

Outbound mail cut off set at 1:50 p.m.

By KEVIN BOTTRELL
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Best saddle up and get on down to the post office, that is, if you have any important letters that have to get out of town before sundown.

As of Saturday, processing of all outbound mail from northwest Kansas has been moved to Salina, meaning mail trucks will leave all area towns, including Oberlin, two to three hours earlier.

In Oberlin, that means the truck will leave at 1:50 p.m. instead of 4:15, with mailers

losing 2 hours, 25 minutes.

Janet Knappert, officer in charge of the Oberlin office, said mail needs to be at the post office no later than 1:50 p.m. to be on the truck. The only mail that won't go to Salina will be mail to another address in Oberlin, which will stay here, and mail to other northwest Kansas towns with a 677 ZIP code, which will be sorted at the Colby sectional center.

Even that may not last long, as postal officials last week announced another round of studies which could result in all mail

processing in Kansas moving to Wichita, Denver, Amarillo, Texas, or Kansas City.

Knapper said collection times at other area post offices include Herndon 1:20 p.m., Jennings 2:05 p.m., Norcatur 2:30 p.m. and Selden 2:20 p.m.

Any mail that doesn't meet the deadline will go out on the next day's truck, said Colby Postmaster Kenton Krehbiel. In most towns, outgoing mail picked up by city and rural carriers won't make that day's truck. Anyone with urgent mail should hand-carry it to the post office by the cutoff.

Krehbiel said to make things easier, businesses with large quantities of first-class mail should separate any mail going to local or 677 addresses from mail going out of the area.

"Businesses with postage meters should change the date to the next day at 3:30 p.m.," he added.

Krehbiel said anyone with questions or comments should call the Colby post office at 462-7904.

The Postal Service is making the change to combat revenue losses over the past

decade. At a public meeting in May, Rick Pivoar of Omaha, district manager for Kansas and Nebraska, said the recession, rising fuel costs and changes in how people send mail have hurt the service. Last year, the service lost about \$8.5 million, he said, with a similar loss expected this year.

All processing of mail from northwest Kansas has been moved to Salina, including that formerly done at the Hays sectional center as well as Colby. The service reported putting on 13 people in Salina to handle the (See MAIL on Page 8A)



IN THE HOMECOMING PARADE on Friday, Samantha Anderson (above right) wore her queen's crown. She rode with King Brent Juenemann and Lia Jimenez and Gage

Scott. Tyler Bruggeman (below) and Zach May rode on the football float. — Herald staff photos by Steve Haynes

Students parade on Penn

DECATUR DICTATOR STAFF

Dressed in their best, two students were named king and queen Friday for the Decatur Community High School 2011 Homecoming.

Samantha Anderson and Brent Juenemann were named to the top spots of the homecoming royalty during an assembly at the high school.

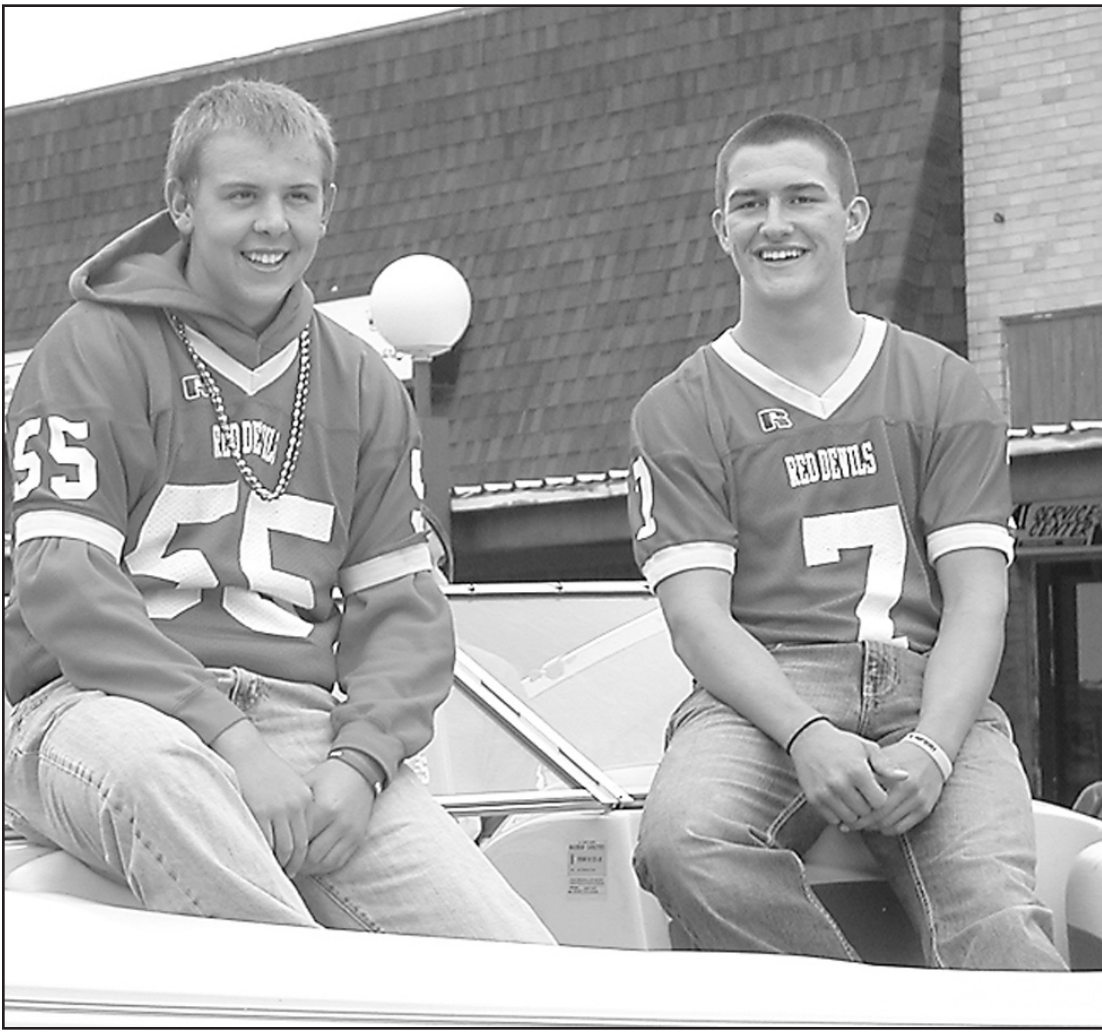
Other members of the homecoming court were Brooklyn O'Hare, Serena Stacy, Megan Wentz, Garrett Berry, Shane McEvoy and Conner McHugh.

Student Council Vice President Nolan Henningson was the emcee for the event.

Flower girl and crown bearer were Lia Jimenez, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Jimenez, and Gage Scott, son of Mr. and Mrs. Justin Scott.

Speaking at the assembly were 10-year Queen Katelyn Unger, Athlete of the Past Rusty Grafel, and football coach J.D. Johnson. Miss Unger talked about her homecoming 10 years ago, just a few weeks after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. She spoke of the patriotism of the country and the pride of Oberlin and the school.

Mr. Grafel, who is now an assistant boys' basketball coach at Colby Community College, brought a senior portfolio that



he never turned in 10 years ago. He talked about the homecoming game his senior year and what homecoming means.

Even though La Crosse, the school's Homecoming opponent, is a state-ranked team, Coach Johnson fired up the assembly by telling stories of great athletic upsets, such as the Miracle on Ice, when the U.S. hockey team defeated the Soviet Union in the 1980 Winter Olympics, and North Carolina State defeating

Houston to win the 1983 NCAA championship.

The DCHS Singers performed at the assembly, singing "Boys of Fall" and "Fireworks." Megan Wentz created a slide show of pictures from old yearbooks and pictures of this year's football team. The show played throughout the assembly on the new big screen in the auditorium.

Alumni awards were presented to Scott O'Hare, queen candidate Brooklyn O'Hare's dad, for travel-

ing the most miles, and to Bernice Martin, Class of 1939, for being the earliest graduate present at the assembly.

Following the assembly, the Homecoming parade wound from the school to the Good Samaritan Center, then down Penn Avenue through downtown. It featured the junior high and high school bands, the Homecoming royalty, the class floats and the football, volleyball, and cross country teams riding in boats.

City continues search for water outside of town

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Hoping to avoid building a \$4 million water treatment plant, the Oberlin City Council approved drilling six test wells Thursday at a cost of around \$6,000 in the continuing search for a better water supply.

Up against a consent order to build a water treatment plant, the council decided over the summer to search for other water sources outside the city which could be piped into town.

At the meeting last Thursday, Chris Miller, an owner and engineer with Miller and Associates, the firm planning the water project, said he hasn't heard anything on a request to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to give the city more time on the search.

Mr. Miller talked about two areas south and east of town where it might be possible to get water for the city.

Mayor Bill Riedel asked if wells in those areas could produce enough water. Mr. Miller said with any irrigation wells tested they will produce less water when redrilled as municipal wells.

One well to the southeast produces about 425 gallons per minute,

he said.

"If we have to purchase a well," said Mayor Riedel, "what's your opportunity if a farmer doesn't want to sell?"

The city can back away, said Mr. Miller, offer more money or use its right of eminent domain to condemn the well.

Mr. Miller said his office had some pipeline jobs last year, and he used the average cost of those to figure the cost of bringing water to town. With about four wells out west, he said, the city is looking at about \$5.2 million, maybe less. Looking south, said Mr. Miller, the ballpark estimate is just under \$5 million.

He added that those figures don't include any of the distribution improvements the city was looking at to move water around the town, or include treatment for well No. 11.

"What's your gut thought?" asked Mayor Riedel.

Treatment, said Mr. Miller, is always a last option. The cost is a wash, with the water treatment plant and distribution improvements at a little over \$4 million.

Mr. Miller added that the city is better off not dealing with uranium which would be taken out of the (See WATER on Page 8A)

Thresher show brings history alive with old machines

Men, women and children took a step back in history Saturday and Sunday at the 31st annual Mini Sappa Antique Thresher and Engine Show at the Decatur County Fairground.

Members of the sponsoring club and equipment owners showed how they used to use old tractors to power equipment which cut logs, threshed grain and shelled corn.

While the weather was a little damp on Saturday, the dining room in the 4-H Building was full of people eating chicken and noodles, with others milling around outside.

Treasurer Maxine Wright said the show had gone pretty well. She said they could have used more people, but appreciated the ones who were

able to make it.

Mrs. Wright said a bunch of big tractors came in from Nebraska. Owners of others said they saw the show's website and came for the first time.

While the weather was chilly and a little damp on Saturday, the turnout was better that day, said Mrs. Wright.

Results from the two-day show include:

Top 5 tractors, Saturday: 830 John Deere, George and LaDonna Brown, Jetmore; 1953 Minneapolis Moline U. Gleason Dryden, Oberlin; 30-60-S Rumley, Griff Malleck, McCook; 1951 Farmall H, Tom Solko, Herndon; 1951 Minneapolis (See THRESHER on Page 8A)

Sports section inside today's paper

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the 2011 Fall Sports section, featuring pictures and information on area student athletes.

The section is made possible by our advertisers, who sponsor the students. In it, you'll find pictures of the students at Decatur Community and Golden Plains high schools who are out for football, volleyball, cross country and cheerleading, along with their coaches.



City needs surveys returned to qualify for grants

The City of Oberlin needs the surveys they mailed out recently back, and soon.

Administrator Karen Larson said the income surveys that everyone received need to be re-

turned right away, or the city is going to need volunteers to go door to door to collect them.

The city hopes the survey results will help it get Community Block Development Grant money. Mrs. Larson said the city received some grant money to help with the sewer project based on old surveys, and hopes the results will be the

same this time.

The grants are available only if the city meets guidelines for the proportion of low- and moderate-income households in town.

Anyone who didn't receive a survey or who threw it away can call the city office at 475-2712 to get another, she said.

