

Mother-daughter duo helps Oberlin

By RAMELL TAYLOR
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Teresa Diederich and Danielle Leitner joined different organizations that work on different projects, but the mother-daughter duo share the same passion to serve their community.

Mrs. Diederich is president of the Decatur County Firemen's Wives, which has worked on a donation drive for the victims of the Black Forest fire near Colorado Springs, and more recently, coordinated activities for Oberlin's first Fourth of July Festival.

"The best part of the festival," she said, "was seeing so many people come together."

Mrs. Diederich said she is already planning for the second annual Firemen's Ball Oct. 12 to raise money for fire trucks for Norcat, Jennings and Oberlin.

Mrs. Diederich, whose husband Rocky is a long-time volunteer firefighter, said once she is invested in something, she develops a burning desire to see things get accomplished.

"When we get an idea," she said, "we implement it, and it gets done. We never say we can't do something; we just find an alternative."

Mrs. Leitner has been a member of the Oberlin Pool Committee, which planned and campaigned for the city's pool project. She said she helped merge the Decatur Tomorrow and Oberlin pool project websites onto oberlinks.com. She ran for the Oberlin City Council this spring, just missing a seat by two votes.

"I wanted to create a website that's full of information about the community," she said. "It's a good tool, because you can go to the community calendar to upload an event, and see if there is an event already scheduled for that day."



COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS Danielle Leitner (left) and Teresa Diederich have been volunteering their time towards various community activities such as the Fourth of July Festival and the new swimming pool project.

—Herald staff photo by Ramell Taylor

Mrs. Leitner said because she and her husband Jeff have two children, Isabelle, 4, and Tessa, 2, most of her work on the city's website is done at home because it's convenient.

Her future projects, she said, include making an appearance at the Community 5K Run with intentions of taking the prize for

best costume.

"I don't know what I'm going to wear," she said, "but it will be something outlandish."

Mother and daughter agreed that nothing they've done so far would have been possible without the help from others in their organizations. Mrs. Leitner praises her fellow members of the pool

committee for all that they contribute. Mrs. Diederich notes that sponsors have made a lot of city events possible.

"Having done things that are positive," Mrs. Diederich said, "maybe there will be a lot less negatives in the community."

Former policeman comes back to town

By RAMELL TAYLOR
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Brad Burmaster, a former Oberlin City police officer, has returned to town and taken the job as assistant chief at the Oberlin Police Department.

He started back with the force on July 1.

Assistant Chief Burmaster served Oberlin for three years before moving to Nebraska where he was an officer on the McCook Police Department for three years.

He said he is very pleased that Oberlin gave him the career opportunity to come back home.

One of the reasons, Mr. Burmaster said, he wanted to come back to Oberlin was because he had great memories working with the residents and his colleagues.

"I like this city because they have always treated me well," he said. "Working with guys like Chief Troy Haas and Officer Scott

Zeigler makes the experience that much better."

Assistant Chief Burmaster brings his wife Brenda and son Aubrey back to town. The couple enjoys motor racing together.

"We race around the surrounding areas," he said. "We had a race last Saturday in Benkelman, Neb."

Besides spending time with family, Mr. Burmaster said, he and his wife have a huge Wizard of Oz memorabilia collection.

He said Oberlin will always be a place he can call his home. Not only does he have a lot of family and friends in town, but he started his career here.

"I learned how to be a police officer in the city of Oberlin," Mr. Burmaster said. "Since working here, I've learned how important it is to work with the public as well as other police officers to keep the community safe."



B. Burmaster

Oberlin installs new park benches

There's several new places to sit along Main Street and at the parks around town, thanks to businesses and individuals paying for metal benches.

Each of the new benches lists the name of the business or individuals who sponsored the seats, said Walter Lewis, Sales Director of JLB Welding in McCook.

"The benches are made of solid steel," he said, "with a powder coat, and each weighing 135 pounds."

City Administrator Karen Larson said she thought the new benches created a friendly atmosphere for the city.

"It gives the city an open mall look," she said. "You can find the benches at the fairground, the main street downtown and the city parks."

Mr. Lewis said his crew will be installing a total of 35 benches. Some of the benches, he said, are still yet to be installed.

Grand Opry show every fourth Friday

The Calhouns and their guest, ventriloquist Joe Gandelman, performed during the Grand Oberlin Opry country music show at The Gateway last Friday.

Drummer Mel Thompson said the group performs in Oberlin every fourth Friday of the month, and features a variety of country music from classic to modern.

"We are a dance band," she said. "We'll perform as many as 30 songs per hour with country songs that date back to the 1920s and every once in a while play some classic rock."

Despite finishing up their wheat harvest only a couple of days before their performance, said Ms. Thompson, the group performed a two hour show that featured their lead singer, Jim Calhoun, in a harmonica solo that brought cheers from the audience.

"Not only can he play the harmonica," she said, "he can play the banjo, the mandolin and the violin, just to name a few."

After the concert, Mr. Gandelman made the audience laugh with a cast of puppets which included a bulldog, a shark, a turkey, a hound dog, and an infant. After his performance, he gave the audience tips on how to be a ventriloquist.

Ms. Thompson said the group has been playing together for about a year and a half, even though all three members have several years of music experience.

Next month's show, she said, will be at 7 p.m. Friday, Aug. 23, and will feature "America's favorite power nerd," Stanwood W. Sparrow.

Group has game nights every Saturday

By RAMELL TAYLOR
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There's a group that meets every Saturday evening for a game night at the Business Entrepreneurial Enhancement Center on Main Street.

Daniel Jordan, who has been a part of the tradition for more than four years, said the group plays anything from card games such as Yogi Oh! and War Hammer, to board games like Monopoly and Risk, and video games like xbox 360.

The group meets at 7 p.m., he said, and will continue all night until everyone agrees it's time to go home.

"Unless we get tired," he said, "or someone has to get up and go to work in the morning, we are there pretty late."

Mr. Jordan said the group draws a crowd varying anywhere from six to 10 people each Saturday.

The group, he said, has a tradition of doing "duel tournaments" and "snack runs" at 10 p.m.

"We get snacks as the night goes on," Mr. Jordan said. "as long as we don't have to travel too far."

Anyone is invited to come out, he said, but the group does prefer older crowds because the games the group play are complicated and the competition is tough.



KACI ZEIGER (left, and Richard Beaudette (middle) went head-to-head on the Xbox 360 while Michael Herzog (right) watched and waited for his turn.

City wants to put a stop to illegal use of utilities

If people get caught using city electricity and water illegally, they are going to have to pay for it.

At the Oberlin City Council meeting Thursday, members discussed an ordinance to charge a \$500 tampering fee for anyone caught using electricity and water from the city without paying for it.

City Administrator Karen Larson said there have been several reports of residents illegally using utilities provided by the city.

While there haven't been a huge number of reports of people stealing utilities, it's been enough to put an end to it.

"There needs to be a fee charged," she said "for people who try to tap into utilities without paying for them and the fee needs to be steep."

Under the ordinance, anyone caught stealing utilities would be subject to paying a reconnection fee as well as the \$500 fine in order to receive services from the city.

Police Chief Troy Haas said those caught in the past have had to pay \$300 in court costs.

The council voted unanimously on the ordinance as written. It will be subject to approval during the council meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

Giveaway to help 4-H groups and FFA

The Decatur County Farm Bureau Association will be having a giveaway to help the local FFA chapter and 4-H groups.


President Natasha Carman said the prizes for the giveaway include a Kindle Fire high definition package that includes a Scentsy warmer, a Rachael Ray Potluck, a blanket and a homemade tote bag, a Craftsman tool set and storage set valued at \$299 and a Miller wire welder valued at \$750.

Mrs. Carman said the prizes will be drawn at 6:30 on Thursday, Aug. 15, when they have their annual meeting at the Oberlin American

Legion. "All Farm Bureau members can reserve their spot at the meeting before Aug. 3," she said. "Any non-members, she said, who will be attending the drawing are welcome to stay for dinner at the cost of \$10 per plate."

Anyone interested in becoming a Farm Bureau member, Mrs. Carman said, can do so for \$45 per year, which would guarantee a spot at the raffle dinner after reservations are made.

Mrs. Carman said participants must be present to win the welder.



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