

* County budget will raise taxes

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 Ms. Grafel said she thought all three of them were there for the budget meeting because the commissioners had talked about a property tax levy of 2 mills to raise \$50,000. She said it had been reported that the commissioners were planning to raise only \$40,000 now.
 Commissioner Stan McEvoy said they did trim a little from the amount after finding out how much time there might be before the work actually starts on the runway.
 There were other needs for the money, said County Clerk Marilyn Horn.
 Is there going to be some time before the work on the proposed longer runway actually starts? asked Mr. McEvoy. The project is moving right along, Ms. Grafel replied.
 Where is the money in the budget? asked Mr. Lohofener. In the county general fund, said Commissioner Doyle Brown.
 If for some reason something doesn't happen with the project, said Commissioner Ralph Unger, then the county can still use the money for something else.
 In 2008, said Mr. Brown, the

county plans to raise \$40,000. After that they can take a look, and by then maybe the city will know how much the longer runway will cost.
 Ms. Grafel said she is planning to meet with Kansas National Guard officials next Wednesday in Topeka about the runway project.
 With the plan to put in a 7,000-foot runway, said Mr. Lohofener, the corporation and the committee working on the project are trying to put together as much money as they can from different sources.
 The county can't give more than \$50,000 a year without an election, said Mr. McEvoy. If the city needs \$10,000 more in 2008, he said, the county might be able to find the money.
 Mr. Lohofener said he would keep the commissioners informed and get them a copy of the new drawing for the runway when he gets it.
 With no other questions or any protests, the commissioners approved the budget, which will increase county taxes by 6.325 mills, which will bring in \$293,978. The total budget is \$2.206 million

* Prizes awarded at tractor show

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 Natalie Hawkins, Atwood, ages 3-6; Steven Harrison, Lebanon, Neb., ages 7-9; and A.J. Roerick, Oberlin, ages 10-11.
 There were 30 quilts and six wall hangings entered in the quilt show. "Best of Show" winners were "Bear in the Woods" owned by Rodney Marsh and quilted by Kristi's Quilt Farm, and a lavender cross stitch quilt, made by Avilda Frick and quilted by Mrs. Benjamin. "Best of Show" went to Country Quilting, donated by Norma Carman, and Kristi's Quilt Farm, donated by Kristi Hawkins.
 A collection of toy trains and semitrailer trucks was on display in

the 4-H building by Gary Orr. Del and Gordon Hawkins served 135 people at a pork barbecue on Saturday night, and Steve Horn conducted church services Sunday morning.
 Sarah Fringer and Dana West played the National Anthem and the colors were presented by the Herndon Veterans of Foreign War Post.
 Poker run winners on Saturday were Marlene Launchbaugh, Beaver City, Neb., first, and Sarah Pringe, Colby, second.
 Club officers are Elden Huff, president; Doug West, vice president; Penny Fringer, secretary; and Maxine Wright, treasurer.

* Money will help pay for building

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 on behalf of the foundation he received a \$200 check from WalMart. This was a grant for the sound system put in by the fair board at the livestock building.

The sound system in the new livestock building, he said, cost \$1,100 and probably needs more speakers.
 Mr. Unger said they might be able to find someone who wants to donate those.

Sirens might go on county insurance

The Decatur County commissioners asked the county clerk to write a letter to the county's insurance pool about covering the emergency sirens.
 County Attorney Steve Hirsch talked with the commissioners at their meeting Tuesday, Sept. 18, about covering the sirens. Mr. Hirsch said if the cities buy the insurance, they might have to pay a lot, but the impact on the county's bill may not be much. There are four sirens in Oberlin, commissioners said, and one each in Dresden, Jennings and Noratur. The commissioners asked Clerk Marilyn Horn to e-mail Tom Job with the Kansas Counties Multi-Line Pool with the request.
 The commissioners approved the purchase of a new door for the register of deeds' office. Register Judy Gaumer said she found the door at Fidele Electric and Woodcrafting for \$150 and custodian Bob Berls installed it.

She said she wants to put the door between the two rooms in the vault to protect the books in case the window ever blew in.
 Mrs. Gaumer said they recently had to take the bars off the window so Mr. Berls could reach the air conditioner to fix it. She asked if the bars have to be on that window, and the commissioners said it would be OK to leave them off.
 In other business, the commissioners:
 • Ratified the purchase of a window air conditioner for \$700 from R&M Service Center to replace one that died on the second floor.
 • Approved the low bid for chemicals for the noxious weed department. Director Gaylen Huntley received three bids: \$22,500 from Helena Chemical from Goodland, \$22,748 from Van Diest Chemical from McCook and \$22,716 from UAP of Oberlin.

Second notice goes out on city water problems

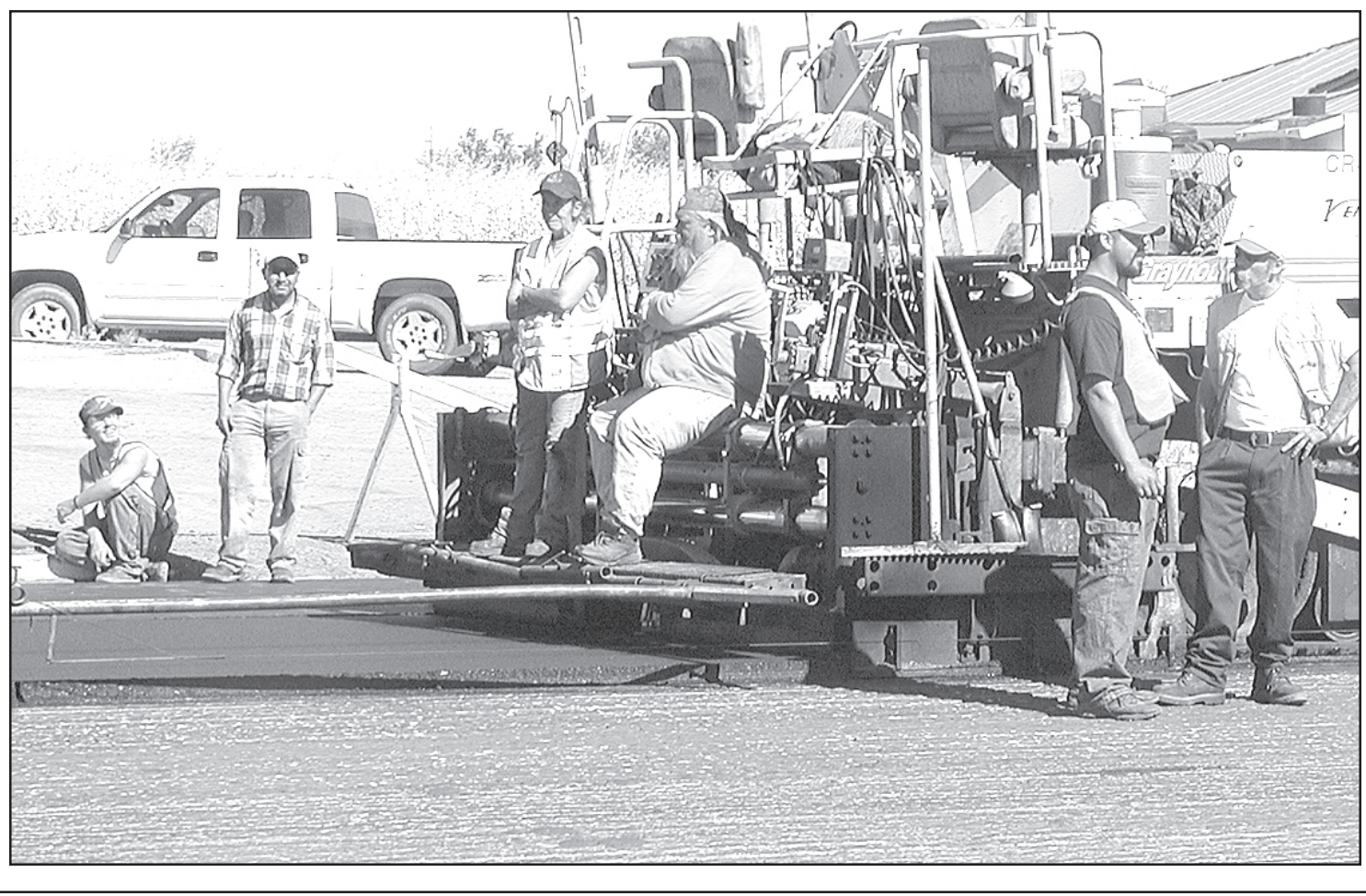
Residents in the City of Oberlin received a second notice in the mail last week about the city's water being in violation of federal and state drinking water standards because it has too much uranium in it.
 City Administrator Gary Shike said the city has to mail a notice out every three months until the uranium level is under the limit.
 He said the allowed level for uranium is 30 milligrams per liter and the city's average is 37.
 The city council, he said, is working on a water treatment that will cost over \$4 million.
 The notice says people don't nec-

essarily need to use an alternative water source, such as bottled water, but anyone with health concerns should talk to their doctor. The notice also says that the level isn't an immediate risk.
 Mr. Shike said the uranium comes from the natural decay of native rock coming into contact with the ground water.
 The No. 12 well east of town is high in uranium, which the city knew when it was drilled. The state let the city drill it, if there was a plan to bring the level down.
 Anyone with questions can talk with Mr. Shike at 475-2217.



Paving near done on U.S. 36

A CREW WITH Venture Corp. took a break Monday afternoon (below) before they started putting asphalt down on the south side of U.S. 36. The men did the north side in the morning. A pilot car (left) led traffic, since the highway was turned into a one lane road for the construction.
 — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



* Schools will change schedules next year

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 school representatives from both leagues scrambling to merge the circuits for the upcoming fall season. Both leagues agreed to merger details at a meeting in Salina on Friday, with the new football league having nine schools split into three divisions.
 The teams left in the Northwest Kansas League — Atwood, Oberlin, Oakley, Hoxie, Colby and Goodland — will only schedule games with towns that have similar enrollments from the Mid-Continent League. These include Norton, Osborne, Plainville and Trego Community/WaKeeney. There will be no merger of the two leagues, but teams will schedule each other during football season.

This coming fall, many area schools will have to make longer trips to compete. The scheduling of the two leagues will see Osborne traveling to Oberlin for the season opener Sept. 5.
 Norton will renew its rivalry from years past, coming to Smick Field Sept. 12.
 The Red Devils will travel to Plainville on Sept. 19, then play Rawlins County at home on Sept. 26.
 Oberlin will travel to WaKeeney to face Trego Community High on Oct. 3, then the team is off to Goodland to face the Cowboys on Oct. 10.
 The boys will begin district play against Hoxie at home in Oberlin on Oct. 17. Oberlin will then travel to

Oakley to face the Plainsmen Oct. 24. They are the only three teams in the district.
 As the schedule fell, Oberlin will travel to Ellis for the final regular-season game of 2008, which is a nondistrict game.
 "The new schedule will have three tiers matching teams and enrollment," said Colby head football coach Chris Gardner. "A, B and C divisions from each league will be matched as close as possible, but scheduling is different because of enrollments."
 "The A division will include schools with the largest enrollments with above average success in football," said Colby High Athletic Director Larry Gabel.
 The B division will include

schools with lower enrollments, but successful gridiron programs in the past few years, such as St. Francis and Oakley, he said, and the C division will include low-enrollment schools that have not had success in the past few years, such as Osborne.
 "It's not the fairest scenario for some schools and traditions will be lost," Gabel said.
 The details on the three divisions are still being hammered out, as some teams might have to travel more than a 100 miles to play in their districts.
 For information, go to the Kansas High School Activities Association website, www.kshsaa.org, or call (785) 273-5329.

Council holds wind firm's letter for lawyer

The Oberlin City Council received a letter back from Sunflower Wind about negotiations for a power contract, but didn't really discuss it at a meeting Thursday night because the city attorney wasn't present and hadn't seen the letter.
 The firm wants to build a "wind farm" to produce electricity in Decatur County and first proposed that the city dump its existing contract and go with the wind proposal. Later, it asked for a "right of first refusal" allowing it to match any offer the city might get.
 At the end of August, the city sent the firm a letter saying it would negotiate with the company if it took the right of first refusal.
 Councilwoman Rhonda May asked if the city had heard anything back. Mayor Joe Stanley said without its lawyer, the council wasn't going to even discuss the proposal, but the letter was received.
 City Administrator Gary Shike said the letter from Sunflower Wind basically says the company will take the right of first refusal out and included an outline detailing a pos-

sible plan.
 Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener said she went to a recent meeting of the Sunflower Chapter of Pheasants Forever to talk about plans for Sappa Park.
 Although the ground on the lake bottom has been fertilized, she said, no crop is being planted on it, which means the group will take over tilling and planting the lake bottom earlier than planned.
 She said the group wants to plant switch grass this fall and wanted to know if the city has put any money aside for work on the lake bottom.
 City Administrator Gary Shike said the council did talk about that, but nothing was in the budget.
 The grass seed will cost around \$3,200 to \$3,500, said Mrs. Lohofener. Mayor Stanley said the city didn't have any money for that.
 In other business, the council:
 • Heard that someone had talked with Mayor Stanley about decals to mark the city vehicles. The council thought that was a good idea.
 • Received an invitation from Dr. Pat Cullen, Oberlin school superin-

tendent, for someone from the council to attend a school board meeting on Monday since the boarding-school plan will be on the agenda.
 • Heard that Police Chief Wade Lockhart received a call about people spinning out on the fresh gravel on Marks Avenue, outside of the city swimming pool.
 The speed limit isn't posted on that street, he said. Where the speed limit isn't posted, said Chief Lockhart, it is 30 miles per hour.
 The council discussed putting up a school zone sign or a 20 mph speed

limit sign. Chief Lockhart said that was up to the council because the speed limit would need to be changed by ordinance.
 • Heard that the police department had received "stop sticks" used to help stop people running from law enforcement officers, through the Kansas Department of Transportation special traffic enforcement program.
 Chief Lockhart said they are still training with the equipment, which has spikes to deflate the tires of a speeding vehicle.

ANTIDEPRESSANT BIRTH DEFECTS

Children of mothers taking certain antidepressants while pregnant may develop birth defects, including holes in their hearts, persistent pulmonary hypertension (PPHN) abnormally shaped skulls, brain and spinal cord defects, and club feet. If you or a loved one may have been affected, call us for a free consultation.

Lee J. Hollis, Attorney 800-701-3672