



**IN THE KITCHEN** at The Gateway, Lee Ploussard held up a small plaque that will be put on the oven bought with money given in memory of his son, Kent Ploussard, who served as the center's director before his death. Mayor Joe Stanley thanked the Ploussard family for the memorial at the council meeting on Thursday, Aug. 13. — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

## Memorials buy Gateway an oven

Oberlin's mayor and City Council thanked the Ploussard family and friends of longtime Gateway director Kent Ploussard for a new oven in the kitchen, bought with memorial donations.

At the beginning of the City Council meeting Thursday, Aug. 20, Mayor Joe Stanley read a

proclamation about the oven which noted that it will be used to cook many fine meals, "including the famous 'Ploussard's Prime' rib roast."

The purchase of the oven was made possible by memorials left in Mr. Ploussard's name. Mayor Stanley said a commemorative plaque will be

put on the front of the oven.

Mr. Ploussard's wife Jody, and his parents, Joyce Ploussard, and Lee and Judy Ploussard, were there to accept the proclamation.

## City sets up plan for wetlands grant

The Oberlin City Council approved setting up a grant agreement with the Sunflower chapter of Pheasants Forever for the wetlands project at Sappa Park at its last meeting.

It's a standard grant agreement, said City Administrator Austin Gilley, for a public body to give money to a private group. Basically, he said, the agreement gives Pheasants Forever a total of \$72,060 for work on the wetlands, including money already given by the city and a \$5,500 grant from an outside source.

Pheasants Forever has reviewed the agreement, said Mr. Gilley, and approved it. The council voted unanimously to approve it. Mayor Joe Stanley said the contractor is waiting for the ground to dry up a little before the crew starts digging on the project.

Mr. Riedel said someone had suggested to him that when the digging starts, the city might want to contact area nurseries since that top soil is valuable.

There was some question whether the city could sell that top soil to nurseries or even by the truck load to people who might want it, since the land is leased to Pheasants Forever.

During the meeting Aug. 13, the council approved the 2010 budget. Although the room was full and more chairs had to be set up for the over 30 guests, no one was the meeting to talk about the budget.

The council approved the budget with members Rhonda May, Ray Ward and Marcia Lohofener voting yes, while Councilmen Rob McFee and Bill Riedel voted no. Mr. McFee didn't make a comment at the time of the vote. He later said there was an item that they couldn't explain where the money was coming from. Mr. Riedel said he voted no because of the \$500,000 in possible stimulus money to come out of the budget. The money was left in, with the council saying it wouldn't be spent unless the city received the stimulus dollars.

With one bid to paint the outside of The Gateway and questions about whether painting will just create a five-year maintenance headache, the council decided to wait for more information before making a decision.

The one bid was for \$62,736 from Murray Roofing and Construction of Colby. It included putting one coat of "elastomeric coating" on the steel to try to help keep moisture out.

Ms. May said she was hesitant to spend that much if what it

means is the city will have to paint the building every five years.

Mr. Ward pointed out that there were some areas on the outside of the building where the paint has worn off and red primer is showing. It might be hard to match that paint, he said.

The project needs to be looked at, said Mr. Riedel, because if steel isn't prepped right, the paint job might not even last five years. He suggested the city call in Kevin Brown with Sappa Valley Construction, who puts up steel buildings, for some ideas.

In other business, the council:

- Heard the city's website is being updated. Mr. Gilley said the council members' pictures will be taken during the next meeting on Thursday, Sept. 3. Mr. McFee said he wouldn't be having his picture taken. The website is [www.oberlinks.com](http://www.oberlinks.com).

- Heard with the resignation of park superintendent Rocky Diederich, V.W. Sauvage and Larry Fought, are mowing the parks. Mr. Gilley said he doesn't have contracts with the two yet but that will be done.

- Heard that Mr. Gilley appreciated the council members meeting with him individually. He said he had a 50-50 positive response to bring in a consultant to talk about what the council and city do. Mr. Gilley suggested a Friday night discussion and then coming back Saturday morning. This would be an open meeting, he said, and the press will be present. Representatives from the newspaper have been invited to participate.

- Heard the city will put a few items in the county's surplus auction at the old shop on Saturday.

- Received the city's first golf-cart application.

- Heard the city is making progress collecting overdue utility bills. When the process started, the city was owed \$80,000, and the total now it is just a little over \$36,000. On past-due accounts, said Mr. Gilley, people have only until Sept. 1 to sign the agreement. On 18 accounts, he added, people signed agreements and have already violated them. The city has 63 new late accounts, he said.

- Heard that the pool will be open weekends for swimmers until Labor Day.

The hours are posted on the door. Mr. Gilley said pool manager Andrew Dempewolf had done an excellent job this summer.

## Oberlin pictured in tourist magazine

Members of the Oberlin Convention and Visitors Bureau looked at a copy of the September *Kansas Magazine*, which has a picture of the LandMark Inn on the cover.

The article about cities along U.S. 36 came out at a great time for the annual U.S. 36 Treasure Hunt along the highway, said LandMark owner Gary Anderson. The "400-mile yard sale" is scheduled for the weekend of Friday, Sept. 18, to Sunday, Sept. 20.

While the article is about all the towns along the route, he said, Oberlin has the majority of the pictures.

Mr. Anderson said he knows the group has talked about it in the past, but the night before the Treasure Hunt would be a good time to do a community activity. There are lots of out-of-town visitors here that night.

The Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce is putting together maps for the hunt, said Manager Carolyn Hackney.

That same weekend is the "Up In Smoke" barbecue cookoff at Sappa Park and the Mini Sappa Antique Engine and Thresher Show.

Just around the corner is Mini Sappa Day at the Last Indian Raid Museum the first Saturday in October, said Director Sharleen Wurm. The museum plans a breakfast with entertainment by the DCHS Singers and the exhibits will be open with free admission all day.

Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp., said she's received information about \$244,000 in recovery facility bonds available for the county and the city.

The two have until Tuesday, Sept. 15, to send in a letter of interest.

Ms. Grafel said she thought maybe the bond money could be used to build a new motel. The problem is that they need a feasibility study. Although a Nebraska man was working on that study, said Ms. Grafel, he died recently. She said his wife was going to send her the information he collected.

Also, she said, she's heard that C&H Power Line is going to come talk to the city about selling the former Oberlin Inn, at the corner of U.S. 36 and U.S. 83.

Mr. Anderson said the Sappa Park Committee is working on an application for an attraction and development grant through the Department of Commerce to put two bathrooms in the shelter house at the park.

He said the group needs to know how much money the bureau is willing to put in.

Actually it would be a good idea to do a budget for next year, Mr. Anderson said. Some of the ideas tossed around were money to help advertise the city's 125th anniversary next October, bathrooms at Sappa Park and a sign for the entrance to the park.

Ms. Grafel said she talked with Jerry Fear, former city administrator, who suggested getting the cattle drive and solar race, held in Oberlin in the same year, in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Ms. Grafel said she's also talked with Rick Doeden, with Custom Trophy and Engraving, about doing some kind of 125th anniversary commemorative coin. The meeting was held Wednesday, Aug. 19.

## Businesses to close for Labor Day holiday

Most Oberlin businesses will be closed Monday for Labor Day, including federal, state, county and city offices, the landfill and banks and financial institutions.

Oberlin schools will be closed and there will be no lunch at the senior center.

Most offices and downtown businesses, as well as the meal site and Golden Age Center, will be closed, though some restaurants and convenience stores will be open. There will be no sale at Oberlin Livestock Auction.

The *Oberlin Herald* will print a day late next week so our staff can have Monday off. Copies may

be picked up on newsstands on Wednesday afternoon, with mail delivery on Thursday in most areas.

The *Herald* office will be closed Monday, but news and advertising may be placed in the slot on the front door or brought to the office by noon on Tuesday.

D&M Sinclair, A&W Restaurant, Ampride, Crossroads Express and the Pizza Hut will be open on Monday.

The LandMark Inn and ReLoad will be closed.

Raye's Grocery will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. both Sunday and Monday.

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