Merry Christmas! See Section C for letters to Santa. THE OBERLIN HERALD

22 Pages, 2 Sections

Wednesday, December 21, 2005

127th Year, Number 51

Crews plan teamwork for next snow

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Since the blizzard at the end of November, there have been a lot of questions about who is in charge of cleaning what roads, who can close roads and how emergency crews, including the state, county and city, can work together to get the job done and keep people safe.

On Friday, Dec. 2, workers from the county, city and state met at The Gateway to hash out what happened and what could have been done differently, although they didn't come up with a lot of answers.

Pomeroy told the Decatur County during their meeting Tuesday, Dec. ness Director Bert Cool had de-

County Roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the worth it. Story to come. Decatur County commissioners:

• Heard that the road and bridge department hasn't been able to get any No. 1 fuel to add to the diesel to winterize it. Story to come.

bulance for a truck seized in a drug bust, but the two decided it wasn't

• Discussed a recent meeting among city, county and state emergency crews about the blizzard. Story

 Talked about the idea of starting • Talked with the ambulance direc- a Red Cross unit here or getting the tor and sheriff about trading an old am- Salvation Army to help out in emergencies. Story on Page 3A.

Ambulance Director Patrick commissioners about the debriefing 6. He asked if Emergency Prepared-

clared an emergency during the storm, one of the questions that came up during the meeting. No one knew for sure.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said he called Mr. Cool on Tuesday, Nov. 29, and heard that people were getting stuck on the roads. Road crews were pulling them out, but they would head down the highway again to get stuck again.

The roads were supposed to be open, said Mr. Unger, but they weren't passable.

U.S. 83 on Monday and Tuesday during the storm, said Mr. Pomeroy.

Pomeroy, they noted that only the state Department of Transportation had the authority to close a state missioners can appoint someone to highway. He said county officials don't have the power to do that.

How would the Department of Transportation know? asked Mr. Unger, saying the county crew did the work here.

Mr. Pomeroy said he had learned that all disasters need to be handled locally. The officials on the scene, said Mr. Unger, should have the au-There were road closed signs on thority to close roads.

> What are they going to do if local officials do close a road? asked

During the meeting, said Mr. County Attorney Steve Hirsch. No one had an answer for that.

Sheriff Ken Badsky said the comclose a road in an emergency. At least the roads can be closed until the state guys can get here to take a look, he said.

Barricades to close the roads were put up on U.S. 83 going south out of town, at the U.S. 36 and U.S. 83 intersection and at the U.S. 83 and K-383 intersection, said Sheriff Badsky, but the county guys had to put them up; it wasn't the state.

The storm gave everyone a lot of (See CREWS on Page 12A)

Budget includes activities

Sports, clubs are inexpensive

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Extracurricular activities take a little less than 5 percent of the budget, the Oberlin School Board heard last Monday night, but the superintendent said it's hard to imagine the schools without them.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt handed out a study on activity costs, showing what comes out of the general fund and what comes out of money students raise at the high school for their activities. He said the board asked for the report at a previous meeting.

The district spent a total of \$251,082 on activities, he said, not including money the kids make and spend. That amount, he said, includes coaching and sponsor salaries, transportation and other expenses. Transportation alone last school year for all of the student activities cost \$90,771.

Without the activities, said Mr. Glodt, the school wouldn't be the same. It's been proven that students who are involved in both sports and other activities do better academically and are more likely to stay out

Education is the district's main focus, he said, but it is good for the kids to be involved in things that interest them.

In a year, he said, \$250,000 out of (See DISTRICT on Page 12A)

Road job threatened by crunch

By VERONICA MONIER

Several road and bridge projects in northwest Kansas might not get done unless the state is able to come up with more money, since federal money is less than expected and the Legislature has been borrowing from the road fund.

At least one project in Decatur County — rebuilding K-383 from Jennings east to the county line could be in danger.

Secretary of Transportation Deb Miller said at a press conference in Norton that in 2004, the Legislature restructured the 1999 Comprehensive Transportation Program's budget. That included an assumed increase of \$250 million from the federal government.

"The federal bill, known as SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users), was approved this summer, and I appreciate everything that members of the Kansas congressional delegation did to get an increase in fund-(See BRIDGE on Page 12A)



showed Steve Haynes and Dave Bergling her number, which with her friends before the giveaway at the Centennial Park matched the one for the grand prize for the Christmas on Us gazebo.

WITH THE WINNING TICKET, Bev Reiter (above) giveaway Saturday. Clayton Carter (below) played the bells — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Women winners of bucks

Seven tickets were drawn out of a large trash can Saturday morning, and two were winners in the Oberlin merchants' annual Christmas on Us \$2,500 giveaway.

At 11 a.m., the first ticket was drawn out of the can, but no one from the crowd of around 250 people came forward to claim a prize. Members of *The Oberlin Herald* staff stood in the gazebo, while kids took turns drawing tickets out of the bucket.

Since all of the "instant winner" prizes had been given away earlier in the promotion, only first place of \$500 and grand prize of \$1,500 were left.

First to holler out from the back of the crowd was Penny Fringer, who showed the matching ticket to win the \$500 in scrip money. Mrs. Fringer said she would use the money to buy a few more gifts for Christmas and some groceries.

The other tickets drawn were included 975812, 5363310, 3268587,3268587 and 7008907.

Then it was time to draw for the grand prize. From the same area where Mrs. Fringer was standing came a little holler. Bev Reiter came walking up with the winning ticket, No. 3824667, which she got at Raye's Grocery.

Mrs. Reiter said she has never won before and was excited to win this time. Actually, she said, she



gifts. She said she was sure her daughter will have some plans for

the money, too. After the grand prize was given away, some headed downtown for hot chili and treats served at several doesn't normally make it to the businesses. Before the drawing drawing. She said she would spend started, the bell ringers from Faith the money on bills and Christmas and St. John's Lutheran churches performed Christmas music.

All of the money given away during the Christmas on Us promotion is in scrip money and can only be spent at sponsoring businesses. Sponsors include: Addleman Drug Store, Ward Drug Store, Stanley Oberlin Mercantile, the Dresser, Center.

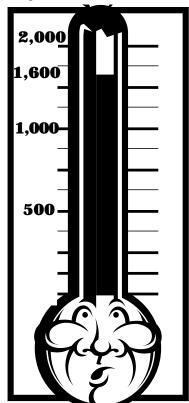
Shear Creations West and Day Spa, the Carpet Center, the Bank, Countryside Veterinary Clinic, Rocking R, Prairie Petals, Fidele Electric, Home Planning Center, Culligan, Dale's Fish 'N' Fun, Flowers by Lee, Ampride, Life-Hardware, Raye's Grocery, time Eyecare and R&M Service

Pantry needs food

Week and a half left in campaign

With a week and half left before the end of the year, the annual food drive at Stanley Hardware is 400 items short of the goal of 2,000

On Monday, owner Joe Stanley said they are doing pretty well for this point in the drive, with around



1,600 items. He said he thinks the items will come in pretty well the last week.

A lot of people who come home to visit for Christmas will donate to the drive, he said.

After the first of the year, the junior high student council will help Mr. Stanley take all of the items to the Decatur County Food Pantry at the United Church.

In the past, he said, they have collected nearly a ton and a half of food.

The pantry is low on all items, including canned and dry goods and household items, he said. Canned items they need include spinach, carrots, potatoes, mixed vegetables, vegetable soup, vegetable beef soup, chicken broth, beef broth, meat, ham, cream of mushroom, cream of potato, cream of celery, cream of chicken, cream of broccoli, peaches, apple sauce, mixed fruit, olives, jelly and juice.

Dried goods needed include baking powder, baking soda, coffee, tea bags, sugar, brown sugar, powdered sugar, pancake mix, mustard, mayonnaise, pancake syrup, ketchup, salt and pepper, crackers, Hamburger Helper, ramen noodles, salad dressing, condensed sweet milk, dressing, popcorn, coffee creamer and oatmeal.

Household needs include toothbrushes, trash bags, sandwich bags, laundry soap, foil, all-purpose cleaner, bleach, laundry soap and cleanser.

* Bridge projects on hold

(Continued from Page 1A) ing for Kansas," Miller said, "but after weeks of analyzing the several thousand pages of the bill, we now know that this funding component is approximately \$117 million short of what the 2004 Legislature had assumed when it restructured the (Comprehensive Transportation Program's) tight funding package."

The Legislature also had a contingency plan, which included the sale of bonds in case federal money fell

She said in addition to asking the Legislature to enact the contingency plan early in the next session, she is going to ask for the repayment of \$125 million in loans that was taken from the highway fund and put in the state general fund when the state was having a budget crisis. The Legislature said it would repay the highway fund.

The highway program, which was started in 2000 and slated to continue through 2009, includes several Norton County projects.

U.S. 36 and K-383 have been redone from Norton west to the Decatur County line and U.S. 283 from the county line north to the Nebraska state line. Several bridges have been replaced on K-9 and the viaduct east of Norton was rebuilt.

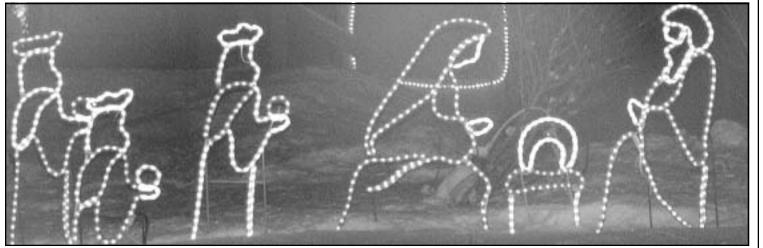
This year, the department started rebuilding U.S. 36 from the K-383 iunction to Norcatur.

northwest Kansas that need to be done to finish the statewide program, Miller said. If the Legislature doesn't approve the contingency bonds and repay loans, then some projects might not be completed.

Major projects in the area that are in jeopardy include K-27 from Goodland south to the Sherman-Wallace county line, and U.S. 183 from Plainville south to Hays.

There are also smaller projects in Decatur, Osborne, Sheridan, Sherman and Thomas counties that have yet to be let and might not be if the money doesn't come through, the secretary said.

"We've made an enormous investment in the state highway system and it will take money to maintain it," said Ms. Miller. "If we don't have sufficient revenue to complete these projects, we'll have to go back and see what we have to cut as far as projects go. But, we're not prepared to do that today. We're confident we'll get the money we need."



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Nine win cash for lights

Nine people in Decatur County won money off their electric bills or cash for their outdoor Christmas decorations.

The Oberlin-Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce Patty Brown for \$75, second to

In Oberlin, first place went to city electric bill.



judged the lights at the end of last Murry Pavlicek for \$50 and third week in Oberlin, Norcatur and to Tim Breth for \$25. Winners in Bailey and third to Imogene Oberlin receive that much off their Keenen.

Richard Rowlison, second to Mike

In Norcatur, first place went to

In Jennings, first place went to

Jim Plotts, second to Rodney O'Hare and third to Chris Bailey. In Jennings and Norcatur, the winners received cash.

* District budget includes activity costs

(Continued from Page 1A) There are projects remaining in a \$5 million budget isn't bad. If the district has to make more cuts because of shrinking enrollment, he said, there are ways to do that before getting rid of activities.

At the high school, said Mr. Glodt, clubs have accounts where they put the money they raise and

Principal Charles Haag runs those accounts, although the students and sponsors get to decide how and when they want to spend the money There are accounts for each of the

classes, art, athletics, band club, book fee, band reeds, DClub, drama ments. club, FFA, speech/forensics, food service, industrial arts, junior high pep club, junior high student council, Kayettes, library, miscellaneous, music, national honor society, petty cash, sales tax, science club, Spanish club, special education, senior high student council, student council activity, TACT, tech club, technology fee, vocational agriculture, weight club and

School Roundup

Oberlin School Board:

 Accepted \$400 in donations from two Oberlin businesses for the grade school. Story below...

 Listened to a report on expenditures for extracurricular activities

At a meeting last Monday, the which showed the district spends 4.68 percent of the total budget on activities. Story on Page 1A.

• Agreed to hire a consulting group to help shop around for insurance for

district employees. Story to come.

yearbook.

The school buys uniforms and equipment from the athletic fund, which comes from gate fees and fees charged to other schools for tourna-

Mr. Glodt said Athletic Director Randy Olson likes to keep a balance of \$7,000 in that fund. Last year, the fund brought in \$62,536 and they spent \$61,674, leaving a balance of

In most districts, said Mr. Glodt, the general fund would have to kick in more money here, but the high school hosts a lot of activities.

Alyssa Montgomery, a high

school student who was at the meeting, asked who buys the sports uniforms. Mr. Glodt said the school buys them with money from the athletic fund.

She asked if the cheerleaders are on the uniform rotation. Miss Montgomery said it seems that the cheerleaders have been raising money for a while for new uniforms, but haven't gotten them. Mr. Glodt said he thought the uniforms are on a seven-year rotation.

He suggested that she ask Mr. Olson, and if he can't answer the question, then Mr. Glodt said he would find out.

Board Member Barb Olson said she asked the same question once. She said she thinks the school provides a skirt and two shirts, one for home games and one for away.

Miss Montgomery said it would be nice to have a uniform for finals of sports events or if the wrestlers go

accounts, including the music club, which raised \$27,218 last year and spent \$27,773. He said most of that goes to the annual music trip. The student council has receipts

of \$40,021 and expenditures of \$41,437. That money is from concessions and magazine sales, he said. The council buys the food for the concession stand and also makes money off of it. Part of the expense was helping pay for the yearly trip to Washington.

Both groups started the year with a balance.

Mr. Glodt said he has heard one complaint, from yearbook students who feel like they are doing a lot of

* Crews discuss storm

(Continued from Page 1A) problems. Part of it, said Sheriff Badsky, was that it was a holiday weekend. Interstate 70 was closed and with the new program, it is closed from the state line to Russell. People thought they could still go west on the two-lane roads, he said.

The sheriff said new road closing signs are "car friendly." They can be nudged with a car and moved or the blowing wind moves them. He said with the wind blowing, the signs moved right out of the way.

"All of us at the meeting were in agreement that we can help each other out," he said. Kristen Brands, district public

affairs manager with the Kansas Department of Transportation in Norton, said the group talked about working together to notify each other and the people about the road closings. During the storm, she said, I-70

was closed early on Sunday so a lot of the travelers tried to get home on U.S. 36. That put more people on the road here. There aren't very many maintenance guys in Oberlin, she said, and then they are split up into 12 hour shifts so there is someone out at all times. The question came up if people in

the county can close the highways. By state law, said Mrs. Brands, only the Department of Transportation has the authority to close a road. The local officials do not have that authority, she said. County officials want to see bet-

Mr. Glodt pointed out two other ter communication from the state, she said. The group compiled a list of e-mail addresses and a phone list, which she said she used after the storm when a section of U.S. 36 was closed again. Mrs. Brands said she started to

call radio stations in this part of the area as soon as the department knew roads were going to be closed. In Oberlin, the power was out, she said, and although she called the radio station here, there wasn't any an-

Basically, she said, the meeting was an after-action review to address the blizzard. Some good ideas and suggestions came from the meeting and some might be used in

Board accepts donations to pay for work on school playground

cepted \$400 in donations from two Oberlin businesses for the grade school at its meeting last Monday

Superintendent Kelly Glodt said the Decatur County Farm Bureau donated \$100 and the Bargain Box gave \$300 as part of the Box Top program. Mr. Glodt said he thinks the grade school is still working on

The Oberlin School Board ac-raising money for playground proved the purchase. equipment.

> heater went out. Last year, he said, the agriculture shop.

The total cost, he said, is \$1,840 from Fidele Electric. The board ap-

The board agreed to work on the Mr. Glodt told the board they superintendent's evaluation forms don't have heat in the vocational and turn them in during the regular agriculture shop now because the board meeting scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 9. They will they put one in the transportation then have a special meeting on Monshop and he would like to put two in day, Jan. 23, to discuss the evalua-

In other business, the board:

Approved one-year contracts for

Mr. Glodt and Principals Charles Haag and Duane Dorshorst.

• Held 10-minute and five-minute closed sessions for personnel. There

was no action taken.

• Appointed board members Monte Moore and Jeannie Martin as Mrs. Martin to serve on the calendar teacher contract negotiators for the committee.

2006-2007 school year.

· Appointed Delayne May and

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
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