

Outdoor watering back on limits

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
k.davis@nwkansas.com

Oberlin's mayor declared a Stage 2 water warning Thursday, meaning the city is now on water rationing using an even/odd outdoor watering system, but homeowners got more than an extra month of unregulated water use this summer.

In past years, the even/odd watering has started at the end of May or beginning of June. This year, with timely rains and an unseasonably cool start to the season, homeowners apparently hadn't been watering as much.

The triggers for a Stage 2 water warning include the city water

Water overused on three days

In the last week, water users in Oberlin have used more than 750,000 gallons, the trigger to go on water rationing, three times.

Under water restrictions, people with odd-numbered addresses can water on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, and those with even addresses on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Outdoor water can be used only between midnight

and 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. to midnight on the specified days. The city pumped:

- 748,000 gallons Tuesday, July 8.
- 758,000 gallons last Wednesday.
- 707,100 gallons Thursday.
- 603,000 gallons Friday.
- 766,000 gallons Saturday.
- 812,000 gallons Sunday.

tower falling below 50 percent of capacity, pumping lowers water levels within 10 feet of the screens in the city wells or the demand for

one day is above 700,000 gallons.

At a City Council meeting Thursday, Mayor Joe Stanley said the last trigger had been hit last Wednesday

when the city used 760,000 gallons and on Tuesday at 750,000.

It had been over the trigger level for a few days earlier in the sum-

mer, he said, but then it would go down. People have been lucky that the city was able to wait this long before the restrictions went into effect, he said.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohoefer said the people have done a great job of conserving water. She said she doesn't see as many people in town watering.

With the declaration of the water warning, the council passed a resolution implementing the restrictions unanimously.

Until the warning ends, people with odd-numbered addresses, ones that end in one, three, five, seven or nine, can water on Tuesday, Thurs-

day and Saturday. Those with even addresses, ending in zero, two, four, six and eight, can water on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Outdoor water can be used only between midnight and 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. to midnight on the specified days, said Mayor Stanley. That includes watering lawns and gardens, washing cars, filling swimming pools and any other kind of outdoor use.

According to the plan, emergency water rates can be imposed. People who need to use water to establish a new lawn or wash house siding prior to painting may get special permits from the city administrator.

Amber Waves

Men work fields

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
k.davis@nwkansas.com

The 2003 Gleaner combine headed south, turned and made a pass back to the north, before coming to a stop to dump the harvested wheat into the back of a large truck parked in the field.

It was Friday afternoon, 100-plus degrees, and Richard Anderson and Paul Shields were working on a field a little less than a mile west of Mr. Anderson's home off the Rexford Road in far west Decatur County.

The two joined forces four years ago, sharing equipment and some of the cost to get their crops in each year. Mr. Anderson said he drives the combine in his fields and Mr. Shields in his. Whoever isn't combining drives the semi-trailer truck to the Decatur Co-op elevator in Oberlin.

The field the men were working in on Friday was Mr. Anderson's. He said they had started harvest Wednesday, July 2, but it rained and was 73 degrees the next day, which kept them out of the fields. Even on Friday, with the temperature well over 100, they found some muddy spots.

The field, planted with Thunderbolt wheat, got some hail damage this spring, said Mr. Anderson, but luckily, he'd taken out hail insurance this year. Although the wheat looked a little thinner because of the hail, he said, it still made a stand.

So far this year, he added, yields have been running 35 to 60 bushels per acre, better than farmers farther west are doing.

When the men finished with that field, he said, they'd be half done. All of his fields, he said, are pretty much within a five-mile radius of his house, which is five miles south of U.S. 36 along the Rexford Road, then a little to the west. Mr. Shields' fields, he said, are mostly south of town, around the Lund Covenant Church.

This is the fourth year the two men have worked together. They farm about the same number of acres, said Mr. Anderson, so they split the cost of the combine, equipment fees, breakdowns and other things, although each pays for the fuel used on his own fields.



IN HIS 2003 GLEANER combine, Richard Anderson (above) cut through a field of ripe wheat west of his house. Mr. Anderson (below) took a short break before he returned to the harvest field last Friday. — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Mr. Anderson said his family has always owned a combine, but when Mr. Shields started farming, he hired custom cutters.

When Mr. Anderson's machine got older, the two talked and decided to look at buying one together. He said they went to an auction in Colby and bought the 2003 Gleaner, one of two machines being sold by a financial institute.

Mr. Anderson said he's been helping with the family farm as far back as he can remember, and his dad still helps him. Mr. Anderson said his parents, Elden and Detta Anderson, live just a mile north of him and his wife Maureen and their three children, Samantha, 15; Chris, 13; and Gabe, 12.

"I always wanted to be a farmer," he said.

When he was younger than his children are now, he said, he started driving farm equipment. Now his kids tell him that he was younger than them and they should get to drive. Mr. Anderson said, but they do take turns riding with him and driving the grain cart — before it broke down.

He said he thinks all three seem to be interested in farming, although he doesn't know if that's what they will choose to do.

After graduating from Decatur Community High School, Mr. Anderson said, he went to Colby Community College for a degree in farm and ranch management. (See MEN on Page 5A)



Crop looks good

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
k.davis@nwkansas.com

The rumble of grain trucks rolling through town has slowed as wheat harvest winds down in Decatur County, and at least one elevator manager says the crop appears to be better than average.

Although the harvest seemed to get a slow start, with rain and cooler temperatures, once it got going, farmers seemed to work straight through until the end.

Last year in the first week of July farmers could sell their wheat for \$5.22 a bushel. This year in the first week of July the wheat price was \$8 per bushel, \$2.78 more.

At the Decatur Co-op elevator in Oberlin General Manager Kurt Anderson said harvest is about 95 percent complete in most areas, except maybe Danbury, where they are about half done.

With the amount of grain the elevators have received in the past few weeks, he said they are storing grain on the ground in Oberlin, Herndon and Danbury. Mr. Anderson said he isn't sure how many bushels of wheat the firm has taken in because no one has totaled the figures.

He said he didn't know anything on the yields yet, either, but he should by next week.

It seems harvest has been pretty much what people thought it was going to be, said Mr. Anderson. There haven't been a whole lot of comments.

The manager said the co-op locations are still staying open in the evenings, but not as late as they were when the majority of the farmers were cutting.

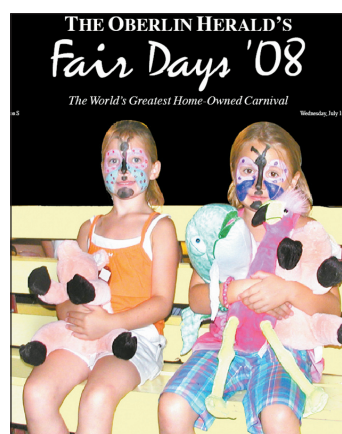
Janice O'Hare with Hansen Mueller Grain in Oberlin said she also thought harvest was just about done, although customers have a few fields left to cut.

Mrs. O'Hare said she thinks between the Oberlin and Cedar Bluffs elevators, they have brought in around 400,000 bushels.

She said she hasn't really heard much on yields yet, although it doesn't seem like there were a lot of shockers.

Dan Grafel, co-owner of D&S (See CROP on Page 5A)

Fair special in the paper



Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the Fair Days 2008 edition, which includes the schedule for the upcoming Decatur County Fair.

The fair starts Tuesday, Aug. 5, and goes to Saturday, Aug. 9. The section also includes stories about the Twister at the home-owned carnival, about some of the activities at the fair and pictures from past fairs and carnivals.

Hospital, city to share almost \$2 million

A rural Dresden couple left their estate, valued at a little under \$2 million, to the Decatur County Hospital and The Gateway civic center, leaving the hospital board and City Council to decide whether to sell or keep their land.

Elmo Lund, the lawyer handling the estate, and Warren Bainter, executor for Fred and Henrietta Bremer, met with the council on Thursday.

Mr. Lund said the couple left

land valued at \$966,000 and about \$1 million in personal property, including money, CD's, vehicles and other things.

Now, he said, he and Mr. Bainter need to know whether the city wants them to sell the land; what the City Council or hospital board want to do. When, asked Mayor Joe Stanley, does the decision need to be made?

Mr. Lund said they plan to meet with the hospital board Monday, and if the council wants to send a representative to that meeting, it would be a good idea. If the two boards want to sell the land, he said, then they will have to decide whether to do it by auction, sealed bid or on the market.

The current tenant, Dick Vahling, had a year-long lease, he said.

Is it legal for a member of the council or hospital board to go to the Farm Service Agency and look at the yields and other information on

that land? asked Council Member Jay Anderson.

Mr. Lund said he thought that would be OK. It might also be good to look in depth at the appraisal on the land.

The land includes one quarter section of grass and six quarters of farm ground. Appraiser Mike McKenna had some suggestions about selling the property, said Mr. Bainter, including the possibility of either (See ESTATE on Page 5A)

Group donates for video

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
k.davis@nwkansan.com

Members of the Oberlin Business Alliance decided to chip in \$350 to help pay for a video promoting the county.

Kem Bryan, chair of the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce board, said at an alliance meeting Wednesday, July 2, several agencies joined to pay for the video, an idea that came from a Decatur Tomorrow meeting.

Darrell Stern, owner of Stern Media LLC, gave the Chamber and Economic Development Corp. a bid of \$4,800, which will include 200 copies of the DVD.

For the project, said Mrs. Bryan, Mr. Stern has contacted couples who have moved away from the area and then moved back here, plus some who moved here who never lived in Decatur County before. The video will include their testimonies.

It will also show buildings around town, the downtown, Sappa Park and other places.

Who will own the copyright to the video? asked Cynthia Haynes, co-owner of *The Oberlin Herald*. Mr. Stern did say, said Mrs. Bryan, that the group will be able to make more of the videos. Connie Grafel, marketing director of the development board, said she is pretty sure the copyright is included.

Since the alliance members didn't have a financial report at the meeting — Chamber Manager Jo Henderson, who keeps the books, was ill — they weren't sure how much money was available. Mrs. Bryan said she looked at the alliance bank statement at the Chamber office and it has \$6,500. Some of that is earmarked for fireworks and other things, noted Gary Walter, with the Bank.

Nonetheless, the group approved \$350 for the project and talked about being able to use the video as a recruiting tool. Any company that's looking for a place to move, this will be a great tool, said Gary Anderson, owner of the LandMark Inn.

In other business, the alliance members:

- Discussed the Back-to-School Picnic in City Park scheduled for Wednesday, Aug. 13. Mrs. Bryan said the Chamber board thought of changing the picnic to a hog roast and make it a fund raiser. In the past, it has been a potluck with fried chicken provided.

That way, she said, people wouldn't have to bring a dish. It could be a set amount per plate or they could leave it as it has been.

In the past the alliance, Chamber and Oberlin School District split the cost of chicken from Raye's.

The chicks might make more with a donation than a set price if the three can agree, Mr. Anderson said, but no decision was made.

In other business, the alliance:

- Heard that the group needs a third-quarter chairperson.
- Heard that the Oberlin Convention and Visitors Bureau is working with KAKE television out of Wichita to run ads for a summer getaway. A crew will be around town getting shots, said Mr. Anderson.

\$1,000 giveaway gets nearer

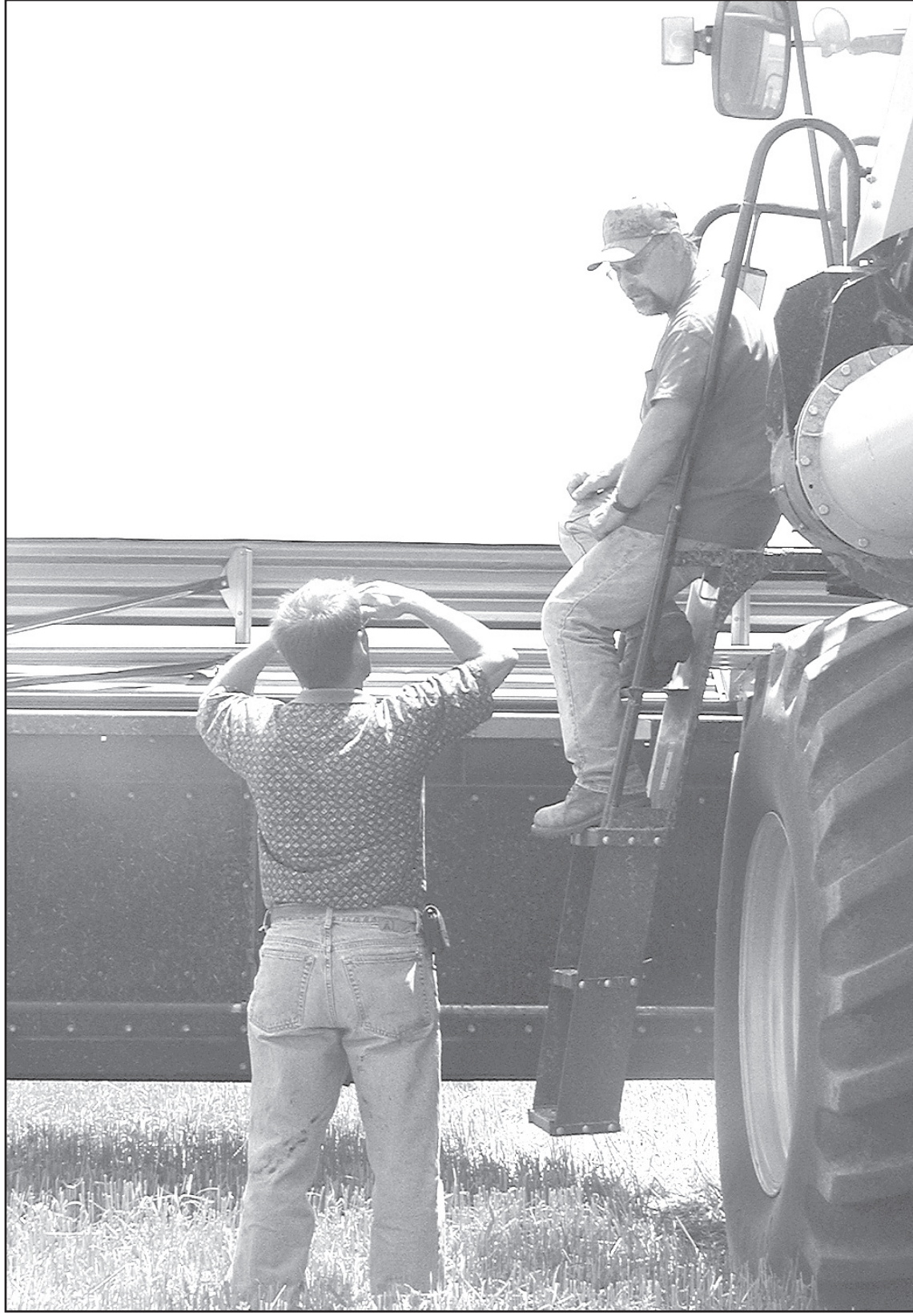
Shoppers have a little over three weeks to sign up for a chance to win \$1,000 in scrip money by entering the annual \$1,000 Shopping Spree sponsored by Oberlin businesses and *The Oberlin Herald*.

The lucky winner will be drawn during the Back to School Picnic in City Park at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 13. Then that person will have from Thursday, Aug. 14, to Friday, Aug. 22, to spend the money at participating businesses. An *Oberlin Herald* photographer will go shopping with them.

This year's sponsors include Dale's Fish 'N' Fun, Stellar Sales, Culligan Water Conditioning Co., R&M Service Center, Ward Drug Store, Countryside Veterinary Clinic, Aqua Shield Roofing and Construction, the LandMark Inn, Stanley Hardware, Raye's Grocery, Addleman Drug Store, Prairie Petals and *The Herald*.

Anyone 18 or older can enter. Just fill out the small entry form at participating businesses and drop it in the box. Newspaper employees and their family are not eligible. The deadline to enter is 4 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 12.

The scrip is good for merchandise only, and only at sponsoring businesses.



COMBINE PARTNERS Richard Anderson and Paul Shields took a moment to talk about harvest. The two own a combine together and work together to get their crops in.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

* Men help each other harvest

(Continued from Page 1A)

He returned to Oberlin and worked at the co-op's service station, changing oil, filling vehicles and checking tires for air.

Right after high school, said Mr. Anderson, he started farming, but after he graduated from college in 1975, he got more involved. Now he owns some of his own ground and rents his dad's.

This past year, he said, they probably have seen the biggest jump ever in the cost of farming. Cost went up on everything, he said.

Finally last year, people were able to raise a good wheat and corn crop, said Mr. Anderson, then the cost for

fuel, equipment repairs, seed, you name it, everything went sky high.

Mr. Anderson said he's had good luck growing the Thunderbolt variety. Every few years, he said, he then tries to add a new variety, and this year he has some Hatcher, too.

Mr. Shields said he's been farming for 10 years. After graduating from high school here, he went to Kansas State University and got a degree in feed science and management. He then worked with ConAgra Flour Milling for 10 years, moving around a lot.

He and his wife Kelly wanted to come back here to raise their kids, Tyler, 14; Cassidy, 13; and Caitlin,

11. Mr. Shields said his father retired when the family moved back and he took over his land.

He said both he and Mr. Anderson were in a situation that they needed help with harvest. Both, he said, were pretty much farming by themselves because the kids weren't old enough to do much. He said it was more affordable to help each other than to hire custom cutters every year.

It gave both a second person to either drive the combine or the truck during harvest, he said, and makes the work go faster.

* Crop looks to be pretty good

(Continued from Page 1A)

Grain and Cattle Co. in Traer, said they have seen yields ranging from as low as 10 bushels per acre on continuous-crop fields to 80 on irrigated wheat. There's been a lot in the 40 to 65 bushels per acre range for dryland wheat, he said, but the

numbers are all over the board depending on whether the crop is summer fallow continuous crop, the variety and whether it was hit by hail.

It's probably an above-average crop though, said Mr. Grafel.

Most farmers in the Traer area,

he said, will be done this week. The elevator has brought in around 250,000 bushels, he said.

Mr. Grafel added that the corn in the area looks good, but with the high temperatures and south wind, the crop really needs a rain soon.

Service group asks to be in budget

The Decatur County commissioners received a request for continued support from the president of the Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, and the three agreed they would consider it when they do the budget.

Jerry Michaud, president of the agency, held a conference call with the commissioners at the Tuesday, July 1 meeting. This year, he said, the county gave the service \$29,000.

This is the 41st year, said Mr. Michaud, that the agency has provided help for the developmentally disabled in northwest Kansas. Once again, he said, he is asking Decatur County for money.

The service works with people with disabilities or people in the county who need therapy, he said. It's much better, said Mr. Michaud,

to be able to help someone at home instead of at a state hospital — better and less expensive.

It's also better, he said, for people who have disabilities to be accepted in their communities and have jobs at home.

Mr. Michaud said the agency gets less money today from the state and

federal governments than it used to, and expenses are more than income. He said they are struggling to make ends meet.

The commissioners said they would look at the request with others received when they do the 2009 budget next month.

County update

At a meeting on Tuesday, July 1, Decatur County commissioners:

- Approved a permit for an electrical line to be put under a road in Olive Township for a water tank. Story to come.
- Received a request for financial support in the 2009 budgeted year from the president of the Developmental Services of Northwest Kansas, which commissioners agreed they would consider when they do the budget. Story at left.
- Decided to ask for new bids for a used three-quarter-ton pickup truck for the sheriff's office. Story to come.

City works to cut budget for next year

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
k.davis@nwkansan.com

The Oberlin City Council spent the evening going over the 2009 budget during a work session last Monday, looking for ways to cut a little here and there, but noting that the fuel bills for every program will be going up next year.

Each year the City Council has at least one informal session to hammer out the budget for the coming year.

The council didn't go all the way through the budget last week, and didn't make any decisions. The members will meet for another budget session at 7 p.m. Monday.

Council members go through the budget area by area, discussing what might need to be added and what might be cut. For example, does the street department need a new truck? Or the police department need a patrol car? Does the city need to repave some of the streets? That money is then penciled in and the council then figures out, based on the valuation figure from the county, whether property taxes need to be increased or decreased.

At this point, the council hasn't made any decisions about taxes, but the members did brainstorm some areas where they might need to increase spending from this year's budget.

City Administrator Gary Shike said the council can see in this year's budget that the departments are spending more for fuel, listed under "commodities."

How is the city going to handle that? asked Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener. She said she's heard that some cities are going to four 10-hour days to save money.

That plan, said Councilwoman Rhonda May, mainly saves commuting costs, so that works in a big city.

The City of Oberlin doesn't have a big enough crew, said Mr. Shike, to work only four days a week. Someone would have to be here on Friday.

Mr. Shike said he and Foreman Dan Castle have been working on getting some of the intersections that have big humps replaced with concrete. The money is coming from the electrical fund, but not all bad places can be replaced at once.

Mr. Castle suggested putting \$28,000 in the 2009 budget for concrete to keep working on the intersections.

Also, he said, he is working replacing the globes for the lights downtown, destroyed in the Thursday, June 5, hail storm. Mr. Castle said he is talking with two companies to see which globes are the best price and best quality. It will cost just under \$10,000 to replace all of them, he said.

Does the city own the canopies downtown? asked Ms. May. No, said Mr. Shike, they are owned by the property owners.

The canopies need to be painted, said Ms. May, and if that's done, maybe they could be updated to a soft taupe instead of brown.

If the store owners decide to paint the canopies, said Mr. Shike, they probably need to hire a contractor so all are done at the same time and the same color.

Someone would have to decide who pays for the canopies in front of the empty stores, said Mayor Joe Stanley.

The city has always maintained the lights, said Mr. Shike, except those in front of First National Bank,

which are owned by the bank.

Under the park item, said Mr. Shike, they had \$9,000 for commodities for this year, but it looks that will cost \$15,000, mostly gasoline for the lawn mowers. The other option is not to mow, he said.

None of the commodity budgets is going to stay the same, said Councilman Rob McFee, because of fuel.

How often are the parks mowed now? asked Councilman Ray Ward. Once a week, said Mr. Castle.

Maybe shaggy will become a look for the parks, said Mr. Ward.

Shaggy or nor, said Mr. McFee, if gas goes up 40 cents, it will cost more to mow, but the proposed budget has increased for commodities.

Maybe they should put in a 10 percent increase in commodities, Ms. May suggested.

The pool needs to be sandblasted, which would cost around \$50,000, including a coat of paint, said Mr. Shike. The last time the pool was sandblasted was 1988 or 1989, he said.

A few years ago, the council decided to put \$50,000 a year into a community development fund. That has \$149,000 in it now, with \$12,500 coming out for the engineering for a wetlands at Sappa Park.

That doesn't include \$50,000 for this year, said Mr. McFee, so there will be around \$180,000 in there. Maybe the council needs to rethink that.

Maybe money for some of the organizations that asked for donations could come out of there, suggested Mayor Stanley.

Some of those include the tree committee, which is asking for \$2,000, and the Oberlin Country Club, which is hoping for \$10,000.

"That's more money than I want to give for someone's hobby," said Mr. McFee.

Golf is an economic development thing, said Councilman Jay Anderson.

Mr. McFee disagreed, saying that if someone wants to pay the game, then they should pay the fee, and the city shouldn't. He said he isn't the only one in town who feels that way.

"Rob's feeling is well taken," said Ms. May. "How much are you willing to do?"

It's the same as the pool, said Mayor Stanley; it's recreation.

That's different, said Ms. May, that's about kids' development.

Everyone wants money, said Mr. McFee, but when you look at the budget, the city doesn't have money for everything. Some things have to be done, but there isn't a lot of money to donate to all these groups to support hobbies.

There are certain things the city has to be responsible for, said Mr. Ward. Other things are luxuries, and the city can't keep raising taxes so people can have luxuries. He said he would hate to see the golf course or pool go, but fees could also be raised. The council can't just up the taxes.

Under The Gateway, the council decided to wait and get information about the Bremer Estate, which apparently includes about \$1 million for the civic center. Mr. Shike suggested they could maybe pay off the bond issue on the civic center with that money, although he wasn't sure how much the debt is.

Maybe The Gateway wouldn't need the \$100,000 transfer from the electric fund every year, said Ms. May.

VOTE

Tiffanie

Farr

for

Register of Deeds

Republican

I would appreciate your vote in the upcoming election.

Paid for by Tiffanie Farr