

Opening days set for bowling alley

The lanes are in and polished, the pin setters are ready and the new bowling alley is about to open for use.

A grand opening for the Sunflower Recreation Center bowling alley is set for Friday and Saturday, March 25 and 26, said Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development

Corp. She said the place will be open from 4 to 9 p.m. Friday, March 25, and from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, March 26.

During the event, she added, the snack bar will have pizza, nachos and other food for sale.

Door prizes will be given and people will have the chance to buy bowling shoes and

balls at a discount.

There will be some shoes to rent, said Ms. Grafel, and bowling balls to use, and lockers will be ready to rent for the season.

Ms. Grafel said they are looking for sponsors to buy a spot on the electronic scoreboards.

Anyone interested in bowling on a league

this year can attend one of several upcoming meetings.

Those interested in mixed doubles can attend a league meeting at 6 p.m. Sunday, March 20, at the bowling alley. A men's league meeting will be 6 p.m. Monday, March 21, and a women's league meeting is at 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 22.

The alley will be closed Wednesdays, "Red Pen" bowling will be on Fridays and open bowling on Saturdays.

As of Monday the bowling alley has \$181,383 raised, said Greg Lohofener. He said he's looking for \$5,000 to \$10,000 more for added enhancements.

Council tables new program to adopt houses

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Oberlin City Council put off a decision on the Adopt-A-Property program, where dilapidated, unwanted properties could be deeded to the city and then to the new owner, after liability questions came up at a meeting Thursday.

Jan Ackerman, the city's contract code enforcement officer, came up with the idea. The homes would be deeded to the city and then the city would deed them to a new owner. No money would change hands, but the new owners would promise to make repairs and pay taxes.

Mrs. Ackerman talked with the council about the program at the beginning of February and asked for some time so she could come up with an application process.

The application Mrs. Ackerman handed out asks for applicant's name, Social Security number, driver's license and whether the person has been convicted of a crime, felony or misdemeanor. The application also asks if the applicant has been sued or taken bankruptcy in the past 10 years.

It asks for details about work and education experience and what the person wants to use the property for. There would be a \$100 fee.

Councilman Bill Riedel asked, if when the city gets the deed to the house, and some hazardous situation is found, such as asbestos or a buried fuel tank, whether the city

Council roundup

At a meeting Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Tabled a decision on the Adopt-A-Property program until the city attorney could do some research on liability issues. Story at left.
- Talked briefly about the delayed Nex-Tech fiber optic project. Story to come.
- Decided to hold off on a program that could give the city information about where it needs to set electrical rates to maintain income. Story on Page 2.

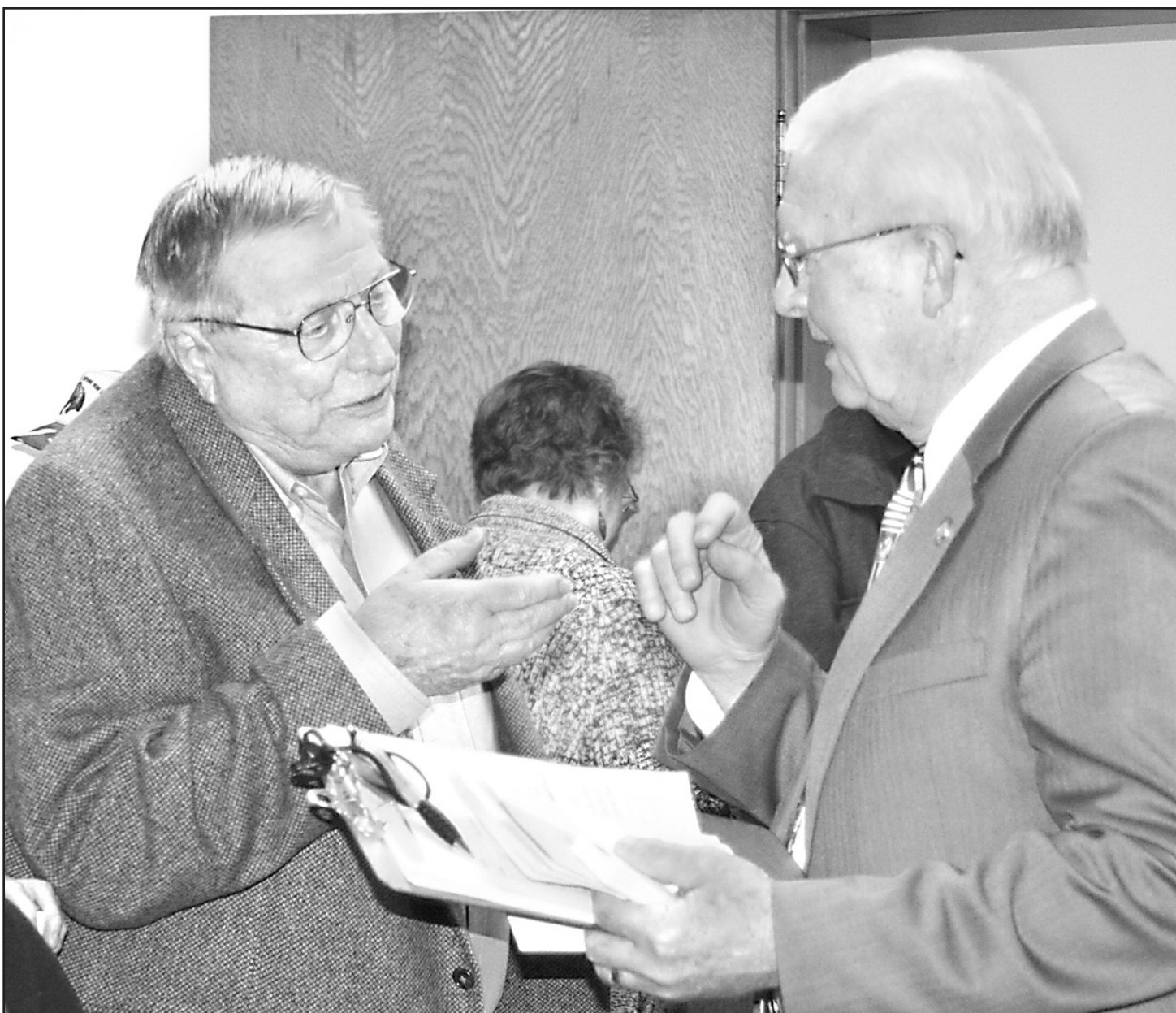
would have some liability.

He suggested that there could be a committee to put the current owner and the person who wants the property together and leave the city out of it.

The city could have the same liability, said Councilwoman Rhonda May, if the committee was under the city.

It's a wonderful idea, said Mr. Riedel, but as soon as the city takes ownership of the properties, it might have to bring the property up to standards.

He added that he doesn't feel (See CITY on Page 12)



IN THE COURTHOUSE on Saturday Jay Anderson talked first to the 18 constituents at the Decatur County Farm Bureau sponsored event. He stopped to talk to Senator Ralph Ostmeyer (above) after the town hall meeting. Representative Ward Cassidy (below)

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Officials talk to voters

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The area's two state legislators talked with 18 people at a "town hall" meeting Saturday about the state's lack of money, why they want to serve, what committees they are on and what's going on here and around the area.

Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer and Rep. Ward Cassidy were at the courthouse for the meeting, sponsored by the Decatur County Farm Bureau.

Some might wonder, said Mr. Cassidy, why the heck he decided to run to represent the 120th district, five counties along the Nebraska line. It all started about a year ago, he said, when a group of people in Phillipsburg asked him to seek the job. He said he promised everyone who voted for him that he would represent the people.

Mr. Cassidy said he loves to hear from people in northwest Kansas, adding that he didn't know what his days would be like once he got to Topeka. He said he has no time during the day to answer his e-mails. He works in committee and on the floor most of the day.

Balancing the budget is important, he said.

"My premise," he said, "is that we can't spend any more money than is being brought in."

With all the budget cuts already proposed and those made in the last few years, plus the loss of federal stimulus money, he said, government is still going to grow 6 percent this year, and that's bad news. He wants to get the budget whittled back down so there can be some positive growth.

The representative said getting money from the federal government can be a real blessing or an albatross. For example, money for special education requires a certain level of state spending. The



state has to come up with enough money to meet the "maintenance of effort" level, now estimated at \$26 million. If the state can't meet that, it will lose the special education money from the federal government, and might never get it back.

There was a roar in the Statehouse when Kansas got the Boeing tanker contract, he said, and he gave thanks to Sen. Jerry Moran for the part he played in that. That contract means billions of dollars coming into the state for payroll, he said.

While everyone is gloom and doom about the budget, with the finances, he can see a light at the end of the tunnel.

Education, he said, is taking a whack. School districts have been told already how much to expect in cuts out of this year's budget. There will be more cutting for next year, he said. The thing is, unless the revenues come in better than they have so far, there could be

even deeper cuts this year.

There's going to be at least three years or more of continued cuts in education, he said. That's not good news, but it's the scenario they are looking at.

Mr. Cassidy said his website should be up and running at www.wardcassidy.com and he's been writing columns for the district newspapers.

"One guy can make a positive impact in Topeka," he said. "I really believe that."

He said when he loses his energy, he will be done.

For now, it's a battle he feels is worth fighting. He has six grandchildren who live in his county and friends and family spread out among the five counties he represents, Cheyenne, Rawlins, Decatur, Norton and Phillips.

The school fire marshal inspection is big for him, he said. As a former school principal, he questioned how a fire inspector could come into his school

every year and find new things the district had to spend money on. The state is cutting education \$300,000 and now wants districts to spend \$400,000 on fire safety concerns.

Mr. Cassidy said he had taken the issue right to the governor. There's no need for the ridiculous added expenses, he said. The state is cutting schools and now saying that districts have to put in new doors.

This issue affects everyone, he added. Since he wrote a bill on this topic, he's heard from nursing homes and private schools caught in the same issues.

Shannon Addleman asked why the state is cutting education when we are getting an influx of people coming here because it's easy to get on welfare?

There's a new secretary at the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, he answered, so give him a chance. He is at (See LEGISLATORS on Page 12)

Only 30 percent turn out to vote

Only 30 percent of the registered voters in Oberlin got out to cast a ballot Tuesday in the city's primary for the mayor's seat as voters decided on the three candidates who will be on the general-election ballot April 5.

Bill Riedel received the most votes with 204, Judy Scott had 92 and Rhonda May 57 to make the cut. Bobbi Jo Johnson, who got seven votes, was eliminated.

County Clerk Colleen Geihlsler, who serves as the county election officer, said 360 out of the 1,175 people registered actually voted. Of those, 65 voted early. The rest went to the polls on Tuesday.

The Decatur County commissioners canvassed the votes on Friday morning and found nothing out of the ordinary, said Ms. Geihlsler.

The general election will also include:

- Jim Miesner, Janice Guthrie, Nolan Johnson, Tim Bowen and Rusty Addleman, for two seats on the Oberlin City Council.

- Dan Nedland, Dan Grafel, Monte Moore and Jerry Chambers for the four at-large seats on the Oberlin School Board. All are incumbents.

- Peggy Pratt and Cathy Anthony for the two seats open on the Twin Creeks Extension District.

- Wava Reames, Jerry Hill and Jim Plotts for the three open seats on the Norcatour City Council. All are incumbents.

- Scott Taylor for mayor and Erma Jean Spresser and Margaret Rhodes for Dresden City Council. All three are incumbents.

- No one filed for the three spots open on the Jennings City Council. Those are currently held by Rick Foster, Pat Hall and Stann Hartzog.

Polling places will be open in Oberlin, Dresden, Jennings and Norcatour from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Anyone who isn't yet registered to vote has until 6 p.m. Monday to go to the county clerk's office on the second floor of the Decatur County courthouse.

Spring clocks forward as saving time begins

The evenings have already started to grow longer as spring arrives, and Daylight Saving Time gets closer.

The sun seems to hang in the sky later and the days are longer.

Daylight Saving Time begins at 2 a.m. Sunday, although most people spring their clocks forward an hour Saturday night before they head to bed. If you don't, you might miss church on Sunday.



*Legislators listen to voters

(Continued from Page 1A) tacking some of those issues. There are 5,000 people getting welfare benefits who don't have a Social Security number, said Rep. Cassidy. He said he doesn't mind people who need help from the government getting it, but does mind the ones who are taking advantage.

Mr. Cassidy asked Ms. Addleman if she's contacted the new secretary, and she said she hasn't.

Kansas dropped the ball when it went away from a "no-nit" rule on lice, said Ms. Addleman.

"We've heard it," said Mr. Cassidy, "they have heard it."

He added that he understands her concern.

It's a horrible thing when the state is out of money, he said.

"We have to start thinking outside the box," said Mr. Cassidy, "because the way our kids went to school won't be the way our kids' kids will go to school."

The group talked some about the state public employees' retirement system, although no one had any answers on what's going to happen to it.

Steve Arnold said he saw that Kansas is in the top five states with the highest taxes. How does that bring prosperity? he asked. Is anything going to be done?

Mr. Cassidy said he sat in a tax discussion with other Republicans last week. The revenue has to go up before anything to be done to lower taxes, he said.

Back to the 5,000 people on welfare, said Robin Williamson. Is that a hard problem to fix? The state could make them have Social Security numbers, said Mr. Cassidy.

The new census figures show the state growing by 248,000 people in the last 10 years, said Sen. Ostmeyer, mostly in Johnson and Sedgwick counties around Kansas City and Wichita.

The senator congratulated Jay Anderson on his son, Steve Anderson, being named the new budget director. He seems to have everything under his finger on finances, Mr. Ostmeyer said, adding that he hopes people listen to him.

It's an exciting time in Kansas, even though the state is broke. He said he supports the arts as much as anyone, but didn't support a move to block the governor's reorganization order enough to get it out of committee. When programs for schools, veterans, the elderly and

handicapped have to be cut, he asked, how can someone say OK to the arts?

The state, he added, has had a spending problem for 10 years.

"I don't want to be negative," he said, "but we are broke."

There's going to have to be some nasty cuts made, Sen. Ostmeyer said, and he's not sure where all of the money will come from.

School districts, he said, have money in contingency funds. Some have more money than others, and some are going to have to spend it.

What people want out here is a school building that is open, with students and teachers in it.

With the loss of population in his 19-county district, he's going to have to pick up two counties this year.

Mr. Ostmeyer said he's excited about the new governor, Sam Brownback. He is visible in the halls and accessible to talk with.

The governor is a smart guy, he added, and he knows how to save money.

One woman asked if there was any way to allow for more out-of-state deer licenses. She said she thinks there's a missed opportunity with not selling more. In the last 10 years, the number of permits has increased, said Sen. Ostmeyer. The state has to be careful with how many out-of-state hunters it lets in, because if all the land gets leased, there won't be places for his grandkids to hunt.

Rep. Cassidy said he has a meeting with the Department of Wildlife and Parks this week. He thinks the youth deer season should be over Christmas break so the kids aren't missing so much school.

Ms. Williamson asked if Sen. Ostmeyer thinks people have seen the worst of the recession. The senator said he thinks so. He said he is optimistic for western Kansas. We have good grain prices, although the area may be heading into a drought. He said the farm economy has never gone down and stayed there.

What is the atmosphere in Topeka as far as northwest Kansas goes? asked Councilman Bill Riedel, a candidate for mayor in Oberlin.

Sen. Ostmeyer said he thought the people representing this part of the state do a good job selling it.

"This job isn't about me," he added. "It's about my district."

Army musicians to give jazz concert

The Jazz Ambassadors, known as America's Big Band, will present a concert at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, March 14, at the Colby High School Auditorium, sponsored by the Western Plains Arts Association.

This 19-member ensemble, a unit of the U.S. Army Field Band formed in 1969, has received acclaim both at home and abroad for performing America's original art form, jazz.

Its concerts are designed to

entertain all types of audiences. Custom compositions and arrangements highlight the group's creative talent and gifted soloists. A diverse repertoire includes big-band swing, bebop, Latin, contemporary jazz, standards, popular tunes, Dixieland, vocals and patriotic selections.

To obtain free tickets, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Pat Ziegelmeier, Colby Community College, 1255 S. Range, Colby, Kan., 67701.



Rooting for their team

AT THE SUBSTATE basketball finals Saturday night, Tiffany Anderson, who is part of the Decatur Community High pep band (above), showed her school spirit with a red-and-white painted face. Samantha Meitl (right) cheered for the Red Devils.

— Herald photos by Susan May



*City tables new idea

comfortable with the city tracking the new owners down, doing a background check and being liable for any possible hazard.

Mrs. Ackerman said the reason the city needs to be involved is that state prisoners from Norton can then help clean up the property while it is city owned and to get grant money. She didn't have a lot of information about available grants, however.

If the city isn't going to be involved, said Ms. May, then there is no need for the council to discuss the plan.

Councilman Ray Ward asked if people would still be interested in the properties if they didn't get grant money. Two of the people she's talked with would be, said Mrs. Ackerman.

If the council doesn't want the program to work this way, she said, now is the time to change it.

Mr. Riedel said he doesn't want the city in the middle of it in case there are liability issues.

"We are already in the middle because we have codes," said Ms. May.

From a liability standpoint, said City Attorney Steve Hirsch, right now the city doesn't have any with the houses.

Mr. Riedel asked if the city could be liable if it owned a house and something hazardous was found.

"We might," said Mr. Hirsch. If a city appoints a committee to work on the plan, he added, Ms. May is right that there could be some liability.

Mrs. Ackerman said she could be the go-between and connect people, but someone noted that she is paid by the city as a contractor.

She said she could go back to the drawing board on the program.

The council decided to table any decision to give Mr. Hirsch some time to do some research.

Band plans to perform

The Stanleytones Blue Grass Band will present a program at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 20, at the Sharon Springs High School Auditorium, sponsored by the Western Plains Arts Association.

With "red-hot" picking and dynamic vocals, the group blends bluegrass, old-time, country, honky-tonk and gospel music into a unique style of high-energy bluegrass. The band was formed in 1999 when the original members met while attending jam sessions in the Boulder, Colo., area. It was named after the Stanley Brothers, Ralph and Carter, who played from the 1950s until Carter's death in 1964.

Admission is by Western Plains season ticket, or at the door, adults \$10, students \$5.

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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

March 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 Brandi Ihrig Dietician	4	5
6	7	8	9 Dr. Frankum Surgery	10 MRI'S	11 Cardiac Rehab	12
13	14 Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	15	16 Dr. Curtis Cardiology	17 MRI's	18 Cardiac Rehab	19
20	21	22 Dr. Frederick C. Miller Cardiology	23 DEXA Bone Density Nuclear Stress Test	24 MRI's	25 Cardiac Rehab	26
27	28 Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab	29 Dr. Rubinowitz Oncology	30 Ultrasounds Cardiac Rehab Diabetic Clinic	31 MRI'S		

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

Happy St. Patrick's Day

Margaret M. Husted Estate Real Estate Auction
480 (+/-) Acres Sheridan County, KS • Irrigated and Dry Land & Grass
Monday, March 21, 2011 • 11 a.m.

Land Location: Approximately 4.5 miles North and 4 miles East of Hoxie, Kansas
Sale Location: Bowen Scout House, 1 Block East of Main Street on Sheridan Avenue in Hoxie, Kansas

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: This 480 acres will sell in 2 separate tracts only with no combination of tracts. The irrigation well on Tract #1 is located on the SW 1/4 of 20-7-27 and irrigates 121 acres on that 1/4 and 102 acres on the NE 1/4 of 30-7-27. Tract #2 will sell as a dryland 1/4. This is your chance to buy at public auction, some very good, Sheridan County, irrigated and dryland cropland. See you at the auction.

FSA and Tax Information

Tract	Auction Acres	Farmland Acres	Cropland Acres	Wheat Base	Corn Base	Grain Sorghum Base	2010 Taxes
#1	320	314.4	293	101.2	151.8	27.3	\$1,640.10
#2	160	156.2	123.5	43.2	64.9	11.7	\$ 326.22

Manner of Sale: Both tracts will be sold individually - no combinations of tracts.
Terms: Ten percent (10%) down day of sale, balance on approval of marketable title on or before 30 days from day of sale. Bidding is not contingent upon financing. Financing, if necessary, must have been arranged and approved prior to the auction so that Buyer(s) are capable of paying cash at closing.
Taxes: Seller will pay all 2010 and prior taxes with the taxes for 2011 and subsequent years to be the responsibility of the Buyer(s).
Possession: Immediate possession on both tracts will be given day of sale upon signing sales contract and payment of down payment. Final possession on Tract #1 will be at closing, upon payment of balance of purchase price and payment to tenant for fertilizer.
Title Insurance: Title insurance shall be used to prove clear and merchantable title with the Buyer and Seller sharing equally the owner's policy expense. The mortgagee's policy, if required, will be the expense of the buyer.
FSA Payments: Buyer(s) will receive all of the 2011 FSA payments.

Seller: Margaret M. Husted Estate

Pratt Real Estate in Charge of Sale • Les Pratt • Broker • Auctioneer
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