

Wheat fields still dry after rain

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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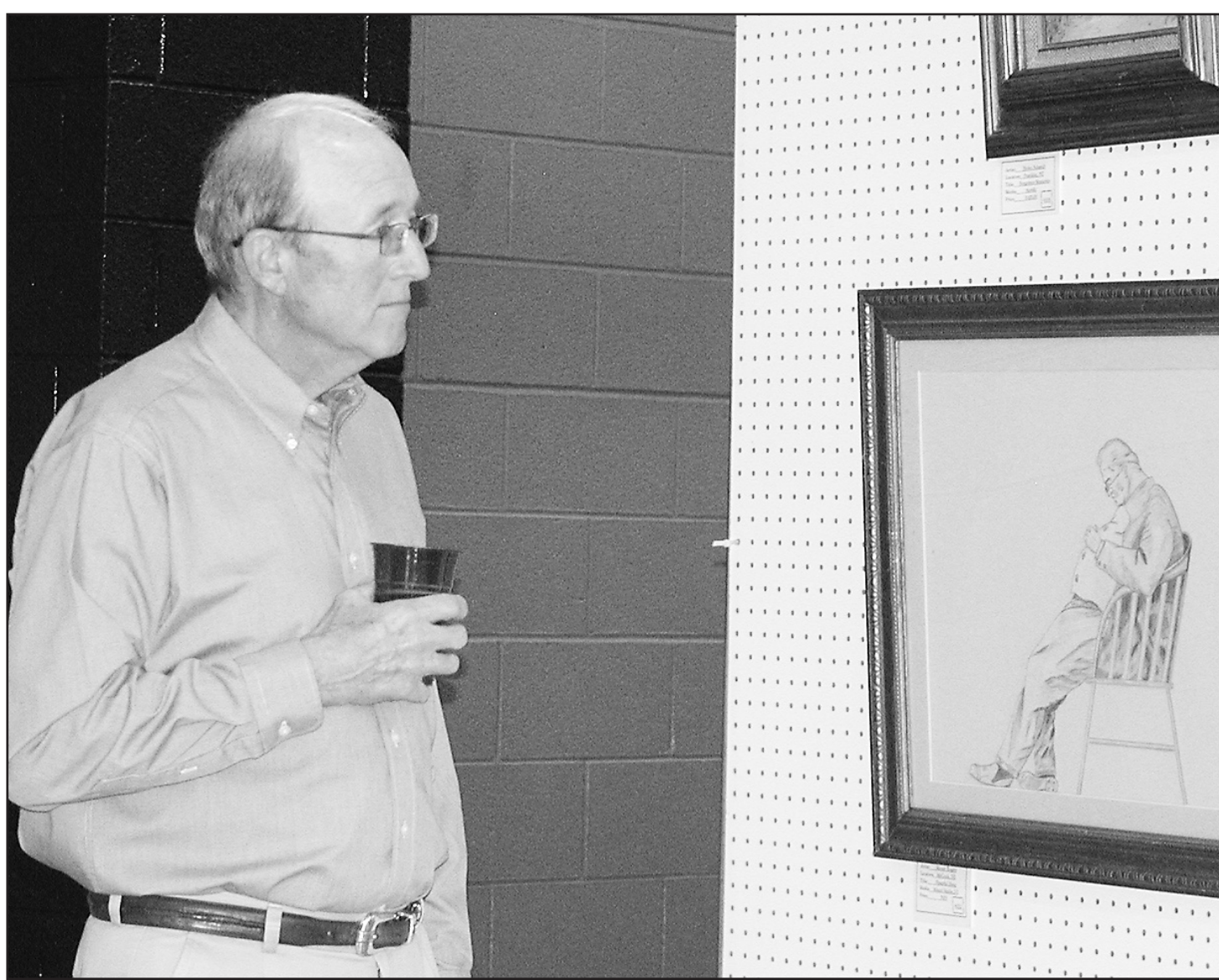
While the recent rain has really made things green up, experts say it's still dry here and worse in some nearby counties. Brian Olson, regional agronomist with Kansas State University based in Colby, said while there is a decent yield potential in Decatur County, the crop is going to depend

on the weather between now and harvest. It's dry, he said; it's been dry. We've had a lack of timely rain, said Mr. Olson. The moisture isn't going to be the determining factor. It might be the cool weather. If it gets hot quickly, he said, it won't be a good situation for the crop. It's already dry, so if things heat up, it will take away from

the yield potential. The crop needs the weather to stay in the 70s. If that happens, Decatur County farmers still have a good chance for at least a decent wheat harvest. The wheat, said Mr. Olson, doesn't look as good as it has in the past few years at this time. Decatur County is a little better off than some of the others in the area.

The crop has a little better stand and better consistency. The further south you go, said Mr. Olson, the poorer the stands look. Some of the fields emerged late, he said. Some have basically come up in the past couple months and those plants are behind where they should be. Stands are thin. Decatur County did get rain last week,

1.25 inches as measured in Oberlin. The forecast for this week, according to the National Weather Service in Goodland, shows a chance of rain ranging from 80 percent to 20 percent every day except today. Highs are supposed to reach only the mid 60s, which is good.



AT THE ARTFEST GALA Friday night, Randy Ostmeier (above) looked at one of the pictures. One of the exhibits was a piece called "The Stinker" (below). It was a body

Board raises graduation requirements

The Oberlin School Board approved changes to the number of credits needed to graduate in coming years since students can take more credits each year with the eight-period day. Principal Charlie Haag said at the board's regular meeting last Monday, that with the eight-period day, students are able to earn more than the 22 credits needed to graduate. Actually, he said, they can earn 24 credits by the end of their junior year. With the seven period day, he said students earned 21 credits by the end of their junior year. Many needed to come back their senior year to earn the extra credit to graduate. If the district is going to stay with the eight period day, said Mr. Haag, then some students can graduate at the end of their junior year.

He said he would recommend increasing the needed credits to at least 25. Personally, he said he would change it to 26. Even with needing more credits to graduate, he added, students can still take a study hall. Mr. Haag suggested changing the number of credits needed for the class of 2012. It could be changed a little each year, said Superintendent Dorshorst.

School Roundup

- At the meeting last Monday, the Oberlin School Board:
- Approved rehiring all teachers, those who already have tenure, plus those who aren't tenured, and moved a few teachers to the tenure list at both schools. Story on Page 3A.
 - Agreed to appoint a staff member to the Decatur Tomorrow recreation committee. Story on Page 8A.
 - Approved changes to the number of credits needed to graduate in the coming years, since students can take more credits each year with the eight-period day. Story at left.

The board approved changing the needed credits to graduate to 23 for the class of 2012, to 25 for the class of 2013 and 26 for the class of 2014. Board member Monte Moore noted that it's something the board can look at each year.

New principal agrees to contract

The Oberlin School Board has a new principal for Decatur Community Junior / Senior High School. Ben Jimenez of Derby accepted a contract offer last Tuesday. The board had voted at the meeting Monday, April 11, to offer the two-year contract to Mr. Jimenez. Board Clerk Vickie Lippelmann said they received the contact back

the next day. Mr. Jimenez is a seventh-grade assistant principal in the Derby School District. His wife is a speech pathologist. The couple have three children, two boys and a girl. While the district hasn't offered two-year contracts in a while, Mr. Jimenez had told the board he was interested in a two-year deal. He starts work on Aug. 1.

Artists show pieces

Artists and spectators wandered in and out of the free-standing walls hung with artwork Friday night, talking, eating and, most of all, looking at the paintings, photos, sculpture and pottery on display.

The seventh annual High Plains ArtFest drew over 200 people to the opening gala at The Gateway. Men and women drank a glass of wine, had a few appetizers and took the chance to be the first to see the art entered in the show, sponsored by the Oberlin Arts and Humanities Commission.

Seventy-nine artists entered 284 pieces, said Mary Henzel, one of the organizers. That didn't include 57 student artists from 12 schools, who had 92 pieces.

Many of the pieces were available for purchase. Patrons who attended the gala were able to use their \$100-per-couple ticket towards the price of a chosen piece if they wanted.

Area artists who had entries at the ArtFest included Amanda Marshall, Bret Ashley, Mary Ewing, Anna Seeber Shaw, Rhonda May, Loretta McFee, Dale Meitl, Elizabeth and Hunter Nedland, Mandy Sowers and Norma Unger.



The show, said Mrs. Henzel, was judged by Brenda Meder, head of the Hays Arts Council. Oberlin artists who received awards included Mrs. Shaw, Miss Marshall, Miss Ashley, Mrs. Ewing and Mrs. Sowers. More than \$3,600 was given out in cash and ribbon awards.

Former administrator remembered for vision

Jerry Fear, former Oberlin city administrator, who died last Monday in Denver, will be remembered for his work to promote building The Gateway and his vision to keep the city moving forward.

Connie Grafel, now the marketing director for the city, said when the Morgan bequest to build a civic center was announced, Mr. Fear had the vision to get community leaders on board who could help him sell the idea of a center featuring state-of-the-art technology.

"It's still better than anything McCook has to offer for big events like the Artfest," she said. Mr. Fear also promoted efforts

to bring the communities in the Tri-State region together, said Ms. Grafel, allowing them to work on similar problems that plague small rural towns.

"I think the most important thing is that he loved Oberlin," said Gary Anderson, owner of the LandMark Inn, "and the people of Oberlin. He was a man with a lot of vision and a lot of heart."

Chuck Frickey said he worked with Mr. Fear at the beginning of his first term as mayor and on community projects before that.

"Jerry was always interested in what could be done in the community of Oberlin to improve the

quality of life of those of us who live here," said Mr. Frickey.

That ranged from keeping a clean and well-maintained and operating city to establishing recreation opportunities to promoting different aspects of the arts and humanities.

"He was looking to the future in all he did," said Mr. Frickey, "not just looking to 'make do' and keep the status quo, and was always seeking things which would ensure a future for Oberlin and those of us who chose to live here."

"Jerry wasn't afraid to ask difficult questions of people and to present different ideas to people who could help with implementing

them."

He added that Mr. Fear was also a nice person, with a good heart. He was concerned that city government be responsible to the needs and wants of the residents.

Mr. Fear, 78, was born Sept. 29, 1932, in Salem, Ill., the son of Herbert and Faye (Borsenberger) Fear. He died Monday, April 11, 2011, at the Denver Hospice Care Center.

He grew up in Salem and graduated from high school there. He served in the Army from 1952 to 1954. He attended Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Ill., graduating with a Bachelor of (See MAN on Page 8A)

Stories feature nominated heroes

Inside today's *Oberlin Herald* is a special section with the county's "Hometown Heroes."

Each of the heroes was nominated by readers of the newspaper. Some are parents picked by their kids, others have helped raise money for community projects while others have been seen doing odd jobs around their community.

THE OBERLIN HERALD'S
Hometown Heroes '11



Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for Saturday

It's time to dust off the Easter baskets and hunt for some candy during the Oberlin Lions Club's annual Easter Egg Hunt at 1 p.m. Saturday at the Lions picnic shelter at City Park.

An area will be a roped off area in front of the shelter, said Pastor Charlotte Strecker-Baseler. Kids will be divided into age groups for 1 to 2 year olds, 3 to 4, 5 to 6 and 7

to 9. Each group will get a chance to pick up eggs and candy for a few minutes. The Mountain Slope Masonic Lodge buys the candy. The Easter Bunny is scheduled to make an appearance.





REXFORD FIRE CHIEF Bill Scott (center, above), face covered in soot, talked with Hoxie Chief Ross Carder (left) and Sheridan County Training Officer Steve Hirsch (right) after volunteers stopped a fire last Tuesday evening north of

Rexford. Gem firemen (below) Pete Ziegelmeier (standing, left), Carl Miller, Jonathan Higerd (passenger seat) and Paul Nieman (driving) brought a tanker into the command post after fighting the grass fire. — Herald staff photos by Steve Haynes

Flames jump the road

By STEVE HAYNES
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A fast-moving fire apparently spawned by a farmer's disc rig jumped a county road north of Rexford last Tuesday evening and raced nearly two miles on a strong south wind before volunteers from eight fire departments could corral it. Rexford firemen responded to the first call about 4:55 p.m., and put their effort into protecting an old farmstead about a half mile north of where the fire started. Rexford Fire Chief Bill Scott said they were able to keep the flames away from that area.

Steve Hirsch of Oberlin, training officer for the Sheridan County Fire Department, said he was on his way to a fire meeting in Hoxie. He saw the fire from the junction of U.S. 83 and K-383 east of Selden. He said he drove west toward the fire and realized the Rexford crew would need help. Eventually, trucks and volunteers from Colby, Gem, Menlo, Selden, Hoxie, Herndon and Atwood joined the fight, bringing brush trucks, pumpers and a flock of tankers. The Thomas County road crew and Frontier Ag also sent tankers. Farmers came with discs and their own tanks. Fire chiefs from Thomas and Sheridan counties set up a command post at Roads CC and 35, about a mile west of the oiled Rexford Road. Tankers disgorged their water into portable tanks holding 10,000 gallons in all so they could run to town for a refill. Pumpers and brush trucks shuttled back and forth from the fire to get water under a



cloudy sky. After jumping the road, the fire roared north through a field of corn stubble, then jumped into grass along the North Fork of Prairie Dog Creek. Firemen said it jumped a fire line plowed by farmers with disc rigs, and they had to drive back out to the main road and come back into the pasture from another angle to resume the fight. Rexford firemen, meanwhile, had gone on north to get ahead of the fire. It jumped Road DD, really just a trail, and another fire line before crews finally stopped it about a half mile short of the Rawlins County line. That kept it away from an occupied farmstead east of Road 35. "It got real hot, real fast up there," one fireman said. The area burned was no more than half a mile wide at any one time, but nearly two miles long, covering grass and fields. South winds around 25 mph, with

gusts to 35, whipped the flames along. The fire jumped a road more than 40 feet across and at least two fire breaks 30 to 40 feet wide, said Sheridan County Fire Chief Ross Carder. Eventually, the wind seemed to shift a little and drive the fire into the north-south Road 35, where firemen held it. By 7 p.m., crews were beginning to go home after refilling the pumpers from the portable tanks. Colby Assistant Fire Chief Sean Hankin said most fire crews were on the way home by 8:30 p.m. Chief Carder said the farmer was doing spring field prep on the corn stubble when he noticed the fire, apparently touched off by a hot bearing on his rig. He told firemen he couldn't do much to stop it with the type of disc he was using, which had a vertical blade. Chief Carder said his men had been headed for their regular weekly fire drill when the call for mutual

aid came. "Now we'll go back and wash all the trucks," he said. Forecaster Greg Guillot at the Goodland weather station said winds had been gusting 30 to 35 p.m. in the afternoon Tuesday. The fire danger was a little less last Wednesday, with "breezy" conditions and winds only 20 to 25 miles per hour.

*Man known for his work

(Continued from Page 1A)
Arts degree. In 1960, he married Sonya Eberhard in St. Louis. They lived in several places over the years while he worked as a community organizer. In the 1990s, he became the city administrator in Oberlin, a position he held until retiring in 1997.

Survivors include three sons, Jerry Joe Jr. and Karen Fear, Florissant, Mo.; Terry and Mary Jo Fear, Richardson, Texas, and Howard and Melissa Fear, Arvada, Colo.; a daughter, Kathy and Dominic

Propersi, Bloomington, Ill.; a sister, Sondra Fear, Springfield, Ill.; nine grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents and his wife. Services were Saturday at Pauls Funeral Home. Bill Duncan officiated and burial was in the Oberlin Cemetery with military rites by the Oberlin American Legion Post. A memorial fund was set up in his name. Contributions may be sent to the funeral home, 121 N. Penn, Oberlin, Kan., 67749.

Board appoints man to rec board

The Oberlin School Board agreed last Monday to appoint a staff member to the Decatur Tomorrow recreation committee. Board member Abby Hissong said the planning group wants to set up a seven-member board under Decatur Tomorrow. Eventually, she said, the idea is to hire a director to run a recreation programs for all ages. Mrs. Hissong said they would like to have someone with the schools on the committee. Superintendent Duane Dorshorst said he talked with Terry Ream, outdoor maintenance supervisor and girls basketball coach, who is willing to serve. The board appointed Mr. Ream to the position. The board talked about a request for blueprints of district buildings for the Regional Homeland Security Agency. Mr. Dorshorst said the Hill City School District has already decided

not to go along, and the Norton School Board was suppose to decide at the meeting that night. While homeland security can't give them a reason not to co-operate, he said, they also can't really say why the district should. Mr. Dorshorst added that Decatur County has already opted out. Member Jerry Chambers made a motion to opt out of giving the blueprints. He said he thinks it's unnecessary. Member Dan Nordland made the second and the board approved not sending the blueprints. In other business, the board: • Agreed that all the board members except Mr. Chambers and Monte Moore will help hand out diplomas at graduation. • Approved joining the Kansas Association of School Boards for \$4,480 and for legal aid at \$1,400. • Held a 10-minute closed session for non-elected personnel, with no action taken.

Patients will see higher first bills

Patients may see a higher bill than normal the first time they see a doctor at the new Decatur Health Systems Family Practice Clinic. Hospital Administrator Lynn Doeden and Finance Manager Amanda Fortin said the first visit at the Family Practice, the patients will pay a one-time charge which is basically a new patient fee. On the first visit at the clinic, said Mrs. Doeden, the doctors are getting to know the patient and taking extra time to go through their charts so they can understand their medical history. She suggested people who are being seen at the clinic to expect the first visit to take a little more

time. It would also be nice if patients brought their medications along, she said. Even if patients don't see their health provider going through the charts, that doesn't mean that they aren't. The price of the first visit varies, said Mrs. Doeden. After the first one, said Mrs. Fortin, the average cost per visit will be \$60 to \$70. If patients were seen at the Family Practice when it was located in the hospital, they have already done the first-time visit and will be an existing patient at the new location, Mrs. Fortin said.

Good Samaritan Society

The Good Samaritan Society — Decatur County would like to recognize and thank the following for their support, donations and time to help us make our Hoedown such a huge success. With our proceeds, we will be purchasing a Recumbent Stepper for Restorative Therapy, as well as items to benefit the residents and staff.

The American Legion	Anita & Steve Hirsch	Good Samaritan Residents
Jeanette Diederich	The Bank Member FDIC	Vi Krizek
Kaitlin Gillespie	Lifetime Eyecare	Tim Wasson
The National Honor Society	Jim & Pam Wesch	Great Northwest Insurance
Gary Anderson	Shear Creations West	Jay & Ann Anderson
Dianne Bremer	First National Bank Member FDIC	Raye's Grocery
Cindy Shirley	Nora Bearley	Ultimate Fertilizer
Chris Dempewolf	Dale's Fish 'N' Fun	Pauls Funeral Home
Janice Shobe	Bernice Martin	Rodney & Glenna
Angela Corcoran	Countryside Veterinary Clinic	Copeland
Montine Alstrom	Reva Marshall	Kay Gaskill
Sheena Dahlman	High Plains Veterinary	Unger Chiropractic Clinic
Lynn Johnson	Services	Northwest Credit Union
Ward Drug Store	Brenda Reiss	Lohofener Grain
101.1 KFNF Radio	Leta & Mark Meitl	Herschel & Jody Betts
Decatur Museum	John & Muriel Ready Trust	CPS
Stanley Hardware	Rob McFee	Karen Larson
Culligan Water	Tina Perrin	Ken & Christi Morris
Oberlin Concrete	Kelly's Home Medical	Farmers Bank & Trust
R & M Services	Nex-Tech Rural Telephone	Member FDIC
Decatur County Feed Yard	Barry Richards	Creative Collision
Triple S Cattle Co./Metcalfe Farms	Marvin May	Fredrickson
PT Shirley	Gary & Sarah Fredrickson	Insurance Agency
	Neil Marshall	... And the entire community

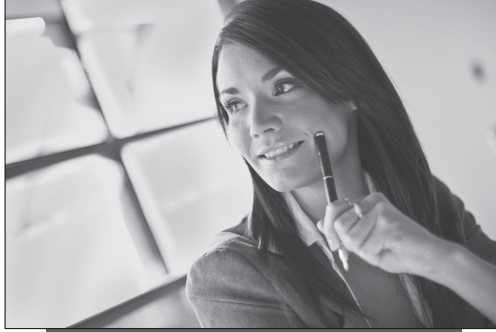



Help Wanted

Ad Designer

The Oberlin Herald, an award-winning weekly newspaper, is looking for a **FULL OR PART-TIME AD DESIGNER.** Knowledge of InDesign preferred.

Call Cynthia Haynes, Publisher or Kim Davis, Assistant Publisher for more information at **785-475-2206.**

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