



Merry Christmas!



THE OBERLIN HERALD

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Board interviews principal

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
k.davis@nwkansas.com

Teachers, staff, parents and business people sat on the floor or in chairs and stood in the lobby of the Oberlin School District office for over two hours last Wednesday night as they waited to learn what would happen with the superintendent's job.

After two hours and 20 minutes of closed sessions, some with and some without elementary Principal Duane Dorshorst, he addressed the group while the board was in a short closed session.

Mr. Dorshorst said while he was in the closed-door session with the board, it had been a positive discussion. Board members interviewed him for a combined job of principal at the grade school and superinten-

dent, he said.

The board didn't offer him the job, but asked if he would consider it, said Mr. Dorshorst.

He added that it was his choice for a decision not to be made that night. Mr. Dorshorst said he has some personal things to consider and hasn't made a decision yet.

At the beginning of the meeting, the board approved the resignation of the Superintendent Pat Cullen in a unanimous vote. All seven members were present.

At the regular meeting Monday, Dec. 8, the board recorded a tie vote on Superintendent Pat Cullen's resignation when three members abstained. Later, the board learned that the absentions had to be counted as no votes, and that Kansas law (See BOARD on Page 5A)

Council hires administrator in fast meeting

With sleet pouring down Thursday night, the Oberlin City Council, in a quick conference call meeting, agreed to offer the job of city administrator to a man from Oklahoma City.

Mayor Joe Stanley and City Attorney Steve Hirsch met downtown at the attorney's office and called the other council members on the phone, since the weather was bad. Mayor Stanley said they weren't able to get in touch with Councilman Rob McFee, but the others voted unanimously to offer the job to Austin Gilley.

Information about Mr. Gilley provided by the League of Kansas Municipalities said he was deputy

director of the Oklahoma Merit Protection Commission. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's in public administration from the University of Oklahoma.

Mayor Stanley said he called Mr. Gilley and offered him the job, and he has accepted.

The city offered a salary of \$51,000, which is \$6,000 more than the city was paying former administrator Gary Shike when he resigned in September.

Although the regular council meeting was canceled, said Mayor Stanley, everyone wanted to take care of this item. Mr. Gilley plans to start working in the city on Monday, Jan. 5, he said.

County locks in bid for senior building

After making a phone call to the county auditor, the Decatur County commissioners locked in a bid for concrete and a new building to house Sunflower Cinema, a bowling alley and senior center at their meeting last Tuesday.

Commissioner Stan McEvoy asked if, before the commissioners approved the total cost of \$640,000 for the building, if the county had

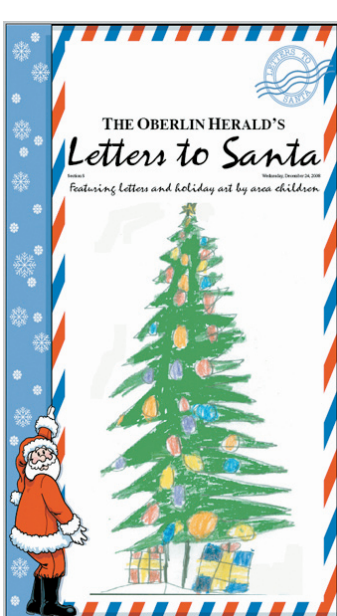
to have the cash on hand to pay for it. That way the county wouldn't be violating any cash basis laws, he said.

Kevin Brown, with Sappa Valley Construction, said to lock in the price of the building required a \$69,000 down payment, which would be refundable until the pieces for the building start to be worked (See BUILDING on Page 5A)

Letters to Santa inside

Video game systems, board games, purses, John Deere toys and iPods are a few of the things on wish lists that Oberlin kids sent to Santa Claus this year.

Each year, *The Oberlin Herald* prints area youngsters' letters to Santa and then forwards them on to the North Pole. The letters are printed in a special "Letters to Santa" section in this week's newspaper. See Section S inside.



SATURDAY MORNING, Beth Harmon (above) sat inside the Golden Age Center with a fist full of tickets as she waited for the Oberlin merchants' Christmas on Us giveaway to

start. Alana Raile (below) picked a ticket out of the trash can while Cynthia Haynes, co-owner of *The Oberlin Herald*, watched.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Woman wins big prize

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
k.davis@nwkansas.com

The thermometer may have shown a single digit Saturday morning, but that didn't stop close to 300 people from showing up for the Oberlin merchants' Christmas on Us drawing.

The drawing, scheduled for the gazebo at Centennial Park, was moved inside to the Golden Age Center because of the cold and a stiff north breeze. The crowd, which usually spreads out around the park, had to shoehorn into the center.

About 10:45 a.m., parking spaces started to fill and people started to filter into the back of the senior center, pulling out folding chairs to sit on. By 11 a.m., close to 300 sat in a large circle and others stood huddled in corners.

Four slips were drawn from a large black can, which was about three-fourths full of the numbered tickets, before the grand prize had been given away.

The final number drawn by Demi Murray was 986776 which was handed out at Raye's Grocery. Sharon Gamblin from the back row said she had the matching number, which she produced to win \$1,200.

Mrs. Gamblin said she wasn't sure what she was going to do with the money, which was given in \$25 increments of scrip. She said she might spend some at Raye's Grocery and some on Christmas presents. Mrs. Gamblin said she's never won anything like



that before. Mrs. Gamblin and her husband Chuck had pulled up to the gazebo at 10:50 a.m., but a member of *The Oberlin Herald* staff told them the

drawing had been moved to the senior center.

She said she probably had around 30 tickets that they had collected over the last five weeks.

Mr. Gamblin said he didn't really have any ideas about what he was going to help his wife spend the money on.

(See WOMAN on Page 5A)

*Board OKs resignation in 7-0 vote

(Continued from Page 1A)

requires four "yes" votes to approve any motion. Member Jerry Chambers wasn't at that meeting.

The board then went into a closed session for nonelected personnel for an hour and 25 minutes before pulling Mr. Dorshorst in for 55 minutes.

The closed session was only the third item on the agenda for the meeting, before an action item to "consider the direction our district will take in the number of administrators needed."

The agenda included talking with Max Heim, with the Kansas Association of School Board, about using their service for an executive search. Although Mr. Heim did show up at the meeting, he was asked to leave by the board president. The board voted to table that item.

After two hours and 20 minutes of closed sessions, the 30 people squeezed back into the board room, with four sitting in the hall way.

Mr. Jackson said the board and Mr. Dorshorst had talked about combining the jobs of superintendent and principal. He said no action would be taken at the time.

The board then voted to go back into closed session with Dr. Cullen for five minutes, again for personnel. Mr. Dorshorst asked if he could be included for the first 30 seconds, which was OK'd. He then addressed the crowd in the lobby.

Member delays start

The Oberlin School Board waited 15 minutes to start a special meeting last Wednesday while close to 30 people in the audience at the district office talked among themselves.

The meeting, scheduled to start at 7 p.m., was held up a few minutes while board members waited for member Dan Grafel to arrive.

At seven minutes after, member Monte Moore tried to call Mr. Grafel on his cell phone, but accidentally called member Dan Nedland's cell. It rang in the board room, giving the audience a laugh.

Mr. Grafel was then reached by cell phone and arrived a few minutes later.

The board later voted to renew both of the principal's contracts for a year. They also agreed to freeze the administrators' salaries.

At the end of the meeting, the board held a 15-minute closed session to discuss the superintendent's evaluation. There was no action taken after that.



THIS PICTURE of workers putting in the cornerstone of the Decatur County Courthouse was donated to the county by former County Engineer Don Claussen during recent a commission meeting.

Man donates 80-year-old picture to county

A little over 80 years after the fact, a picture of the laying of the Decatur County Courthouse cornerstone will be hung in the hallway.

At a county commissioners' meeting Tuesday, Dec. 9, Magistrate Judge John Bremer gave the picture to the county. He said Don

Claussen of Salina who formerly lived in Decatur County, had sent it to him.

The picture shows men laying the cornerstone of the courthouse in 1926.

Mr. Claussen said his grandfather is one of the men in the picture doing the work.

A copy of the picture will be hung on the

wall in the courthouse and one will be given to each of the museums in the county, commissioners decided.

The commissioners sent a thank you to Mr. Claussen for the keepsake.

*Building project moves forward

(Continued from Page 1A)

on. That would hold the bid, too, Mr. Brown said. He said he thought that John Nelson, with Nelson Concrete, would hold the concrete bid with some money down, too.

Greg Lohofener, with the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., said they have the money to lock in the bids, using donations, money from taxes in the senior citizen fund and fund raisers Golden Age Center supporters have held.

The commissioners called auditor Steve Zodrow, with Mapes and Miller, and Mr. Lohofener asked if the county could put the money down without violating any laws.

Mr. Zodrow said he thought it would be OK as long as the county had the cash to cover the down payment.

County Clerk Marilyn Horn said they would be running the money through the senior citizen fund that the county already has set up.

Mr. Zodrow said he didn't think it would be a budget or cash basis violation. It would only be a cash basis violation if it pushed the senior fund to a negative number, he said.

The rest of the project can be done

in another year, he added.

Mr. Brown said the county would need around \$100,000. Mr. Lohofener said he has \$63,000 in donations that were written out to the county, and there's \$35,000 in the senior fund for the Golden Age Center. That means \$2,000 will need to come from the money raised by the members, he said.

If that money can be brought to the county, said Mr. Zodrow, then it can happen.

Construction, said Mr. Brown, is set to start at the beginning of March.

Mr. Lohofener said he would like the commissioners to approve the down payments so the prices can be locked in, but that further work would be subject to getting the deed to the empty lot to the south of the current senior building.

Mr. Lohofener said he's talked to the owner of the lot, who said he was going to sign the deed over to the county, but the deed hasn't been received. Mr. Lohofener said they aren't going to build on land that the county doesn't own.

The commissioners approved the down payments subject to receiving the deed.

Donations needed to finish building

The community effort to put up a new building to house the movie theater, senior center and bowling alley still needs \$120,000 to produce a finished project.

Greg Lohofener, with the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., told the Decatur County commissioners last Tuesday that backers are short \$55,000 to finish the Golden Age Center and Sunflower Cinema parts of the building. About \$65,000 is needed to complete the bowling alley.

The total project, he said, is expected to cost \$950,000. The money, he said, will come through a state tax-credit program, which produced donations of \$178,571;

Donations to the county at \$81,429; county money for the senior center at \$35,000; fund raisers \$23,000; roof insurance check \$17,000; a lease or loan of theater equipment at \$50,000; a federal loan of \$100,000 and a county general obligation bond issue for \$300,000.

Mr. Lohofener also penciled in \$45,000 for demolition work to be done by the county crew.

Duane Dorshorst, a member of the cinema board, said there is some question on how to get everything into the county's name and who will own what.

Before demolition, said Mr. Lohofener, all of the deeds need to be

transferred to the county.

Is there even a deed for the theater? asked Mr. Dorshorst.

Afterwards, it will be like the Golden Age Center now, said County Clerk Marilyn Horn. The county doesn't want to run the facility, but needs the deeds for the demolition work.

Mr. Lohofener said he has received information from Mr. Dorshorst on a bid for movie theater equipment.

It includes a 3D screen, he said, and there isn't another one that he knows of in this area.

Kevin Brown, owner of Sappa Valley Construction, said they have some details to work out, like picking the colors for the steel building.

He said he would be back for the Tuesday, Dec. 30, meeting to discuss it.

Wick Buildings, said Mr. Lohofener, has given an \$8,400 extra discount on this project.

People can still donate to the project by seeing Mr. Lohofener or Connie Grafel, marketing director for the development group. Mr. Lohofener said he will be contacting people who have pledged money, but have not paid those pledges, or they can contact him at 475-3459 or Ms. Grafel at 475-2901.

*Woman wins \$1,200 in scrip money

(Continued from Page 1A)

Before the grand-prize drawing, Alana Raile pulled three tickets for the \$300 first prize. Ed Dean claimed the \$300. Alana first pulled ticket No. 986640 from Raye's Grocery, then 122681 from Rocking R and 582738 from R&M Service Center, to which Mr. Dean said "bingo."

Mr. Dean brought in two instant

ticket winners over the past four weeks, so he had already won \$100 in scrip from the contest.

Showing his ticket to Dave Bergling, ad manager, Mr. Dean said he could now buy his wife something for Christmas and chuckled.

Mr. Dean, who moved to Oberlin from Colby three years ago, said he wasn't sure where he would spend his winnings, but that he had told his

wife she would get a gift if he won.

The Christmas on Us giveaway is made possible by merchants who choose to sponsor the promotion each year. The scrip can only be spent at sponsoring businesses and has to be spent by the end of the year. Merchants are not required to give change.

This year's sponsors were the LandMark Inn, Addleman Drug

Store, Southwest Implement, Stellar Sales, Home Planning Center, Dale's Fish 'N' Fun, Ward Drug, Raye's, Stanley Hardware, Rocking R, Ultimate Fertilizer, R&M Service Center, Prairie Petals, Ampride, the Bank, A&W Drive In and D&M Sinclair Service, the Dresser, the NWKansasonline.com business directory and *The Herald*.

Businesses plan to close for Christmas

Most Oberlin stores and businesses plan to be closed for Christmas Eve on Wednesday, but some will be open until around 5 p.m.

With the exception of convenience stores, nearly everything in town will be closed on Christmas Day.

With all the town's restaurants shut down, you may need to cook dinner at home on Christmas. Shop early, though, because Raye's Grocery will close at 4 p.m. Christmas Eve.

However, next week, the store will remain open until 9 p.m. on New Year's Eve.

The grocery will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year's Day, but open regular hours on Friday both weeks.

The Oberlin Herald will go to press on its regular schedule next Monday, so deadlines for news and advertising will be at noon on Monday.

The Herald office will be closed all day Thursday and Friday, Dec. 25 and 26, and Thursday, Jan. 1. Deadlines for ads in *The Country Advocate* will be noon, Tuesday, Dec. 23, and on Friday, Jan. 2.

Mail will be delivered in town today and Dec. 31. The post office will be closed all day Christmas Day and New Year's Day, and there will be no mail delivery either day.

Federal, state, city and county offices, as well as all banks and financial institutions, will be closed on both holidays. Decatur County offices also will be closed on Friday, Dec. 26.

Crossroads Express and Ampride convenience stores will be open regular hours on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

D & M Sinclair will close at 6 p.m. on Christmas Eve, be closed on Christmas Day and open Friday, Dec. 26. The store will be open regular hours on New Year's Eve, closed New Year's Day and reopen Friday, Jan. 2.

A&W Root Beer will close at 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve, be closed Christmas Day and open on Friday, Dec. 26. The restaurant will be open New Year's Eve and closed New Year's Day.

The Frontier Restaurant will close at 2 p.m. on Christmas Eve and be closed Christmas Day.

Pizza Hut will close at 5:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve and be closed Christmas Day.

They will be open regular hours on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

The LandMark Inn's Teller Room will be closed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

On Friday, Dec. 26, it will close

for lunch, but be open in the evening.

It will be open New Year's Eve and closed New Year's Day.

The Oberlin Library will close at 3 p.m. on Christmas Eve and be closed Christmas Day and Friday, Dec. 26. It will close at 3 p.m. on

New Year's Eve and be closed New Year's Day. It will reopen on Friday, Jan. 2.

WITH OUR THANKS AT THE HOLIDAYS

The Deveny Family of Employees would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Thank You for your patronage this year. We look forward to serving you in 2009!

 RICK EDWARDS	 MIKE DEVENY	 BILLY DAVIDSON
 ROGER HENTHORN	 CHRIS BRIDGMON	 CRYSTAL CRUISE
 JOHN FOLEY	 RANDY JOHNSON	 JON MARKS
 KEVIN GERIH	 MARK CUMMINS	 ALESHA HEDKE
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401 East B Street - McCook, NE 69001
(308) 345-5200 - 1-800-345-0031
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