

*Newcomer wants to save city's money

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Mr. Bowen said this is not the first time he has been called on to defend the Constitution of the United States. He served 15 years in the Navy, he said, touring the Mediterranean and Red seas and serving in Operation Desert Storm.

Mr. Bowen said his goals are clear: He wants to save money, cut expenses and curtail city ordinances that he sees as a violation of constitutional rights.

"I'd like to stop the hemorrhaging," he said, "the money going out of here the last year is ridiculous ... I think the pool project is a waste of money. I think our current pool could be repiped and be just fine. The city can't afford \$2.5 million right now."

"The current ordinance (on blighted property) is a clear violation of our constitutional rights — it's against the law to refuse right of entry, specifically. And that's against the Fourth Amendment."

"Right of entry is about when she (Jan Ackerman, the code enforcement officer employed by the city to enforce the blighted property ordinance) can enter a property, and according to our ordinance, it says that 'it shall be a violation of this code to deny the officer the right of access and entry of private property ...,' which is against the Fourth and Fifth Amendments, and Article 15 of the Kansas Bill of Rights."

The Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guards against unreasonable searches and seizures, and also requires a warrant for these, as well as a showing of probable cause. The Fifth protects citizens

from abuse of government authority in legal procedures. And lastly, Article 15 of the Kansas Bill of Rights states the "right of the people to be secure in their persons and property against unreasonable searches and seizures shall be inviolate; and no warrant shall issue but on probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or property to be seized."

Mr. Bowen said he moved here from Central City, Colo. He lived there for seven years and in Denver for 14. He bought a house in Oberlin when his mother fell ill, and he came home to take care of her. She has since passed away, but Mr. Bowen remained, working as a handyman. His father, Marlin Bowen, owns Cabin Antiques.

"It's a great town," he said about Oberlin, "but when I moved here, it seemed a lot better than it does now. I felt that people were a lot more friendly than they are today, and I don't understand why."

"I'm kind of hoping to pull the community together, and I would like to see a Community Day, like one day out of the month when we all get together and help these people with blighted properties. I think we need a date and time to come out and do it — something solid for people to plan around."

Mr. Bowen said that anyone and everyone is welcome to talk to him regarding city policies and actions. He encouraged people to e-mail him through the city website, www.oberlinks.com. E-mail for council members may be sent to citycouncil@oberlinkansas.gov.



\$1,000 SHOPPING SPREE WINNER Lyle Hilker decided to spend part of his prize on supplies for the food pantry, which said that macaroni and cheese was their No. 1 item in demand. He said he also made a payment on an air conditioner he had to replace this summer at R&M Service Center. — Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp

*Winner shops here

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gregations in collecting for the pantry. When they realized they'd won the prize again, she said, they called up the pantry to see what people needed.

Peanut butter and macaroni and cheese were the top hits, she said, so they put in an order with Raye's Grocery owner Kirk Brown for those items and others in bulk. They still didn't spend the prize all in one place.

"We didn't have an air conditioner this summer," Mr. Hilker said. "It went out the day it was 117 degrees. Our house was built in the 1950s, and I guess the furnace and air conditioner

both hadn't been replaced since then."

When they ordered a new air conditioner from R&M Service Center, the man who came to help install it said that there was no room for the new machinery with a furnace that big, so they were forced to replace both the air conditioner and furnace — and it doubled the price.

So the rest of the prize went toward ensuring this winter's heat and next summer's cooling. And hopefully, in the end, a little more warmth in the bellies of those who need it in these hard times.

*Power bills, rates will be studied

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collection rates to make sure that revenues and costs are aligned so the city won't come up short at the end of the year. Mrs. Larson said that results of the review should be available by the next meeting.

• Heard back from the city's insurance firm that the breaker and switches the city bought for repair of the electrical substation cost \$23,000. They also heard that three cooling fans and six radiators in the transformer that is being repaired are bad, which will cost another \$25,000, for a total of \$48,000 that the insurance company will be paying. They have already paid \$430,000 so far, and will pay up to \$500,000 for the repairs, which should be complete by October.

• Decided to hire someone to do the city's mowing, which Mrs. Larson said will cost about \$17,000,

which is considerably less than they would have to pay were they to hire a full-time groundskeeper for city property.

• Heard that the ballot for the swimming pool tax issue went to the courthouse and will be printed in this and next week's issues of *The Oberlin Herald*.

• Heard from water manager Willard Perrin that the annual sewer cleaning will begin on Monday, Aug. 27, west of U.S. 83 and south of Ash Street. It will be in the same district as the hospital, and homes that will be affected will receive tags regarding the process. He also reported that water use was down to about 600,000 gallons a day, and only hit 700,000 one day recently. The city's wells are down a total of about 5 feet since the drought started, he said.

*Local bank owner gets 50-year award

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10 locations, including Oberlin, Jennings, Herndon, Atwood, Norcatur, Colby, Norton, Selden and Oakley.

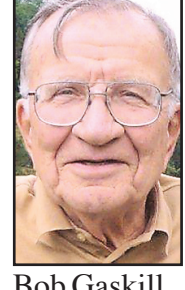
Bauer Financial has consistently awarded The Bank its highest "Five Star" rating, and the bank is one of four its size in Kansas holding an "Outstanding Community Reinvest Act" rating. In 1995, the *Farm Journal* recognized The Bank as "the best place in Kansas to get farm financing."

In 1996 Mr. Gaskill received the title "Best Farm Lender" from *American Banker*, published in New York.

Today, The Bank carries not only a Preferred Lender designation but also is the "Top Farm Service Agency Lender" in the state. Mr. Gaskill has been active in the state Bankers Association, having served on the Federal Affairs committee, governing council and board.

Besides banking, he has been in the cattle and ranching business near Trinidad, Colo., and owns and manages the Turkey Creek Ranch in Wallace County.

He and his wife of 49 years, have a son, Guy, who is executive vice president and manager of The Bank at Winona, and two daughters, Lori Gaskill, of Lakewood, Colo., and Mrs. Metcalf. They have seven grandchildren.



Bob Gaskill

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