

Citizens tell worries to legislator

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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People asked about the federal budget, the stimulus packages, water, farming and much more Monday afternoon when Rep. Jerry Moran stopped in Oberlin for one leg of his "Big First District Listening Tour."

Mr. Moran said this was his 36th stop so far, leaving 33 counties to go in the 69-county district.

A lot is happening in Washington that he doesn't support, the congressman said. His stops in Kansas, he said, help him stay focused on the issues that matter to people here. Not only that, he said, but it helps him stay focused on Kansas and not on the capital.

The budget was just passed at \$3.55 trillion, with a \$1.695 trillion deficit. Mr. Moran said he heard on the radio Sunday that by some date in May, the government will have spent the money it actually has and be operating on borrowed money.

Our problems, said Mr. Moran, aren't going to be solved by the country continuing to borrow money. He added that he has been consistent in his voting record on the size and scope of the budget and spending, as well as on stimulus packages.

The budget is getting exponentially bigger, he said, and the day is coming when the value of a dollar is going to diminish even more.

He said his generation is saying that they want their kids and grandkids to have a lower standard of living by what's happening with the borrowing and spending. That, he said, is morally wrong.

"Our nation's capital," said Mr. Moran, "has lots to learn from people like us."

He added that he voted "no" on the stimulus packages.

Is the stimulus money worth going after, or are there going to be too many regulations? asked Connie Grafel, marketing director of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp.

Rep. Moran said he would never say not to go after money. The idea of the stimulus package was to have projects that were "shovel ready," he said, but only a small percentage are like that. He said he didn't vote for the stimulus, but with that said, if the money is going to be spent, he is willing to help Kansas communities get it. The money is supposed to be spent immediately, he said, but the law says that's over a three-year period.

The disadvantage to smaller com-

People offer to help

About 25 people got to air their opinions and complaints to Rep. Jerry Moran Monday afternoon at The Gateway and find out what they can do to change things in Washington. One offered his help.

"What can we do to help you?" asked Gary Walter, president of the Bank.

Mr. Walter asked who he and the people in the room should contact to help Mr. Moran fight what's happening.

Mr. Moran suggested e-mailing, all of the members of Congress. The reason there was an increase in Democrats is partly because they were elected in rural, conservative areas, he said.

He said he would guess those representatives' constituents are telling them the same things he's hearing.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a San Francisco liberal, has been amazingly successful in getting people to vote the way she wants, he said. Some of that might change as the 2010 election gets closer.

What can be done to make sure the voices of the people are heard? asked Kathy Brainard, manager of The Gateway.

Mr. Moran suggested trying to teach city people to understand rural life. Who you know, where do your relatives live and do they understand what's happening here, he said.

"The way to make voices heard is to do it collectively," said Mr. Moran, "but the problem is that we aren't always the majority, so we need to get people to understand and believe how we do."

He said, he's been speaking more on the House floor, probably more than he ever has.

unities with this is that they don't have grant writers, he said.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohoe-
(See TOUR on Page 5A)

Wheat looks good in most area fields

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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A few wheat fields across the area were damaged by the freeze last week, but for the most part, experts say, the area look pretty good.

Brian Olson, area agronomist with Kansas State University, said there was some freeze damage to a few no-till wheat fields. The weather just got a little too cold and the plants got burned back, he said. The damage happened on fields where the crown, or growing point, for the plant was out of the ground.

If the growing point of the plant is damaged, Mr. Olson said, the crop can suffer.

No-till wheat is more exposed to damage because of the cold temperatures than conventional fields, the agronomist said. With no-till, there's a layer of residue on the ground, so if farmers don't watch real close how deep they are planting, the seed could be in the residue or slightly below it. Then when the crop starts to grow, the crown may be just above the soil surface and susceptible to damage.

The area doesn't have extensive freeze damage, said Mr. Olson, just some fields. The damage, however, goes all the way to Smith and Jewell counties.

Some of the crop also has some

damage from brown wheat mites, he said. The little bugs look a lot like little newspaper punctuation. They feed on the plant, said Mr. Olson. The bugs come out from dry soil, but start decreasing around mid-April.

When there is moisture, he added, the mites can't get out of the ground.

Over the weekend, Oberlin received .41 of an inch of rain. The moisture is good, said Mr. Olson, not only to keep the brown wheat mites in the ground, but for the crop. Of course, he said, the wheat can still use more.

Lots of farmers are ready to start planting their corn for the fall crop. Mr. Olson cautioned that they need to be careful and watch the soil temperatures. The soil needs to be at 55 degrees for corn to germinate, he said, so it's still a little too cold.

Mr. Olson said he checked the two-inch depth a week ago and it was still at 48 degrees. The ground needs to be at 55 for two or three days in a row, he said.

If the soil is too cold, the seed could have problems germinating. There's also more of a chance of disease and insects, he said.

Although farmers might be getting anxious to start planting, he said, they need to hold off until the ground is ready.



Kids collect candy

HOLDING HIS BASKET and heading into the field of candy, Peyton Fife (above) was ready to have some fun. A little later Faith Meitl (left front) and Brittanie Farr were off and running when it was time for their age group to gather in goodies. Carson Farr (below) ate a piece of candy on the sidelines. The annual hunt in City Park the Saturday before Easter is sponsored by the Oberlin Lions Club and the candy donated by the Masons.

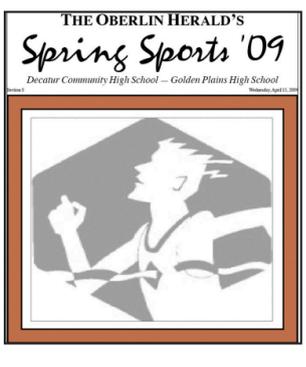
— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



Sports in paper

The annual Spring Sports section is inside today's issue of *The Oberlin Herald*.

The section includes pictures and information about track and golf team members at Decatur Community High School and also team photos from the junior high school here and Golden Plains High School.



Artist to show off works during annual Artfest

Artists from around the area have a chance to show and sell their work again this year at the High Plains Artfest at The Gateway later this month.

Artfest, which started five years ago, is designed to showcase adult and student artists in one local show Saturday and Sunday, April 25 and 26.

Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County

Economic Development Corp., said at least 140 artists have signed up for the show. Some schools that plan to bring work still aren't in that count, she said.

Again this year, said Ms. Grafel, they will hold a gala the night before the show, Friday, April 24. A \$100 sponsorship fee will get two people into the event. That money then can be used towards the purchase price (See ARTFEST on Page 5A)



VISITING AFTER A MEETING in Oberlin, Tom Jakowski (left) talked to U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran on Monday night at The Gateway. This was the 36th stop for the congressman on his annual tour of the district. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Old theater seats take up storage area

The Decatur County commissioners talked briefly about asking the Sunflower Cinema Board to move the seats from the old theater out of the buildings at the Decatur County Fairground.

Items salvaged from the old theater and senior center are stored in buildings at the fairground. Commissioner Ralph Unger said at the meeting Tuesday, March 30, that he talked to a member of the Decatur County Amusement Authority board, who said a lot of the room at the fairground is being taken up by the old seats.

At the meeting on Tuesday, March 24, the president of the group, which runs the home-owned carnival at the fair, asked the commissioners if they could get some of the items moved out of the buildings so the authority can store prizes for the fair and get some of the ride seats out to paint.

Mr. Unger said he would try to contact someone from the theater board. At one time, he said, they were trying to sell the seats for \$5 a seat.

The commissioners kicked around the idea of mounting some of the seats on boards or something to add more seating on the fairground, but nothing was decided.

All of the booths and hoods out of the old restaurant at the Ampride building have been donated to the recreation center project, and are being stored at the fairground as well, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine said he had gone to a Northwest Kansas Planning and Development meeting recently. He said he

talked with Randy Hrabec, director of the agency, about the solid waste report, which was supposed to be done by now.

The county is holding a check for \$957 for dues for the year until the report is finished, commissioners said.

Ambulance Director Linda Manning said all 11 of the Oberlin emergency medical volunteers passed a defensive driving class offered through the county's insurance carrier at the beginning of March.

Starting at the beginning of May, she said, the ambulance service needs to have an identity theft program to safeguard patients' information. She gave the commissioners a copy of a proposed program. Mr. McEvoy said they would have County Attorney Steve Hirsch take a look at it.

Ms. Manning said she noticed in the minutes from the last meeting a conversation about the lights in the ambulance bay and clinic in Jennings. She said no one had told her that they were having problems with the lights. She said she would check into it.

She also said she is getting the ambulances ready for the annual state inspection.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Appointed Jim Reeves and Vickie Bailey to the Decatur County Health Foundation board until 2011.

- Signed a contract with Joe Dreher, athletic director at Decatur Community High School, to head up the summer ball program for \$5,000.

* Tour brings congressman to Oberlin

(Continued from Page 1A) fener said the city has tried to talk with the Environmental Protection Agency about water regulations that may force it to build a \$4 million treatment plant. That hasn't been successful.

Basically, she said, someone with the agency told them that they didn't care about the size of the town. The agency had no plans to change its regulations, she said. If the city council voted not to comply with the regulations, the agency wouldn't have any problem sending them to jail.

Oberlin has been kind of the poster child for water, said Mr. Moran. He has worked with the city on the issue of arsenic in the water for a long time. He said they have tried to develop a working relationship with the environmental agency and had less success than he wanted. He said he's tried to convey to the agency and people in Washington that sound science and common sense need to be used when setting up these regulations.

Even then, he said, there will be towns that can't afford to meet the regulations.

At one time, he said, he proposed that people from the agency, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and agencies that have money to help communities meet the regulations, get together

in a room and talk. He said he is still for that.

Robert Martin of Herndon said he's been involved with the Western Prairie Resource and Conservation District. The group has grant writers who have helped area counties build a recycling system that pretty much operates on its own, he said.

Seven of these groups from Kansas, Colorado and Nebraska are working together to clean up the Republican River, he said, but President Obama wants to eliminate the program, which is under the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Moran said he's been a supporter of the conservation program for a long time. He said he thinks the program will survive the budget process. When it comes to appropriating money, he said, enough people support the program that it will survive.

Sharon Addleman, who owns Addleman Drug Store with her husband, said she's concerned about preserving our freedoms and democracy. She said she wants the country to survive so that her grandkids have the same freedoms.

Only 17 House members voted against the stimulus plan and corporate bailouts, said Mr. Moran. He said he was one of them. He added that he thinks President Obama campaigned differently than he is governing.

Mrs. Addleman said she's also concerned that the country has borrowed so much from the Chinese. They will think that they own us, she said.

Joe Dejmaj, co-owner of Dale's Fish 'n' Fun, a wholesale sporting goods firm, asked about the \$486 million in the stimulus package for Cabela's, a Nebraska retailer. Mr. Moran said he wasn't aware of that.

"Aren't you aware of what's in the packages?" asked Mrs. Addleman.

No, said Mr. Moran, the stimulus bill was presented on the Internet at midnight and voted on the next morning. Normally, they get 48 hours to vote, but the majority changed that rule. It's interesting that the speaker of the House campaigned that she would always give members 48 hours to read the bills, but she hasn't.

"I think it's poor government," said Mrs. Addleman. Mr. Moran agreed.

The next stop on the tour was in Atwood, where the congressman was to talk with the high school government class. It's embarrassing enough to explain to adults, he said; imagine explaining to students.

Patrick Shirley, a Norcat area farmer, said he wanted to know why the Farm Service Agency needs farmers to release their tax forms, who owns what land, document

which partner has what and more. Not only does the capital have to be accounted for, said Mr. Shirley, but where the farm equipment is bought and leased from has to be listed.

He added that if he makes too much money, he can't do the program.

There isn't any requirement in the farm bill to provide tax documents to the Department of Agriculture, said Mr. Moran; it just has to have a third-party declaration.

Each year, said Bill Duncan, pastor of the Church of Christ, the hate crimes law comes up and is voted on. In the past, said Mr. Moran, they have been able to defeat it, but it's a different world with a big Democratic majority.

Hospital Administrator Lynn Doeden said she wanted to know if the hospital will be able to recapture any of the money it has spent to update technology. Mr. Moran suggested he get with her so they could talk about it.

Then he was off to Atwood and St. Francis.

City to look at bid for Gateway heat

The Oberlin City Council plans to look at bids for heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems at The Gateway at its meeting Thursday.

Administrator Austin Gilley said the city has received bids from three firms.

At the first April meeting, the council approved a bid from Murray Roofing and Construction of Colby to replace the roof. That company, said Mr. Gilley, would like half of the payment up front and the other

half at the end of the project. The council will have to decide if that's what it wants to do.

Mr. Gilley said the hospital wants to put a sign in the park on the west side of U.S. 83. The council will need to decide if that's OK.

Bill Riedel, who was elected to serve on the council last Tuesday, will be sworn in. City Attorney Steve Hirsch and Mr. Gilley will do a presentation with some orientation material for him.

Mr. Gilley said he also might give a report on the survey the city sent out.

Also, he said, he received Marvin Hansen's resignation as the principle grave digger for the Oberlin cemetery. At the last meeting, the council talked about the contract, but no decision was made whether to rehire Mr. Hansen.

The council will meet at 7 p.m. downstairs in The Gateway.



Dr. Gary Fredrickson, organ, and Joy Russell, piano, will present "Twenty Flying Fingers" in concert at Faith Lutheran church on Sunday, April 19 at 2 p.m.

Sponsored by Oberlin Arts & Humanities Commission
Donations will be accepted for a DCHS music scholarship.
For information call Ella Betts 785-475-3557
or Mary Henzel 785-470-0218.

This program is presented in part by the Kansas Arts Commission, a State agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a Federal agency which believes that a great nation deserves great art, Oberlin Arts & Humanities Commission, Hansen Foundation.



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- ♥ Spinal Screening – Hinze Chiropractic
- ♥ Ear Canal Exam – Stevens Hearing Center
- ♥ Foot Screening – High Plains Podiatry
- ♥ BIA (body fat % analysis) – Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department
- ♥ Wellness Screening – Wellness 4 Life
- ♥ Skin Scope – Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department
- ♥ Hearing Screening – Community Hospital Speech Therapy
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