



Group questions water for wetlands

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**

Sappa Park and wetlands advocates talked with the Oberlin City Council on Thursday night about whether there would be enough water to actually have a wetlands at the park, but no one knew the answer for sure.

The idea is to carry water discharged from the city waste water treatment plant down Sappa Creek to the park to provide a wetlands. Since the city is building new treatment lagoons, said Chris Miller, with Miller and Associates, there could be a few months

in the summer when less water would be discharged than at present because of evaporation from the ponds.

Mr. Miller, an engineer with Miller and Associates, the firm which designed the plant, said the discharge should be about the same as it is now with 170,000 gallons going into the creek each day. It will be different in the summer because of evaporation off the lagoons, he said, but in the winter there won't be much evaporation.

Councilwoman Rhonda May asked how much of the outflow makes it to the park

now. Rick Pauls, with Pheasants Forever, said it is a live creek.

Ms. May said it looks like the answer is that the outflow will be the same with the new plant as it is now, in rough numbers.

However Dr. Richard May, another Pheasants Forever representative, said with evaporation, there might not be enough water. Councilman Jay Anderson asked if the city could release more.

There isn't any more water to release, said Mayor Ken Shobe. The flow depends on how much water comes out of the sewer

system.

The time of the release could maybe be changed, said City Administrator Gary Shike. Mr. Miller said they could do that, but basically water would be released in the summer months and then not in the winter.

The waste has to be in the lagoons for a certain amount of time to be sure it is clean when it's released, he said.

Mr. Shike said he doesn't want to see a lot of dirt work done at the park and then there not be any water.

Mr. Pauls noted that area has been in a

drought, and wondered how that will affect the flow.

The plant, said Mr. Miller, was designed with the idea of a 20-year climate in mind, so basically during wet years there will be more runoff and in dry years less.

That means there will be some years when the wetland could be a mud hole, said Gary Sanden, and other years when it is going to be dry. It is important to remember, he said, that the plan is for a wetlands, not a lake.

Is that acceptable to the community that (See PARK on Page 10A)

Treatment facility might open at ranch

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**

King's Alcohol and Drug Treatment Center won't make a decision about opening a treatment home at the former Sappa Valley Youth Ranch until after the first of the year.

Heath Bechler, president and chief executive officer of the firm, said they might want to open up a facility at the ranch but he needs to check into the logistics of it and get some questions answered first. He said he would love to jump at the chance, but doesn't want to repeat any of the mistakes made by the youth ranch operation.

King's Center operates a group home for teens with drug and alcohol problems in Oberlin. It is a sister firm to King's Achievement Camp, which reopened the youth ranch in April and ran it until it was closed by the state last month.

The ranch closed at the end of September after the Kansas Department of Health and Environment refused to issue it a permanent license.

King's Achievement Center is run by Rep. Dick Kelsey of

Goddard, a business partner of Mr. Bechler.

Mr. Bechler said he thought Mr. Kelsey was passionate about saving the youth ranch and was moved by the support he found in Oberlin. It was pretty disheartening when they had to shut the doors, he said.

Mr. Bechler said he wants to make sure he has done his homework up front before he jumps into the ranch facility.

King's Treatment already runs the 180 House on Elk Avenue for young men.

In order to do this right and make a decision, he said, he is going to take his time and talk to the state agencies he'll have to deal with.

A treatment facility would have to be licensed by the state Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services Addiction and Prevention Division which serves youths 16 and older. If the facility works with kids under 16, he said, it would also have to get a license through the Health Department.

Mr. Bechler said they have talked (See TREATMENT on Page 10A)

Federal money might help build a longer runway

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**

It seems there might be almost half a million dollars set aside to help do some work at the Oberlin Airport, where a California bus firm would like to see the runway long enough for corporate jets.

Ed Young, director of aviation for the Kansas Department of Transportation, told Decatur County officials last Tuesday the federal government has set aside \$450,000 for the airport here, and there probably will be another \$150,000 soon.

That money comes from the Federal Aviation Administration, which runs programs to help local airports, he said, adding that other airports in this area may have money designated for them, too. There is a small chance that Oberlin could possibly get some of that money as well, he said.

Last Tuesday, Commissioners Ralph Unger and Doyle Brown,

County Clerk Marilyn Horn, Mr. Young, Chriss McDiffet and Kristen Brands and Eric Oelschlager with the Department of Transportation, Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman, Larry Brennan with the California company, BCI, City Administrator Gary Shike and Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., met to discuss possible improvements at the airport.

The bus company bought the old Jennings School, where it is building a plant. The firm asked for a longer runway when it first started to look at the school so they can land corporate jets, and the private jets of its customers for buses.

Currently the airport has a 3,792 foot runway, said Mr. Shike, and the company wants a 5,000 foot runway.

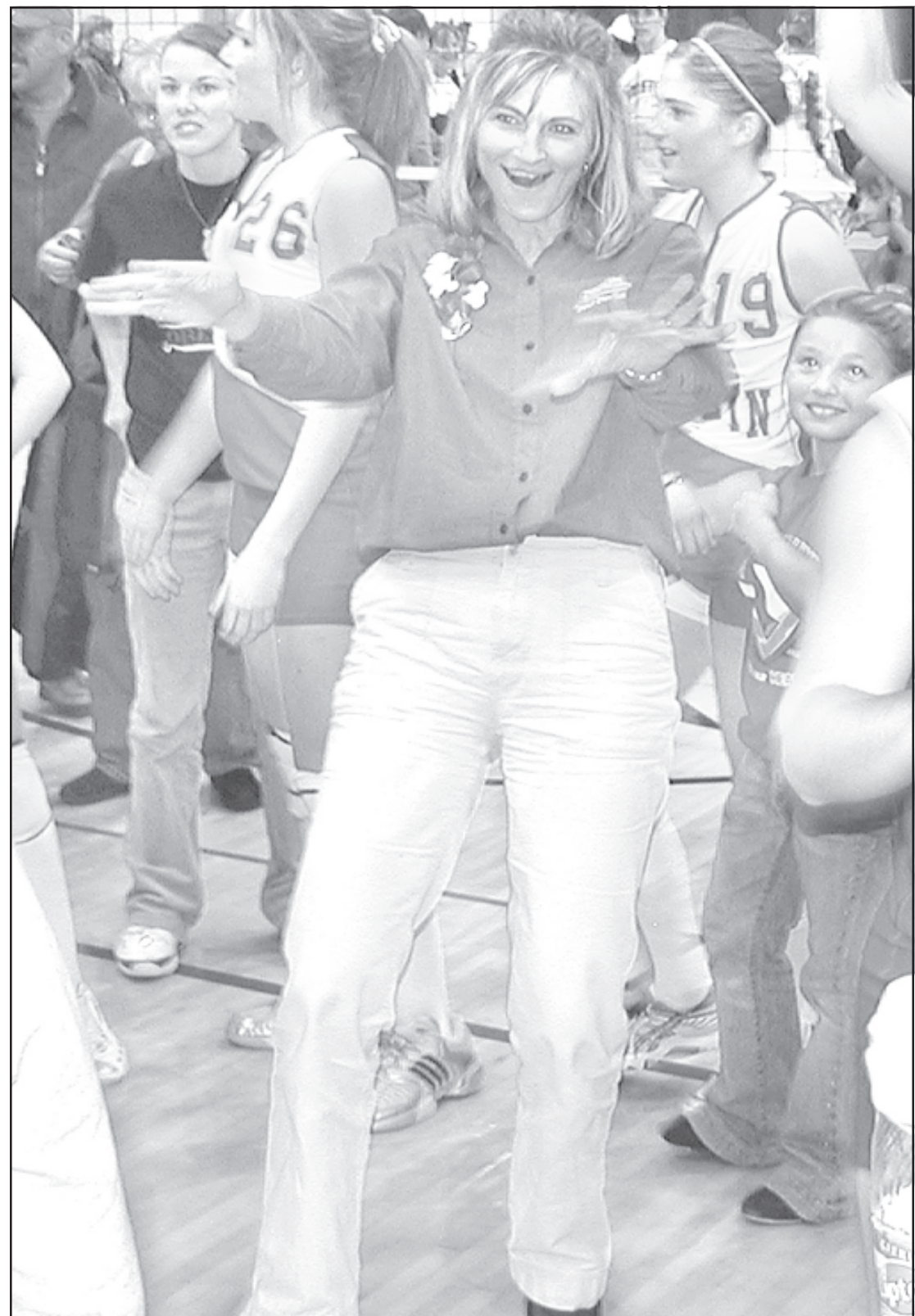
(See MONEY on Page 10A)



Team wins games

THE LADY RED DEVILS (above) celebrated with their fans and coaches Saturday after they beat the Lakin Broncs and the Phillipsburg Panthers to win the Substate Volleyball Tournament. Assistant Coach Sherri Ruf (below) celebrated after the team got the trophy. The Oberlin girls, ranked No. 1 in Class 3A volleyball, will travel to Salina on Friday and play at the Bicentennial Center. See the full story on the team on Page 7A and a congratulations page on Page 6B.

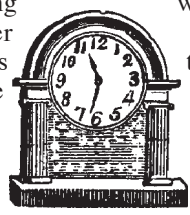
— Herald photos by Sarah Fredrickson



Saving time ends as clocks fall back

The sun has been going down earlier and earlier lately, making the days seem shorter as it gets to be time to go off of daylight-saving time.

The clocks will turn back an hour on Sunday, which means the evenings will seem even longer through the



winter.

Clocks need to be turned back at 2 a.m. that morning, but most of us will either set the clocks back Saturday night before going to bed, or when we get up. Just don't forget, or you'll miss that extra hour of sleep.

District will close Friday to support team

The Oberlin School District will be closed on Friday to allow for students and staff to attend the state volleyball tournament in Salina.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt said when they started to look at how many substitutes would be needed, it made more sense to close the

schools.

The numbers wouldn't work, he said, and a lot of the staff and students want to go support the Lady Red Devils.

Mr. Glodt said people he hadn't seen at a game all year turned up in Scott City for the substate

games. They were out to support the girls. Without school that day, he said, it will give people the time they need to get to Salina.

Mr. Glodt said there will be no classes at the grade school or high school and the district office will be closed.