



A Victorian candle scone (below) got one last adjustment from Darla Dole, owner of Decor & More, 126 So. State. Mrs. Dole turned on a decorative lamp (above) in the southwest/western section of her showroom. — Telegram photos by Carolyn Plotts

'Just darling' describes new store

By CAROLYN PLOTTS
The common reaction of first-time shoppers when they enter Decor & More at 126 S. State, is one of surprise, usually followed by a comment such as, "Oh, this is just darling."
Darla Dole, has taken a leap of faith and opened her own business. "God put the idea in me," she said. "I call it 'Divine Inspiration'."
The showroom of Decor & More features room areas decorated in various themes. She has a garden area with several water fountains; a rose-themed bedroom; a kitchen setting with roosters; a safari section with monkeys and jungle prints; seaside decor; inspirational pieces; Victorian bathroom items; southwest pieces; and gifts for babies, children and hard-to-buy-for men.

As her youngest child was about to graduate from high school and leave home, Mrs. Dole began to wonder what she would do with herself. More and more the idea of a store featuring home decor began to take shape. "I've tried other things," she said. "But, here, a customer can see what they want, and take it home." She will also handle catalog sales if a customer can't find what they want in the store.
After much research, she became a distributor for World of Products. Not only does she have a fully-stocked retail outlet, but she also has a party plan. A hostess can have the party in her own home, or use the cozy atmosphere of Mrs. Dole's store.

Another aspect of her business plan includes holding fundraisers for local organizations. A club can choose from any of her catalogs, make their sales, and earn a sizeable percentage. Mrs. Dole has all the information at the store.
She also plans to carry the work of many more local crafters and artisans.
"This is all new to me," she said, "But, I'm having a ball."
"My husband, Gary, is very supportive. He's done a lot to help me get the store ready," said Mrs. Dole.

Mr. and Mrs. Dole recently celebrated their 20th wedding anniversary. They have two sons, Jamie and Joe, who both live in Manhattan. The Doles are members of Living Hope Fellowship.
Decor & More will have their grand opening and ribbon cutting in July. Store hours are 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday; 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday; closed Sunday and Monday.



— Telegram photos by Carolyn Plotts

Oberlin council looks at grant to lengthen runway

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

In a special meeting last Wednesday, the Oberlin City Council said yes to attempts to get a grant for a longer, wider runway at the Oberlin Airport to serve a firm that wants to buy the Jennings School.

City Administrator Gary Shike said he had met last Tuesday with Decatur County commissioners and members of the Oberlin-Decatur County Area Economic Development Corp. board, along with representatives of BCI, a bus company out of California which plans to buy the school.

The California firm hopes to create 20 jobs to start and then grow from there at a bus refurbishing plant at the old school.

An upholstery firm might move in as well, bringing more jobs, but the firms want easy access for corporate jets.

To improve the Oberlin airport, the city would have to get grants from the state or the Federal Aviation Administration, officials said.

The original idea was to build a 5,000-foot runway near Jennings so the company can fly large planes into the new location. Complications with the air strip stopped that plan.

Officials found out, for one thing, that it would be illegal to use county road equipment to grade a private runway.

Officials suggested improving the Oberlin Airport to provide a longer and wider landing strip for business jets. The plan shows a runway 75 feet wide and 4,800 feet long running northwest from the airport.

The council held the special meeting to discuss the plan with airport board members, a county commissioner and members of the economic development board.

Councilman Joe Stanley asked if the airport would have to be manned 24 hours a day. Bob Fraker, airport manager and fixed-base operator, said he didn't think so.

At the McCook Airport, he said, they have someone on call.
In the past, said Mr. Shike, the

Federal Aviation Administration has objected to the light poles in the parking lot of the fairground, saying that planes trying to take off and land have to go through that airspace.

Is an automated weather observation system still in the works for the airport? Gene Gallentine, an airport board member, asked. It is, said Mr. Shike, but he would probably try to stall it if they go forward with a new runway so the equipment will be in the right spot.

There are a number of things that would be nice about having a longer runway, said Mr. Shike. It could help get the government to pay for runway lighting and could be a benefit for other businesses.

"I think we have to try this," he said.

How much manpower is it going to take to pursue a grant from the Federal Aviation Administration? asked Councilwoman Rhonda May.

It is just paperwork, said Mr. Fraker.

The government would pay 95 percent of the project and the city 5 percent, said Mr. Shike. An engineer would help with the paperwork.

Mr. Shike said he talked with Bucher, Willis and Ratliff, the firm that did the original plan for the airport and drew up the alternate with the northwest-southeast runway.

They said the project could cost \$2.1 million.

Connie Grafel, marketing director with the economic development group and the city, said they need to get in writing that BCI said they will have 300 flights a year. This project has to be started now, she said.

Currently, the federal agency has \$50,000 allocated for the Oberlin Airport and possibly another \$543,000, said Ms. Grafel.

The group heard that the government wants 500 operations a year at the airport to help with

funding of a project. Mr. Stanley asked if air ambulances would count towards that number?

Yes, said Mr. Fraker. The group wasn't sure how many of those landings there were a year, but thought enough to help make up the extra 200 landings needed, if the company used the strip 300 times.

This all sounds positive, said Councilman Jay Anderson.

The council authorized the mayor to sign a memorandum saying that the city would do what it could to get the grant.

"This is the best thing to come along in a while," said Councilman Ray Ward. "We need to pursue it."

If this works, said Mr. Shike, it is probably the only way to improve the airport, using government money.

When the project is done, BCI isn't the only company that can use the air strip.

Mr. Shike said the city hasn't pursued the runway to the northwest before because it wasn't a realistic idea in the past, there just wasn't the need. Now there is a need.

He noted that the city would need to buy some land.

After the project is done, he added, the city will own the new runway.

Mr. Shike said he doesn't know how the project would affect taxes for city residents. The city will have to come up with a way to finance its share of a grant, which could be around \$100,000. It could be through taxes, but he said, he doesn't have any idea. The council didn't discuss that part of the plan.

Ms. Grafel asked if there should be a board to run the project. Mr. Shike said they have looked at setting up a public building corporation, which would be a board of three to nine people. They would help make decisions about projects like this.

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