shayla Williby, a free-lance grant writer, lives in Decatur County.

Internet tonight Call 475-2206

Wednesday, July 27, 2005 THE OBERLIN HERALD 5A

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August 2005

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	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Dr. Rubiniowitz Hematology/ Oncology	9	10 Dr. Frankum General Surgeon	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Dr. Miller Cardiology Clinic	24	25 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	26 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	27
28	29 Dr. Rubiniowitz Hematology/ Oncology	30	31 Dr. Frankum General Surgeon			

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## Prevention is everybody's business

To the Editor:

An initiative is underway in Kansas designed to limit children's access to cigarettes and other tobacco products.

"It's Everybody's Business" is a collaborative effort including the state Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services Addiction and Prevention Services, Regional Prevention Centers, the Department of Health and Environment Tobacco Use Prevention Program, the Department of Revenue Alcoholic Beverage Control, the Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition and the Kansas Family Partnership.

In the coming months, this group will be teaching Kansas tobacco retailers about the consequences of selling tobacco products to minors.

We've established free resources that retailers can use to educate their employees about Kansas law on tobacco sales.

On-site training programs for retail clerks and managers will be conducted by prevention specialists. Print materials will be available for retailers to post to deter illegal purchasing attempts and illegal sales.

Kansas currently ranks almost last in the nation for compliance with underage tobacco sales laws. Through this initiative, we hope to achieve a higher standard of compliance that will make our children

healthier. To see how you can help, go to [www.itseverybodysbusiness.org](http://www.itseverybodysbusiness.org).

Janae Talbott  
community prevention consultant  
Regional Prevention Center of  
Northwest Kansas, Hays



## Letter to the Editor

## Thomas County August 2 - August 6

### Fair Days

#### P.R.C.A. RODEO

2 BIG NIGHTS!

Tuesday & Wednesday  
August 2 & 3

8 p.m.



Wednesday, August 3  
ANTIQUA TRACTOR SHOW &  
STATIONARY ENGINE  
DISPLAY: 3 - 9 P.M.

#### FREE BBQ:

Sponsored by Cornerstone Ag  
& the Thomas Co. Fairboard  
Wednesday, August 3  
@ 5:30 p.m.

#### ~ SCHEDULE OF EVENTS ~

Saturday, July 23, 9-11 a.m. - Dog Show (4-H Sacred Heart Gym)  
Open Class

Monday, July 25, 8:00 a.m. - Clothing Construction Judging & Revue, Colby United Methodist Church  
10 a.m. - Queen & Princess Horsemanship Contest - Fairgrounds  
7:00 p.m. - Rodeo Queen & Princess Fashion Revue & Speech Contest at Quality Inn

Tuesday, July 26, 8:00 a.m. - Ready Made Fashion Judging  
9-11 a.m. - 4-H Lifeskills Judging @ Colby UMC  
7:30 p.m. - Public Fashion Revue @ Colby UMC

Thursday, July 28, 8:00 a.m. - Arts & Crafts Judging, 4-H Bldg.  
7:00 p.m. - Fair Set-up

Saturday, July 30, 8:30 a.m. - Shooting Sports  
9:30 a.m. - Open Class Horse Show

Sunday, July 31, 1:00-5:00 p.m. - Booth Construction

Monday, Aug. 1, 8:00-10:00 a.m. - Booth Construction  
9:00 a.m. - 4-H Horse Show  
4-6:30 p.m. - Open Class Entries Dept N - ONLY  
7:00 p.m. - Dog Agility Competition in the Livestock Arena

Tuesday, Aug. 2, 7:30 a.m. - 4-H Livestock Weigh-In  
11:00 a.m. - Deadline for entry of 4-H Exhibits  
8:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. - Open Class Entries - except Dept. N  
11:30 a.m. - Judging of all 4-H Exhibit

2:00 p.m. - Cat, Rabbit, Hand Pet & Poultry Show  
3:00 p.m. - Open Exhibits Judged

8:00 p.m. - PRCA Rodeo-Crowning of Rodeo Queen & Princess

Wednesday, Aug. 3, 8:00 a.m. - 4-H Swine & Sheep Show  
3:00-9:00 p.m. - Antiqua Tractor Show & Shine display  
5:30 p.m. - Free Barbecue - come and enjoy!

8:00 p.m. - PRCA Rodeo

Thursday, Aug. 4, 8:30 a.m. - 4-H Dairy, Bucket Calf & Beef Livestock Show  
8:00 p.m. - Roofmasters Roofing Demolition Derby

Friday, August 5, 9:00 a.m. - 4-H Round Robin  
4:00 p.m. - Buyers's Appreciation BBQ - 4-H Livestock Sale  
7:00 p.m. - F&M Insurance Modified Shootout

Saturday, August 6, 10:00 - Parade  
12:00 p.m. - Pioneer Day - 4-H Building  
7:00 p.m. - F&M Modified Shoot Out Feature

#### TICKET PRICES

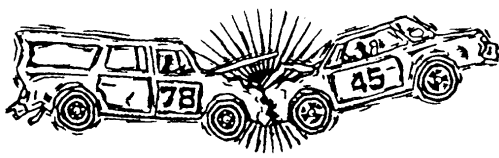
(Children under 5 are free)

PRCA Rodeo: Adults \$10.00, Child (6-12) \$5.00

Demolition Derby: Adults \$10.00, Child \$5.00

Races: Adults \$12.00, Child \$5.00

## Roofmasters DEMOLITION DERBY



Thursday, August 4

8 p.m.

## 2 NIGHTS OF RACES!!



Friday, Aug. 5

F&M INSURANCE  
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Modified Qualifying, ASCS  
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7 p.m.  
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Saturday, Aug. 6

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Car Crazy Price **\$6,086**

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'99 Pontiac TransSport  
Was \$6,900  
Car Crazy Price **\$4,972**

'05 Chevrolet Malibu Maxx  
"15,000 miles."  
Was \$15,900  
Car Crazy Price **\$13,987**

'04 Buick LeSabre Custom  
Was \$17,900  
Car Crazy Price **\$14,884**

'05 Pontiac G6 "GT"  
"Choose from 3"  
Was \$20,900  
Car Crazy Price **\$19,369**

'05 Chevrolet Suburban 2500 LT  
Was \$35,900  
Car Crazy Price **\$32,616**

'03 Pontiac Grand Am GT  
Was \$13,900  
Car Crazy Price **\$12,489**

'03 Ford Expedition XLT  
Was \$23,900  
Car Crazy Price **\$22,825**

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