

County and city talk about road

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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County, city and township officials met with members of the city's airport committee and the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. board on Thursday to talk about closing a road north of the airport, but came away without a decision.

The city received a letter from Bucher Willis and Ratliff, the engineering firm planning its airport expansion, asking for a letter with a commitment that the road north of the airport will be closed. The road is known as Road 1N or, under the county's new addressing system, T Lane, said Connie Grafel, marketing director for the development group. While people refer to it as

Parking lot slows airport expansion

The question of whether to abandon part or all of the parking lot on the north side of the Decatur County Fairground to clear the approach zone for the north-south runway at the Oberlin Airport came up at a meeting Thursday night, but no decision was made.

County commissioners, the mayor and city council, members of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. board and township officials met to discuss a road north of the airport that the engineers say needs to be closed so the city can build a 7,000 foot runway.

Someone noted that the Federal Aviation Admin-

istration wants the city to move the current runway 600 feet to the north because the parking lot at the fairground occupies the space needed for a "runway protection zone."

Greg Lohofener, with the economic group, said he isn't sure of the point of spending \$1.5 million to move the runway 600 feet because the protection zone needs only to go 60 feet into the parking lot. Why not change the parking lot? he asked.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener said no one has really ever asked about closing part of the parking lot, adding that there is parking around The Gateway that people could use for the fair.

a county road, she said, it actually is a Liberty Township Road. The

engineering firm wants a letter from the county and township saying it's

OK to close the road.

The road would have to be closed

to build a 7,000-foot runway for jets, she added, there's no guarantee that a 7,000-foot runway will be built.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine asked how soon the road would need to be closed. It could be three years or longer, said Ms. Grafel, but the engineers want the letter now.

Gerry Tally, a landowner and Liberty Township official, said he wouldn't sign a letter unless there's a plan to put an alternative route into that area. Lots of farmers use that road to bypass town with machinery, he said. As more roads are closed, he said, access is harder for farmers.

Tim Stallman, county road and bridge director, said there was some talk about opening a road as close to

the airport buffer zone as possible.

Commissioners Gallentine, Ralph Unger and Stan McEvoy; Liberty Township officials Dave Bose and Doug Brown; Mayor Joe Stanley; and Greg Lohofener and Jim Wesch, with economic development, looked at maps with Mr. Tally and his wife Theresa to find an alternate location for a road.

Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener and Deanna Castle, with the economic board, also were present.

The group talked about how many flights the airport expects and the flight path for the new runway, which Mr. Tally said will take planes over his house.

Mr. Lohofener said it should be (See ROAD on Page 5A)

Rotary visitors from Mexico tour Oberlin

Five young professionals from Mexico toured Oberlin last week as part of a Rotary International Group Study Exchange program.

The five stayed in the homes of Oberlin Rotary Club members last Wednesday to Sunday morning and toured sites around the area.

The group included Aida de la Peña Yolanda Mata, an internal comptroller, who served as the team leader; Fernando Alonso, a lawyer; Ana Cristina Galvan Solorio, in marketing; Abraham Chavez Alejandro Lugo, who works in communication and public relations; and Nadia Berenice Mariscal Soltero, an actuary.

The group toured the ethanol plant in Campus, near Oakley, on their way to Decatur County. While staying here, they spent a day in Atwood with members of the Ro-

tary Club. They toured the Decatur County Feed Lot, shopped on Main Street in Oberlin, attended the High Plains Artfest gala, toured the Last Indian Raid Museum, visited the Herschel Betts farm and had dinner at the LandMark Inn.

Mr. Alonso, said Jim Hollowell, an Oberlin Rotary member, got to spend the afternoon with Judge John Bremer.

The idea of the six-week exchange, said Mr. Hollowell, is to promote better understanding of other people and cultures. It helps with relations between countries.

This is the last year that Rotary International will sponsor the program. If clubs in two countries want to take on a project, he said, they can, but the expense will also be the clubs' responsibility. The (See VISITORS on Page 5A)

Valves should help school heat system

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Oberlin School Board agreed to ask for bids to put new valves on all the radiators in the high school to help control the heating system and get the air handlers running to help cool the building down before next month.

Jay Connelly with Connelly and Associates, a consultant who was hired to look at the heating system, said at the Monday, April 13, meeting that moving ahead with the \$100,000 project would help control temperatures in the school winter and summer.

At the beginning of the school year, most of the high school was without heat, waiting for steam lines to be replaced. Into fall and early winter space heaters were used in the music wing to take the chill off.

The district purchased a new boiler for approximately \$26,000, although it isn't installed yet. The installation will cost another \$26,000

and that hasn't been paid for yet.

The board decided to stick with the steam heating system, said Mr. Connelly, so it needs to look at controlling the temperatures. There are 43 radiators controlled by valves, he said. Some of those work and some don't.

Replacing those valves, said Mr. Connelly, would probably be the best use of the district's dollar.

Electronic controls don't make sense in this situation, he added. Instead, he recommended replacing all of the steam valves with new ones.

The air handlers are designed to bring in outside air and push it through the building. Getting the air handlers working, said Mr. Connelly, would provide a way to cool the building.

To fix them, he said, they will need to pull down some of the ceiling on the second floor. If the board decides to do this, he added, they could have some of the poor light (See HEAT on Page 5A)



AT THE GATEWAY on Thursday, Janelle Walter (above) tried to decide where to place the hook in on a portable wall before hanging one of the pictures to be displayed for the High Plains Artfest. Anna Seeber Shaw (below) of Oberlin

placed a picture on a wall during set up while Judy Cochran (bottom) and Connie Grafel discussed where would be best for a large painting.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Artwork decorates Gateway

Pictures of all shapes and sizes and types hung on the temporary walls put up around the arena at The Gateway.

People milled around the walls, studying the pictures, picking their favorites and deciding which ones to buy. Ceramic vases, bowls and sculptures sat on tables around the walls.

Each piece had been entered by an artist, either a student, an amateur or experienced, for the fifth annual High Plains ArtFest.

Mary Henzel, with the Oberlin Arts and Humanities Commission, said the show was a huge success.

On Friday night, over 180 artists and patrons saw the pieces for the first time during a fund raising gala at The Gateway. They were able to study each piece while Willis Pracht of Garden City and Dianne Vap of Atwood played in the background.

The evening also included lots of appetizers.

For the show, there were over 60 pieces from high school students representing 11 schools. Organizer Connie Grafel said the number of schools was up this year from only seven last year.

Jordan McHugh, from Decatur Community High School, displayed several of her pieces at the show.

Sixty-seven adult artists brought in 207 pieces to display in the nine categories including acrylic, pastel, oil, water color, photography, mixed media, ceramics/sculpture, drawing/charcoal and other.

Area participants, said Mrs. Henzel, included Miss McHugh, Neil Marshall, Anna Seeber Shaw, Jeanie Loudon Unger, Ryan May, Rhonda May, Kristin



McHugh, Dan Nedland, Hunter Nedland, Theresea Reeves and Shayla Williby.

Of those, Mrs. Shaw, Mrs. Unger, Dan Nedland and Hunter Nedland won awards. Mrs. Shaw, Mrs. Unger, Ryan May, Ms. May and Hunter Nedland all sold pieces of their work.

This year's show was judged by Barbara and Jay Nelson of Manhattan, who have a gallery.

Mrs. Henzel said over 160 people attended the show on Saturday and Sunday.

"The show was great," said Ms. Grafel. "Everyone at the gala said it was the best show yet and the food was wonderful."



Health Care section inside today's paper

Nor'West Newspapers presents a special edition on Rural Health Care in today's copy of *The Oberlin Herald*.

Each year, the staffs at the six newspapers composing Nor'West Newspapers join to take a look at health care in rural northwest Kansas. The section includes stories on most of the hospitals in the region, the shortage of nurses, the work of dentists, traveling specialists and other health care providers.

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*Heat controls will help keep school warmer

(Continued from Page 1A) fixtures on the second floor replaced at the same time.

The air handlers would operate under one control, probably in the principal's office, he said. There is also an air handler in the auditorium which would be easy to get to, although he wasn't sure how much that space is used.

The project would most likely be done during the summer, he said. The valves would take two men a couple of months. To do the air handlers, he said, you wouldn't want people working in the hallway during classes. The auditorium could be done anytime, however.

Mr. Connelly said the project could be bid as one or in pieces.

Board President Dewayne Jackson asked if fixing the air handlers would take the place of putting giant fans in the halls at 5 a.m. That's the idea, said Mr. Connelly.

Fixing the air handlers, said Principal Charlie Haag, won't change

the temperature in the gym. Fans would still have to be run during graduation.

With the new valves, said Mr. Connelly, the district would save some money on its gas bill. The board came to a consensus that replacing the valves made sense.

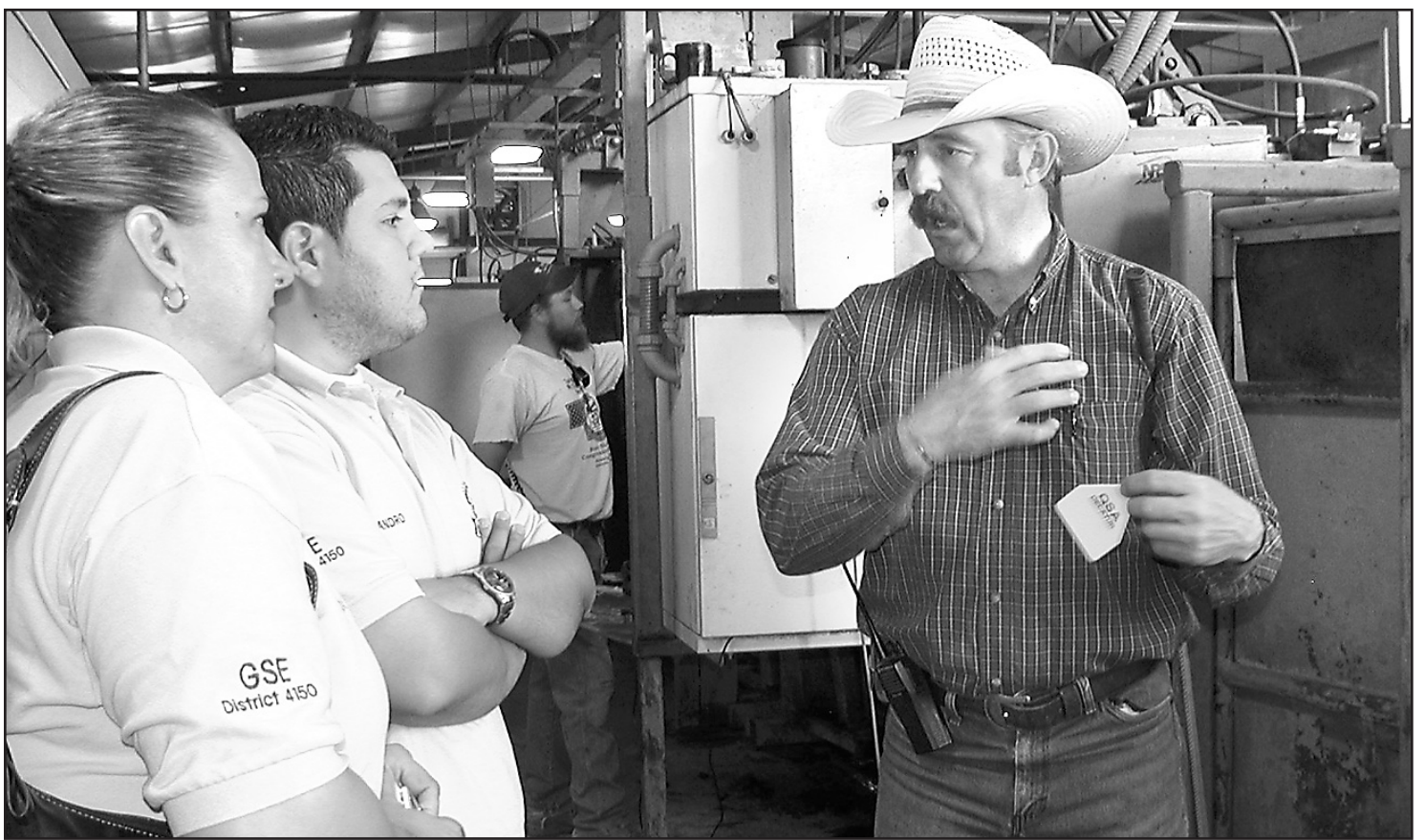
Mr. Jackson asked if the board should do the air handlers.

The board talked about whether the district has the money, which they figured they did with \$822,000 in capital outlay. Mr. Connelly estimated the entire project would cost around \$100,000.

Member Chris Bailey said it made sense to him to do all of the project, but he asked for the superintendent's recommendations.

Superintendent Pat Cullen agreed but suggested getting bids with the project broken into parts, so the board could do the valves now and the rest later.

The board approved asking for the bids in sections.



AT THE DECATUR FEED YARD on Friday morning, Manager Kevin Unger told Aida de la Peña Yolanda Mata and Abraham Chavez Alejandro Lugo, two members of a Rotary International Group Study Exchange team from Mexico, about the ear tags they use on the cattle during a group tour. — Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

*Visitors from Mexico tour businesses

(Continued from Page 1A) reason for stopping the exchange program, he said, is because Rotary says it has too many irons in the fire.

Exchange programs, usually one a year, are done with a different country each time. In the past, the Oberlin club has had visits by groups from Israel, Bolivia and Brazil.

Mr. Hollowell said he still keeps in touch by e-mail with people from Brazil and Bolivia. It's an excellent program, adding that he will miss having it each year.

Herschel Betts, a club member and a past district governor of Rotary, helped the district organize this exchange. Each of the five professionals stayed with members of the local

club including Mr. Betts and his wife Jody, Mr. Hollowell and his wife Linda, Bob and Kay Gaskill and Dan Nedland and his wife Rhonda May.

On Sunday, the group moved on to Oakley. They will fly back home Sunday, May 10.

Kids will need more vaccines

The Decatur County health administrator talked with the commissioners last Tuesday about the latest additions to the list of vaccines that kids must have before they go to school.

Administrator Marilyn Gamblin said children will now need a tetanus booster at age 11. All kids going to day care, preschool and Head Start will need a hepatitis A shot, plus a second measles, mumps and rubella and either the chicken pox vaccine or proof they had the chicken pox.

She said she's had a lot of adults interested in the shingles vaccine this year. Shingles results from a latent infection by the chicken pox virus which attacks the nerves. To have it, she said, the person has to be 60 and older.

Ms. Gamblin said the Women, Infant and Child program is going to change a little. In the past, someone from Sherman County has come here and worked the program, doing the paperwork, handing out the vouchers and doing family evaluations. Women in the program also have to meet with a nutritionist

every three months.

That person is no longer going to be coming here, she said, adding that she's checked with Norton County and they will provide someone to come administer the program.

Each family has to be re-certified each year to stay on the program, said Ms. Gamblin.

On another problem, she said that since the beginning of the year, she's had four test positive for rabies in animals in the county, three skunks and one fox. People need to take care around wild animals, she said, especially ones that show no fear of humans.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Held a 30-minute closed session for non-elected personnel with the commissioners, Ms. Gamblin and County Attorney Steve Hirsch. Afterwards, they voted to rescind a regulation allowing comp time for the home health nurse, since the county doesn't do home health care anymore.

- Heard that the department did 700 flu shots this year, more than any previous year.

*Road belongs to Liberty Township

(Continued from Page 1A)

runway. A call to Brad Weisenberger with the firm confirmed that a fence will be put around the runway.

Inside that fence, he said, the could still be farmed with a special kind of lease and the farmer would be able to access that land through a gate.

After studying the maps to see where an alternative road could go, someone mentioned that it could

go across three quarter sections that belong to Mr. Tally and across some land belonging to Warren Weibert.

Mr. Tally said he would like to have a piece of paper signed by the landowners before he agrees on the road closing.

In order to have the road closed, said Mr. Unger, the city will probably have to petition the county, and the commissioners would have to

make a decision. He said he's not sure if the road wouldn't fall under eminent domain powers. The commissioners can't just say tonight that they are going to close a road when there is a process to follow, he said.

Next, the economic group will contact the landowner, said Ms. Grafel.

Commissioner Ralph Unger. Ms. Manning said she's already moving one out when a storm is coming. The department has three ambulances in Oberlin and one in Jennings, she said.

No one ever thinks that a storm could wipe everything away, said Mr. Gallentine. He added that he's glad to hear that Ms. Manning is already taking precautions.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Heard that Ms. Manning plans to take one Jennings ambulance to Denver to work on the light bar. The crew has been having problems with it for years, she said.

- Heard that Ms. Manning is sending a heart monitor to Zoll Medical to have preventative maintenance done for \$230. She said she thought it was a good idea because the crew has been having problems with it.

Commissioners worry about warranty

The Decatur County commissioners discussed paying for a year or longer warranty on an "auto pulse" machine they bought for the ambulance department, but asked the director to get some more information before making a decision.

Director Linda Manning said the warranty on the machine, which does automatic chest compressions, is up at the end of June. The county can pay to extend the warranty for a year or more up to four years, she said.

Ms. Manning said the machine cost \$15,000 and was new last year. It's never been used.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine asked if lack of use could lead to more problems. No one could say.

It looks like it's \$1,200 a year for warranty, with four years costing \$3,985, said Commissioner Ralph Unger. He asked if the machine would be obsolete before the war-

County Roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Discussed paying for a year or longer warranty on an autopulse machine, but asked the ambulance director to get more information before making a decision. Story at left.
- Talked with the county health

administrator about newly required vaccinations for children. Story at left.

- Talked with a representative from the county's insurance organizations about the history of the policy and a recent 8 percent reduction in the premium. Story on Page 3A.

Board purchases bus, Suburban

The Oberlin School Board purchased a school bus and a new van at the meeting on Monday, April 13, choosing from a list of 10 bids.

Brian Simonsson, transportation director, said he recommended purchasing a Suburban from Taylor Motors of Colby, the low bidder at \$31,286. All of the bids were for 2009 Suburbans, he said.


Other bids were from Wagner Chevrolet of McCook for \$35,997; Oakley Motors, \$35,900; Money Chevrolet, Hill City, \$31,719 and \$295 for tinted glass; Hays Chevrolet, \$31,710 plus \$295 for tinted glass; and Bernie Jones GMC, Cam-

bridge, Neb., \$31,132 plus \$295 for tinted glass.

Mr. Simonsson said he received four bids for 2009 16-passenger buses, including one from Kansas Truck, Wichita, for \$47,954; Masters Transportation, Kearney, for \$45,829; Midwest Bus Sales, Bonner Springs, for \$43,155; and Kansas Truck, Wichita, for \$44,981.

He suggested the Bluebird bus from Kansas Truck, the lower bid, because that is what 80 percent of the fleet is now. He said the district has received great customer service from Kansas Truck.

The board approved that bid.



The High Plains ArtFest Committee

thanks the following for helping make the fifth annual High Plains ArtFest a success!

Without them, the show would not be possible.

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Road crew to buy new culverts for inventory

The Decatur County commissioners gave the OK to order culverts to help replace inventory.

The road crew has recently checked its culvert inventory and they are out of 18-inch culverts and almost out of the 24-inch size. Mr. Stallman said he hasn't put an order together, but thought it could cost up

to \$10,000. The commissioners approved an order up to that amount.

Mr. Stallman said it's also time to order a split load of fuel, half unleaded gasoline and half off-road diesel. The commissioners approved the purchase, although he didn't have a cost.

The annual road and landfill meeting with township officials the court room on the third floor of was set for 10 a.m. on Tuesday in the courthouse.

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