

## Students score 'excellent' on tests

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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The Oberlin School District has received 12 "Standard of Excellence" Awards, based on test scores from last year's state assessments.

The tests, said Superintendent Duane Dorshorst, gauge where the students are on the standards set by the state.

Oberlin schools met the "Standard of Excellence" in math for the third, fourth,

fifth and 11th grades, in reading for the fourth, fifth and 11th grades and in writing for the 11th grade.

Besides individual classes meeting the "Standard of Excellence," Oberlin Elementary School made the standard overall in reading, said Mr. Dorshorst, and Decatur Community High made it in math and reading.

Mr. Dorshorst and Principal Charlie Haag told the board about the results during its

meeting last Monday.

Mr. Dorshorst said the district is going to celebrate the 12 Standards of Excellence. It's not to say that there aren't some areas where improvements can be made, he said, but this is a reason to celebrate.

This rating is based on the scores from the students at each grade level taking the tests, he said. The federal government has a formula that they use. So many students have to score in the exemplary rating and

only a very low percentage can be on the "academic warning" and "approaching standards" levels.

Having so many high ratings speaks well for the district, said Mr. Dorshorst. The teachers are teaching the state standards and students are learning and understanding the material.

While the district's curriculum includes the state standards, he added, it goes beyond them, so the students learn more than just

the minimum.

The board members decided to brainstorm ways to celebrate this achievement and discuss it at the board meeting on Monday, Dec. 14.

You can check out the full report card for the Oberlin School District or any other district in the state by going to the state Department of Education website at www.ksde.org.

## Electric users complain about city fee

By **CYNTHIA HAYNES**  
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Two electric customers complained about a \$100 reconnect fee the City of Oberlin is charging accounts which have been turned off for not paying their bill, but council members agreed the fee is working.

Kelli Brown and Dale Kempt both wrote notes to the city about the connection fee. Ms. Brown said she feels the fee is unreasonable, noting that she was already paying a 5 percent late fee. Mr. Kempt was more to the point, as he wrote on his bill that he would not pay the fee and the city could call him if it wanted.

City Administrator Austin Gilley brought the complaints to the council meeting on Thursday, saying although the two had not put in a formal appeal, he was treating the complaints as such.

Ms. Brown, said Mr. Gilley, has been late 28 out of the last 29 billing cycles and Kempt 13 out of 55. Mr. Kempt does have a problem, Mr. Gilley added, because he travels a lot.

Mr. Gilley said that he has talked to Mr. Kempt about getting the account paid directly by his bank, but Mr. Kempt does not bank here and the city is not set up to take direct

transfers from out-of-area banks. He said Mr. Kempt does not want to set up a local account.

The \$100 reconnect fee has been effective in getting the city's backlog of unpaid utility bills collected, Mr. Gilley said, and several customers have already paid it.

The city charges \$25 as a connection fee for electricity and \$25 for water when someone moves in and starts an account, Mr. Gilley said.

The council can waive the \$100, Mr. Gilley said, but that would require an ordinance change and probably not be fair to the people who have paid it.

The council decided to give both parties a 10-day grace period. If they don't pay the bill in 10 days, with \$100 reconnect fee, their power will be shut off.

Councilman Rob McFee said that he understands that the fee is high, but said the city couldn't afford the \$77,000 it had accumulated in past-due accounts. Mayor Joe Stanley agreed. Mr. Gilley said the backlog had been reduced to around \$3,000 or \$4,000. Some of those bills are being reduced by payments.

"I think we have a program in place that works," the mayor said. "You're never going to have a perfect program."

## Theater tickets on sale for opening

Time is running out to buy tickets for the first movie to be shown in the new Sunflower Cinema on Main Street.

Only 100 tickets are being offered for the fund raiser at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 27, after the Parade of Lights and a visit to Santa Claus in downtown Oberlin.

Tickets, \$20 a piece, can only be bought before the show. No tickets will be sold that night, said theater board member Duane Dorshorst.

Anyone who wants to buy a ticket may contact any board member, including Mr. Dorshorst, Bev Reiter,

Brian Simonsson, Kala Bose, Susan May or Jan Badsky.

Tickets can be bought and picked up at the Oberlin School District office Monday through Friday.

The board, said Mr. Dorshorst, has requested Disney's Digital 3D version of "A Christmas Carol" for the opening weekend.

The \$20 ticket will get people into the show, a soda or water, a medium popcorn and a treat bag.

The movie will also be shown at 7 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28, and 2 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 29, for \$6.

## Merchants' giveaway starts for Christmas

It's time to start collecting little red tickets for the Oberlin Merchants' annual "Christmas on Us" contest and a chance to win the \$1,000 Grand Prize.

For more than 10 years, *The Oberlin Herald* has teamed up with local businesses to offer the contest, which promotes shopping here in Decatur County.

For every \$10 shoppers spend at sponsoring businesses between today and Friday, Dec. 18, they will receive one red ticket. People can also get one ticket a week from the newspaper office or from the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce. No purchase is required to win any prize. Tickets are limited to 250 in any single purchase.

Sponsoring business this year are Ward Drug Store, Stellar Sales, Carpet Center, the Bank, Dale's Fish 'n' Fun, LandMark Inn, Raye's Grocery, Stanley Hardware, Home Planning Center, the Dresser, Ultimate Fertilizer, Ampride and The Oberlin Herald.

The Grand Prize drawing is scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 19, at the gazebo in Centennial Park, unless the weather is bad. Then it will be moved inside, to a place yet to be determined.

Up until the Grand Prize drawing, numbers will be drawn each week and placed in the sponsors' ads in *The Herald*. Those numbers match tickets already issued by merchants. Bring that ticket into the newspaper office before 5 p.m. Friday of that week and claim a \$50 instant prize.

All of the prizes are paid in scrip money that can be used at sponsoring businesses. Merchants are not required to give change.

Employees of any of the sponsoring businesses are not eligible to get tickets at the place of their employment. Employees of the newspaper and their immediate family aren't eligible to win any prize. Winners must be present and have the ticket with them at the time of the drawing. All winners agree to be photographed and interviewed by the newspaper.



AT THE PHEASANTS FOREVER banquet Friday night at The Gateway, Dane Milburn of Shawnee and Dale Milburn of Burlington (above) looked at the walk-in hunting guide maps. Troy Juenemann, Gabe Anderson and Kaine Fredrickson (below) looked at auction items.

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes

## Banquet starts season

Pheasant season started Saturday, with hunters from all over the region trying to bag their limit of birds.

Bob Woolsey, with Dale's Fish 'N' Fun, said things seemed to have gone well for opening weekend. He said the hunters got birds early on Saturday and the hunting stayed that way throughout the weekend.

There were lots of hunters from lots of different states, said Mr. Woolsey. A few did complain about some of the uncut crops in the fields, he said, since they couldn't get through the corn or milo to find birds.

The cold weather on Sunday helped, said Mr. Woolsey, keeping the birds a little closer together.

Patrick Inman, who works at the store, said he went over to Norton County and didn't see as many birds as he did here.

Ken Badsky of the Sunflower Chapter of Pheasants Forever, said opening morning was tough. Some people had good luck and others didn't. The wet, cool weather has delayed the harvest, leaving more cover for the birds than normal.

Some people have said the birds are a little flightier than normal, too.



Mr. Badsky said his group bagged 16 birds on Saturday. Sunday was a little tougher, he said. It snowed and rained, and everything was wet. The group bagged eight birds that day.

Monday morning, he said, the same group got another eight.

Mr. Badsky said they have seen both young and old birds. There are a lot of birds, he said.

Before opening morning, the Sunflower Chapter of Pheasants Forever held its annual banquet at The Gateway on Friday night.

Organizer Rick Doeden said there had around 300 people, with half or more from out of town.

It went well, he said. The group had lots of volunteers, probably more than ever. The area businesses, said Mr. Doeden, supported the

banquet probably as well as they ever have, and the Gateway staff did an excellent job on the meal.

As of Monday, he added, the group didn't have all of the figures from the banquet, so he couldn't say how much it made. Proceeds are used for chapter projects, including habitat projects and work at Sappa Park.

## City buys mixers to cut lagoon smell

By **CYNTHIA HAYNES**  
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The Oberlin City Council agreed Thursday to buy five solar-powered sewer lagoon mixers from a company in North Dakota, which wasn't the lowest bidder but was recommended by both the city's engineers and the man who runs the plant.

The city received three bids for the mixers, which it hopes will decrease the ammonia in water at the treatment plant and mostly eliminate the smell.

Pond Solutions of Bismarck, N.D., bid \$121,400, APAC-Kansas, Hutchinson, \$137,590, and SolarBee, Dickinson, N.D., \$178,906.

The bid from the Kansas company is just to install the equipment made by Pond Solutions, Chris Miller of Miller and Associates, the engineering firm for the sewer project, told the city council at its meeting on Thursday.

The two main bidders are Pond Solutions and SolarBee, he said. Miller and City Foreman Dan Castle

both recommended SolarBee.

"All you hear about is SolarBee," Mr. Castle told the council. "They've a proven technology. Pond Solutions is just trying to take the business away with unproven technology."

Mr. Miller said that he has received numerous phone calls from both companies and that it's like a political war between them.

Pond Solutions, he said, was apparently founded by a person who left SolarBee and started his own

company.

One of the reasons he is recommending SolarBee, he said, is it is a proven company.

"SolarBee has over 600 installations around," he said. "I don't know how many Pond Solutions has. I'd never heard of them before this bid process."

Another problem is the city's specifications require a brushless electric motor, he said. While Pond Solutions bid on a brushless motor, (See COUNCIL on Page 10A)



# Veterinarians buy Hoxie clinic, hire an associate

Countryside Veterinary Clinic of Oberlin has purchased the Hoxie Veterinary Clinic, and a long-time Oberlin practitioner plans to move to Hoxie so the practice will have an experienced doctor in each town.

The sale was announced last week by Dr. Mark and Carol Poell of Hoxie, and Dr. Mark and Barbara Olson and Dr. Travis and Abby Hissong of Oberlin, owners of Countryside.

Dr. Olson and Dr. Hissong said that Trent Glick of Pittsburg has been hired to join Countryside after graduation from the Kansas State University School of Veterinary Medicine in May. He will be working during the coming months as part of a veterinary "rotation" requirement, then join the practice as a full-time associate.

All three veterinarians will work at both the Oberlin and Hoxie facilities, providing large- and small-animal services throughout the area. Dr. Olson stressed that the combined practice will continue to be a single operation with each doctor working in both towns.

Dr. Olson has practiced mixed-animal medicine for 27 years and Dr. Hissong for 13. Dr. Olson grew up near Herndon and graduated from Decatur Community High School, while Dr. Hissong is from Hebron, Neb. Both are graduates of the K-State veterinary school.

Hoxie Veterinary Clinic will be renamed Countryside Veterinary Clinic of Hoxie, the new owners

said, but hours, services provided and staff will remain the same at this time.

Dr. Poell, who has worked in Hoxie since 1991 as a solo practitioner, plans to retire Monday. He and his wife will be moving to St. Marys to be closer to relatives.

Dr. Olson and his wife Barbara have purchased the Poells' home in Hoxie and say they plan to move there next summer.

Both Olsons have been active in Oberlin school affairs. He helped to lead two campaigns for school building improvements, and helped form the Oberlin School District's foundation. He says he plans to continue helping to recruit donors for the foundation.

Mrs. Olson, who has completed nearly 14 years as a member of the Oberlin School Board, also graduated from Kansas State, where she earned a degree in landscape horticulture.

Dr. Hissong is a past president of the Oberlin Jaycees and as president of the Decatur County Fair Board helped lead the drive to build a new livestock building. Mrs. Hissong, a new member of the school board, has been active in Support our Schools, or SOS, the parent-teacher support group for Oberlin schools, has served on the Last Indian Raid Museum board and has led the Jaycees Angel Tree drive for several years.

## \*Council buys solar mixers

(Continued from Page 1A) they apparently do not have one.

Mr. Miller said he was told by SolarBee that their competitor did not have a brushless motor and when he checked with Pond Solutions, he was told that they are in the process getting them but their brush-type motors work just as well.

He said he then talked to some people who use Pond Solutions' motors and they have to go out in a boat every year or two and take them apart and clean them. That's how they work, he said.

City Administrator Austin Gilley said that he didn't like that idea.

"From a labor standpoint," he said, "I'd rather not have staff in a boat."

Mr. Miller said there were some problems with the SolarBee's bid also.

Councilwoman Rhonda May sug-

gested that the city rebid the project but Mr. Miller said it wouldn't make any difference.

"I'm convinced neither of them could read a spec," he said, "and Pond Solutions will always come in cheaper because they're a knock-off."

Mr. McFee said he wasn't sure why the city required bids if they weren't going to take the lowest one.

Mayor Joe Stanley noted that the lowest bidder put down that they would provide brushless motors, but they don't have them.

The council decided to accept the recommendations of its engineer and foreman and accept the SolarBee bid, subject to approval by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, which is providing \$86,500 for the project.

## Church to serve as gift-drop site

The Oberlin United Methodist Church will be a collection center for Operation Christmas Child this year.

The Samaritan's Purse project will have its national collection this week. People can drop off shoe boxes full of gifts from 8:30 a.m. to noon Monday through Friday, said the Rev. Doug Hasty, pastor of the church.

The idea is to fill each shoe box with gifts for kids overseas, many suffering from disease, famine, war and natural disaster.

This is an opportunity to teach

children about generosity and compassion, said Mr. Hasty, and bring hope and joy to hurting children in other countries.

The boxes can be filled with toys, hard candy, school supplies and other necessity items, he said. They also may include a personal letter of encouragement.

A \$7 donation is encouraged to cover the cost of shipping and other expenses.

Mr. Hasty said boxes from this area will most likely be sent to Mexico. Anyone with questions should call him at 475-3067.



## Parade draws crowd

AT CENTENNIAL PARK last Wednesday, Chloe Harmon, Alex Eskew and Alana Raile (above) waved small American flags through the crisp fall air while they waited for the Veteran's Day parade to start. Veterans from all over the area followed parade marshal Ken Shobe, a former Air Force pilot, and former Oberlin mayor, who rode in a Jeep driven by Gene Morford (right). Servicemen and women from all military branches walked and rode in the parade.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

## Administrator to present information about The Gateway

The Oberlin City Council will hear a presentation about The Gateway at its regular meeting Thursday.

Administrator Austin Gilley said

the presentation will cover the civic center facility, policies, prices and procedures. There will be some proposals about changes, too, he said. Anyone interested in The Gateway

is invited.

The meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

upstairs in the meeting room. It is open to the public.

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 Ballot to be mailed out December 1, 2009. After voting, mail or deliver ballot to Decatur County Election office by noon on election day, Tuesday, December 15, 2009.  
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