THE OBERLIN HERALD

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Water project moves forward

The Oberlin City Council gave the engineer working on the water project the go-ahead to ask that the water from a proposed new well be added under the city's current water rights.

At the meeting last Thursday, Chris Miller, with Miller and Associates, said this summer the engineering firm submitted an application to convert a city-owned irrigation well southeast of town to a municipal well.

This month, he said, the Kansas Department of Agricultural Division of Water Resources responded to the letter. Basically, the state said if the city wants that right converted to a municipal well, the city needs to explain why it's needed.

Currently, the city's water right is to pump 301 million gallons a year. On average, the city pumps around 176 million gallons.

Mr. Miller said he would recommend that the city ask for the new well to use part of the allowed 301 million gallons a year. He didn't suggest asking for a bigger water right for fear that the city could lose some of the current rights.

Councilman Bill Riedel asked if the city could use some of the excess water for Sappa Lake. Mr. Miller said that's something that he would have to check on. The city probably wouldn't be allowed to exceed the amount of water that can be pumped from each well, said Mr. Miller.

The city has two irrigation wells and those might stand a better chance of being used in a situation like this than a municipal well. He said he would have to check.

The city has several wells which are no longer pumped, including Nos. 3 to 7, and three, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, which are used.

The irrigation well, said Mr. Miller, if it's transferred to a municipal, well will be No. 13.

It costs about $100 to file the application, he said, but in order to get the irrigation well changed to a municipal one, that is the next step.

Can the city ask to change a municipal well to an irrigation well? asked Mr. Riedel. Mr. Miller said it could.

(See LETTER on Page 10A)

Council Countdown

At a meeting last Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Heard that the airport committee plans an informational meeting at 5:30 p.m. Thursday at the airport. Story on Page 3A.
- Approved an oil-and-gas lease for 169 acres near the sewer ponds south of town. Story to come.
- Gave the engineer working on the water project the go-ahead to ask that the water from a city-owned irrigation well to be added under the city's current water rights. Story at left.
- Decided to change the due date on the city utility bills from the 10th of the month to the 15th. Story on Page 3A.
- Announced that a third city administrator candidate has decided not to take the job. Story below.

Administrator turns down city spot here

Mayor Joe Stanley announced at a City Council meeting Thursday night that after discussions with the latest city administrator candidate in closed session, the candidate had decided not to take the job.

The council gathered twice last week in closed session on evenings it normally doesn't meet.

The second night, last Wednesday, Joseph Gaa, the third candidate who had been offered the job, was present.

The first closed session was held for an hour and 15 minutes at The Gateway late Tuesday afternoon. Included in the session were Mayor Stanley, Interim City Administrator Karen Larson, City Attorney Steve Hirsch, Police Chief Wade Lockhart and council members Richard Kimble, Rhonda May and Bill Riedel.

There was no action taken.

The council met again to discuss matters of attorney-client privilege for an hour and 50 minutes last Wednesday at The Gateway with Mrs. Larson, Mr. Hirsch, Mayor Stanley, Mr. Gaa and the council.

Again, there was no action taken.

The council had offered Mr. Gaa the job after the other two candidates selected for the post declined.

Mayor Stanley said the council plans to start over in the search. There are resumes still to look at from the initial advertisement.

There was no discussion at the regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday on what the council plans to do now for finding an administrator.

Voters get chance to pick officials

Kansas voters get the chance Tuesday to decide who will serve as senator, governor, attorney general and more when they cast their ballots in the general election.

In Decatur County, all of the polling places will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., allowing registered voters the chance to help decide who will serve.

Those polling places include:

- The Gateway for voters from both Oberlin city precincts, plus Beaver, Finley, Harlan, Liberty, Logan, Olive, Roosevelt, Sherman, Altory, Bassettville, Center, Cook, Oberlin, Prairie Dog, Sappa and Summit townships.
- The Dresden Methodist Church for voters from Dresden and Custer, Lyon and Dresden townships.
- The Sunflower Senior Center for voters from Jennings and Clayton, Allison, Pleasant Valley and Jennings townships.
- The Norcatur City Hall for those from Norcatur and Garfield, Grant and Lincoln townships.

Clerk Colleen Geihsler, who serves as the county election officer, said as of early Monday afternoon, 210 people had cast their ballots before advanced voting ended at noon.

Voters who wait until election day to cast their ballot, she said, don't need to bring anything with them unless they are first-time voters and didn't show a picture ID when they registered. Those who didn't show an ID will have to show one when they vote.

Mrs. Geihsler said she had no predictions about voter turn-out from the state as of Monday. With the exception of one county office, all candidates on the ballot are for state offices.

Incumbent Stan McEvoy is seeking re-election for county commissioner in district No. 1. Mr. McEvoy said he's just finishing up his first term, although he isn't new to political office. He first served on the Oberlin City Council.

He said he decided to run again because he feels like he can still make a difference. Mr. McEvoy said he enjoys serving the people and is enthusiastic about the job.

Mr. McEvoy is president of the Kansas Counties Commissioners Association; last year he was vice

(See POLLING on Page 10A)

Buying books to read

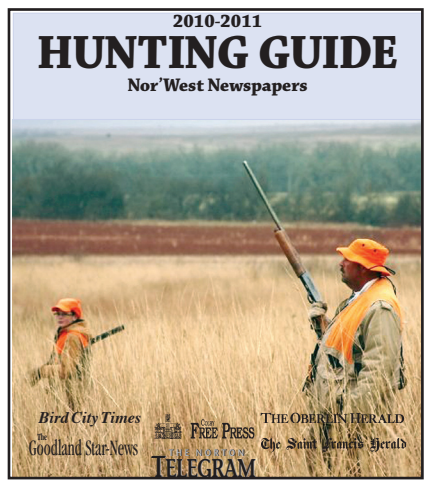
IN THE LIBRARY at Oberlin Elementary School on Monday, Kelli Bryan (above left) paid librarian Linda Glaze for books she picked out during the school's book fair while A.J. Zillinger waited. Megan Lohoefener (right) flipped through a book while Cassidy Gillespie (below) picked one out. The fair will be open tonight and Thursday night during parent-teacher conferences.

Hunting section inside today's paper

Nor'West Newspapers' annual fall Hunting Guide is included in today's copy of The Oberlin Herald.

The section includes articles on the outlook for hunting pheasants, deer, turkey and waterfowl in this area, where to buy licenses and the rules and regulations for the year.

It also has maps showing where hunters can go for walk-in access to state-leased land in northwest Kansas.



Native arrested in attempt to hire a 'hit man'

A 73-year-old Kansas man was arrested last Tuesday at Denver International Airport after attempting to hire a "hit man" who turned out to be an undercover FBI agent.

Brooks Kellogg, who is said to be an Oberlin native and have a home in Hays, was arrested after the meeting at the Denver airport.

According to court documents, e-mails and instant messages were exchanged about the purported murder-for-hire job prior to the meeting.

An affidavit filed by an FBI agent with the criminal complaint says that Mr. Kellogg met with the undercover agent to pay $2,000 in cash for "expenses" to commit the contracted killing.

The conversation allegedly included the agent asking Mr. Kellogg if he really wanted the person killed, which he allegedly replied "yeah." The conversation goes on to the men discussing the possibility of other jobs.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Kellogg was arrested.

The man Mr. Kellogg allegedly wanted killed had won $2.5 million in a lawsuit against him. That

(See MAN on Page 10A)

*Polling places open all day on Tuesday

(Continued from Page 1A)

president. Basically, he said, the association represents commissioners at the state level.

Others on the ballot include:

• Jerry Moran, Republican; Lisa Johnston, Democrat; Joseph K. Bellis, Reform Party; and Michael Wm. Dann, Libertarian,, for the U.S. Senate.

• Tim Huelskamp, Republican, Fowler; Alan Jilka, Democrat, Salina; and Jack Warner, Libertarian, for US. representative for the 1st District.

• Sam Brownback and Jeff Colyer, Republicans; Tom Holland and Kelly Kultala, Democrats; Kenneth W. Cannon and Daniel J. Raublon, Reform Party; and Andrew P. Gray and Stacey Davis, Libertarians; for governor and lieutenant governor.

• Chris Biggs, Democrat; Kris Kobach, Republican; Derek Langseth, Reform; and Phillip Horatio Lucas, Libertarian, for secretary of state.

• Derek Schmidt, Republican; Steve Six, Democrat; and Dennis Hawver, Libertarian, for attorney general.

• Ron Estes, Republican; and Dennis McKinney, Democrat, for state treasurer.

• Sandy Praeger, Republican, for commissioner of insurance.

• Robert Strevey, Democrat, and Ward Cassidy, Republican, for state representative in the 120th District of northwest Kansas.

• Sally Cauble, Republican, for state Board of Education in the 5th District.

*Starting with a song

BEFORE THE regional cross country meet on Saturday at the Oberlin Country Club Susan Nelson led some members of the DCHS Singers in the National Anthem.

— Photo by Susan May

*Man arrested

(Continued from Page 1A)

suit involved a Steamboat Springs, Colo., real estate development business called Chadwick Real Estate Group.

The case has been filed in the U.S. District Court in Colorado. Mr. Kellogg is facing one count of using interstate commerce facilities and mail in the commission of murder for hire. The penalty includes 10 years in prison, a $250,000 fine or both, a $100,000 special assessment, three years of supervised release and restitution to be determined by the court.

While Mr. Kellogg is listed as an Oberlin native, no record of him living here could be found by *The Oberlin Herald* staff this week.

According to an article in the Hays Daily News, Mr. Kellogg is a member of the Fort Hays State University Foundation board and has been co-chair for the Cornerstone Campaign, an effort to raise $60 million for the foundation. He also created Uniplace LLC with another businessman to build Stadium Place Apartments at the university in 2005. In 2006, the article says, Mr. Kellogg bought a former downtown movie theater and reopened it as the Fox Pavilion later that year.

Dr. Gary Fredrickson, who is also on the Fort Hays State University Foundation board, said the members received an email and all press questions should be directed to the university's public relations department.

Republican man wants house seat

By KAREN KRIEN
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Republican Ward Cassidy of St. Francis is running for a seat in the state House of Representative for the 120th District in the Nov. 2 general election.

His opponent is Democrat Robert "Bob" Strevey of Norcatur.

Mr. Cassidy says he is concerned about schools, highways and transportation, ethanol development and agriculture, just to name a few issues.

"The bottom line is," he said, "I care about what affects northwest Kansas and its people.

"If we don't stand up to protect our northwest Kansas way of life, we will have to take what is dished out, and I don't plan to stand by and let that happen.

"Everyone needs to work together to solve problems. We need to preserve our lifestyle."

He uses the acronym "CAVE," which he said stands for communication, availability, visibility and energy, to describe his planned approach to the job.

As he has campaigned, the main thing he heard from voters is that people want to maintain their communities and to see them grow.

"I believe we should do everything we can to maintain (our way of life) without raising taxes," he said.

If he is elected, he hopes to be appointed to the Agriculture, Education, Corrections and either Transportation or Wildlife and Parks committees. He thinks he will work well on all of these committees.

As far as agriculture goes, he has an interest in the area's major industry, and has a son-in-law and many friends who farm.

"If I have questions concerning agriculture," he said, "all I have to do is pick up the phone and call them."

He has spent 40 years in education and has a specialist degree in educational finance from Fort Hays State University. He said that he understands education finance, and having worked in the system, understands what schools need.

"I don't want to see programs cut, but I think we can work together and find a way to keep programs like music, art and other programs that small schools are trying to maintain."

If he is elected, he plans to let people know, in plain, easy-to-understand letters and news columns, what is going on in Topeka and how it will affect the people out in northwest Kansas.

People need to know what is going on, he said.

Mr. Cassidy is employed by the Northwest Kansas Educational Service Center as a school counselor in St. Francis. He started his career in 1970 as a teacher, then six years later, began counseling. He was principal of the St. Francis High School from 1981 to 2000.

He and his wife Gloria have two daughters, Penny and Jenny, who live with their families in St. Francis and six grandchildren who attend the St. Francis schools.

Mr. Cassidy said he urges everyone to get out and vote on Tuesday.

"We, in Northwest Kansas, have the best people and a lifestyle that we have worked hard for," he said. "Let's fight to keep it that way."

*Letter sent asking for well change

(Continued from Page 1A)

The engineer said he wants to send in a letter asking for the water to be added to the current water right. Unitl this permit is done, construction on that well can't start.

The council didn't vote, but the consensus was that the request was OK.

As long as it keeps the gallons in the water right the same, said Councilman Rob McFee.

He added that he guessed if the state cut the city back to the 176 million gallon a year it now uses, the city wouldn't ever get the extra back.

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Salina man campaigns for job

By JUDY SHERARD
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With the Nov. 2 election less than a week away, Alan Jilka, a Salina Democrat running to represent the 1st District in Congress, was in Oberlin last Tuesday.

Mr. Jilka, a graduate of the University of Notre Dame, said he had been a staff member for former Sen. Nancy Kassebaum, a Republican, and former Rep. Dan Glickman, a Wichita Democrat. He also served as a Salina city commissioner and three terms as mayor of Salina. His family has owned a furniture store in Salina since 1923.

Doug Sebelius, the Norton County attorney, and a Republican, accompanied Mr. Jilka here. Sebelius said he's reaching across party lines to support the Democrat because he's interested in politics, not partisanship.

"Too many are interested in personalities, not public interest," Mr. Sebelius said.

Mr. Jilka said he appreciates Mr. Sebelius lending his support and his name. He hadn't known Mr. Sebelius' father, Keith, a former Congressman from this district, but knows he was a good man whose name implies integrity, a willingness to build relationships and good public service.

"I aspire to earn the kind of reputation Doug's dad had by virtue of his service to the district," he added.

Mr. Jilka mentioned four issues at the top of his to-do list if elected. First, he would address the agriculture economy, looking at some of the new Environmental Protection Agency regulations and anti-agriculture special-interest groups. Second would be finding a realistic solution for the federal budget. Working toward energy independence is another concern, because the United States now depends on others for 65 percent of its energy.

Immigration is the final point Mr. Jilka mentioned. To see some of the problems firsthand, he spent a week at the Mexican border. One solution he advocates is enhanced security, but he also sees a need to deal with the 12 million undocumented immigrants already in the country while looking out for the our own economic best interests.

Norcatur Democrat seeks first district seat

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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A Norcatur Democrat seeks to serve the 120th District in the Kansas House of Representatives.

Robert "Bob" Strevey has run for the post in three previous elections, with this one being his fourth race.

In each of those, hes run unopposed in the primary, and then met the Republican candidate in the general election. This year, Mr. Strevey will met Ward Cassidy from St. Francis, who beat long-time Rep. John Faber in the GOP primary.

Mr. Strevey said part of the reason he runs is because he feels people have a right to have a choice when they go to the polls. Without a name on the ballot for the Democrat party, he said, there's no a choice.

The environment in Topeka right now, said Mr. Strevey, makes it difficult for anyone to get anything done. If elected, he said, he will try too get something done about the state's roads.

Mr. Stevey serves on the board of the U.S. 36 Highway Association. He said the state has a good transportation plan right now. The association has plans or U.S. 36 to become a four-lane road, he said, and he wants to see that worked on.

It's also important to take care of money for the schools . Sen. Sam Brownback, the Republican candidate who is the likely next governor, is pushing hard for cuts in government, said Mr. Strevey. What he is really talking about is cutting back on money for schools. Sen. Brownback, said Mr. Strevey, also favors giving state money for vouchers for private schools.

Mr. Strevey said he's not sure how much he could do to keep school money in place, but he would "stand up and holler."

Having worked at the prison in Norton, both in the education department and as a volunteer, he said, he is also interested in seeing that the state keeps its facilities and does dot move to privatize them.

The prisons are overcrowded, he said. A No. 1 problem is that programs that make money are being made the priority, not the security of the state.

Mr. Strevey said he has a long background in education, with 31 years as a teacher in area schools, including Norcatur, Selden and Grainfield. He said he lives on the family farm south of Norcatur with his wife Muriel and continues to grow crops.

Mr. Strevey said his home is in Norcatur. If elected, he said, he has no plans to move east to Topeka. When someone is elected to a position like this, he said, it's more of a second job. The House isn't in session all year.

Mr. Strevey said he considers the ability to run for office a privilege. It's a privilege, he said, to be part of the process.

He added that he urges everyone to get out and vote on Tuesday so that they, too, can be part of the process.

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