



# THE OBERLIN HERALD

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## City ends wind farm discussion

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
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The Oberlin City Council voted to cut off negotiations with a wind-power firm Thursday night after hearing that the power consultant it hired wouldn't recommend the city enter into a contract with the company "at this time."

City Administrator Gary Shike said he had talked to Joe Herra, an independent electrical consultant from Burr Oak, who said he had finished a letter for the city, but was having a hard time sending it.

Mr. Shike said Mr. Herra's conclusion was to advise the city not to enter into an agreement with Sunflower Wind right now.

Mr. Shike said Mr. Herra offered to come to the Thursday, Jan. 3, meeting to talk about his advice.

Company officials were unhappy they did not have a chance to be at the meeting. In a letter to the council, Brice Barton, a Sunflower Wind director, complained that he had been told the council wouldn't discuss the issue Thursday. It was on the agenda under old business.

Barton said Sunflower, which announced this week it was buying a building in Hutchinson to house a wind-turbine manufacturing plant using European technology, would continue its interest in this area

### Council Roundup

At a meeting last Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Voted to terminate negotiations with Sunflower Wind after hearing from a consultant who said he wouldn't recommend the city entering into a contract with the company at this time. Story at left.
- Talked briefly about the possibility of getting grant money for wetlands at Sappa Park. Story on Page 3A.
- Discussed the condition of streets in the city after the recent storms. Story on Page 3A.

and might still build a wind farm in Decatur County

"When Oberlin is ready to use locally generated alternative energy, Sunflower Wind will be ready to help Oberlin," Mr. Barton wrote. "Please let us know if we can be of any help to you in the future and please watch the horizons of Decatur county for wind turbines from Sunflower Wind."

Thursday, Councilman Jay Anderson said he was "kind of

(See WIND on Page 5A)

## Company buying building for a plant

Sunflower Wind, which has been trying to negotiate a power contract with the City of Oberlin for the last few months, is buying a 260,000-square-foot building in Hutchinson to manufacture "mobility systems" and wind turbines.

Brice Barton, director of project development, said Hutchinson has an available skilled work force, the desire to fill empty buildings and also had a big, long building that was available.

Hutchinson officials said Sunflower signed a contract which will lead to ownership of a building formerly owned by Eaton Corp.

"We are excited that Sunflower will be moving into a 260,000 square foot portion of the manufacturing space that Eaton no longer needed," said Chamber of Commerce President Dave Kerr.

Kerr said he has been working with Sunflower, the City of Hutchinson, Reno County and Eaton over the last several months. The firm will occupy the building and begin making improvements that suit its manufacturing operation. This start-up company plans to employ over 250 people there by the end of 2010, Kerr said.

Sunflower Wind partnered with a European firm to license the wind-turbine technology, Mr. Barton said. The company, said Dan Rasure, one of the directors, will receive manufacturing know-how and training to build the turbines.

Sunflower, he said, plans to be able to start taking orders in January, with the first turbines to be running by the end of next year. He said the initial production will be large, 2.5-megawatt turbines.

## Firm is 'disappointed' city drops contract talks

This letter was sent to Oberlin's mayor, city administrator, the Oberlin/Decatur County Economic Development Corp. and *The Oberlin Herald* in response to a decision made by the City Council on Thursday to terminate negotiations with Sunflower Wind.

"Upon hearing the news regarding the decision of the City Council, I was disappointed that we could not reach an agreement at this time.

I apologize that I was not there to answer your question, but due to a family emergency and the fact that I was informed no action would be taken, I did not make myself or a representative

available.

Sunflower Wind will continue to be committed to making wind work for the residents of Kansas. When Oberlin is ready to use locally generated alternative energy, Sunflower Wind will be ready to help Oberlin. Please let us know if we can by any help to you in the future and please watch the horizons of Decatur county for wind turbines from Sunflower Wind."

The letter was signed by Brice Barton, director of project development for Sunflower Wind.

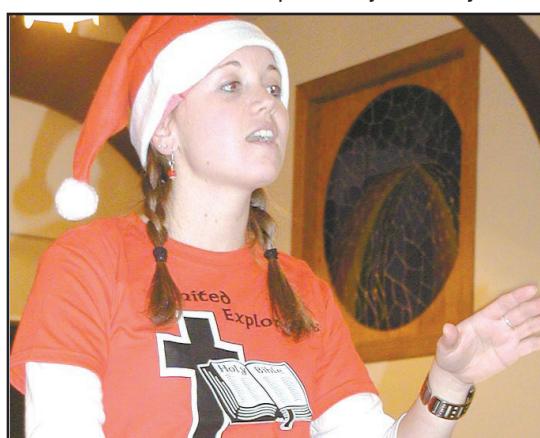
Mr. Barton said that the company still hopes to go forward with a proposed wind farm in Decatur County.



## Sing in the season

**DRESSED IN SHIRTS** they received for Christmas, kids from the United Explorers youth group sang for their parents last Wednesday before a soup supper at the United Church. Patience Carman (top) held her hands up for a song celebrating the birth of Christ. Sierra Lohoefer (right) held cards with the words while Kristi Smith (below) directed.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



## School board may have a seat

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
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The Oberlin School Board could have an opening soon, as one of the members has moved to Lawrence, but until she resigns, apparently there's not much the board can do.

The term of board member Delayne May, who moved to Lawrence this month with her husband Richard, is up in 2009. At the meeting last Monday, Board President Dewayne Jackson said Mrs. May hasn't resigned, and until she does, the board can't do much. If she does choose to resign, he said, the board can appoint

someone to her position.

Superintendent Pat Cullen said apparently, under Kansas law, Mrs. May can stay on the board even though she lives out of district and finish out her term.

The board will have to advertise, take applications, interview the candidates and then select. The first part of that is that she would have to resign, but that hasn't happened.

The newspaper left a message at the May's home last week, but no one called back. All of the member positions are at-large.

Principal Duane Dorshorst told the board

about a program called Blending Assessment Instruction, an online tutorial session to help students prepare for state tests.

Mr. Dorshorst said he thinks most of the teachers have used the program. Students can go on the internet and get a brief explanation of the state standard for a test, get a tutorial and then answer a few questions.

The teachers can download a lesson to help them work with the class, he said. There are also work sheets, slides and other things to help prepare students for the state exams.

(See BOARD on Page 5A)

## Honor band for 17

Seventeen students at Decatur Community High School qualified for the Kansas State University honor band, although all of them might not be able to attend. Principal Charlie Haag told the Oberlin School Board last Monday.

Some of the students, he said, also participate in speech and there is a speech event the same day. Mr. Haag said the students who qualified haven't been notified.

The district needs to decide if it will pay for any of the trip or if it will be up to the students, he said. Some of the students who made it, he said, probably wouldn't be able

to afford to go.

Mr. Haag said he checked with Atwood and that district pays for all of their students who qualify to go. Mr. Haag said he didn't think the district should pay for it all, however.

Last year, he said, he thought the school furnished a vehicle, but the students paid for the gas, hotels, food and entry fee.

Superintendent Pat Cullen said maybe the board should wait and see how many kids are going to go. He said they would have a recommendation at the next board meeting.

## Store's food drive zooms over the top with a week to go

The tally for the food drive at Stanley Hardware grew to over 2,000 items on Friday, meeting the goal for the year.

The drive started Friday, Nov. 23, at the hardware store on Main Street. Each year, owner Joe Stanley sets a goal of 2,000 items. Everything donated is taken to the Decatur County Food Pantry at the United Church after the first of the year.

On Friday afternoon, the store had 2,076 non-perishable food

items and toiletries to take to the food pantry. A week ago, the count was only 1,323. The Teens for Christ held its porch light drive on Sunday, Dec. 16 and brought in several hundred items. Raye's Grocery also donated hundreds of items.

The drive doesn't end until the first day of 2008, so there's still time to make a donation. Bring nonperishable food items, toiletries, cash or filled punch cards from Raye's.

# \*Wind firm told city won't sign contract

(Continued from Page 1A)  
ready" to give up on the negotiations. He said he really wanted the wind deal to work, but the longer the negotiations go on, the less he thinks Sunflower Wind will be able to make it work. Dr. Anderson said he is ready to follow St. Francis and Sharon Springs' lead and call it quits.  
Back in August, Sunflower Wind

approached all three towns about selling wind power to their municipal systems. St. Francis and Sharon Springs voted months ago to reject the contracts, about the same time the City of Oberlin agreed to enter into negotiations.  
Councilman Ray Ward said Sunflower Wind came in August and wanted a decision in a few weeks. The company has no track

record to go on, said Mr. Ward, and haven't given the city any financial statements. He said he is ready to call it quits.  
Wind is a good idea, but not with this company at this time, said Mr. Ward.  
Sunflower Wind hasn't shown their ability to get out of the gate, said Councilman Rob McFee, adding that he said he sees no reason for Mr. Herrs to come up here. If the

council has questions, said Mr. McFee, Mr. Shike can send them to Mr. Herrs. He doesn't have to come out here.  
Sunflower Wind doesn't have any experience, said Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener; the company has never built anything like this before. They won't provide a financial statement.  
"It is a good idea," she said. "I would

like to see it go but ... it's not getting anywhere."  
"There are too many unanswered questions for me," agreed Mayor Joe Stanley.  
The council agreed to end negotiations in a unanimous vote. Councilwoman Rhonda May wasn't at the meeting.

# \*Board might have opening for a member

(Continued from Page 1A)  
The program is only in math right now, he added, but science tutorials will come out next year.  
In other business, the board:  
• Accepted a donation from the Knights of Columbus for \$1,041, with half of it going to the high school and half to the grade school. The money, raised in the group's annual Tootsie Roll candy sale will be used for special education.  
• Approved a bullying policy on first reading.  
• Discussed revision of the district's policy book. Superintendent Pat Cullen suggested that each board member read the entire book, but that each member also be assigned a section which they will be responsible for.  
• Approved the lowest bid for a five year plan for three copiers, for \$72,948 from Western Document Imaging out of McCook. The other bids came from Ikon of Colby for \$96,304, Northwestern Office Suppliers of Hays for \$98,301 and Of-

fice Works of Colby for \$104,366.  
• Named board members Monte Moore and Chris Bailey as negotiators for the teacher contract next year.  
• Held closed sessions for 10 and two minutes for personnel before approving one-year contracts for Mr. Dorshorst and high school Principal Charlie Haag.  
• Held a closed sessions for 30, 15 and 5 minutes to discuss the superintendent's evaluation with the board, then for 10, 5 and 5 minutes with Dr. Cullen present. There was no action taken.  
• Heard that an inspection by the state fire marshal had found some items that need to be taken care. Dr. Cullen said he will get bids to replace doors to the science rooms and work on the other areas.  
• Talked briefly about the entrance to the high school. Dr. Cullen will get a bid from John Nelson to use concrete stamped like bricks instead of using real bricks.

# County tweaking new address system

The Decatur County commissioners looked at the Emergency 911 addressing system again last Tuesday, trying to work out some quirks.  
Commissioner Ralph Unger and Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman have been working on the system for the last few months.  
One of the areas he is working on, said Mr. Unger, is Leoville. The tiny town is split by the Postal Service, he said. The west half has a Selden zip code and the other half Dresden. County Attorney Steve Hirsch said some people still use the former Leoville zip code too.  
Mr. Stallman said he talked with someone from Newman Traffic Signs out of North Dakota about new road signs. The options are six-inch letters and numbers for the regular type with three-inch abbreviated letters on 9 inch tall signs.

For instance, if there is a 300th Road, the th would be in 3 inch while the 300 would be 6 inch. No decisions were made. The commissioners will talk about the signs again after the new year.  
In other business, the commissioners:  
• Approved Dr. Elizabeth Sliter as the medical consultant for the Decatur County Health Department, replacing Dr. Richard May, who has moved to Lawrence.  
• Approved an application for a \$45,000 grant for mitigation of hazardous materials spills. This is a 75 percent federal grant and 25 percent county match.  
• Heard there were requests for tax abatement for \$113 for Yancy and Amanda Sowers and for \$567 for NF Producers for Doug Frickey.

# Merchants will give gifts to year's first baby

With 2008 nearly here, Oberlin merchants are getting a basketful of gifts ready for the first baby born at the Decatur County Hospital in the new year.  
Each year, businesses team up with *The Oberlin Herald* to gather gifts for the parents of the first child born at the hospital here.  
To receive the gifts, the parents must contact the newspaper and agree to be interviewed. All must be claimed within 60 days of the child's birth.  
Gifts for the first miss or mister

of 2008 include a \$10 gift certificate from the Dresser, a case of baby food from Raye's Grocer, a \$10 gift card from Stanley Hardware, a \$20 gift certificate from Carol Morford with Mary Kay, a \$25 gift certificate from Addleman Drug Store, a \$10 gift certificate from Ward Drug Store, a pizza for two from Pizza Hut, a \$25 gift certificate from Rocking R, a gift from Frederickson Insurance Agency and a year's subscription to *The Oberlin Herald*.

# Woman discovers top prize in Business Alliance drawing

Alvera Bruggeman of Oberlin was the big winner of \$1,000 in Santa Bucks at the Oberlin Business Alliance holiday drawing on Saturday, Dec. 15.  
She was one of 10 winners who matched numbers drawn at random and announced by Joe Stanley, owner of Stanley Hardware and a member of the Alliance, from the merchants' stock of tickets given during the Christmas on Us promotion this year.  
Each winner came up onto the stage at the Centennial Park gazebo

and chose a wrapped Christmas "present." One held \$1,000 in Santa scrip, the others just \$25, so there were no losers on the stage.  
When Mr. Stanley told the 10 to unwrap their presents, everyone was happy, but Mrs. Bruggeman was beaming.  
Winners of \$25, as given to the newspaper, included Judy Marietta, Dick Ahlberg, Tielia High, Travis Raile, D. Fortin, Caleb Howland, Ardis Roe, Tammy Neal and Luella Overmiller.

## This one got away



**ACOLORADOMANCAMEEAST** to do some big-game hunting last week. Mike Nolan of Sterling went hunting at Craig Larson's ranch southwest of Oberlin last Monday, killing one of Mr. Larson's bison. The bull weighed about

1,800 pounds, Mr. Larson estimated. Mr. Nolan wanted the animal, one of 10 on the ranch, for its meat and to mount, Mr. Larson said. The buffalo (above) was one of the cows in the herd.  
— Herald staff photo by Dave Bergling

# Schools study district cell phones

The Oberlin School Board asked the superintendent to find out which school employees need cell phones and to see what a group could buy on a basic phone through Nex-Tech Wireless out of Hays would cost.  
Superintendent Pat Cullen said the board has a choice with the cell phones. They can either have the district pay for the phones and then pay for any personal charges, or it can pay everyone a stipend to use their own cell phones. Not everyone has a cell phone today, he said, but the district has 10 people with mobile phones.  
Dr. Cullen said it would be convenient if people don't have to carry a cell phone for the district and also a personal one. They could just

### School Roundup

At its meeting last Monday, the Oberlin School Board:

- Asked the superintendent to find out which school officials need cell phones and how much a basic plan costs through Nex-Tech Wireless. Story at left.
- Heard that 17 students at Decatur Community High School have qualified for the Kansas State University honor band. Story on

carry one phone.  
The superintendent said he wanted direction from the board on the issue. He said he talked to the auditor, who said whatever the district wants to do, it needs to be in writing.  
Board President Dewayne Jackson said he would recommend paying people to use their own

# Community telethon needs some talent

Do you sing, play the piano, do magic tricks or have another talent you want to perform on television?  
If so, the Seeds of Hope Telethon needs you for the yearly event, shown on Oberlin local access cable channel 7.  
Each year, community members provide talent for the event, held at the beginning of February. The telethon, which auctions off donated items and highlights community groups, helps raise money for clubs and organizations in Decatur County.  
The fund raiser this year is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 2, at The Gateway.  
Civic groups and agencies receiving money include Oberlin Teens for Christ, the Decatur County Last Indian Raid Museum, the City of Jennings, City of Norcat, Kansans

for Life, the Oberlin Area Concert Band, Oberlin Lions Club, Salvation Army, Relay for Life, the Decatur County Ministerial Association, Tripple Creek Riders, Decatur Professional Women, Oberlin Girl

Scouts, Creative Movements Gymnastics, Awana Club, the Golden Age Center and the Decatur County Fair Board.  
The Decatur County Summer Recreation Program and FROGS

summer day camp will split one share, with each receiving half of what the other groups get.  
Anyone interested in providing some talent for the day should call Kimberly Davis at 475-2206

# Offices, businesses to close Tuesday

Convenience stores will be open regular hours Tuesday, with many Oberlin stores and businesses closed for New Year's Day.  
Raye's Grocery will be open until 9 p.m. on New Year's Eve, but closed on New Year's Day.  
*The Oberlin Herald* will go to press on Monday and the office will close early Monday afternoon and all day Tuesday. Deadlines for *The Country Advocate* will be noon Friday, as usual. Other deadlines will be at 5 p.m. Friday.

Mail will be delivered in town on Monday, but the post office will be closed all day New Year's Day and there will be no mail Tuesday.  
Federal, state, city and county offices, as well as all financial institutions, will be closed on Tuesday.  
Crossroads Express and Ampride will be open regular hours on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.  
D & M Sinclair will be open regular hours on New Year's Eve, but closed New Year's Day.  
A&W and the Frontier Restau-

rant will be open New Year's Eve and closed New Year's Day.  
The ReLoad will be open regular hours on New Year's Eve and closed New Year's Day. Pizza Hut will be open both days.  
The LandMark Inn's Teller Room will be open regular hours on Saturday and from 7 to 9 p.m. for dinner on New Year's Eve. The Oberlin Library will close at 3 p.m. New Year's Eve. There will be no cattle sale at Oberlin Livestock Auction on Monday.

## HANSEN MUELLER

### Kansas Grain Truck Drivers Needed

- New daycabs & ag hopper trailers
- Home at night, based in Oberlin or Belleville area
- Competitive pay
- Health, dental & disability insurance; 401(k) plan

You must have a clean CDL & minimum two year verifiable experience in grain semis. Mechanical aptitude is helpful. All references will be checked, as will MVR, criminal & credit record. We're looking for motivated, hard working individuals.

If you have what it takes to join our team for the long haul, send your typed resume to Joe DeRauf, fax 785-475-2528; mail 708 E. Frontier Parkway, Oberlin, 67749; email joed@hmgrain.com

## New Year's Party

### Monday December 31 7 p.m. to Midnight

DJ — Paul Heskett

Join us to bring in the New Year in Style!

\$2 cover charge

## Oberlin American Legion

Oberlin, KS