

## Snow means more work for cattlemen

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

The end-of-the-year blizzard, which dropped two feet of snow just after Christmas, has meant extra work for cattlemen and workers at Decatur County Feed Yard.

Whether the operation is commercial or family, it seems the main priority when this kind of weather hits is getting the snow moved and the cattle fed. At both a private farm and the Decatur County Feed Yard, the men agreed that the cattle can and do get stressed in this kind of weather.

It seems that snow storms, though, aren't just stressful on the cattle, but on those in charge of them, too.

Richard Anderson, who lives 10 miles west of Oberlin and five south of U.S. 36, said they got two feet of snow on the flat spots, but the drifts were deeper. There was a fair

### Trash pickup back to normal

The year-end storm shut down Oberlin's trash service for almost a week, but starting Monday it was back on regular schedule.

Bill Cathcart, who runs the service, said with the holiday, New Year's Day, and then the snow, there just weren't enough days last week to get all of the trash picked up. Mr. Cathcart said they had to get the truck dug out and then the icy streets weren't conducive to getting the rig around the corners.

The men did pick up trash at the hospital, Good Samaritan Center and the restaurants last week, he said, but it was several days before they could even do that.

Everything should be back to normal this week, said Mr. Cathcart. People can just pile their trash up in front of their homes on top of the snow and the crew will be around to pick it up.

For the last week, the Oberlin city crew has been busy cleaning up the snow. For most of the week, loaders and dump trucks could be seen on Main Street getting rid of the large piles of snow in the middle of the road.

City Foreman Dan Castle was out plowing and didn't answer a call Monday afternoon. The crew was using a grader to scrape ice and snow off the streets as the temperature soared into the 40s.

amount of rain ahead of the snow.

When livestock aren't close to home, said Mr. Anderson, it gets worrisome for stockmen in weather like this. The first priority is getting

the roads open to the cattle, he said. Sometimes that is done by the county and other times farmers have the equipment to do the work.

Fortunately, said Mr. Anderson,

he has a four-wheel-drive tractor with a dozer blade, so they were able to open up some of the roads and help others, too. Mr. Anderson said it helps that everyone in the country

itches in to help each other.

After Christmas, he said, he had surgery, so he is laid up and relying on the help of others to get the work done.

Lots of people still have cattle out to pasture, he said. Some have moved them closer to home for calving season in February and March.

For the cattle out in the field, said Mr. Anderson, the snow makes it a little harder to get feed to them. In a lot of cases if the cattle are in the pasture, they have a stock tank with a windmill. As long as the wind moves a little, the windmill can keep the water in the tank moving so it doesn't freeze.

If the wind is really calm, then the farmer has to get a pitch fork or ax out and break the ice. Closer to home, most of the tanks have electric pumps, he said, which means if the power goes out, the water

freezes.

A lot of farmers, said Mr. Anderson, have generators and the tanks are hooked up to them, so that keeps the water from freezing.

Cattle can go a day or two without water. When it gets really cold, the cattle huddle together to stay warm and aren't very active, so they don't need as much water.

In a blizzard, he said, it can take a day or two to get food and water to them.

In this last storm, said Mr. Anderson, he had some stock close to the house and others farther away. A neighbor opened the road for them and then his dad followed in a tractor with a bale of hay a day after the storm.

It depends on the number of cattle in the field on how much hay, cane or alfalfa you have to take out there. (See CATTLE on Page 12)

## City and school positions open for April election

Several seats on the Oberlin School Board and city councils in Oberlin, Norcatur, Jennings and Dresden are up for election this year, with the candidate filing date only a week and a half away.

Anyone who wants to run in the April election needs to file by noon on Tuesday, Jan. 23. Candidates can either pay a \$5 filing fee and complete the nomination papers or get a petition signed by 25 people for a city election and by 50 people for a school board seat.

Last year, voters made all seats on the Oberlin School Board at-large, said County Clerk Marilyn Horn, and that is why candidates have to get 25 more signatures.

That means that anyone in the school district can run for any seat on the board.

Mrs. Horn, who serves as the county election officer, said Jeanne Martin, Monte Moore, Barb Olson and Kurt Vollertsen hold the seats that are up for election this year school board.

Mayor Ken Shobe and Council members Rhonda May and Ray Ward hold the seats that are up for the Oberlin council.

Mrs. May said she hasn't decided if she will run for election or not. Mayor Shobe said he doesn't plan to run and Mr. Ward wasn't able to be

reached.

Council seats up in Jennings include those held by Mike Helm, Jim Plotts and Mark Bailey. Mr. Helm, is currently serving as the mayor after Doug Dempewolf resigned. Mrs. Horn said she has written the secretary of state to see if the mayor's seat needs to be on the ballot. She said she is waiting for an answer, but there will be three council spots up for election.

Council seats in Jennings to be on the ballot are currently held by Rick Foster, Bill Gawith an Stann Hartzog. Those in Dresden are held by Mayor Russell Rhodes and Council members Erma Spresser and Scott Taylor.

Anyone who wants to run and lives in the city limits or in the school district can pick up petitions at the county clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse, she said.

Mrs. Horn said the general election is scheduled for the first Tuesday, April 3. A primary will be held Tuesday, Feb. 22, only if more than double the number of open seats apply to run for one job. For example, Mrs. Horn said, if nine people file for the school board seats, a primary will be needed to narrow the field to eight.

So far, no one has registered to be a candidate for any office, she said.

## City water dock open to everyone for emergency use

The Oberlin City Council agreed to open the water dock for farmers and ranchers who need to water cattle after the recent storm, but members want it closed as soon as the emergency is over.

City Administrator Gary Shike said he received several calls about opening the water dock by the city shop so stockmen could fill tanks for cattle faster. With power out in parts of the county, he said livestock are without water. Mr. Shike said he had approved, and the council agreed it was a good idea.

Councilman Joe Stanley, serving as mayor, said Mr. Shike, has had several people ask him about keeping the water dock open when the city doesn't have water restrictions.

Last summer, the council agreed to close the dock because the city was on water restrictions. The water dock is a place where anyone with a portable tank can come in and buy 140 gallons for 25 cents. The

### Council Roundup

At meeting Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Thanked the city crew for a "wonderful job" cleaning up after the past two storms and keeping the power on to most of the town. Story on Page 3.

- Agreed to open the water dock for farmers and ranchers use during the storm, but to close it after the emergency. Story at left.

- Agreed that the Sappa Park Committee should continue working on plans for a wetlands. Story on Page 3.

dock is set up to fill the tank quickly.

After the city lifted the water restriction, (See CITY on Page 12)

## Banquet this month

The Oberlin-Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce is getting ready for its annual banquet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 25, at The Gateway.

The cost of the surf-and-turf meal is \$17 and reservations are needed by Tuesday, Jan. 23. Anyone who wants to attend should call the

Chamber office at 475-3441 or stop by. At the event, Doug Watson will portray Will Rogers and five county citizens will be honored.

The Chamber board is looking for three members, so anyone interested should call Glenva Nichols, manager. New members will be elected at the banquet.



AT THE OPEN HOUSE at Bus and Coach International in Jennings on Saturday, Phil Oldridge, president and chief executive officer, (above) told about 200 people a little bit

about the company. The business is housed (below) in the former Jennings School, which it purchased last August.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

## Jennings company launches new bus at first open house

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

The former Jennings High gym, now a showroom, was packed Saturday afternoon as people gathered around the door so they could hear about the new bus plant which has taken the school's place.

It was the long-awaited day for some Decatur County residents to see the construction inside their old school, meet the executive team of Bus and Coach International, see the firm's new bus and welcome the business to town.

The open house at Bus and Coach International, known as BCI, started at 2 p.m. and ended at 5 p.m. with over 200 people turning out.

The company purchased the old school in August and the building has been under renovation since. The first thing to go up was a large chain-link fence that enclosed the property. New BCI signs have decorated the outside of the building.

Inside, there is new dry wall. Rooms that once housed children are now the reception area and offices. The cafeteria is more modern, with tall tables and bright colors.

In the former gym, now the showroom, workers carefully preserved the Jennings Coyotes logo on the floor. The bleachers are still in place and so is the stage, but a large garage door has

### Town gets to meet executives

Bus and Coach International launched the 2007 Falcon 45 Motor Coach Saturday in an open house in Jennings, with over 200 people from the area and executives and board members from all over.

At least 16 board members, executives and family members arrived in town last week from Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Pasadena, Calif., France and other places. During the open house Saturday, the BCI team talked with people, answering questions about the bus, the firm's new plant and themselves.

Included in the team, which sat on chairs lining the wall, (See BOARD on Page 12)

been added and the room houses a new 2007 BCI Falcon Motor Coach.

Before opening things up for questions and letting people climb in and out of the bus, Phil Oldridge, chief executive officer and president, talked a little about the business. BCI, said Mr. Oldridge, started as a company that sold and leased



used coaches. A lot of the clients said they wished the firm was in the new bus business, he said. That started the wheels turning with a series of meetings and phone calls.

Mr. Oldridge said they knew it would be a long, drawn-out process, but the company decided to build a new bus. He said they wanted to

build a U.S. bus with parts from the United States made to be used here. This bus, he said, pointing to the white bus with the red and orange design, is the prototype. This bus, he said, represents 3 1/2 years of our lives and a \$10.2 million investment.

(See OPEN on Page 12)