

Many of my colleagues around the country use Internet blogs and twitter to keep citizens informed about city business. While I'm fairly computer literate, there is just something comforting about seeing things in the old black-and-white newsprint.

I appreciate Steve and Cynthia Haynes and *The Oberlin Herald* giving me the opportunity to write a monthly report on city business.

Here's a brief list of some of the projects we are working on:

- Completing the environmental assessment for the proposed airport runway, which will have a public hearing soon. We expect the next round of grant applications this spring, and some construction beginning later this year.
- Assessing street and sidewalk priorities.
- Pricing and planning for a wall around the new cemetery section.
- Making preliminary site plans



City Corner
By Austin Gilley
City Administrator
agilley@oberlinkansas.gov

for a hotel on the south edge of the Gateway property.

- A comprehensive energy use and infrastructure review to improve our electric distribution, lights, and generation.

- A consent order with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment on the city's water treatment plan.

- Plans to improve the shelter house at Sappa Park in conjunction with lake improvements.

- Selecting a contractor for the circle drive at the Gateway's main

east entrance.

At its fall retreat, the City Council identified improved community relations and information as a priority. As always, every citizen is welcome to schedule a meeting with me to discuss any public project or review public documents until their desire is filled.

City employees, me included, may not always have the answer you want to hear, but we owe it to the taxpayers to provide answers for what we do, how we do it and why we did it. If we can't explain

it, there's a good chance we need to take a hard look at it.

To that end, my top priority is continuing our efforts to improve the city's financial information. I am happy to say that the city administration has made huge strides in a short time at improving these areas and overcoming significant obstacles. We still have some growing pains (about which you probably can read in this paper), but this year promises clearer information to provide a more accurate reflection of city activity.

With a new accounting system, improved purchasing procedures and a commitment to sound management, city leaders will have the opportunity to make more-informed decisions and better plan for the future.

You can reach me at 1 Morgan Dr., Oberlin, Kan. 67749; by phone at (785) 475-2217; or e-mail at agilley@oberlinkansas.gov.

Americans love choice; babies need life

To the Editor:

Friday, Jan. 22, was the 37th anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which made most abortions legal.

"Choice" is as American as apple pie. We Americans love to be able to choose what we want, when we want. We think for ourselves and love to look at options. We routinely exercise our choice while shopping, watching television, deciding what to eat, etc.

But are all choices good? Some choices are bad. Some food, although tasting good, can make us ill. Some television programs are bad for us or our children.

But the most permanent choice is cloaked in the "right to choose," as though all the options for a pregnant woman were equal and good choices.

Letters to the Editor

There are only two options for ending a pregnancy: Giving birth to the baby (keeping the child or placing the baby for adoption), or the death of the baby (naturally or intentionally).

Abortion always kills a baby. Abortion also hurts women. Because of their very nature, it replaces any problems it was meant to solve (unsupportive boyfriend, shame, embarrassment, finances, etc.) with worse problems: gut-wrenching guilt, nightmares, sadness, anger, suicidal thoughts and the like. (See www.afterabortion.org by Dr. David Reardon.)

The abortion industry has convinced the Democratic leaders

in Washington that they must take the opportunity of reforming health care to enshrine and pay for abortion on demand into a national "health" care plan. In their effort to change the status quo, they claim abortion is a "needed medical procedure" and a necessary "part of woman's reproductive health care." But abortion is not health care.

They are also sneaking in a dangerous provision about end-of-life care to save money. Anyone who studies it will see that Sarah Palin's simple statement about "death panels" is not far off at all.

The health care profession exists to care for people — all people, no matter their size, age, social status,

economic bracket, race, ethnicity or level of physical or mental capacity. Abortion advocates sometimes complain that abortion practice is stigmatized and practitioners are shunned by other physicians. There's a reason for that: killing is not health care.

If American law enshrines abortion and euthanasia (voluntary or involuntary) as a standard practice in health care, it will forever change the identity of that healing profession and America itself.

Don't be fooled by "choice;" instead, choose life, an inalienable right. For information go to www.kfl.org.

David Gittrich,
state development director
Kansas for Life, Wichita

Expert says many changes to tax forms this year

To the Editor:

Tax season is here again and there are many changes and new forms, not only with the IRS but also with Kansas. As reported earlier, all intangibles tax forms must now be filed through the county clerk.

As some of you may have already found out, due to financial cutbacks, the Kansas Department of Revenue's free Kansas forms will not be available at most places, including libraries. Their goal is to have all Kansas returns e-filed.

The word I have received from the state is that due to a limited

number of employees this year, it will be July before they begin to open paper returns and they are not anticipating to begin processing refunds from those until October. E-filed refunds should be processed much as in the past.

I understand that if you filed a paper Kansas return for 2008, you may receive some paperwork to assist in filing a paper return in 2009. Photocopies will not be accepted, as their scanners will only read the color-coded original forms.

You can visit the Kansas Department of Revenue website

to e-file or go to professional tax advisers. Our American Association of Retired Persons volunteer sites will also be available to assist the elderly and low-income people with free tax preparation.

Don't miss out on your Kansas food sales tax or Homestead refunds by not filing a return. If you pay property tax on your home, have bought a home, purchased some energy-efficient items, or purchased a new vehicle, you may qualify for some of the new federal credits.

Some people who have had money refunded in the past may even owe

money for 2009 due some of the stimulus programs put in place by Congress in 2009.

Our program does not prepare farm or business returns, but if you feel that you may qualify for free service for the low-income and the elderly or if you have other questions about the new credits, call me at (785) 678-2659. As in the past, starting on Feb. 1, I will be available at the library in Hoxie and The Bank in Jennings.

Frances Bader, Jennings
AARP District No. 11

Driver decries maintenance of state roads in this county

To the Editor:

There is one word to describe the road conditions on state highways in Decatur County: Pathetic!

I drive 100 miles through three counties every day, and Decatur County highways are the worst. Last Wednesday morning (Jan. 20), U.S. 36 and U.S. 83 had not been cleared at all in Decatur County. They were snow packed and icy.

I usually leave early, but I waited to leave until 9 a.m., hoping the roads would be cleared. It didn't happen.

When I got to the Sheridan County line on U.S. 83 and on into Thomas County, the roads were clear. This is not the first time; in fact, it happens all the time.

This is blight on Decatur County. People tell me they will travel another route, if they can, to avoid Decatur County highways because they are notoriously the worst. How is that going to bring travel business to Oberlin?

I have to travel these highways and can't avoid them.

Everyone should complain. This is ridiculous.

Ruth Wolfram, Oberlin

Editor's Note: The editor was out a half hour later and met a state

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Rawlins County Health Center

RAWLINS COUNTY HEALTH CENTER COMMUNITY CALENDAR

707 Grant Atwood, KS 67730
(785) 626-3211

Bringing Specialized Healthcare To Your Community

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Dr. Rubowitz Oncology Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	2 Brandi Ihrig Dietician	3 Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	4 Lighter Side Weight Loss Program	5 MRI's Cardiac Rehab	6
7	8	9	10 Dr. Frankum Surgery Bone Density Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 Dr. Curtis Cardiology Mammograms Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	18 Dr. Saba Orthopedics	19	20
21	22	23 Dr. Miller Cardiology	24	25 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	26 Dr. Reeves Podiatry	27
28	29	30	31 Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	Nuclear Stress Tests will be February 17, 2010 		

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THE OBERLIN HERALD
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February 2010

St. Valentine's Day February 14

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A VISITING PHYSICIAN, PLEASE CALL (785) 626-3211 Cheryl Banister, RN Specialty Clinic Director

H1N1 1BADBUG

BEAT THE BAD BUG! GET VACCINATED

The H1N1 flu vaccine is widely available and recommended for everyone, including:

- Pregnant women
- Healthcare workers
- All children and young adults ages 6 months through 24 years of age
- Caregivers for children under 6 months of age
- People ages 25-64 years of age with certain high-risk medical conditions
- Anyone wanting to protect themselves against H1N1 influenza

For more information, call the Kansas H1N1 Hotline at 1-877-427-7317, visit www.kdheks.gov, or contact your healthcare provider.

STAY INFORMED AND STAY AWARE!

\$48,000,000.00 and counting....

The Kansas Office of the State Bank Commissioner **Division of Consumer and Mortgage Lending** has returned over \$45,000,000 to Kansans scammed by deceptive and illegal credit practices, and provided nearly \$3,000,000 in educational grants to help teach Kansas kids that wise personal financial decisions will help them have a bright future.

What do we do? It might be for your home, car, or something else. If you borrow money or buy things on credit, we oversee all types of consumer debt and mortgage lending activities in Kansas. **Why?** Our mission is to protect Kansas consumers and ensure responsible companies and lenders operate here.

If you have questions or concerns about a mortgage or consumer loan, a lender or broker, payday loan, debt relief program, or any consumer financial issue call us toll free:
1-877-387-8523, or visit us at www.osbckansas.org

The Kansas OSBC Division of Consumer and Mortgage Lending — you're the reason we're here.

KANSAS

Building Financial Freedom with a Tax Refund

For many people, their tax refund equals "splurge money." However, your financial future may be a better destination for these funds. Instead of rushing off to the nearest shopping mall or travel agent, use these money-saving solutions to get you one step closer toward financial freedom.

Establish an Emergency Fund

Having an emergency fund may be a lifesaver in case of the unexpected. Experts recommend keeping at least three to six months' worth of living expenses in a savings account to be used in the event of unemployment, illness or other time of need. 1

Consider this: If you put \$100 into a savings account each month — assuming a hypothetical five percent return — you could have more than \$15,000 in 10 years.

Reduce Your Debt

Often times, people apply a company bonus or tax refund to a mortgage, automobile payment or credit cards. Applying extra money may shorten the length of a loan and the amount that is paid toward interest. For example, if you owe \$3,000 on a credit card with 16% interest and you're paying only the \$60 minimum each month, it will take seven years and almost \$2,000 in interest to pay off this debt. If you put \$1,400 of your tax refund toward your balance and continue paying \$60 per month (instead of the new lower minimum payment), you'll pay the card off in less than three years an only \$390 in interest. You may be able to save yourself ore than \$1,500 in interest!

Save for Big Purchases

Do you have your eye on a new TV or sofa? Instead of using credit, consider starting a savings account for those big-ticket items. Take time to track your expenses for a month. You may be able to find ways to cut expenses in order to boost your savings for these items. For example, if you bring a sack lunch for a cost of \$1 a day instead of the \$5 you'd spend at the cafe, you could save \$1,040 per year (52 weeks x 5 days x \$4 per day savings = \$1,040).

Keep an Eye on the Future

Opening an individual retirement account or college savings account with your refund could mean a brighter financial future for you and your loved ones. Talk with your insurance agent about a financial checkup and ways you could save for the future. Several savings options are available, and your agent can help tailor a strategy to meet your objectives.

By applying these strategies, you may find yourself experiencing more financial freedom with a little extra "splurge money" in your picket at the end of 2010!

Source:
www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/money/finanfree/finanfree.htm
www.pubelo.gsa.gov/cic_text/money/save-fit/save-fit13.htm
www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/money/here2-security/5_steps.htm

1 "Life Advice About Building Financial Freedom," www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/money/finanfree/finanfree.htm, visited November 6, 2006

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