

Chamber changes course

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
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With a proposed merger with the Oberlin Business Alliance and the resignation of its manager and a board member, you might think that the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce would be shaking in its boots – but it's not.

Manager Carolyn Hackney, citing a difference of opinion about the Chamber's "new direction," resigned last week. Her last day was to be Monday. Board member Marvin Slabaugh also resigned at Wednesday's board meeting, saying that he can no longer make it to the meetings due to work.

But there was an unexpected benefit to the shake-up, as the board decided it won't be hiring a replacement for Ms. Hackney, which frees up the money spent on her salary for other activities. Chamber President David Swank said that this dovetails well with the new vision for the organization he has been touting since he was elected at the Sept. 5 meeting.

That vision, he said, is to join forces with the alliance and the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. The alliance, he said, already focuses its energies on businesses that are already here. The Chamber, he said, should be working with the economic development agency to bring new business in.

Because there is no longer someone at the office to take phone calls, the board decided, the Chamber phone will be forwarded to the cell phone of a designated board member. If anyone has any questions or needs help, they can still call the main number, (785) 475-3441, said Chamber Secretary Sharleen Wurm.

Committees were assigned to work on upcoming Chamber projects. The board will be busy through the holiday season, and many events are right around the corner.

First off was the "welcome wagon" program, headed by Treasurer Ruth Miesner. Many items have already been donated for the wel-

come bags, she reported, including handouts from different businesses, coupons, a list of churches in town, and some very nice portfolios and other resources. New residents can sign up to receive the bundle when they go to the city offices to establish utility services, she said, and it will be delivered by a board member. Someone will call back a week later to see if the new resident needs anything.

Mr. Swank said the program will likely start up after Christmas.

Next up is the Kansas Holiday Craft Show, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 24, at The Gateway. The Chamber plans a bake sale this year, and lunch will be served by the Gateway staff. The board expects at least 55 booths featuring leather craft, jewelry, baked goods, kitchenware, Tupperware, needlecraft and more.

After that will be the Christmas Shopping Expo which should be similar to last year, said Mr. Swank, and will feature a holiday bake sale to benefit the Chamber. It will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1, at the Old Bohemian Hall of the Decatur County Museum. Almost all of the spots have filled up for this event, said Mrs. Wurm. More information will be coming closer to the date.

Board member Carrie Morford will head up a committee for the annual door decoration fund raiser. The Chamber is debating what to do for its annual decoration fund-raiser sale, but according to Amanda Grafel, who is heading the project, they may be doing something other than their traditional ribbons for the storefronts. They should know within a couple of days, she said.

If you have any questions, said Mrs. Wurm, call the Chamber or any board member, including herself, Mr. Swank, Vice President Mrs. Grafel, Mrs. Miesner, Mrs. Morford, Rick Thomeczek, Shelby Hackney, Deb Smith, Ken Badsky, Galen Olson or Whitney True Francis.

Getting a special tattoo



KASEE SMITH GAVE Amanda Grafel a temporary glitter tattoo at Ward Drug during the annual Business to Business tour on Sunday night. About 25 to 30 people made the tour, during which merchants showed each other what the town has to offer for the holidays.

— Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

Groups look at merging

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**
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The Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce board members proposed joining forces with the Oberlin Business Alliance during a meeting last Wednesday and agreed to go to the alliance's meeting today, where the alliance said they would consider it.

The proposal comes on the heels of some big changes at the Chamber, including the resignation of manager Carolyn Hackney, who said prior to the meeting that she decided to part ways with the organization because she didn't agree with its new direction.

That direction, which is being spearheaded by Chamber President David Swank, includes using the money previously used to pay Ms. Hackney to broaden Chamber activities instead of hiring a new manager.

Mr. Swank proposed a merger of sorts with the alliance, the crux of which will be dual membership in both organizations. Today, if a business wants to join both, Mr. Swank said, it has to pay dues to both, which amounts to \$200. But Chamber membership is down, he said. Member Kurt Vollertsen said the alliance's numbers haven't changed in the last few years. Any way you look at it, Mr. Swank insisted, both groups should come out ahead.

The alliance has been helping pay the manager's salary of \$12,000 a year. Now that they don't – and apparently won't – have to do that, both should have more to spend, Mr. Swank said. If they work together and solicit members together, he added, then they can probably get even more money for bigger projects.

After the resignation of Ms. Hackney, there seemed to be concern among board members that the Chamber itself was either going to evolve or die out – a concern others were quick to dispel.

"Nothing is falling apart," said Chamber Secretary Sharleen Wurm the day after the meeting. "Each board member is stepping up and sharing the work. People can still call the Chamber for anything they need, or they can always call one of the board members."

Seven got all but one right

While no one got all the games right, seven contestants came up with seven out of eight correct on this week's Pigskin Pick'em contest.

Brett Amberger of Colby came up with seven correct and was within two points of the correct score of the Fort Hays State University victory over Nebraska-Kearney. The Kansas team downed the Lopers 30-24.

He wins the first prize, \$15 in scrip.

The second-place award of \$10 goes to Gary Anderson, Oberlin, who had seven right and believed that Fort Hays could beat the Nebraska boys.

Wilbur Reichert, Dresden, wins the \$5 third prize. He had seven right and although he thought that Fort Hays would lose, his score was the next closest.

Others coming up with seven right were Cheri Kastens, Herndon; Tom Martin and Tyler Bruggeman, Oberlin; and Anna Carter, Jennings.

Those guessing six out of eight were Jordan Davenport, Kelly Brown, Rusty Adleman, Jerry Schuetz, Ryan Leitner and Alex Heeger, Oberlin, and Megan Carter, Jennings.

Picking five out of eight were Clayton Carter, Jennings, and Warren Bainter and Tim Hrnchir, Ober-

lin

All eligible scores are recorded. At the end of the contest, the contestant picking the most correct games will receive a trophy and \$50 in scrip money.

Winnings can be spent only at the sponsors: Ward Drug Store, the LandMark Inn, Fredrickson Insurance Agency, Decatur Co-op, Hanson Mueller, Creative Collision and *The Oberlin Herald*.

Other scores this week:

- Texas Tech over Kansas, 41-34 (2OT).
- Arizona over Colorado, 56-31.
- Kansas State over TCU, 23-10.
- Nebraska over Penn State, 32-23.
- Oklahoma over Baylor, 42-34.
- Oklahoma State over West Virginia, 55-34.
- Colorado State over University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 33-11.
- Missouri over Tennessee, 51-48.

Jennings woman hurt in two-vehicle wreck

A Jennings woman was injured last Tuesday eight miles north of Jennings when another vehicle drifted over to the left and the two collided head-on.

Lardrick Alexander, 48, Jennings, was driving north about two miles south of U.S. 36, the Kansas

Highway Patrol reported. A southbound 1984 Ford Bronco driven by Kenneth R. Krizek, 79, Jennings, apparently crossed left of center, colliding head-on with Mr. Alexander's pickup. The truck was driven back into the east ditch.

A passenger in the pickup, Barbara

Szweistis, 73, Jennings, was taken to the Decatur County Hospital. The report said she was not wearing a seat belt. Mr. Anderson and another passenger, Kelly Stamm, 22, Oberlin, were not injured. The patrol said both were wearing seat belts.

Mr. Krizek was not injured. He

also was wearing a seat belt.

A representative of Decatur County Hospital said that no information about the condition of Ms. Szweistis could be given out.

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Ideal Experience

- 10-15 years' experience with mid-sized manufacturing company,
- BS Degree in Engineering
- 5-10 years previous experience in machining of castings
- Knowledge of Microsoft Office and SYMIX
- Aggressive, organized, Self-starter, Strong team building skills, Self-assured
- Good problem solving skills, Good verbal and written communication skills, Goal oriented

CNC Set-up Programmer

- CNC Set-up Programmer with experience programming on Okuma and Mori Seiki mills and lathes. Able to work independently. Required skills: 5+ years experience, CNC set-up Programmer, CNC operator, Tooling experience. Aggressive, organized, Self-starter, Strong team building skills, Self-assured
- Good problem solving skills, Good verbal and written communication skills, Goal oriented
- CNC Machinists: 3+ years CNC experience, Tooling experience. Aggressive, organized, Self-starter, Strong team building skills, Self-assured, Good problem solving skills, Good verbal and written communication skills, Goal oriented.

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