

School board approves library donation project

The Oberlin School Board approved a \$63,358 renovation project for the high school library through a gift from the Love family at a meeting last Monday.

Two years ago, said Paul Shields, president of the Decatur Community Educational Foundation, members of Lorraine Love's family toured the library and decided it was out of date and dark. Miss Love graduated from Decatur Community High School in 1935.

Initially, said Mr. Shields, the family wanted to see more lights and stacks for the books.

A committee including Dr. Mark Olson and Colleen Rittmann, foundation members; Mr. Shields; Principal Charlie Haag; students Heather Ploussard and Alyssa Ripp; teachers Leigh Davis and Terri Woolsey; and librarian Linda Glaze, was named to study the project, he said.

Mr. Shields said he became involved when he became the president of the foundation. Dr. Olson talked to the family and they were interested in not just putting up lights and stacks, he said, but "doing the library right."

Mr. Shields said the foundation has money to cover the project, which includes:

- New stacks for \$20,205.
- Lighting for \$9,606.
- Chairs for \$10,272.
- Carpet for \$8,000.
- Tables for \$7,500.
- Paint for \$2,100.
- Curtains for \$750.

- Ceiling tiles for \$1,000.
- Art hangers for \$1,000.
- A clock for \$75, mirrors for \$150, a typewriter for \$250, a portable DVD player and headphones for \$350., and educational games for \$100.

Mr. Shields said they tried to get bids from local firms for the work. There's also money in the foundation's endowed fund to help with upkeep and literature. Every year, there will be \$1,500 for the library, he said.

The committee, he said, knew the energy audit could be coming up so they wanted to look at correct lighting. Mr. Haag talked with three architects to get a recommendation on the lights.

Mr. Shields said he thought they felt the estimates may be a little high.

Originally the family put \$65,000 in the foundation fund for the project, he said, and last week, there was \$67,000 because of the interest.

The family knows what is happening, he said, and they would like to have a display case built by one of the students with the name of the Lorraine Love Family Trust engraved on it.

The project needs to be approved by the board, said Mr. Shields. The committee would like to get it done before school starts, at least most of it.

Are removal costs in the bids? asked member Dan Nedland. Yes, said Mr. Shields.

Commissioners discuss tax rebate

The Decatur County commissioners talked with the Norton County economic development director about the Neighborhood Revitalization Act and a request to accept the program for the Norcatat cemetery and fire districts.

Diane Becker said the program offers a tax rebate plan for people who make improvements to their property. The Norton County commissioners approved using the act to help increase property values and encourage people to fix up their property, she said.

Each taxing entity in Norton County, said Miss Becker, can then approve or say no to the program. Since parts of the Oberlin School District, the Norcatat Cemetery District and Norcatat Fire District are in Norton County, she said, each has the opportunity to take part in the program.

What happens, she said, is if a house is valued at \$50,000 and the improvements raise the valuation to \$70,000, then the owner will get a rebate on the taxes on the \$20,000 improvement. The rebate starts at 100 percent for the first year, she said, and goes down from there.

To take part in the program, she said, property owners have to apply. It works on residential, agriculture buildings and commercial buildings.

Miss Becker noted that the owner continues to pay taxes on the original valuation. The rebate is just on the tax on the improvements, so the county doesn't lose any income.

This would be only for property in those taxing districts that are partly in Norton County, said Miss Becker. She said she would like to see all of the 28 taxing agencies in Norton County in the program.

So all of the taxing agencies in the county don't have to agree to

County roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Talked about applying for a grant to renovate or build an emergency operations center. Story to come.
- Approved purchase of an Auto Pulse machine for the ambulance. Story to come.
- Talked about a bond issue or a guaranteed loan to help build a new recreation center in Oberlin which would house the senior center, movie theater and a new bowling alley. Story on Page 1A.

the program to make it work? asked Commissioner Doyle Brown. Miss Becker agreed, adding that the Oberlin School Board still hasn't made a decision.

The improvements have to be \$10,000 or more to be accepted for the program, she said, and so far, Norton County has 10 applications.

Who approves those? asked Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

Appraiser Alan Hale screens the projects, she said, and when one is done, the treasurer, county clerk, appraiser and Miss Becker make sure all of the requirements are met.

Is there a deadline? asked Mr. Brown. No, she said.

Of the 10 people who applied so far, said Mr. McEvoy, are any of them in the Norcatat cemetery or fire districts? Miss Becker said she didn't think so.

Mr. Brown said the commissioners need some time to discuss the project. Miss Becker left an adoption packet in case it's needed.

Carnival needs help to run games and rides

The Decatur County Amusement Authority needs volunteers to run the rides and work the games during the carnival the first full week of August.

Board members plan to call organizations and people who have volunteered in past years to see if they want to volunteer again.

Anyone or any group that knows they will want to work during the carnival the week of Tuesday to Saturday, Aug. 5 to 9, should call Stephanie Blau at (785) 470-0222 to get on the schedule.

At the authority's meeting Thursday, the group decided to sell wristbands the first night of the carnival for \$15. The wrist band will allow

unlimited rides for Tuesday night only. Individual ride tickets will be sold for other nights.

The authority purchased 1,000 wristbands, said member Jim Wesch, adding that he found the wristbands at 500 for \$20.

In other business, the authority:

- Heard that the Oberlin Rotary Club will pay up to \$1,000 to fix the Ferris Wheel.

- Talked about getting some help from kids who need community service hours for scholarships. It looks good on scholarships to show that people have volunteered, said member Stephanie Blau.

A fountain full of sweet treats



PUSHING HARD to get syrup out of the antique soda fountain at Addleman Drug Store, Ashley Horton made a cherry limeade for a customer on Monday.

— Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Country club requests money for golf course

Members of the Oberlin Country Club asked the City Council on Thursday to include a line item into the budget for next year for equipment for the golf course, but the council put off a decision until budget time.

Gary Walter, representing the country club, said with declining membership and increasing expenses, the group probably can cover its operating expenses, but won't have money to replace its equipment. The members asked for a capital outlay line item to help update mowers and other equipment.

That way, said Mr. Walter, the volunteers who come to work can mow instead of fixing mowers.

He said the members talked about needing \$12,000. It is important to have a golf course, he said. Mr. Walter said the mayor made a comment that he was at a recent meeting in Hill City with other city officials. Ten out of 12 in attendance offered some sort of support for recreation in the city, he said, and the two that didn't, didn't have golf courses.

The city does give the golf club a preferential lease of \$1 for 50 years, said Mr. Walter.

The country club, said Mr. Walter, carried over an excess of \$10,000

Council Roundup

At a meeting Thursday night, the Oberlin City Council:

- Received a request from the Oberlin Country Club for money in the budget for next year to help pay for equipment for the golf course. Story at left.
- Decided to save \$25,000 of the \$75,000 budgeted for street sealing this year to be used to start repaving streets next year. Story to come.

from last year, from memberships and donations.

He said he's heard some people say that they chose to just pay the green fees when they golf, rather than joining the club. Just paying the green fees, said Mr. Walter, isn't what keeps the golf course open. Although it might not be cost effective to pay the membership, the course is something worth having and keeping.

Mr. Shike said the council will talk about the request during budget time in July.

Fire ruins vacant house

A fire destroyed a vacant farm house southwest of Oberlin late Sunday night and early Monday after a storm moved through the area.

Fire Chief Bill Cathcart said the blaze at the old Dean Groneweg farm house 14 miles south and 4 1/2 miles west of town apparently was started by a lightning strike.

Rural electric crews called out after the storm went through the area to find and fix power outages,

said Mr. Cathcart, and they spotted the fire around midnight.

When the firefighters got to the house, he said, only one wall was standing. Both the Decatur County Rural Fire Department out of Oberlin and the Selden Fire Department responded.

Roads were muddy from the storm, said Chief Cathcart, but the trucks were able to get through. The fire fighters had everything ready for the next call by 4 a.m.

The 8 Wonders of Decatur County!

Which Would You Choose???

Local residents know the best spots tourists should visit while in our area. That's why the Oberlin Decatur Area Economic Development Corporation, Landmark Inn, Decatur County Museum, Oberlin Convention and Visitors Bureau, Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce and the Oberlin Herald are asking you to help name the 8 Wonders of Decatur County. This unique marketing effort will help direct tourists to the top eight attractions we have to offer.

Voting will take place in two stages. In stage 1, we're asking for you to name your own top 8 list. Either fill out the form below and return it to The Oberlin Herald or vote online at 8wonders.hdnws.net/decatur/. Voting will take place until July 7.

Stage 2 will feature the top 16 sites voters have selected as finalists. From that list, you will determine the 8 Wonders of Decatur County. Stage 2 also will be conducted with your choice of paper or online ballot starting July 22.

We need your help to identify the best of the best. Whether it be a building, museum or a place of business, a remote rural location or an in-town hot spot, Decatur Countians are the best source of knowledge.

8 Wonders of Decatur County Ballot:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____


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