

City repeals rule against pit bull dogs

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Oberlin City Council voted Friday to repeal the ordinance banning pit bulls, agreeing that the vicious-animal ordinance can cover dangerous dogs from here on out.

An ordinance repealing the pit bull ban — which extended to breeds which make up the pit bulls line and dogs that had the appearance of pit bulls — was passed in a 4-0 vote. Councilman Rob McFee wasn't at the meeting, but backed the change at the last meeting in October.

Where is the push to repeal the pit bull ordinance coming from? asked Councilwoman Rhonda May.

At the last meeting, said Mayor Joe Stanley, (when Ms. May was not present) the main discussion was on the part of the ordinance which says if a dog looks like a pit bull, it isn't allowed.

The council also went over the vicious animal ordinance, said Councilman Ray Ward.

Does a dog have to bite someone to be proven vicious? asked Ms. May. That's pretty much it, said City Attorney Steve Hirsch.

That's what it will take, said Jeff Johnson, city animal control officer. A dog will have to bite someone or attack another animal before something is done.

This really comes down to protecting kids, said Ms. May. And other people and pets too, said Mr. Johnson, who said he wasn't in favor of getting rid of the ordinance.

Mr. Johnson said he thought the

Council Roundup

At a meeting Friday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Decided to table a proposed wind-power ordinance with a lengthy agenda planned, allowing the members more time to look through it. Story below.

- Talked with the mayor about not sending a proposed motel/hotel ordinance back to the planning commission because it would set the process back another month. Story to come.

- Approved repealing the ordinance covering pit bulls within the city limits, letting the vicious animal ordinance cover the dogs from here on out. Story at left.

- Talked behind closed doors for an hour to discuss applicants for the city administrator's job. Story on Page 3A.

city should leave the ban alone. He added, however, that since he took over as the animal control officer, it has been labrador retrievers that he's had the most problems with.

There are some German shepherds in this town that would take a person on, he said, but there is also a difference between a dog being protective and being vicious.

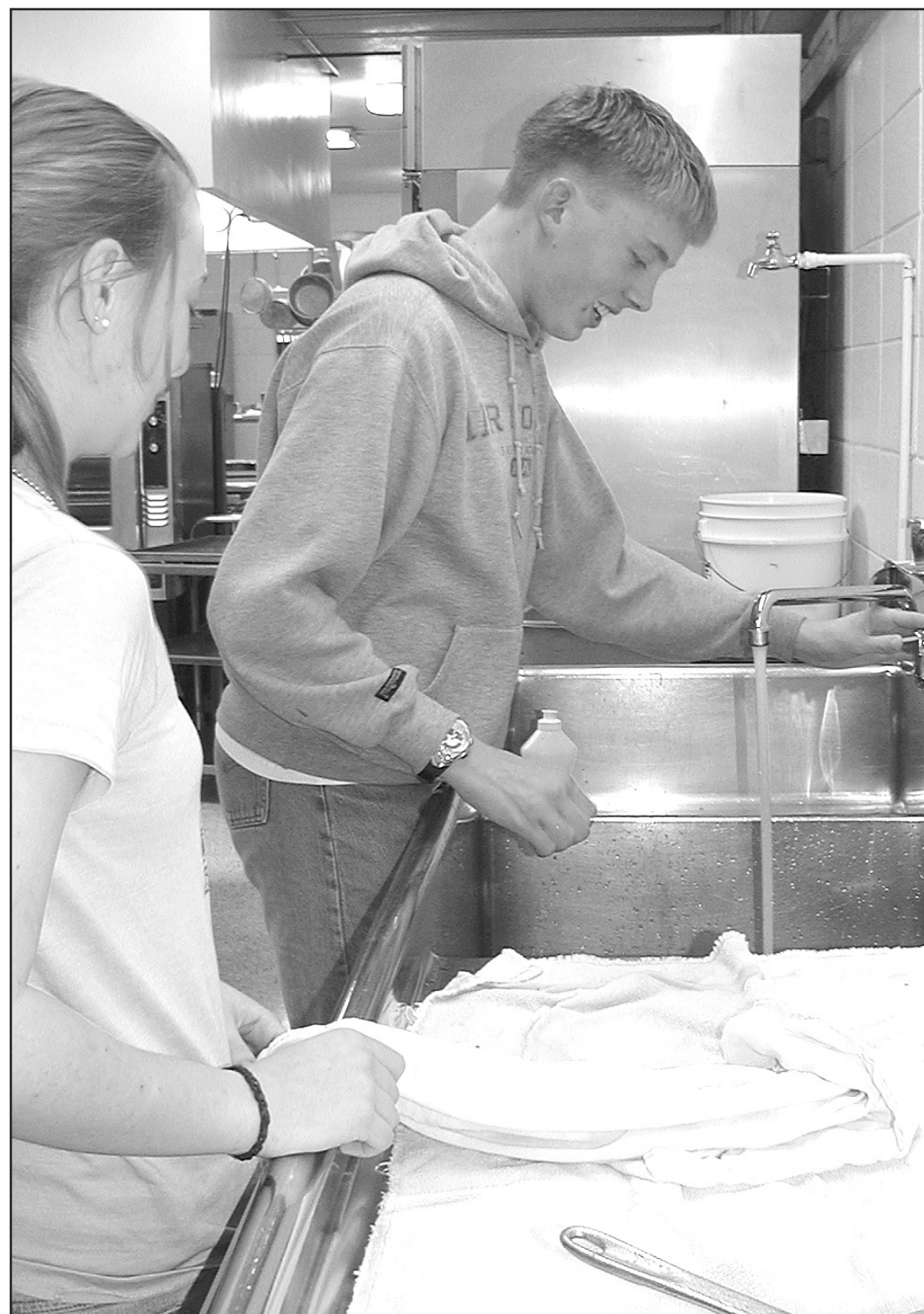
Would there be any advantage to include a provision that a certain number of complaints is allowed (See DOGS on Page 8A)



Club cooks for cash

FRIDAY EVENING in the kitchen at Decatur Community High School, Alex Ortiz (above left) and Rhiannon Davies helped cook a dinner the Spanish Club sponsored at the school. Tim Larson and Nakita Bose (left) washed dishes before the fund raiser. The club was raising money for a trip to Mexico.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



City tables ordinance on wind, again

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Facing a long agenda and a lot of questions, the Oberlin City Council decided to table a proposed ordinance to allow people to use wind power again Friday, giving the members more time to study it.

The ordinance, using one from Colby as a sample, has now been discussed three times and tweaked just as many.

The first section defines a "small wind energy system" as a wind energy conversion system consisting of a wind turbine, a tower and associated control or conversion electronics, which has a rated capacity of not more than 100 kilowatts and which is intended to primarily reduce on-site consumption of utility power."

The council talked about the definition, then decided to change it a little

Allowing the system to produce 70 percent of someone's normal power use, said Foreman Dan Castle, is too high. He said that should be lowered to 20 percent. The city

needs to look at the long-term plan, he said, adding that the government doesn't require 20 percent yet.

Wind energy is coming, but not at a 70 percent rate, he said. The city should never give up 70 percent of its power revenue.

The real issue, said Councilwoman Rhonda May, is, like it or not, the city will have to buy excess wind power. If that power can't be bought and put on the grid, then it should be at 20 percent.

If the city will somehow, someday buy the power, she said, it should be set at a higher percentage.

Mr. Castle said he just got back from a meeting where officials said there's lots of wind energy just sitting there because there isn't any firm generation to back it up with to get it on the grid. The city doesn't need to overreact with 70 percent, he said.

Mayor Joe Stanley said from the meetings he goes to, none of the large power companies seems to like wind energy.

In the next 20 years, said Ms. (See WIND on Page 8A)

Former teacher, reporter dies

By **MARY LOU OLSON**
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Lula Thieler, 103, who taught at Oberlin Elementary School for 19 years and was a newspaper correspondent for Rexford until she was 97, died Wednesday, Nov. 5, 2008, at the Citizens Medical Center in Colby.

She and her husband, the late Earl Thieler, were active members of the Oberlin community. Besides teaching, Mrs. Thieler and her husband also operated a Dairy King



Lula Thieler

at the present location of the Pizza Hut. After she retired, they lived in Rexford, where she wrote a column of local news for area newspapers, including *The Oberlin Herald*. After making the move from Rexford to Colby at age 97, she wrote news of residents at the senior living complex for *The Colby Free-Press*.

She was born Sept. 1, 1905, on a farm four miles southwest of Rexford, the daughter of Samuel and Mary Margaret (Hoyle) Claar. She

grew up in the Hawkeye area southwest of Oberlin, where her grandfather, Henry Claar, had homesteaded in 1879. Later the home was turned into the Halfway House, a rest stop for the stagecoaches between Colby and Oberlin.

She attended Dible School a half mile north of her home. Her 1923 class was the first to graduate at Rexford High after it became a four-year school, and she received an elementary teaching degree from Fort Hays State College.

She married W. Thurman Daniel on May 17, 1928, in Hays. They lived in Coldwater and Bucklin (See TEACHER on Page 8A)

Senior center inches forward

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Decatur County commissioners approved paying a \$17,500 bill for the architect working on the new recreation /senior center project on a 2-1 vote last Tuesday.

Commissioners Doyle Brown and Ralph Unger voted to pay the bill while Commissioner Stan McEvoy voted against.

Greg Lohofener, who has been working on the project since the beginning, and Connie Grafel, market-

ing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., met with the commissioners about the bill.

Mr. Lohofener said architect Rex Olson has been working on the (See CENTER on Page 8A)

Video on web promotes county

A video promoting Decatur County has received over 1,300 "hits" on the Internet.

The video, put together by Darrel Stern of Stern Media, out of Oberlin, was posted on YouTube just last Wednesday, said Kem Bryan, chair for the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce Board, and

people all over have been looking at the video.

The video, said Mrs. Bryan, is a result of a Decatur Tomorrow meeting in which people tried to brainstorm how to promote the county.

The video mainly focuses on Oberlin, said Connie Grafel, mar-

keting director for Oberlin-Decatur County Area Economic Development Corp., but it's for the whole county.

The corporation and chamber worked together on the video, said Mrs. Bryan, with other groups and businesses giving money to pay (See VIDEO on Page 8A)

*Wind ideas held

(Continued from Page 1A)
 May, she sees power supply contracts becoming more flexible. Big companies have finely detailed models for the demand of electricity and how they can meet it, she said, but with wind there isn't a supply model, it's unpredictable.

How will this affect the city's income? asked Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener, for instance, if the school district puts a wind turbine in.

The school's billing is roughly \$14,000 a month, said Mayor Stanley, so if they shave 20 to 30 percent off that, it's several thousand dollars.

The school could then sell power to the city? asked Councilman Jay Anderson. Yes, if all the district is doing is generating to reduce power consumption, said Mayor Stanley. So the district would maybe sell to the city in June, July and August, said Ms. May.

"We have a fairly lengthy meeting tonight," said Mayor Stanley. "I would like to see us table this and everyone study it so we can discuss it at the next meeting."

What price would the power be sold to the city? asked Dr. Anderson. Mayor Stanley said he didn't have the numbers with him, but the raw power number that the city bought power for in September was 2.99 cents. One and a half times that is about 4.5 cents. The discussion was tabled. The council will meet again at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 20.

*Dogs can live in city

(Continued from Page 1A)
 before something has to be done with the dog? asked Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener. No, said Mr. Johnson. He said he gets complaints now, but he is the one who has to make the determination on the dogs. The pit bull ordinance has been on the books for some time, he added.

"Personally, I don't see a problem with it," he said.

Any law that bans something "that looks like something" is pretty vague, said Mrs. Lohofener.

If that part is taken out, said Mr. Johnson, then the city shouldn't have the ordinance. Even if it is a pit bull, if the dog isn't vicious, why shouldn't someone be able to have it? asked Mr. Ward. The ordinance was probably adopted to prevent problems, not as a reaction, he said. The council voted to adopt the ordinance repealing the pit bull ordinance, allowing the dogs in town after the change is published today. It appears on Page 7B of today's Oberlin Herald.

Job fair planned at Gateway

If you're still not sure what career path you might want to choose someday, check out the "Careers for Tomorrow" job fair next Wednesday.

The fair, sponsored by the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Gateway.

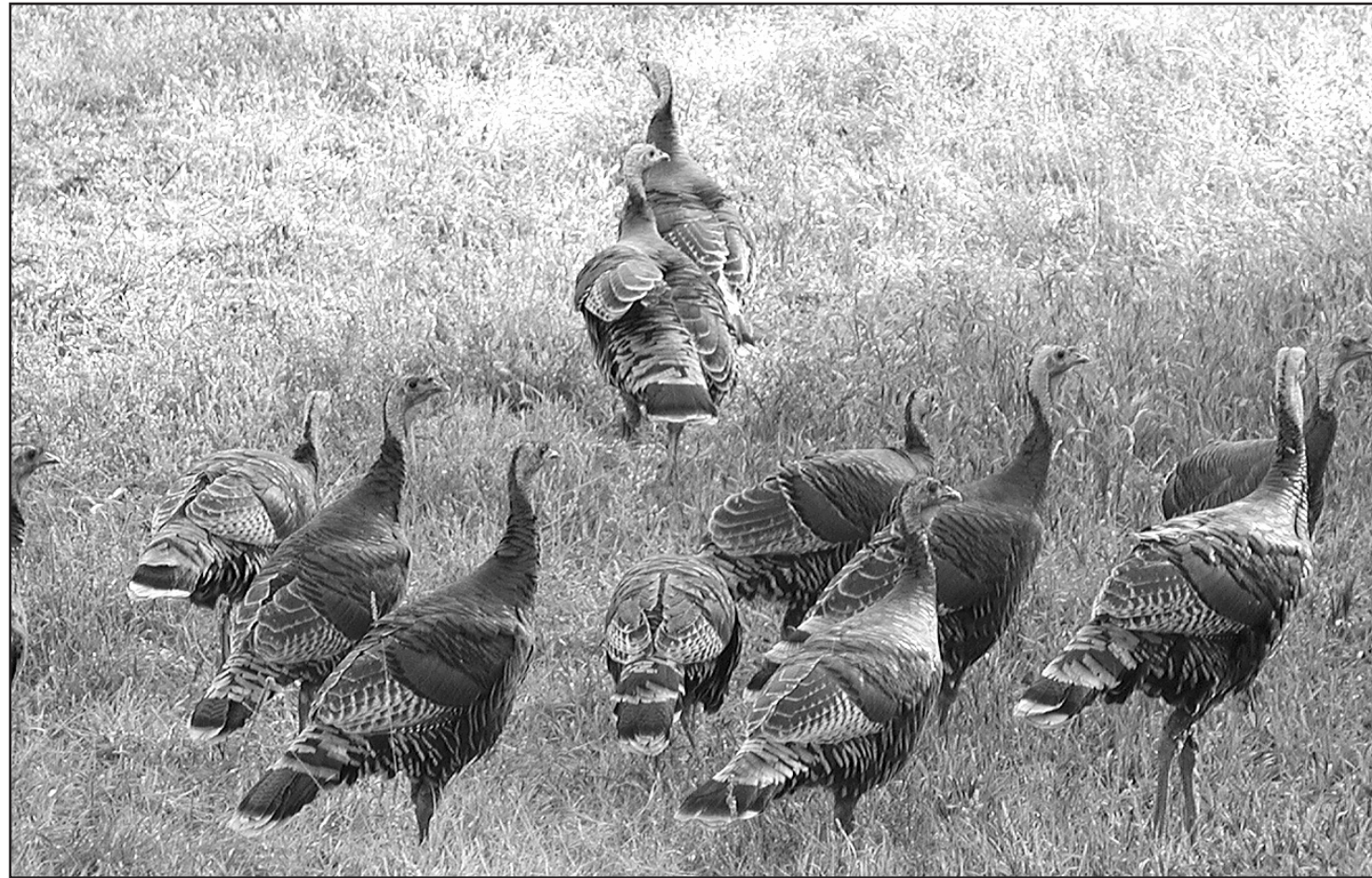
The fair is open to the public, with students from area schools in northwest Kansas and southwest Nebraska invited.

For questions, call Connie Grafel, marketing director for the corporation, at (785) 475-2901. Ms. Grafel is the contact for businesses at 1 Morgan Drive Oberlin, Kan. 67749, while Brenda Breth, Decatur Community High School counselor, is the contact for students at 475-2231.

Ms. Grafel said she expects representatives from businesses, industry and service providers at the fair. Colleges and schools from the area are sending recruiters, including McCook Community College, Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture in Curtis, the Kansas National Guard, the Northwest Kansas Technical College from Goodland and more.

Registration for a booth is \$10. She said the KansasWorks job service mobile bus will also be there.

Doin' the turkey trot



A FLOCK OF TURKEYS walked near the bridge just south of Oberlin last Tuesday. The flock, about 35 in all, had just crossed U.S. 83 heading west along Sappa Creek.
 — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

*Video should help tell county's story

(Continued from Page 1A)
 The \$4,800 cost. There really was amazing support for this, she said. The Oberlin Convention and Visitors Bureau was a big donor, said Mrs. Bryan.

The video, which runs about 10 minutes, focuses on people, not just what we have here, said Ms. Grafel. The interviews were done with people who moved here and plan on staying.

Mrs. Bryan said she hopes people will check out the video online and pass it on to friends and relatives who are looking for a place to raise a family, open a business or find a job.

One idea is for the DVDs to be included in visitor packets sent out by the Chamber, said Mrs. Bryan. Ms. Grafel said they are also checking with cable companies to see if they will air the video.

Mrs. Bryan said she is also doing some research on getting something in the classified ads for different publications or other places to let people know about the video.

Maybe with the economy, said Ms. Grafel, people are looking for cheaper living and a safe place to live. They may want to get away from the big city.

If people want to buy one of the videos, said Ms. Grafel, they can

contact her or the Chamber office. The DVDs will be sold for less than \$5.

This is a unique way to market the town, said Mrs. Bryan.

There is lots of film that was shot for the video, but not used, said Ms. Grafel, so it can be updated once in a while.

If people have any ideas on how to market it, said Mrs. Bryan, they can contact the Chamber office.

Hotel ordinance goes back to zoning committee

The Oberlin City Council sent an ordinance allowing motels and hotels to be built in the commercial/general zone back to the planning commission so it could be reworked to give the council more control over future projects.

The planning commission, said Mayor Joe Stanley at the meeting Thursday, Oct. 30, approved changing the zoning to allow motels and hotels. Most of the commercial/general zone

is along the highway, he said, but most of the downtown area is also in the same zone.

The change, said City Attorney Steve Hirsch, would allow hotels to be built anywhere in the zone.

The existing motels were built before the zoning ordinance, said Mr. Hirsch. This ordinance was done 25 years ago, he said, and not allowing the construction of motels in the

commercial general zone was probably an oversight.

The other change would be to allow cooking in a hotel or motel, said Mayor Stanley. With this change, said Mr. Hirsch, the motel builder would need to just get a building permit. If the developer had to get a conditional use approved by the zoning board and council, he said, the city could have some control on the location.

*Center gets changes as project moves ahead

(Continued from Page 1A)
 project. He came out here last week and met with representatives from the Golden Age Center and the Sunflower Cinema about what can be salvaged from the old buildings.

After the discussions, said Mr. Lohofener, the plans now have the concession stand and restrooms kind of trading places. That way, one person could work the concession stand for both the theater and bowling alley, he said. The change, he said, opened up a line of sight that was needed.

Mr. Olson also met with Kevin Brown of Sappa Valley Construction, which was the only company that bid on the project. It includes a new senior center, theater and bowling alley under the same roof.

Mr. Lohofener said his understanding was that Mr. Olson said he could fishish plans within in two weeks so Mr. Brown could get the final bids.

However, Mr. Lohofener said he didn't think that the development

corporation had the cash flow to pay the architect's bill.

What about the money from the donation check written to Decatur County? asked Mr. Brown. Ms. Grafel said she wasn't sure if they wanted to cash those in case the project doesn't end up being built. She said she doesn't want to have to reimburse the money.

Mr. Lohofener asked if they could use some of the \$35,000 in the county Golden Age fund from the tax dollars. The original estimates had the architect fees at \$27,000.

That would be around \$9,000 for each group, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy, including the county, the development corporation for the bowling alley and the theater.

We can't look at this as three separate projects, said Mr. Lohofener; it's one project.

The commissioners voted to use the tax money to pay the \$17,500 for the architect's fees with Mr. McEvoy voting no.

RAWLINS COUNTY, KS LAND AUCTION

1040 +/- Acres, Cropland, Grassland & Improvements
 Friday, December 5, 2008 @ 10 a.m.

Auction Location: Columbian Hall, Atwood, KS
Land Location: From the intersection of U.S. Hwy. 25 & 36, go 11 mi. North on Hwy. 25, then 1/4 mi. East to improvements on Tract 1.
Sellers: Caroline M. Peterson, Revocable Trust

TRACT 1: A tract of land located in the SE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of 8-1-33, approx. 10 ac. grassland m/l with 1457 sq. ft. home w/full basement, 40' x 64' steel building & other outbuildings.

TRACT 2: SW 1/4 of 8-1-33, less Tract 1, consisting of approx. 139.49 ac. cropland.

TRACT 3: Combination of Tracts 1 & 2

TRACT 4: NE 1/4 of 8-1-33, consisting of approx. 153.49 ac. cropland.

TRACT 5: NW 1/4 of 9-1-33, consisting of approx. 144.33 ac. cropland, 11.49 ac. grassland.

TRACT 6: NW 1/4 of 17-1-33, consisting of approx. 106.63 ac. cropland, 47.74 ac. grassland.

TRACT 7: S 1/2 of 18-1-33, consisting of approx. 284.78 ac. cropland, 11.94 ac. grassland.

TRACT 8: E 1/2 of NW 1/4 of 24-1-34, consisting of approx. 67.13 ac. cropland, 10.89 ac. grassland.

For complete sale bill visit our web site at: www.gladrealestate.com
 For additional information and a tour of the land, contact Rocky Hayes at:
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*Teacher lived to be 103

(Continued from Page 1A)
 before moving to a farm north of Hawkeye. They had two sons and two daughters. He died in January 1948.

She married H. Earl Thieler in Rexford on April 7, 1950. They moved to Oberlin that year, and she began teaching at the Oberlin school. She retired in 1971. After retirement, they moved to Rexford. Her husband died July 16, 1994.

Mrs. Thieler said her philosophy over the years was, "Blossom where God plants you."

She was a member of the Rexford Community Church, the Red Barn Gang, the Royal Neighbors, the Ringneck Campers, the Lioness Club, the Happy Hour Extension Club and the Social Hour Club.

Survivors include three children, Walter Daniel, and JoAnn and Ed Miller, Colby, and Marjorie and Joe Paddock, Rose Hill; a step-daughter, Betty and Rex Carswell, Rexford; a step-son-in-law, Keith Barnett, Atwood; 27 grandchildren; and many great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by a son, Jay Daniel; a step-daughter, Darlene Barnett; five brothers, Charlie, Evart, Fred, Clyde and Roe Clear; and four sisters, Martha Connelly, Pearl Woodring, Betty Carson and Ella Sharrah.

Services were Saturday at the Rexford Community Church with Pastor Lane Purcell officiating and burial in the Hawkeye Cemetery.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Pauls Funeral Home, 121 N. Penn Ave., Oberlin, Kan. 67749.

Tour set for Sunday

The Oberlin Business Alliance's annual Business-to-Business tour starts at 4 p.m. Sunday at the Business Enhancement Entrepreneurial Center in downtown Oberlin.

The tour shows people, particularly clerks at businesses here, what stores in Oberlin have to offer. Any business can be on the tour by giving a call to the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce office at 475-3441.

Afterwards, the Chamber will offer refreshments for \$5.

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