

Wind might help power high school

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Oberlin School Board looked at a proposal for a \$3.46 million "self-funding" energy update which would add a 600-kilowatt wind turbine to the high school and replace the heating system, supposedly producing enough power to pay for the work.

Johnson Controls, Lenexa, was chosen to do an "energy audit" at the May board meeting. Since then, the company has been looking at options to upgrade lights, the heating system and even the cooling system

School Roundup

At a special meeting last Monday, the Oberlin School Board:

- Looked at a "self-funding" energy update which would add a 600-kilowatt wind turbine at the high school and replace the heating and cooling system, with a price tag of \$3.46 million. Story at left.

- Met behind closed doors for two hours and five minutes to evaluate the superintendent. Story to come.
- Approved a \$63,358 renovation project for the high school library using a gift from the Love Family Foundation. Story on Page 3A.

at both schools, with the idea that the savings from using less fuel and producing more electricity, would

pay for the project. At the meeting last Monday, Casey Lauer, Fred Travis and Matt

Leaper with Johnson told the board about the six options the company worked on for the high school. Costs ranged from \$1.95 to \$4.75 million. The men said they thought Option 6, which includes the wind turbine, is the one that really makes the most sense.

Their report showed option No. 6 includes replacing the steam side of the high-school heating system with new equipment in each classroom, with no demolition work needed; converting boiler rooms to learning space; providing wind-generated power, a renewable resource, mak-

ing the school independent from utility costs; an updated electrical service; and extending the life of window air-conditioning units at the grade school while decreasing maintenance.

The project would put a "packaged terminal" air conditioner in each high-school classroom that would also have a heat pump for winter. The 600 kilowatt wind turbine would be put up on the old practice field south of the football field to provide power for the high school.

What if all the district does is

take the old boiler out and put a new one the district already owns? asked member Monte Moore. A lot of pipes would need to be replaced, said Mr. Travis.

The energy savings wouldn't exist to offset the cost of the project, said Mr. Leaper.

How much pipe would need to be replaced? asked board President Dewayne Jackson. Kenny Black, facilities maintenance supervisor, said he would advise them to replace all of it, because there'd still be leaks. A steam leak in the (See ENERGY on Page 8A)

Money needed to keep rides going this year

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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With only about \$12,000 to spend and rides that need about \$21,000 worth of repairs, the Decatur County Amusement Authority — which operates the carnival at the county fair each August — is asking for a little help.

With the week for the Home-Owned Carnival approaching in little more than a month, the authority's board met Thursday to discuss what to do next with the rides and some other items.

The carnival runs in conjunction with the fair the first full week of August. This year's fair and carnival will open Tuesday, Aug. 5, and run to Saturday, Aug. 9.

Treasurer Candy Ketterl said the group started the meeting with \$32,166, but after paying the bills, including \$1,300 for the sno-cone machine and to Warren Bainter \$161.83, the authority is left with \$30,705 in checking and \$5,216 in savings for emergencies.

Judy Scott said the authority knows that some of the bills coming up include \$8,000 for insurance that's due at the beginning of July, and \$5,000 for electrical work and food for the concession stands. She said last year food cost at least \$5,500, although she isn't sure if that was just one bill or all of it. The group still has to pay for some prizes.

That will leave \$12,205, without the prizes paid. That doesn't include purchasing bearings or chains for the Octopus either.

Stan McEvoy, a county commissioner and authority member, said the floor on the Twist Over is rusted out and the seat belts are shot, so the authority decided to close the ride for this year.

Rides that need repairs this year include:

- The Octopus, which needs a new motor for an estimated \$11,614, plus spare bearings and chains to repair breakdowns, though no one is sure what those will cost.

- A new motor for the swings, for an estimated \$9,800. The estimate to fix both rides, with new motors, from Motion Industries for an estimated \$25,000, said Ms. Scott. The bid included tax, but the authority is tax exempt.

She said the group checked into a new Octopus with two cars on each arm, which would cost \$75,000 to \$80,000, but there's no way to raise that this year.

What about grants? asked member Stephanie Blau. Ms. Scott said she looked at some, but the group is out of time for this year. It takes time, she said, and someone to be able to write grant applications.

The authority did brainstorm some options, including applying for a community grant through (See RIDES on Page 8A)

Leaders prepare for Frogs camp

Get out the lunch pails, because Frogs camp starts Monday.

The Fun, Radical, Outdoor, Get-away Summer camp starts at 9 a.m. Monday in Oberlin's City Park for kids entering second to sixth grade.

Under the guidance of Head Frog Anthony Marshall and Assistant Frog Karli Fredrickson, the kids will play games, sing songs and make crafts.

The camp goes from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday from Monday through to Friday, Aug. 1.

The leader adults, both college students, said they have the summer planned out, with larger crafts than last year, new games, new songs and costume days.

A lot of the crafts, said Miss Fredrickson, will be built each day

until Friday. That doesn't mean kids won't be able to just come one day during the week, though. If a child can only come one day in a week, they can still do the craft, she said.

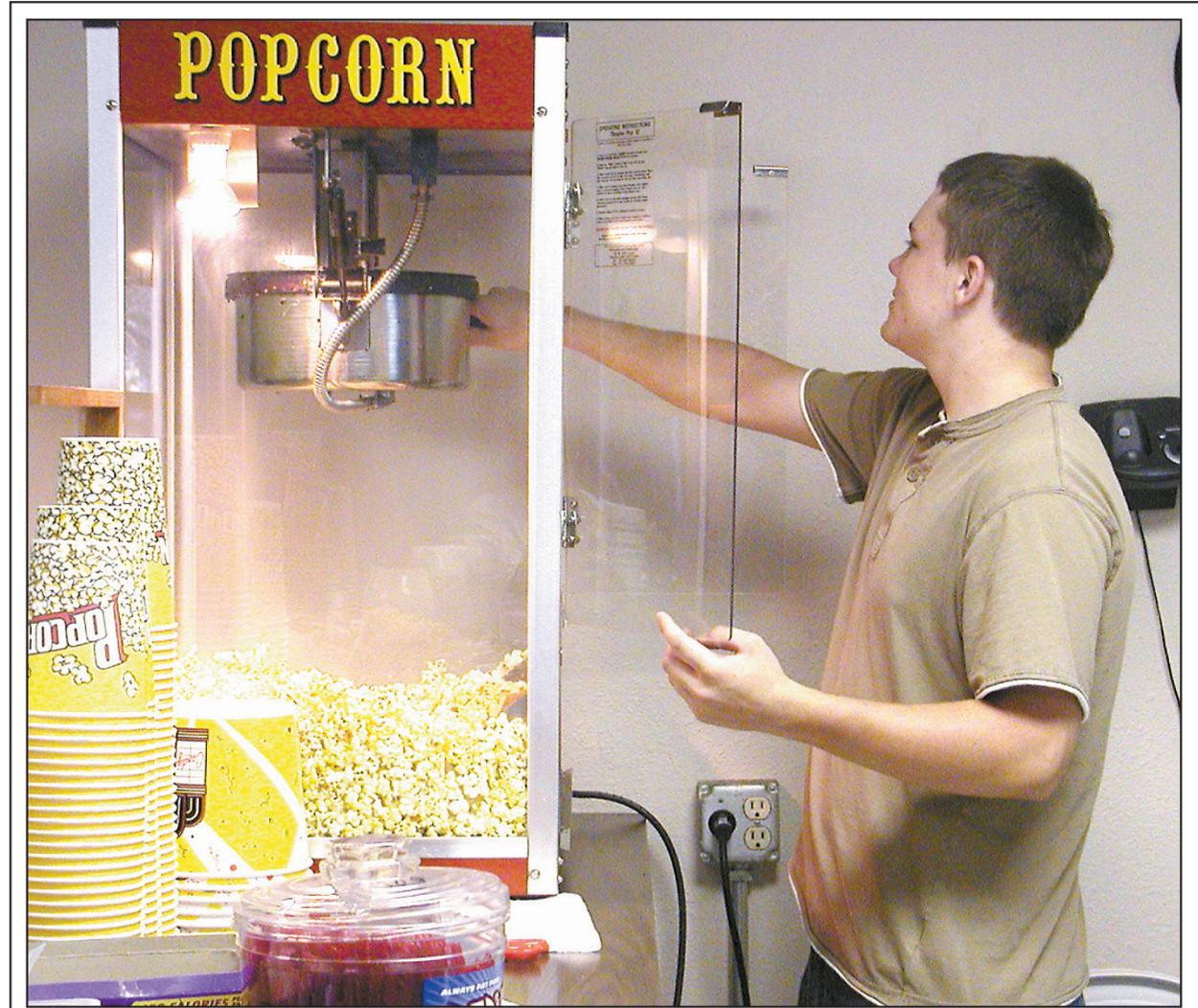
Basically, said Mr. Marshall, the campers will make bigger, cooler crafts.

Besides, capture the flag and other traditional camp games, he said, they have found two to three new games so there won't be so much repetition.

There are new songs, too, said Miss Fredrickson.

The two said they want to do a pool day with the kids, a pirate day with a treasure hunt and a cowboy and indian day at the museum.

Frogs, sponsored by the Oberlin Covenant Church, is open free to all kids. Campers need to bring a sack (See CAMP on Page 8A)



Theater needs people

AT THE SUNFLOWER Cinema on Saturday, Nathan Simonsson (above) worked in the concession stand before he started the projector. Dayton Kempt (left) ordered a soda to go with his popcorn. With donations, the volunteer-run theater has been able to pay off its back taxes and bills. Bev Reiter, a board member, said in order to keep the theater open, though, the board needs better attendance or more donations. Shows start at 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays over the summer.

— Herald staff photos by Kim Davis

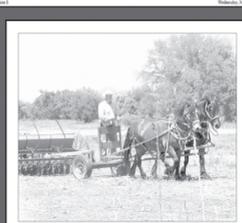
Progress section inside

It may not seem like a lot's changed in Decatur County in the past 2 1/2 years, but businesses have opened, stores have moved and new people have been hired.

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is this year's Progress section, featuring changes in the county in the past couple of years.

Some businesses have expanded while others have new owners or administrators. Check out the Progress section to see what's changed.

THE OBERLIN HERALD'S
Progress '08



County discusses financing for center

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Decatur County commissioners talked last Tuesday about borrowing money with a bond issue or guaranteed loan to help build a new recreation center which would house the Golden Age Center, Sunflower Cinema and a new bowling alley.

Greg Lohofener, who has helped with the project as a member of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. board and now as a volunteer, talked with the

commissioners about the money options.

Commissioner Ralph Unger asked if Dave Barber with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Administration had gotten back to Mr. Lohofener about the agency's loan program, which the hospital board used to finance its new addition. Mr. Lohofener said he hadn't, adding that he needs to know if the county owns the building, could a nonprofit agency like the theater board run it?

An application for the state tax

credit program has been sent in to buy equipment, said Mr. Lohofener, and they should hear about it around July 1. Tax credits won't be used to build the structure, he said, just buy equipment.

The commissioners and Mr. Lohofener talked with Sarah Steele with Gillmore and Bell, a Wichita bond law firm, on a conference call because they had questions about a mixed-use property.

If a private agency would be hired to operate all or part of the center, said Ms. Steele, there could be some

concern about a bond issue from the county.

The cinema board or the Economic Development Corp. could oversee both sides if there needs to be a nonprofit organization running the center, said Mr. Lohofener.

How much does the county want to get involved in the financing in terms of risk? Ms. Steele asked. Originally, said Mr. Unger, they talked about some kind of revenue bonds, with little risk to the county.

(See CHAMBER on Page 2A)

* Rides need to be fixed

(Continued from Page 1A)
Midwest Energy, money from the Seeds of Hope Telethon, a grant through Wal-Mart and also talking to the Bargain Box, which gives money to local causes.

The Amusement Authority, said Ms. Scott, is trying to do a good job and make improvements. Only two of the former Amusement Authority Board still serve. After the carnival last year seven of the members, including Ward Votapka, Kristi Gallentine, Lynn Groneweg, Jason Fortin, Ray Ward, Peggy Ream and Kelsey Gallentine resigned. A new board, including Tim Thornton, Candy Ketterl, Stephanie Blau, Jim Wesch, Elden Huff, Kevin Ketterl, Dana Koeperich, Jennifer Schissler, Melinda Grafel and Judy Scott, was elected at the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce annual meeting this year. They joined Vicky Ray and Dana Marintzer,

Next year, said Ms. Scott, maybe the authority could consider fixing a ride or start looking into a new ride. The electrical work will already be done by then, she said.

Since the Twist Over will be closed this year, the board decided at a previous meeting to rent a big slide for \$1,500. The members are still trying to figure out where to put the slide. Originally, they thought it could go west of the grandstands, but that's where the sewer lines are. The slide could possibly go west of the 4-H Building instead, said Mr. McEvoy.

Anyone who wants to make a donation to the authority can send a check to the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce, 104 S. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749. In the memo line, the check needs to say that the money is for the authority. Donations through the Chamber are tax deductible.

A long day's work



ON WEST HALL STREET near Elk Avenue on Monday, Glen Stragey with Oberlin Concrete prepared dirt to replace part of the street near the corner. City Administrator Gary Shike said the city wants to put in a curb and a new section of pavement for drainage.

— Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

*Energy project pitched to board

(Continued from Page 1A)
auditorium last year forced the district to replace the damaged floor, prompting the look at replacing all the pipes.

So option No. 6, said Mr. Jackson, would replace both the steam and hot-water heating systems with in-room units? Correct, said Mr. Leaper, and the window units would be moved to the grade school to help upgrade the cooling system there.

"This is a lot bigger project than I thought we were getting into," said Mr. Jackson.

Option No. 6, said Mr. Leaper, is the district's best choice.

The board, said Mr. Lauer, didn't have to say yes or no on the project that night, but instead just tell them whether Johnson Controls is moving in the right direction. If so, he said, they will be back in two to three weeks with more information.

With this option, said Mr. Leaper, the electrical upgrades inside the school will be done before the school year starts. The wind turbine wouldn't be put in until next summer. In the first year, he said, the district will probably spend a little more for electricity, then the project will start paying for itself.

The turbine, said Mr. Moore, will provide more electricity than the high school uses. Is there a way to put that into the local utility grid and trade a kilowatt generated for a kilowatt used at the grade school?

That's something that has to be negotiated with the city, said Mr. Leaper.

Is there any reason not to look at this option? asked member Dan Grafel, noting that it would cost \$1 million just to fix the heating system the school has.

Can the district go into debt for the next 30 years for something like this? asked Mr. Jackson. Steve Zodrow, with Mapes and Miller, the company that does the school audit, said it would be a legal debt. The district wouldn't have to go through a formal bond issue with an energy savings program, he said, adding that he hasn't run into this kind of debt with part of it being self-funding.

The district might want to get taxpayers involved and give them a voice on what they think of the project, Mr. Zoderow advised.

Superintendent Pat Cullen said he talked with Dale Dennis, deputy commissioner of fiscal and administrative services with the state Department of Education, that afternoon and he said districts normally put a couple hundred thousand into a project like this and then see what the savings will be.

Mr. Moore asked if the new lighting and wind turbine will last 30 years, and Mr. Travis said they would. What about the heating and air conditioning, will it last 30 years? asked Mr. Moore. Typically, said Mr. Leaper, it will last 20 to 25 years.

Just to upgrade the heating and air conditioning system would cost \$900,000, said Mr. Jackson, but that might increase the electrical bill. That's right, said Mr. Leaper; there wouldn't be any energy savings in that project.

The company can have a fully developed project to show the board by the middle of July, said Mr. Leaper.

The board told Johnson to bring back a proposal at the July meeting.

* Camp scheduled for City Park

(Continued from Page 1A)
lunch, but snacks and drinks will be provided.

Mr. Marshall said people can make donations for the camp through the church, and they are selling raffle tickets to a basket full of goodies which is on display at Stanley Hardware. The tickets are one for \$1, six for \$5, 13 for \$10 and 26 for \$20, he said, with the money going to the camp. The basket includes one \$10 gift certificate each for Pizza Hut, Crossroads Express, Ampride, Dollar General,

Stanley Hardware, the Re-Load and the LandMark Inn, a \$15 gift certificate for Raye's Grocery and a \$6 certificate for A&W.

Unlike past years, Miss Fredrickson said, there will only be one family night, but they are going to have a pool party for that night.

This is Mr. Marshall's third year as head frog and eighth year helping out, while it's Miss Fredrickson's first.

It's been refreshing, said Mr. Marshall, to have someone who has never been in Frogs before. Miss

Fredrickson has brought lots of new ideas, he said.

"This year, Frogs is going to be a totally new camp," he said.

The two said they want lots of kids to come, those who have been before, and those who haven't. Every camper doesn't have to come to every day of camp, said Mr. Marshall, but if someone can make it for all of them, that's great, too.

"Every day is new," he said. "Every day is different."



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Readers get to choose '8 Wonders' of the county

Newspaper readers have the chance to select the "8 Wonders of Decatur County" by casting a vote using the ballot in today's *Oberlin Herald* or online.

A ballot for the contest is printed on Page 3A of the newspaper or online at 8wonders.hdnews.net/decatur/.

People can vote on what they think are the eight most wonderful things in Decatur County up until Monday, July 7. At that time, the top 16 vote getting sites will be printed in the paper with a picture and some information about each.

The ballots will be printed again and people will have the chance to

vote up to Tuesday, July 22.

The winners will be announced in the Wednesday, Sept. 3, edition of *The Oberlin Herald*.

The "8 Wonders of Decatur County" is being sponsored by the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., the Oberlin Convention and Visitors Bureau, the

LandMark Inn, the Decatur County Museum, the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce and *The Oberlin Herald*, in conjunction with the *Hays Daily News*, which is sponsoring an area-wide compilation of county-by-county wonders.



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