

Student hurt in car wreck

One of three young men injured in a car crash last Wednesday near Leoville, Jaime Labrado of Selden, died Saturday at Wesley Medical Center in Wichita.

Funeral services for Jaime, a junior at Golden Plains High School in Rexford, will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 12, 2012, at the Golden Plains Grade School Gym in Selden, with burial in the Selden Cemetery.

Golden Plains Superintendent Mary

Ellen Welshon said today the district will dismiss classes at 12:30 p.m. so teachers and students can attend.

She said until then, the district was trying to keep things "as normal as possible."

Meantime, the other two youths continued to improve at Wesley. Colten Wachendorfer, 17, who had been driving that night, and Jesse Mumm 18, Vian, Okla., went from critical to fair condition. Monday, both had been upgraded to good condition, the best

report, a nursing supervisor said. Both remained in the hospital, however.

"We have support people for the kids to talk to," said Mrs. Welshon at the school. "We're just really trying to do everything we can for the families, the kids and the community."

"We just want to support our kids ... the best we can. We're trying to keep things as normal as we can."

While outside counselors have come to

help, she added, it seems like the kids mostly have been talking with each other and with the Golden Plains staff, teachers and others they know. She said the mood was "very sad, very concerned" Monday morning.

"We'll continue to have support for our kids," she added.

The three teens were flown to the Wichita hospital Wednesday night after their car skidded sideways through a stop sign and rolled into a ditch about seven miles east of

Selden on K-23.

Trooper John Gizzarelli of the Kansas Highway Patrol reported that Wachendorfer, 17, was driving north in a 2002 Pontiac Firebird about 9:45 p.m. As he approached the end of the pavement northbound at the intersection with K-123, he apparently realized he was about to run the stop sign and hit the brakes.

The car skidded sideways through the intersection and rolled into a ditch about seven miles east of Selden on K-23. (See STUDENTS on Page 8A)

Electric rates to go higher due to demand

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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Oberlin's city electric rates will be going up by 4 to 5 percent because the demand has increased so dramatically over the summer, the City Council decided at its meeting Thursday.

City Administrator Karen Larson said Sunflower Electric Power Corp. of Hays is the only electricity supplier available to the city, and when the city renewed its seven-year contract with the company last spring, it didn't foresee the coming drought. Come budget time last month, the city found itself \$90,000 short on what it needed to keep up

electricity.

Mrs. Larson then said that after looking the budget, she'd hired a company called Power System Engineering, which has worked with Prairie Land Electric of Norton in the past, to go over the rates the city pays and the city's current charges to come up with a rate plan that would be fair for everyone.

Based on the firm's recommendations, the council approved a new rate schedule for the city Thursday.

Currently, residential customers pay a \$5 service charge and an average of about \$81.58 a month for (See RATES on Page 5A)

Loan to pay for water project; bills will increase

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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The Oberlin City Council has decided to take out a loan with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to pay for the water project, which could save \$4 million, but will increase household water bills by about \$1.30 a month.

The council met with Miller and Associates, the McCook engineering firm handling the project, at a special meeting Aug. 30 with the council, city staff and crew and the city's engineers, to hear updates on the progress of the project as

well as make decisions on money, hear about deadlines and decide on things like blending wells and how the city should pipe in the new water.

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture has offered to give the city the loan for the project," explained Chris Miller, who ran the meeting. "With a 2.5 percent interest rate over a term of 40 years, the loan would result in a total payment of about \$8.4 million."

"With the KDHE loan," Mr. Miller said, "the repayment will be over a 20-year term and result in a (See WATER on Page 8A)

Volunteers to help property owners

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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The City Council heard Thursday that a volunteer task force is being organized to help people who say they can't afford, or aren't able, to meet the terms of the city's blighted property ordinance, but Code Enforcement Officer Jan Ackerman would be staying.

The move was framed as a response to people who were upset with the way the city has been enforcing the ordinance. Many people who attended the last council meet-

ing, Thursday, Aug. 16, had called for Mrs. Ackerman to step down. The council stopped short of this, but offered some compromises to ease tensions.

City Administrator Karen Larson said she and Police Chief Troy Haas met with Eric Swegle, who had made an impassioned speech against the ordinance at the Aug. 16 meeting, and Mike Gawith, a member of the Decatur Tomorrow Beautification committee. The four reviewed what people said needed (See BLIGHTED on Page 8A)

School Food



WHILE SECOND HELPINGS of a main dish are no longer allowed during school lunches, youngsters like Ashley Treese (above), a student at Decatur Community High, are allowed as many servings as they like from the salad bar.

- Herald staff photo by Stephanie DeCamp

Lunch program makes changes

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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If you hear your kids grumbling about school lunches this week, you can blame the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which has changed the school lunch program in an effort to curb childhood obesity.

A lot of parents are upset about the changes, saying their kids are coming home hungrier than ever.

"I don't like when the government mandates how I can raise my kids, and how they're fed," said Susan May, whose two children attend Oberlin schools. "There's no way any football player or athlete is able to go from lunchtime to

6:30 p.m. after practice with the small portion they're feeding them.

"And when they don't get fed, how can they perform academically to the high standards they're expected to? I've read studies that say hungry children don't perform academically."

"It's a one size fits all plan, and my children aren't obese. They exercise daily. Kids have physical education at school, and if they're obese, the parents need to step up and take care of that. I don't think the school or government should have to solve every problem in our lives."

One of the big problems that parents are upset about is that there is now a cap on the

amount of protein and calories that students can have at any given meal. They are no longer allowed to go for seconds if there is food left. They are, however, allowed as many servings as they like from the salad bar.

"Honestly, I think it's stupid," said 14-year-old KeAnn Jacobs at Friday's hamburger tailgate. "The servings are about as big as my fist - I'm not a big fan of it. I'm a person that likes meat. If I don't have enough, I start shaking."

According to a statement from Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback, who attended a summit on obesity in Topeka on Thursday, almost one (See SCHOOL on Page 8A)

Mini Sappa Antique show ready to run

The 32nd annual Mini Sappa Antique Thresher and Engine Show is gearing up for this weekend, beginning at 9 a.m. at the fairground, and will feature everything from antique cars and farm equipment to games, demonstrations and tractor pulls.

"It's all about friendships and just the camaraderie that we have as a group," said Vickie Lippelmann, secretary of the Mini Sappa Antique Thresher and Engine Club. "We have some really neat people involved."

The show will include raffles for a club-made quilt and a 1948 John Deere Model A tractor. Both projects were started in January by club members, Mrs. Lippelmann said, and the drawing will be held

after the parade on Sunday.

The show will feature quilts, vintage tractors, cars and trucks, antique farm machinery, farm toys and model displays, demonstrations, tractor pulls, parades twice a day, and more, she said. Food will be available all day, she said, "and the lady that makes the ham and beans can't be beat."

For the past two years, Mrs. Lippelmann said, they've had weather problems, with one day being cold or rainy and the other being fine, so they're hoping it goes better this year.

"We're hoping for two really good days," she said. "That helps with the crowds. It's really a nice family environment."



Hydrants show up in patriotic colors

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP

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If you've been looking around as you drive lately, you'll have noticed something patriotic - and I'm not just talking about all the stars and stripes in store windows. Someone has been sneaking around, painting Oberlin's fire hydrants.

Paint Oberlin Patriotic is a group of women who decided it was time to bring back some of the excitement of election year. Instead of partisan bickering and negative television ads, they started a contest for the home, business or public building with the most patriotic decorations,

which would win a \$100 prize come election day.

And that's where the fire hydrants came in. Marcia Lohoefer, a member of the club, said that the members thought of the idea, got permission from the city and then made an announcement at Decatur Community High, looking for volunteers. Then art teacher Terry Woolsey organized the group of students who went out to put their own mark on that often overlooked city staple. Some of the kids are even getting points with the National Honor Society for their work. (See HYDRANTS on Page 10A)



Legion nominates man for national job

Michael D. Helm of Norcat, an Army veteran who served during the Vietnam War, has been nominated by the Department of Nebraska as a candidate for national commander of the American Legion.

A 41-year member of the Jack Helt American Legion Post in Lebanon, Neb., Mr. Helm served with the 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, N.C., and earned his Ranger tab during the winter of 1972.

(See VETERAN on Page 5A)



Mike Helm



