



Water lines redone

MIDLANDS Contracting employees from Kearney, Neb., moved water pipe with a front end loader Monday across East Avenue near Hall Street. After moving the pipe, the men connected the pieces. The pipe will be part of a new water main the city is putting in at several places around town.

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes



City sold six beer licenses back in 1939

By **CYNTHIA HAYNES**
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In the back of the Oberlin police station is a big, old vault. In it, Chief Wade Lockhart has saved dozens of old city ledgers, account books and meeting minutes.

This is the second in a series of excerpts from those documents.

City council members in 1939 included A.J. Thomsen, C.E. Carper, Earl Sproul and D.G. Addleman. Chas Stevenson resigned in June and was replaced by Lew Wenger. The mayor was J.C. Nitsch and the city clerk was R.S. Claar.

From the minutes of the Jan. 3, 1939 Oberlin City Council meeting:

• Applications of W.A. Cook, Elmer P. McKinzie, J.M. Johnston, Albert A. Unger, Letha Avery Pester and John J. Scott to retail cereal malt beverages was presented to the council.

All six were accepted.



From the Vault

By **Cynthia Haynes**
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• Jay McKinzie had paid the license of \$5 on each table in his pool hall last November 1st, and in December had to take one down. He asked a refund on this one table for the unexpired time. After some discussion, motion was made by Thomsen and seconded by Carper that we refund Jay McKinzie \$3.35 on this license.

Motion carried.

From the minutes of the June 5, 1939, meeting:

• Motion was made by Addleman that J.C. Nitsch be given permission

to knock out the curb and pave the place north of his building that will be occupied by a Safeway Store.

Motion carried.

• Motion was made by Carper that Leo Lehn be notified to move his house out of Cass Ave. by August 1st, 1939, or legal action would be taken.

Motion carried.

• Motion was made by Addleman that 25% discount be given to resident users of water for the months of June July, August and September, 1939.

Motion carried.

From the Sept. 4, 1939, meeting:

• Motion was made by Addleman that the City of Oberlin furnish light and heat for the City Library, located in the corner room of the Opera House, for the next year.

Motion carried.

From the minutes of the Nov. 6, 1939 meeting:

Ordinance #218, authorizing the construction of a sewage disposal works for the City of Oberlin, Kansas, and authorizing the issuance of the negotiable bonds of said city in the amount of \$18,000 for the purpose of providing funds to pay a part of the cost of the construction of said sewage disposal works, describing all the details of said bonds, and providing for a tax levy to pay the principal of and interest on said bonds as same mature, was presented by L.E. Wenger.

(See SEWER on Page 5A)

Hospital posted a loss last year

Drop in patients the cause

The Decatur County Hospital received the 2011 audit report, showing a decline in the number of patients and the amount of money made for the year.

John Harris, with BKD of Wichita, the firm which did the audit, said the report shows an operating loss of \$648,748.

The hospital didn't have as many inpatients last year for the acute or swing beds, he said. Without the volume, the cost per day for each patient went up, he said, because they had to maintain staff.

The numbers at Cedar Living Center dropped too, he added, noting that while the hospital did show a loss, that doesn't mean it can't bounce back.

The board is going to have to find out what makes sense for the hospital here, stabilize what it already has and move forward, he said.

Last year was a transition year with the purchase of the Family Practice Clinic and finding new doctors and providers, he said.

The hospital, said Mr. Harris, might have to look at staff issues. If the volume stays down, then the hospital is going to have to look at cutting the staff.

The bottom line is that the hospital lost \$650,000, he said. All that, said board member Kathy Nauer, isn't really lost because the hospital made some major purchases.

Yes, Mr. Harris replied, the hos-

pital bought the clinic and basically started from scratch, but the audit does show a loss.

Cash flow and assets are two different things, said board member Pete Zander. The hospital had a clean audit report, he said, although there are a few notes.

There were a few adjustments that needed to be made, said Mr. Harris. There were times that items on the board's books didn't get transferred to the hospital's books. He said he did talk to the person who does the books, and most of those adjustments were due to investments. That will be handled quarterly from now on, he said.

Mr. Harris said the board's depreciation isn't being recorded, but needs to be. He added that he isn't really worried about these things, but all of the figures do need to be recorded in the hospital's books, too.

The computer system for payroll needs to be adjusted because the system is trying to overpay people because of the every-two-week payroll.

Mr. Harris said the bond lawyer wants the hospital to look at its figures and make sure it can keep making the payments for bonds issued to build the speciality clinic with the change in its financial status.

The board took copies of the audit, but didn't approve it. The audit will be on the agenda in May for approval, members said.

Company offers discounted Internet

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The cable provider serving Oberlin is offering discounted high-speed Internet for families with children who qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program at school.

Dennis Weese, community relations and commercial sales director with Eagle Communications of Hays, said the Connect2Compete program is based on the idea that broadband access helps students, especially those who might not be able to afford it. If one or more children in a household qualified for the state-federal lunch program, the family is eligible for the reduced-price Internet.

"Eagle Communications believes technology is one of the greatest tools students can have both in and out of the classroom," said Travis Kohlrus, general manager of the firm's broadband division. "We are also very aware that not all students have the same access to high-speed Internet services in their homes."

With this program, said Mr. Weese, the family could get high-speed Internet for \$9.95 a month.

Those interested in the program don't have to be Eagle customers. If

they are customers though, he said, they have to be in good standing, with bills paid on time.

Eagle plans to offer this program in all towns where the company already offers the Internet, he said. Customers usually have to live inside the city limits to get cable service, however.

He said the company will start hooking people up through this program as soon as they start calling.

"Educators know that Internet access is key for students to succeed with more technology-based school work," said Mr. Weese. "Eagle Communications is honored to participate in a program that will help more students have online access in their homes. We don't want to see any student lose an opportunity because they couldn't get access to the Internet."

Parents who are interested in the plan can go to the company's website at www.eaglecom.net and download the application.

The application includes the name, address and phone number of the person applying. It also asks for the names of children who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, their grade and school.

Food bank to get help from farmers, company

Craig and Dennis Ritter, farmers in the Jennings area, recently had a chance to help the Decatur County Food Pantry by designating \$2,500 to the organization through America's Farmers Grow Communities program, sponsored by the Monsanto Fund.

Monsanto, a major supplier of farm chemicals, gives its customers in each county a chance to win \$2,500 for their favorite nonprofit organization. The Ritter brothers, the winners in Decatur County,

directed the donation to the Food Pantry. The organization, sponsored by the Decatur County Ministerial Association, will use the \$2,500 to pay for vouchers at Raye's Grocery for fresh items and to replace supplies.

"I am very happy to be able to help my community through this donation to the food pantry," said Dennis Ritter.

A giant check was presented to the pantry in a ceremony April 17 at the United Church. Present were Melanie Anderson, administrator of the food bank; Jan Matheny, a volunteer; Pastor Linda Willey, (See FOOD on Page 5A)

