

Several buildings to get fiber cable

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Several locations in Oberlin should have fiber-optic cable to the premises sometime this summer, though the rest of the town apparently will have to wait.

Nex-Tech Inc. has engineers in Oberlin this week, said Valerie Rule, business administration supervisor for the firm, staking everything for construction for fiber to several places in town.

The company is putting in fiber lines to the Decatur County Courthouse, the high

school, the hospital, the police department, the library, the county health department, the new community building and The Gateway.

"The fiber-to-the-premise infrastructure will provide virtually unlimited bandwidth to these vital community institutions," said Jeff Wick, Nex-Tech chief operating officer. "Broadband access will play an ever increasing role in the economic vitality of every community, and Nex-Tech is confident that this investment in Oberlin's future will be mutually beneficial to the city and

its residents."

While the company's original project was to put fiber to every door in town, that's been put on hold. The fiber was supposed to put on the city's existing power poles, but because of other utilities already on the poles, the company says, there's no room to hang the fiber and meet industry standards.

Nex-Tech, said Ms. Rule, has put fiber in Hoxie, Norcatur, Norton and Stockton. It's in the process of putting fiber in Hays. Some of the towns received buried fiber, like Norcatur, others aerial. Ms. Rule said it depends

on what worked in each neighborhood.

Work on a building which Nex-Tech purchased across the street from the Sunflower Cinema has also been put on hold. Ms. Rule said the office project is tied to the original fiber project.

The company, said Ms. Rule, is also working on a project of bringing Internet service to Oberlin by WiMax, a wireless service. The fiber-to-the premise offers more bandwidth, which makes it faster at 75 megabits per second, while WiMax can provide up to six, Mr. Wick said.

"Construction of the WiMax system should be completed by late fall 2011," said Mr. Wick, "and will give Oberlin residents and businesses a viable broadband option."

Ms. Rule said the fiber-to-the-premise project for the public buildings should be done around June or July.

The company is also going to provide 10 free broadband connections and 10 free wireless connections for the library and The Gateway. Each one, said Mr. Wick, normally costs nearly \$840 a year.



Store gets carpet

ATRAYE'S GROCERY, Bill Goscha of the Carpet Center (above) pointed out to Jim Soderlund the next area where the men were going to lay carpet. After business hours, Mr. Goscha's crew, including Rocky Cooper (below) and Mr. Soderlund, has been replacing the old carpet in the store.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



Family practice moves to new location

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Decatur County Family Practice Clinic has moved into its new facility, the former Medical Arts Clinic building, which is owned by Decatur County.

In March, Decatur Health Systems bought the Oberlin Medical Arts practice and moved the Family Practice to the 14-exam-room facil-

ity to the west of the hospital.

Things are going well, said hospital Administrator Lynn Doeden. The Family Practice is busy. When a second provider is hired, she said, things will flow better.

With the change in location, the Family Practice employs seven people, some of whom were working at the family practice in the hospital, some retained from the former Oberlin Medical Arts staff and some new ones.

The hospital, said Mrs. Doeden, is still looking for doctors.

In September, Dr. Leslie Daly was hired to work at both places. Mrs. Doeden said they have known all along that he planned to leave at the end of March. Dr. Daly accepted a job in Kentucky, she said, as he had planned to do. She said he gave his two weeks notice two weeks ago.

Mrs. Doeden said the hospital and the Family Practice will use temporary physicians from Does Who Care, out of Olathe, to maintain its practice.

The doctors who provide service during the weekdays will be here

for at least two weeks at a time, she said. Others will provide service on weekends.

In November, the hospital hired Robin Williamson, a physician assistant, who continues to work full-time at the family practice, help cover the emergency room and see patients at the hospital.

Mrs. Doeden said she is still looking for physicians. One was here a couple weeks ago and hasn't made his decision yet. Another doctor, she said, is coming to look the end of April.

Councilman doubles vote in mayor race

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Councilman Bill Riedel won more votes than the other two candidates combined in city balloting Tuesday, putting him in the Oberlin mayor's seat.

Voters also chose two new council members, retired pharmacist Rusty Addleman and Oberlin native James Miesner.

Mr. Riedel, who has served on the council the past two years, received 277 votes in the general election Tuesday. Former council member Judy Scott was the next-closest vote getter with 141 and then incumbent Councilwoman Rhonda May with 67.

Mr. Riedel said he looks forward to working for the city and appreciates those who have supported him. He added that he also looks forward to working with the different civic organizations in town.

Ms. May, who was appointed to the council by former Mayor Ken Shobe in 2006 and then ran for election for a full term, was at home Tuesday. She said she wishes the new mayor the very best.

Ms. Scott couldn't be reached for comment.

Two new council members were elected on Tuesday also.



R. Addleman

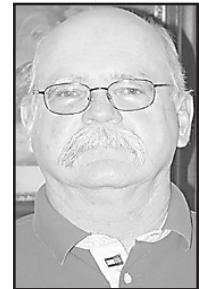


Jim Miesner

While the field originally had five candidates seeking the two seats, two dropped out before the election.

Mr. Addleman was the top vote getter with 354 votes. Reached at the Oberlin Country Club on Tuesday night, he said he feels honored. Mr. Addleman said he appreciates the people who placed their confidence in him and voted for him. He added that he's interested in working on the airport project.

Mr. Miesner won the second seat with 304 votes. He said he's pleased (See VOTERS on Page 8A)



Bill Riedel

Write-in wins, incumbent out in Norcatur race

By **CYNTHIA HAYNES**
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Norcatur voters put a write-in candidate on the City Council in city balloting Tuesday, returning two incumbent council members to office, but leaving one without a seat.

The three incumbents were on the ballot, with two challengers running as write-ins. Gerald Hill and write-in candidate Scott Hartzog won election with 49 votes each. Wava Reames took the third open seat with 47.

Incumbent James Plotts and write-in candidate Larry James each got 27 votes.

Reached at home after the count, Mr. Plotts said that he had done some campaigning, visiting voters at home and putting up posters.

He said he had been told that an

unsigned negative campaign letter had been put out against him, although he had not seen it.

"I'm OK with it," he said of the outcome. "I've got other things I can do. I thought I did a good job while I was in there, and I'm ready to move on."

Decatur County voters did not exactly rush to the polls. Only 678 of them, 28.66 percent of those registered, turned out to cast their ballots in city, school board and extension district elections.

This compared to 30 percent of Oberlin voters who came out to trim the list of mayoral candidates from four to three at the March 1 primary. Two years ago, only 490, or 28 percent of the then-registered voters, turned out for a similar election.

(See LOW on Page 8A)

Board plans to discuss principal candidates

The Oberlin School Board plans to hold a special meeting today to hear from a committee of teachers who interviewed the three candidates for the principal's job at Decatur Community High School last week.

Superintendent Duane Dorshorst said the board intended to interview four candidates, but one dropped out. The three also met with a committee of teachers.

Mr. Dorshorst said the candidates who interviewed were Jess Buller of Wray, Colo., Ben

Jimenez of Derby, and Brenda Breth, who teaches English and journalism and serves as counselor at the high school.

The school board received 13 applications for the job, currently held by Charles Haag. Only nine of the applications were completed, however.

While the board will discuss the interviews in closed session at the special meeting, said Mr. Dorshorst, they don't plan to hire a new principal until the regular scheduled board meeting on Monday.



A sweet treat



WITH A SPOON in her hand, Aspen Gallentine ate an ice cream float during class last week. The students in Belinda Jones' fifth-grade class suggested the winning theme for the Oberlin Business Alliance's Holiday Parade of Lights last

fall. The alliance said thanks to the kids with a root beer/Mountain Dew float party on Friday.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

Insurance agency receives two awards

An insurance agency with an office in Oberlin has received a "Best of the Best" award for agencies of the same size in the nation.

Bridges Group, said Renee Spreser, financial insurance spe-

cialist, received the award two years ago as well. It's one of six in the nation, among insurance firms of the same size, to receive the award.

Mrs. Spreser said the firm, which has offices in Oberlin, Norton and

Hill City and agents in Winona, has received the "Best Practices" award the last eight years. That award, she said, is based on the agency size, the market it's in, amount of business on the books, profitability and

other areas.

Mrs. Spreser said she thinks Bridges has received that award for the past eight years.

The company does business all over northwest Kansas, is moving into southwest Kansas and has clients in Nebraska.

Bridges, she said, handles all kinds of insurance.

Museum needs donated items for its sale

The Last Indian Raid Museum needs "gently used" items for the upcoming Rummage Sale.

The museum will take the items

from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, April 15. The museum doesn't accept large appliances or exercise equipment.

The sale will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, April 16, and from noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 17.

*Voters elect newcomers to serve city

(Continued from Page 1A) and happy that there are that many people in the city that have faith in him.

Tim Bowen, who received 157 votes, congratulated everyone who won.

Both Janice Guthrie and Nolan Johnson pulled out of the race, although their names were already printed on the ballot. Mrs. Guthrie received 27 votes and Mr. Johnson 17.

Mr. Riedel had two years left on his council term. Coupled with the

recent death of Councilman Richard Kimble, that will leave two seats open. There hasn't been any talk about appointing someone to fill Mr. Kimble's seat so far.

Mr. Riedel will continue serving on the council until he becomes the mayor in May. Mrs. May and Councilman Ray Ward, who did not run for re-election, will be going off.

The new mayor said he would urge anyone who might be interested in filling his council seat to contact him.

*Low turnout marks election for cities, schools

(Continued from Page 1A)

The contested city election in Oberlin seemed to draw best; the 485 people who voted for Oberlin mayor represented about 41 percent of the voters registered in that city.

Four Oberlin School District candidates ran unopposed for four open at-large seats. Monte Moore got 491 votes, Dan Grafel 438, Dan Nedland 419 and Jerry Chambers 411.

Of the two candidates for the Twin Creek Extension District board, Cathy Anthony of Norcatur got 465 votes and Peggy Pratt of Oberlin 437. They were unopposed

for two open seats.

In Jennings, no one was on the ballot for City Council, so the voters wrote in 10 choices for the three open seats. Stan Hartzog with 18 votes; Rick Foster, 13; and Pat Hall, 12, won election. Others with written-in votes were Carla Latimer, 6; Eric Fleckstein, 4; Kerry Green, 2; and Robert Jones, Romana Shaw, Phillip Ritter and Paul Nauer, 1 each.

In Dresden, Scott Taylor was elected mayor with 13 votes and Margaret Rhodes received 13 and Erma Jean Spreser 12 to be elected to the City Council.



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