

Corn moving from field to bins

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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With the fall weather settling in, farmers are out in the fields picking corn.

Area elevators report that the corn harvest began around the first week or so of September.

At the Decatur Co-op, general manager Kurt Anderson said they have over 3 million bushels of corn already in storage.

Mr. Anderson said the elevators are taking some milo also, but most of it isn't steady.

The milo is still too wet and in some areas too green, he said. It needs a good freeze, before farmers start cutting a lot of it.

The corn crop is looking fairly good, he said, though it's down just a touch from last year. He said the corn got heat and dry weather at the wrong times.

So far, he added, he doesn't know of anyone who's done picking the fall crop yet, so the yield numbers aren't in. Mr. Anderson said he is hearing everything from 50 to 120 bushels an acre on dryland corn.

There's a lot of variety in the numbers, depending on the area of the county and what the weather was like.

On Monday, he said, he didn't think the farmers here are even half done with the fall harvest yet.

Last year, in just corn, said Mr. Anderson, the elevator took 5.5 million bushels. Last year's harvest started in September, too, but with regular rain and snow storms, it lasted well into the new year.

With the milo, he said, he thinks the harvest will be later than normal.

Up the street at Hansen Mueller Grain, Janice O'Hare said, the elevator has received just over 1.5 million bushels of corn. That's just at the Oberlin elevator. Cedar Bluffs, she said, has barely started with the fall harvest.

Hansen Mueller has also taken in a small amount of milo. There isn't nearly as much milo planted this year, said Mrs. O'Hare, but it's mostly not ready to be harvested.

It seems like the yields are all across the board, depending on when and if it rained on a given field. Mrs. O'Hare said it seems like the guys are anxious to get out to the field and pick the corn so they don't have a repeat of last year's harvest.

Last year at this time, she said, they had taken in around 50,000 bushels with over a month of harvest done.

She said she's heard very few farmers who have been disappointed with their numbers other than those who had terraces that were flooded and the corn drowned out.

Idea group to place signs at city entries

The Oberlin City Council gave the Decatur Tomorrow group the go ahead Thursday to place signs noting the planning group's status at the entrances to the city.

Co-convenor Deanna Castle told the council the group has become accredited through Public Communities LLC, she said, which is something to be proud of.

Oberlin is actually one of the first towns in the state to become accredited, she added.

Decatur Tomorrow would like to put up four signs at the entrances to the city, she said. The signs can be put on private or commercial property.

The fair board has already OK'd one being put near U.S. 36 on the fairground property.

Mrs. Castle said Decatur Tomorrow would like to put one sign on the airport property near U.S. 83, one on the city well property south of town and one on a well site east of town south of U.S. 36.

The city would have to approve those and then Decatur Tomorrow would have to make an application to the state, said Mrs. Castle.

Councilwoman Rhonda May said she would suggest getting the signs as close to the highways as possible.

There is some city property near the gun club east of town that might work better than the well site, said Councilman Bill Riedel. It would put the sign on the right side of the road and closer to the highway.

The signs are five feet by five feet, said Mrs. Castle. They say Decatur County, with four pillars representing education, health, business and

Council Roundup

At a meeting on Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Approved the bid for mowing city parks and other properties for the next year. Story to come.
- Discussed a complaint about a yard from a previous meeting and directed the city foreman to remove the pampas grass that has been complained about. Story below.
- Received information about a possible lease option for the former youth ranch. Story on Page 7A.
- Approved a new hire for the electrical department. Story to come.
- Gave the Decatur Tomorrow group the go-ahead to place signs at the entrances to the city along the highways. Story at left.

government.

The council approved the signs, encouraging the group to place them as close to the highways as possible.

Also, said Mrs. Castle, it's time to collect the \$500 that the city said they would give the organization every year for three years. This is the second year, she said.

The council approved the payment and asked the group to send a letter or someone to request the money at budget time, since the \$500 wasn't set aside this year.

City council decides to remove tall grass to improve visibility

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Oberlin City Council returned to a complaint about tall grass obscuring vision from a previous meeting and directed the city foreman to remove pampas grass from an Oberlin resident's yard.

Jan Ackerman of Hoxie, the city's code enforcement officer, said since the meeting at the beginning of September, the plumes have been cut off the pampas grass at the house on North Wilson Ave., but the sight problem hasn't been taken care of.

The visibility is still bad, especially for people backing out, she said.

She added that she thinks they are handling this complaint the same as they have the others.

Councilman Rob McFee said his recollection of the prior meeting was that if the grass wasn't taken care of, the city would go in and

remove it. The grass is on the edge of the property, where it would be on the city's right of way, he noted.

Jen Schissler, who lives next door, said the people who live in the house have let it go for years, and it's hard to see to back out of her driveway.

Interim City Administrator Karen Larson said she will let the foreman know that the grass needs to be taken out.

At 105 N. Antelope, on the highway, said Mrs. Ackerman, the trees have been trimmed.

Mrs. Ackerman said there has been progress made at 807 W. Sappa. The property has changed owners and the new people are getting it cleaned up.

She said she's also been in contact with the owner of 110 S. York, who lives in California. The property, a former preschool, is way overgrown

(See CITY on Page 7A)



Students celebrate big game

IN THE PARADE down Main Street on Friday, Sara Kyte (above right), who had just been named Homecoming queen, rode next to Gabi Johnson and Keithen Fortin, who had just been named homecoming king at Decatur Community High. Cutouts (right) of some of the junior football players helped decorate the class of 2012 float. Becky O'Boyle (below) played her flute in the marching band.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



City waiting for answer from an administrator

The Oberlin City Council has offered the administrator job to a third candidate after being turned down for a second time last week.

The first two candidates the council interviewed in person have now turned down the job. The second candidate, said Inter-

im Administrator Karen Larson, said she was turning down the job because she didn't feel she was qualified for the projects the city is working on.

The council hasn't heard from the third candidate yet, Mrs. Larson said.

Woman recalls 100 years of life, memories

By **MARY LOU OLSON**
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Though times have changed in many ways since Aleen Van Vleet was born a century ago, Oct. 21, 1910, on a farm near Oberlin, she has always kept pace with everything that came along and she still enjoys life, her family and playing cards.

A resident of Cedar Living Center in Oberlin, Mrs. VanVleet grew up a farmer's daughter southwest of town. When she was born, the doctor came to the house for the delivery. He told her parents, Walter O. and Pearl Vernon, that her mother was the best nurse in the county. Even though she wasn't a nurse, she had a lot of prac-



A. VanVleet

tice rearing 11 children.

Mrs. Van Vleet remembers when she was 4, an epidemic of "summer complaint," later called "the flu," caused the death of many children in the county, but she and one boy her age survived.

"I remember going to the table from my bed to take one tablespoon of pure cream from my mother," she said, "and I guess it did the job, because here I am, ready to celebrate my 100th birthday."

As children, she said, she and her sister had to drive the milk cows home from their pasture. They enjoyed playing games, but one day, she jumped and came down in a hole and broke her leg.

"My dad heard me screaming," she recalled, "came and threw me up straddling over his shoulders and trotted us home with my leg dangling, causing extreme pain every step of the way."

"A treat for the kids was when the Haller or

(See WOMAN on Page 7A)



*Yards get city censure

(Continued from Page 1A) with weeds and trees, she said. The owner has called her about the property. He said he wanted to fix it up and then sell it to someone with low income. Mrs. Ackerman said he wanted to know if the city could clean it up and he could make payments, if he could donate the property or if the city or school would be interested in buying it. If the city cleans it up, said Mr. McFee, the payment is added to the taxes. He added that the city can't say anything for the school district. Councilman Bill Riedel suggested tabling the discussion. He said he would like to go look at the property. The council agreed.

Candy theme chosen

The Oberlin Business Alliance picked the theme Candy Land Christmas for this year's Parade of Lights, to be held the Friday after Thanksgiving. Each year, the members ask for theme suggestions from the classes at the grade school. This year, Belinda Jones' fifth grade won. The other suggestions were Polar Palace, Discover the Spirit of Christmas, Hot Rod Christmas, Cowboy Christmas and Santa's Workshop. The alliance members picked the theme during their meeting last Wednesday at the LandMark Inn. The group's recent tailgate before the home football game against Norton brought in around \$600 before expenses.

- The members said they were pleased with the turnout for Mini Sapa Day and the city's 125th Anniversary celebration.
- Plans were starting for the holiday season. So far, the schedule includes:
 - The Business-to-Business tour starting at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 14.
 - Santa Claus at the Golden Age Center following the Parade of Lights on Friday, Nov. 26.
 - A ladies' shopping night from 9 to 11 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 16.
 - A soup lunch at the Golden Age Center from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 18, with Santa there to meet kids in the west room. The alliance members will be giving a basket of goodies away.
 - The Oberlin Herald's Christmas on Us drawing on Saturday, Dec. 18.
 - A men's shopping night from 9 to 11 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 23.

Box tops help school

For the next couple of weeks, Oberlin Elementary School will be collecting box tops from food and other products used at home. Students can turn the box tops in to their classroom teacher until Friday, Oct. 22. The totals will be posted weekly, and the winning class will receive a reward. The box tops can be found on boxed dinners, cereal, plastic bags, tissues, paper towels and other items. The program is sponsored by General Mills. Each of the box tops has a value, and those are turned into points that can be "spent" to buy items for the school.



HOLDING LICENSE PLATE No. 1 in 1958 was County Treasurer Aleen Van Vleet. Her son Eugene always got the first plate. His Army boss once told him, "You must be related to the governor to always have tag No. 1."

*Woman recalls 100 years

(Continued from Page 1A) Watkins salesman came to the farm and brought us horehound candy. "When it was time for harvest, we had to cook dinner for seven or eight harvesters at binding time and again at threshing time. Sometimes, the threshers had their own 'cook shack,' and we were relieved from that chore." "Kids in our neighborhood either went to Addleman School or grade school in Oberlin. After taking a few piano lessons, I was church pianist for many years. I also mastered the violin, just to please my dad, who was the old-time fiddler type." She attended Decatur Community High School, where she remembers being good at math and science. She graduated in 1925, then taught at Decatur School in Roosevelt Township. She married Leo Van Vleet on May 4, 1928. "We lived on a farm 10 miles east of Oberlin," she recalled, "after we were married and went through the 'Dirty 30s.' We often had to put gunny sacks over the windows and throw water over them to keep out the dirt and heat. "We moved to Oberlin when my husband was hired as janitor at the courthouse and also later at the old high school building, where our family and several other families lived for several years after the new high school was built. There were also several government offices in the building." She was a "stay at home" mother until taking a job in the office of the J.C. Penney store in Oberlin. While there, she said, she invented a better system of keeping inventory. From there, she started working at the courthouse as deputy to County Treasurer Laurene (Shaw) Bryan-Van Otterloo. She was later elected treasurer, a

position she held for about 20 years. She also served two years as county clerk, then retired for the first time. She also worked some nights and weekends in the county dispatch office and chaired the county cancer drive. At the request of the county commissioners, she organized the Golden Age Center in the building now occupied by Pauls Funeral Home. When the senior center moved to the "old" building across the street, she recalled, many volunteers helped. She continued to manage the center for 15 years. After the center opened, she said, they always had nine tables for pitch, pinochle and canasta. Some enjoyed Scrabble and they had a Thursday Fun Night and Sunday talent show. Mrs. Van Vleet still enjoys playing cards and her daughter and son-in-law, Veanna and Max Carman go to Cedar Living Center at least once a week to play cards with her. She has also always enjoyed word games and crossword puzzles. She lived at Wheat Ridge Terrace for several years and was still driving herself to the Golden Age Center and other places when she was 95, which often included walking at Sappa Park when the weather was nice. She moved to Cedar Living Center after a stroke, but today, her mind is as sharp as ever. She and her husband had three children. They and their spouses include: Leo and Josie Van Vleet, Phoenix; Veanna and Max Carman, Oberlin; and Gene and Lil Van Vleet, San Diego. In addition, all of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren are living. Her family is organizing a card shower to help her celebrate her 100th birthday on Oct. 21. Cards may be sent to her at 810 W. Columbia, Oberlin, Kan., 67749.

Big game party planned at cinema

Put on that blue or purple T-shirt and head down to Sunflower Cinema to catch the fight between teams Thursday night when the Wildcats take on the Jayhawks. The football game will be shown on the big screen at 6:30 p.m. Thursday. A \$10 snack fee will include an unlimited amount of popcorn and one bottled drink. There will be a free taco bar at halftime. The doors open at 5:30 p.m., but only those 21 and older will be admitted. Those attending can bring their own cooler of drinks, but alcoholic ones will be allowed only in the lobby. Proceeds will go to the cinema and the bowling alley project. Donations will also be accepted. Rusty Addleman, representing KU, and Gary Walter, representing K-State, will be hosts for the evening.

Drug store puts satellite radio on Main Street

An Oberlin business has purchased the equipment and subscription to put satellite radio on the speakers under the downtown canopies. Kurt Vollertsen, owner of Ward Drug Store, said he got tired of the available discs and other problems with the system, which operates out of the Chamber of Commerce office. He said they have satellite radio in the store, and it offers many music types, including holiday music. The store, he said, paid for the hardware for the satellite radio and will cover the \$30-a-month fee. At the Oberlin Business Alliance meeting last Wednesday, another businessman suggested that it might be a good idea if other businesses wanted to pay for a month or quarter. Mr. Vollertsen said it was important to him to have music under the canopies. He's not opposed to anyone helping pay for the service, but the subscription is under his store's name, so the money would need to go through him. The new system has been in for a few weeks now and was used during the city's 125th anniversary at the beginning of the month. Mr. Vollertsen said the amplifier had to be sent to Phillipsburg to be worked on, so it's currently off. He said the part could be fixed and back in a week or it might take a month.

Treasurer warns that county money is running out fast

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Decatur County treasurer told commissioners last Tuesday that she had bad news and more bad news. Treasurer Jean Hale said the balance in the county general fund is \$200,000, not enough to last out the year. Commissioner Stan McEvoy said the bills have been running at \$120,000 a month. There is some money in the general fund reserve. A bond payment is due for the new recreation center, said Mrs. Hale, which will cost \$34,632. There is \$48,000 in the debt service account. Commissioner Ralph Unger said to go ahead and pay that bill since the money is available. Mrs. Hale said the day before, the last printer in the treasurer's office stopped working. The error message was for a fuse problem. After calling the company to see what it would take to fix the printer, she found that the part was close to \$500 and that didn't include the hourly charge at \$100 an hour or better an hour for a technician to fix it, plus mileage. That's \$1,000 to fix the printer, said County Attorney Steve Hirsch. Mrs. Hale said the office has been putting money aside in the equipment reserve fund. If it's an option to buy a new printer, she said, she would like one with three trays so she can do checks, tax statements and motor vehicle forms. Currently, she said, she is using the one in the back room, behind the coffee room, so every time she

County Roundup

At their meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Heard the fair board has posted signs about dumping camper sewage at the fairground. Story to come.
- Heard from the county treasurer about a lack of money in the county general fund, a printer breakdown and a bond payment due. Story at left.

has a customer, someone has to get what's been printed. That's the same printer the clerk's office uses for things like accounts payable, she noted. It might be good to get a price for a new one, said Mr. Unger, just in case this one dies. Mrs. Hale called Manitron, out of Hays, which the county uses for the tax and budgetary/accounting programs, about a new printer with three drawers. She came back and said it would cost \$4,631. Another idea was moving the machine from the back room to the treasurer's office. The group talked about calling people in the area who work on computers to see if they could fix the printer. Mrs. Hale said she had talked to Dick Carman, who said he couldn't fix the printer. No decision was made.

Ranch lease proposed

The Oberlin City Council received information about a possible lease option for the former youth ranch at the meeting Thursday. Interim Administrator Karen Larson said the person from the Ray of Hope Ranch is interested in the property. She has talked with Mayor Joe Stanley, who was absent, about it. Mrs. Larson included information on the ranch, which serves troubled young women. The information shows that horses are used for a therapeutic riding program. Mrs. Larson said the council needs to start talking about whether that property is for sale or for rent. The former youth ranch, which has provided a home for numerous youths over the years during its time as Cookson Hills School and Sappa Valley Youth Ranch, has been empty for the past few years. While other organizations have looked at the property, nothing has been done with it.

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