

County signs check for center

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Decatur County commissioners looked at final plans for the new movie theater, bowling alley and senior center last Tuesday, then gave the contractor a check for \$68,000 to lock in the price.

Kevin Brown, with Sappa Valley Construction, showed the commissioners the plans and asked if they wanted to sign a contract or wait until January.

The commissioners asked their auditor if the county should wait to sign the contract because of the cash basis laws.

Auditor Steve Zodrow said the commissioners should probably wait until January, or the county would have to list the contract as an encumbrance in 2008.

Greg Lohoefer, with the Oberlin-Decatur County Area Economic Development Corp., said he had received a faxed deed for the lot south of the Golden Age Center. It's not for the lots across the street, only for the lot on the south side of the building. It isn't the original deed, said Mr. Lohoefer, so in order for the transfer to be recorded and legal, they will have to get the original.

The faxed copy of the deed came from the owner Perry Case.

Mr. Brown said he has the final plans and has gone through everything and ironed out the details of the cabinets. Everything from the doors to the water fountains will be handicap accessible, he said. The contractor said he's still looking at getting the project going at the beginning of March.

Mr. Lohoefer said he had a letter to be put on county letterhead

County Roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Heard that the road and bridge supervisor needs to remind township officials that paperwork for any work done with money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the storm in 2007 needs to be done and sent in. Story on Page 5A.

- Talked with the weed-control director, who told them that the county transit van, Bus 22, is on its last legs. Story on Page 3A.

- Talked briefly with two department heads about buying a copier to share, but decided to wait until the first meeting in January. Story on Page 3A.

- Approved the 2007 audit, which showed no cash or budget violations and improvements in the county general and overall expenditures. Story on Page 3A.

- Looked at the final plans for the new movie theater, bowling alley and senior center and gave the contractor a check for \$68,000 to lock in the price. Story at left.

supporting a \$100,000 grant from the Dane G. Hansen Foundation. The commissioners approved signing a letter of support.

The grant request is going through (See COUNTY on Page 5A)

Farmers invited to conference at The Gateway

It's just about time for the Cover Your Acres annual winter conference at The Gateway, which pulls farmers and industry people in from all over northwest Kansas, southwest Nebraska and eastern Colorado.

The conference is set for Tuesday and Wednesday, Jan. 20 and 21, said Brian Olson, area agronomist with Kansas State University. It's designed to bring farmers, industry people and university experts together to talk about crop production practices for the High Plains. These people are not only dealing with crop production, but with very little available water to produce those crops.

In the past, he said, farmers have asked about crop residue management, glyphosate resistance, the best options to use on plants and drills to get seed into the ground, among other items.

There are some advances coming in the next few years on grain sorghum, or milo, said Mr. Olson, so those will be on the agenda this year, too. There's also uncertainty on grain marketing and crop insur-

ance.

The main sponsors of the conference include Hoxie Implement, Lang Diesel, the National Sunflower Association, McCook National Bank, Pioneer Hi-Bred, Producers Cooperative Oil Mill, Monsanto, Farm Credit of Western Kansas, K-State and the Northwest Kansas Crop Residue Alliance.

Pre-registration, at \$22, needs to be postmarked by Tuesday, Jan. 13, said Mr. Olson. After that day, registration is \$45.

Mr. Olson said he encourages people to register early so that they can get things planned, for example, how much food will be needed. On the menu is roast beef with gravy and potatoes au gratin for lunch.

This year, he said, they received more private and industry sponsorship, so they are going to choose 40 pre-registration checks at random and give those back to the people the day they pick up their packets.

Both days of the conference start with registration at 7:45 a.m., the welcome at 8:15 a.m. and break-out sessions starting at 8:45 a.m. The program is the same either day.

City plans coffee hour to welcome new leader

The City of Oberlin will host a welcome coffee hour for the new city administrator on Thursday at The Gateway.

Mayor Joe Stanley said the coffee will be held upstairs in The Gateway from 9 to 11 a.m. Everyone is invited to come meet

and welcome Austin Gilley, who was hired at the end of December and started work this week.

Mr. Gilley, said Mayor Stanley, was in town on Saturday, Dec. 20, and found a place to live. He was scheduled to start work on Monday.



Students learn system

AT OBERLIN Elementary School on Monday, Konnor Witt (above) sat on the floor with his pencil ready while one of his classmates, Nolan Pierce (right) sat in a chair in the library as the class learned about the Dewey Decimal System of filing books.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



Selden business finalist in '8 Wonders'

The family-owned Koerperich Bookbinders in Selden is one of the 24 finalists which will be narrowed down to the Kansas Sampler Foundation's "8 Wonders of Kansas Commerce."

Chris Koerperich, who runs the bindery with his brother Don, said his brother was at the Kansas Sampler Center getting information about being a finalist on Monday.

The 24 finalists were chosen from commercial "wonders" nominated by the public.

People now have a chance to vote for the top eight wonders online at 8wonders.org, by calling (620) 585-2374 for a ballot or by picking up a ballot from the bindery. Voting started on Monday and ends on Tuesday, Feb. 17.

Chris said his father, Richard

Koerperich, started the business in 1969 on Main Street in Selden. Now the firm binds mainly family genealogy books and rebinds old Bibles and textbooks for schools.

The biggest contract now is binding old law books that are then sold to universities.

The company can do a genuine leather binding and hard cover binding, said Mr. Koerperich.

The brothers have two full-time and three part-time employees.

According to the Kansas Sampler Foundation, criteria includes that the "business be publicly accessible for tours or that its story be on permanent display at a museum." The finalists can be either a past or present business.

Other finalists include Baxter's (See BROTHERS on Page 5A)

Bequest to cover losses at civic center

Money left to the City of Oberlin to be used for The Gateway will help cover the civic center's yearly losses of about \$40,000, as well as possibly pay for a new roof and other items, city officials say.

Mayor Joe Stanley told the City Council on Thursday night that \$40,000 that had been transferred from the electric fund into The Gateway account this year has been transferred back out because the city has received money from the Bremer estate.

Fred and Henrietta Bremer left their estate half to the Decatur County Hospital and half to the city

to be used at The Gateway.

So far, the city has received one check for \$500,000 and another for \$680,600. Mayor Stanley said he was told the city would receive one more check from the estate, but for much less.

Some of that money will go to support day-to-day operations at The Gateway, he said. Some of it will go to other projects, he said, including a possible roof replacement, which will be a big, pricey project.

Representatives from Roofmasters of Hays are coming to the (See ESTATE on Page 5A)

Annual food drive exceeds goal by 575

With 2009 rung in, the annual food drive at Stanley Hardware is over, surpassing the goal by 575 items.

Owner Joe Stanley said he held the first drive in 1999, starting after Thanksgiving and ending just after the new year. In early 2000, the donated items were taken to the Decatur County Food Pantry in the basement of the United Church to be handed out.

Since then, Mr. Stanley has sponsored the drive each year at the holidays. This year, the drive started after Thanksgiving and

ended on Thursday.

On Monday, the count stood at 2,575.

It was a good year, said Mr. Stanley. It seemed like more groups got involved. Quite often when someone would bring in items, they would say it was donations from their day care, club or organization, he said.

Mr. Stanley said the Teens for Christ group planned to help move the food from the store to the food pantry on Tuesday. He added that he plans to do the drive again next year.

In the morning sun



AT SAPPA PARK Monday morning, three does and a yearling deer stood on a hill in a corn field as the sun came up. The white tail deer stayed in the field most of the morning.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

Council approves four beer licenses

The Oberlin City Council approved beer license renewals for four businesses last Monday...

Council Countdown

- At a meeting last Monday, the Oberlin City Council:
• Heard that the city will hold a coffee hour for the new administrator at The Gateway on Thursday.
• Approved continuing a utility allowance for the Last Indian Raid Museum and Sunflower Cinema.

Mayor Stanley said they could check at the high school to see if one of the classes could help with the project.

Mayor Stanley said the money that's been transferred into The Gateway account from the electric account has been transferred back out.

So the estate money is being used for day-to-day operations? asked Ms. May.

Phil Fraker who is getting the bids, to ask about that.

The members looked at a newsletter that Mayor Stanley picked up at a recent meeting that the City of Ellis puts out with utility bills each quarter.

He said they could maybe put one out with information people may want to know about the city.

Clerk Karen Larson said they could maybe do it twice a year. She noted that the city uses postcard-size bills, so they would have to make the newsletter separately.

Member Rhonda May said the city could maybe do the newsletter four items a year the first year and then see if there's anything new to say.

Girl hired to write sports

Elisha Jones, 17, has joined the staff at The Oberlin Herald as a sports reporter.



Elisha Jones

Miss Jones, a senior at Decatur Community High, plays basketball this season. She was on the school's league championship volleyball team this fall and plans to be part of the track team in the spring.

She transferred from Jayhawk-Linn High in

Mound City, south of Kansas City, this year. Between the two schools, she said, she has lettered four years in volleyball, three in basketball and three in track for the javelin.

She is the daughter of Jeff and Belinda Jones. Her father is a physical education teacher and head boys basketball coach at Decatur Community, and her mother

teaches eighth-grade English and is a tutor.

She has a brother Dalton, who is a freshman, and a sister Kayla, in seventh grade.

Miss Jones works on the Decatur Dictator staff and also worked for the school newspaper before transferring to Oberlin. She plans to attend McCook Community College next year and major in graphic design.

Road paperwork needs to be filed

The road and bridge supervisor said he has some calls to make to remind township officials that any work done with money from the Federal Emergency Management Agency from the 2007 storm needs to be finished and the paperwork turned in.

Tim Stallman said a lot of the townships who had damage from the storm in early 2007 asked for extensions on the time to have the

repair work done. That paperwork showing the work is done has to be in by Jan. 7, he said. Hopefully, the townships that took the extensions are thinking about getting that paperwork done.

Mr. Stallman said he planned on making some phone calls to remind township officials of the deadline.

The commissioners ratified the cost of fixing the radiator in Grader 132, which was \$1,428. Mr. Stall-

man said he took the part to Hoxie Ag and Radiator to be repaired.

During the recent storm, said Mr. Stallman, snow was heaviest in the south and east part of the county, near Jennings and Kanona. He said his crew decided not to plow the roads. Once the roads are dried out, he said, the crew will go work them.

Council gives OK on utilities

The Oberlin City Council gave the OK to continue a utility allowance for the Last Indian Raid Museum and Sunflower Cinema at its meeting last Monday.

Mayor Joe Stanley said in 2008, the city gave the museum an allowance of up to \$3,500 in utilities, which pays for the water, electricity and sewer usage. The museum used \$2,260 of that allowance last year, he said.

The city has allowed \$100 a month for Sunflower Cinema. If the bill is more for electricity, water and sewer, then the difference is paid by the volunteer-run board.

In most months, said Mayor Stanley, the theater doesn't use more than the \$100 for city utilities.

The council voted unanimously to continue the utility allowances.

Chamber banquet set

The Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce board is getting ready for the group's annual dinner and banquet scheduled for Thursday, Jan. 15.

The event will start at 7 p.m. at The Gateway. The banquet price is \$16.

During the annual meeting, members of the Chamber will vote on six new board members. Members whose terms are up are Kem Bryan, Tami Shaw, Sid Metcalf, Beth Harmon, Kelly Wasson and Kari Ketterl.

People who have agreed to

have their names on the ballot include former Mayor Ken Shobe, Richard Kimble, businessman Robert Groneweg, Kelli Dickinson, radio announcer Adam Kadavy, Cindy Shirley, Amanda Anderson, Lisa Paulson, Martin Burton and Spring Diederich.

There are nine total members on the board.

Make reservations for the dinner with the Chamber office at 475-3441 or stop by the Business Entrepreneurial Enhancement Center at Penn Avenue and Commercial Street.

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*County gives \$68,000 check to contractor

(Continued from Page 1A) the Chamber of Commerce office because of its tax classification, said Mr. Lohofener.

The commissioners OK'd colors of tan on the sides and ivory on the trim.

Mr. Lohofener also asked commissioners to draft a letter for people who donated to the county to make the building possible. The donation amount needs to be written in, the letter, signed and then mailed out, he said. The commissioners approved the forms be signed and sent out.

Anyone who still wants to make a donation needs to have it in by

Sunday, Feb. 1, he said. Although donations can be accepted after that date, said Mr. Lohofener, they would like to have the cash in hand so they know if they can finish the building.

The Chamber manager, Tina Watson, has really stepped in and helped out with the support letter for the Hansen Foundation, he said.

Mr. Brown said they need to go through the existing Golden Age Center and Sunflower Cinema and do a salvage list. Then those items will need to be removed and placed in storage before the county demolishes the buildings, he said.

*Brothers run book business

(Continued from Page 1A) Bait and Tackle in Stockton, Big Brutus (the world's largest power shovel) of West Mineral, the Bowersock Mills and Power Co. of Lawrence, Brant's Meat Market of Lucas, Brookover Feed Yards of Garden City, Cloud Ceramics of Concordia, Cobalt Boats of Neodesha, DessinFournir furniture of Plainville, the El Dorado Oil Field, the Frontenac Bakery, Hemslojd Inc. of Lindsborg, MarCon Pies

of Washington, Mill Creek Antiques of Paxico, Millers of Claffin Furniture, Moon Marble Co. of Bonner Springs, RANS Inc. of Hays, Ringneck Ranch of Tipton, Stafford County Flour Mills of Hudson, the Grasshopper Company of Sylvan Grove, the Wichita aviation industry, Winter Livestock of Dodge City and the Wolf Creek Generating Station in Burlington.

*Estate money received

(Continued from Page 1A) council meeting Thursday to make a proposal about replacing the roof. They are also going to suggest replacing some of the siding. Mayor Stanley said he has no idea what that will cost.

In past years, the city has transferred money from the electric

fund to The Gateway to help cover operating losses. That isn't needed now, the mayor said.

Although that's money that was collected through utility rates, the money won't be refunded to power users. The money, said Mayor Stanley could possibly be used to help other departments.

