

First test well fails to pump enough

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
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Oberlin's plans of getting water out of the Ogallala Aquifer to replace its contaminated wells took a step back last week as the first test well failed to pump an adequate supply.

Chris Miller of Miller and Associates, the city's engineers, told the City Council at its meeting Thursday that initial tests of four

new well sites outside of town had shown that sites No. 1 and No. 4 should be the best. Nos. 2 and 3 did not seem like they would pump enough water, he said.

So after a test well was drilled in No. 4, he said, it was pumped but it only came up with 115 gallons a minute. Wells now being used in town both pump 400 gallons a minute, which is enough to provide water for the town and fill the water

tower. However, he noted, before the city has to go back to planning an expensive water treatment plant to remove arsenic and uranium from the water supply and then spend upwards to \$100,000 a year to dispose of the contaminants, he has a few other ideas.

He said he would suggest that the city look at a battery of wells, up to four wells within 600 feet of each other. Together they might pump

enough for one good well.

The problem with the battery, he said, is that it would require extra pieces of equipment. Everything is small, he noted, but there has to be more of it, so the price goes up some.

There is also an old well near where they are drilling that supplied water for an oil field operation, he said. The well is no longer being used and the landowner has given

permission for the city to see if it will pump enough to make it a viable municipal well.

So far, Mr. Miller said, only the No. 4 test well has been drilled. However, if the council wants, he can have No. 1, which also looks promising, drilled.

He said that he thought the city should look at both the battery of wells and the old supply well also. "I'd hate to give up the fight now,"

he told the council.

The council members agreed with him.

"Pump your well drilling site," suggested Councilman Rob McFee. "I don't think you should slow down."

The council authorized Mr. Miller to try the other wells and the old supply well and report back at the next regular meeting, which will be at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 7.

Memorial Day ceremonies set for cemeteries

The Oberlin American Legion will hold Memorial Day Services at the Oberlin Cemetery on Monday. Volunteers will put up 244 American flags given by the families of deceased veterans. For a complete listing of the veterans whose flags have been donated to the American Legion, see Page 4B.

Services will start at 10 a.m. with members of the American Legion, Sons of the American Legion and Legion Auxiliary helping, said Commander Rollie Avery.

The posting of the national colors will be done by Gary Jensen and the National Anthem will be sung by Samantha Anderson.

Chaplain Stan Chapin will give the opening prayer and Jim Miesner will place a wreath at the newly restored veterans' memorial

Juliet Madsen, a wounded Army combat veteran of the Iraq War and published author, will speak.

Everyone is invited.
NORCATUR

Marilyn Barnett Perry will give the Memorial Day address at 2 p.m. on Sunday at the Norcatur Cemetery. There will be a parade to the cemetery, beginning at 1:30 p.m. from the corner by The Bank. Pastor Ed Woods will give the opening prayer.

Andrea Marshall Spanier will sing "The Star Spangled Banner." A volley will be fired to honor all veterans who have died during the past year to close the service.

The Avenue of Flags will be put up at 7 a.m. Sunday and volunteers are needed to help put he flags up and take them down.

Lunch will be served in the multipurpose room in the Norcatur City Building (the old grade school) from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

In case of bad weather, the service will be held at the old Norcatur High School gym. The Methodist Educational Building will be open following the service.

(See MEMORIAL on Page 5A)

Government wants reasoning for a longer runway

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
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Even as workers scrape away the old pavement on the existing runway during Phase I of reconstruction at the Oberlin Airport, the government is asking if the city really needs the new, longer runway which is Phase II of the overall project.

City Administrator Karen Larson told the Oberlin City Council at its meeting Thursday that she received an e-mail from Jeff Deitering, an engineer with the Federal Aviation Administration in Kansas City, noting that the city needs two items to continue with Phase II of the project, which would include a new 5,000-foot northwest-southeast runway which could be expanded to 7,000 feet.

The first, and maybe most difficult, is a new justification for the project.

"In 2007," Mr. Deitering wrote, "when we first started planning for a new runway at your airport, it was based on a need by a local manufacturer (BCI) and a forecast of having 10 aircraft based and several hundred operations of our design group II at the airport by 2012 — these were the justifications for the new runway."

"Since then we've had a recession and it appears BCI scaled back their presence in the area and the latest (5-1) Master Record for the

airport shows only five aircraft at the airport."

If the city can come up with a new justification for building the new runway, he added, the government needs assurance that the city can come up with the 10 percent match required as the local share of the project. This is estimated to be \$815,858.

Mrs. Larson told the council that she had just received the e-mail that afternoon.

"It puts us in kind of a curious position," said Mayor Bill Riedel. "It appears to me that the bottom fell out of our justification. It's going to be really tough."

Councilman Rusty Addleman asked if the city's need for an air ambulance system would be a good justification, but Mr. Riedel said he had looked that up and Oberlin had only 12 air evacuations from the airport in 2010, 12 in 2011 and seven so far this year, three of them when the helicopter that also serves the hospital, was in for repairs.

Mr. Addleman suggested that the city should get together with the airport advisory board, Economic Development Corp. and anyone else interested in the airport and see what could be hashed out.

The mayor set a special meeting for 7 p.m. Thursday, May 31, to discuss the problem.



IN THE LIBRARY at Decatur Community High School, Nolan Henningson (above left), honored student, and Dalton Jones, valedictorian of the Class of 2012, practiced their speeches before graduation on Saturday. Miranda Shelton (below) gave her parents the thumbs-up sign after she received her diploma — Herald staff photos by Kim Davis

Seniors receive diplomas

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Dressed in long red-and-silver robes, 23 Decatur Community High School seniors walked into the gym Saturday afternoon with smiles on their faces.

All that stood between them and their future was the upcoming ceremony, where they would receive their much-anticipated diplomas.

Three students in the Class of 2012 rose to the top in rankings, said Principal Ben Jimenez: Nolan Henningson, honored student; Tyler Shields, salutatorian; and Dalton Jones, valedictorian.

Ten months ago, said Mr. Henningson, he was enjoying his last summer of high school and happy with the way things were. He said the future scared him; he had no idea what he would major in or where to go to school.

With the start of his senior year, he said, three words entered his vocabulary: senior, graduation and college.

Senior year, said Mr. Henningson, was the time to figure things out. One thing he figured out was that graduation doesn't mean the end of something.

It's the final page in one chapter of his life. He said he and his class are off to the next chapter in their lives.

The class is ready for the next stage for the future, he added.

It's crazy to believe, said Mr. Shields, that they all have made it here. It seems like only yesterday the Class of 2012 was in the sixth grade, putting on a production of



"When in Rome."

Mr. Shields thanked his coach and teacher, Dick Ahlberg, during his speech. Running through a list of the classes' accomplishments, he said he could stand there all day and talk about how all of his classmates had done well.

"We will excel, no matter what we do," he said.

There were often times that people said we couldn't do something, he added, but the class always rose and did whatever it was told couldn't be done.

Mr. Jones said he was new to Oberlin the summer before his freshman year, and his only con-

cern was running Mr. Ahlberg's required 100 miles so he could get a free cross country shirt.

The Class of 2012 is a friendly and talented group of students, he said, adding that he could name accomplishment after accomplishment of the class both academically and athletically.

Without the help of the coaches, teachers, parents, friends and community, though, the class couldn't have done all that it has.

This class, said Mr. Jimenez, has left a permanent mark on his life in the single school year he has known them.

Before watching a senior slide

show put together by Mika Hackney, Mr. Jimenez thanked the teachers, parents, grandparents and great-grandparents of these kids. He also thanked two "special" teachers who are retiring this year, Randy Olson and Mr. Ahlberg.

The seniors received their diplomas, switched their tassels from one side to the other and the Class of 2012 became the newest members of the Decatur Community High School alumni.

Alumni tab inside

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the fourth annual Alumni section featuring graduates of Decatur Community High School anniversary classes just in time for the annual alumni weekend, reunions and banquet at The Gateway.

The section includes stories and pictures about classes that graduated in 1937, 1942, 1952, 1962,

THE OBERLIN HERALD'S
Welcome Alumni
Featuring the 10-year alumni classes of Decatur Community High School

Decatur Community High School Anthem

1937, 1982, 1987, 1992 and 2002.

