

## Chicken owner asks city for approval

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Melinda Enfield took off her "Mrs. Decatur County" sash and picked up copies of laws from other towns and headed for the podium at Thursday's City Council meeting. Mrs. Enfield, who had just finished introducing herself as Mrs. Decatur County, came back to the microphone to talk about chickens, mainly hers. About a month ago, she and her son William asked the council to let them keep their pet chickens in town.

The city's animal ordinance says people have to have an acre of land to get a permit to keep up to five chickens in town. Just because

### Ordinance may be up to voters

Two pet owners have started gathering signatures on a petition to get a proposed revision of the Oberlin animal ordinance on the ballot after the county attorney approved the wording.

Melinda Enfield said Monday she received the letter from County Attorney Steve Hirsch approving the language of the revised animal ordinance. The ordinance takes out a requirement that people who want to keep animals have at least an acre of land, includes a permit fee of \$5, allows for substantial weight to be given to objections from any residents within 300 feet

of the location of the proposed permit and doesn't say if miniature barnyard animals are or aren't allowed.

It would still be up to the Board of Zoning Appeals to issue the permits or deny them, she said.

If Mrs. Enfield and Rose Eskew get enough signatures by Thursday, Feb. 15, the ordinance will show up on the city ballot in April.

The women need to get 192 signatures on the petition, said Marilyn Horn, the county election officer.

and then go before the city Board of Zoning and Appeals.

Mrs. Enfield said, with the help of Rose Eskew, who wants to keep a miniature horse named Scout at her home, she had rewritten part of the animal ordinance to allow people to get a permit to have chickens without needing an acre of land.

Mrs. Enfield said she made copies of ordinances from other cities for the council. Boise, Idaho, she said, has no restrictions on chickens in the city.

What about other animals? asked Councilman Jay Anderson. Mrs. Enfield said she didn't know, as she was checking only on chickens.

In Portland, Ore., she said, people can have three chickens or less. They can have more with a permit.

These are just two examples, said Mrs. Enfield. If bigger cities allow these animals to live inside city limits, she asked, why can't Oberlin?

This community was built on a foundation of agriculture, she said, and she sees no reason why chicken owners need an acre of land.

These animals aren't big enough to need an acre of land to live, she said; the rule is ridiculous. Mrs. Enfield said she and Mrs. Eskew sat down and wrote a new ordinance without the one-acre rule.

(See PROPOSED on Page 5A)

people have an acre of land doesn't mean they get the permit. The people have to fill out an application

## Girl Scouts want to use former ranch

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Representatives from the Oberlin Girl Scouts talked with the City Council on Thursday about using the vacant youth ranch for an overnight camp for about a week this summer or possibly as an official Scout camp for years to come.

Becky Ayers, membership specialist for the Scouts, and Penny Fringer, service unit manger, met with the council at its regular meeting Thursday night, saying they were at the meeting "to plant seeds of thought." Whether those might take root, the council didn't say. No decision was made.

Mrs. Ayers said the Sunflower Council, to which the Oberlin Scouts belong, covers 16 counties in northwest Kansas. The two women, said Mrs. Ayers, have talked a lot about how the Scouts and the city could be partners in using the former Sappa Valley Youth Ranch.

She said this area is without a Girl Scout camp, except when leaders organize a day camp.

Mrs. Ayers said they would like to use the former ranch either the first or second week in July to put on an overnight camp for girls from all over the council area.

"I feel passionate about Girl Scouts," said Mrs. Ayers. "I have been one all my life. Penny is pas-

### Council Roundup

At a meeting Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Talked with Melinda Enfield about her written proposal to amend the city's animal ordinance to allow people to have chickens on less than an acre of land. Story above.

- Heard from Mrs. Enfield a second time on a revised proposal, but didn't make a decision. Story on Page 5A.

- Found out that a proposed water treatment plant could cost the city \$3 million to \$4 million more than expected after a pilot study showed that more equipment could be needed. Story on Page 3A.

- Listened to a request from the Oberlin Girl Scouts about using the former youth ranch as a camp for a week during the summer, but made no decision. Story at left.

- Approved a consent order for changing the completion date for the waste water treatment plant to the end of May. Story on Page 5A.

sionate about it, too." (See SCOUTS on Page 5A)

## Representative discusses education

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Congressman Jerry Moran talked with about 60 people Friday about economic development for the area, the new farm bill and how the audience felt about more troops going to Iraq.

About 43 people, including business owners, government officials, farmers and the government class from Decatur Community High School, asked the congressman questions and answered his. A coffee hour was sponsored by the Decatur County Farm Bureau.

Rep. Moran said he is anxious for the opportunity to visit Jennings and see the new bus plant in the old school there. He is also interested in the airport and runway expansion in



Jerry Moran

Oberlin.

"I am trying to do everything I can to help economic development in Kansas," said the congressman, "and not in Nebraska."

He said his main interests are agriculture, health care and small business issues that affect rural Kansas. Rep. Moran said he wants to keep health care available and affordable in small towns. That includes keeping a dentist and optometrist, among other professionals, in town, he said.

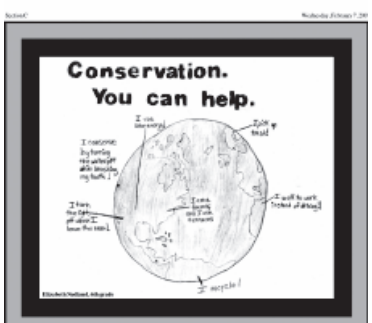
On the education front, he said, President Bush's No Child Left Behind law is up for re-authorization this year. He said he thinks the law has Washington more involved in (See MORAN on Page 5A)

## Families honored in today's paper

Four families received Kansas Bankers Awards from the Decatur County Conservation District this year for soil and range-land conservation and wind-break plantings.

Each year, families in the county are honored for their work with the land. In today's Oberlin Herald is the annual Conservation Section, which has stories about the families that received the awards this year.

THE OBERLIN HERALD'S Conservation '07



A MICROPHONE in her hand, Patience Carman, 5, (above) sang "Shout to the Lord" at the Seeds of Hope Telethon on Saturday. Susan May (below) held up a chicken bank

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes

## Telethon raises \$11,000+

Volunteers stood behind cameras, crawled on the floor, turned on microphones, answered phones, served food, interviewed people, auctioned off items, sang and played the piano all day Saturday to raise money for 17 civic organizations during the 12th annual Seeds of Hope Telethon.

As the night ended, all stopped to celebrate as the drive topped it's \$11,000 goal with \$11,095 in cash donations.

Members of the telethon committee, Jack Benton, Bill Duncan, Peg Smith, Regina Stanley, Brenda Ulery, Kristi Smith and Tim and Kimberly Davis, met for the past six months to set up the schedule, trouble shoot problems and brainstorm ideas.

After raising more than \$11,000 last year, the committee decided to up the goal to \$11,000 this year. At the end of the evening at 10 p.m., the tote board read \$11,095, which didn't include any of the items purchased during the all-day auction or any late donations. (See TELETHON on Page 5A)

