

Group donates for video

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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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 groups 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

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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 want 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

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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,

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 Develop-

mental 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.

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.

* Estate leaves \$2 million to public

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selling the homestead with the land or separately.

What about the household property, machinery and vehicles? asked Dr. Anderson. That would probably go at auction, said Mr. Bainter, adding that he didn't really see any other way to do that.

Is all of the family memorabilia and items like that gone? asked Dr. Anderson. Mr. Bainter said he thought that had already been handled.

The will, said City Administrator Gary Shike, was very brief.

Were there any directions on how the money should be used at The Gateway? Mr. Bainter said he didn't know of any.

Mr. Lund said they would like a decision in the next couple of months.

Mayor Stanley said he could attend the upcoming hospital board meeting. Personally, he said, he thought the best bet would probably be to sell it.

Keeping the land in undivided interest and being landlords with the hospital is a recipe for a mess, said Councilwoman Rhonda May.

She added that she isn't saying the council couldn't work with the hospital board, but if the entities decided to keep the land, they should divide it.

When the land is sold, said Dr. Anderson, where does the money go? In interest-bearing accounts, said Ms. May.

Is there a consensus to sell the land? asked Mayor Stanley.

Dr. Anderson said he thought they should look at it first. Maybe before the first meeting in August, the council could go look at the land and the house and land, he said.

City works to cut budget for next year

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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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 Lohoefer. 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