

# County

## help shoppers enjoy others in downtown

owned by the Curry Brothers, who had a tombstone shop. No one knows for sure how the stones ended up on top of the building.

If visitors look at the bottom of buildings they will see small metal doors which were once used to shovel coal into the basements, to be used for heat.

Decatur County, is known for it's home-owned carnival, which draws thousands of people a year during the first full week of August. Each night of the county fair there are concerts, a tractor pull, demo derby and entertainment in front of the grandstand.

The carnival features a fairway with a carousel, Ferris wheel, Tilt-A-Whirl, swings, Octopus, train, games and food stands.

In 2004 the community reopened the dirt race track at the fairground after years of volunteer work. The Oberlin Speedway is the home of races throughout the summer months.

There is also a horse arena at the fairground, where equestrians hold barrel races, gymkhanas, and get togethers.

At the intersection of U.S. 36 and U.S. 83 sits The Gateway civic center, which was built in the early '90s. The town pulled together to raise money to build the center, which is where the community holds everything from musicals to farm equipment expos, dinners for 10 to several hundred or just a quick game of basketball. A walking track with exercise equipment provides a bad weather spot for health-minded citizens.

In June the museum hosts the annual Summerfest and Car Show downtown, drawing in antique vehicles from Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado.

During the second weekend in October the museum holds Mini Sapa Day to commemorate the opening of the facility and Indian raid, with a pancake feed, vendors, games and free entrance to the

museum. This year the museum will celebrate its 50th birthday with a parade; the Koshare Indian dancers from Lamar, Colo.; and other activities.

The same weekend, the Mini-Sappa Antique Thresher and Engine group holds Mini-Sappa Days at the fairground. During the two-day event the group demonstrates how things use to be done on the farm and shows off cars, trucks and equipment.

Just outside of town is Sappa Park. The bathhouse was built in 1938 with the Civilian Conservation Corp. (CCC) camp moving out of the area in April 1939. The depression-era-workers camp built the park, including the bathhouse, when the Work Progress Administration (WPA) built the dam for the lake. Now part of the old bathhouse is a shelter house used for family reunions, picnics and church events.

Water rights for the lake were lost many years ago and the area was returned to farm ground. Today several groups are at work on the dry lake area to provide animal habitat.

Recently volunteer groups have put in walking trails around the former lake bed. There is also a nine-hole Frisbee golf course put in by a group of boys from Decatur Community High School.

Plans are in the works to add a wetlands to the park.

Norcatour, which is just off of U.S. 36 on the Norton/Decatur County line, claims fame being the hometown of Eldon Auker, a former major-league pitcher who struck out Babe Ruth. There is a park in the heart of the town named for him.

Jennings, south of U.S. 36 on K-383, is a Czech immigrant community. Each year the city holds the annual Fireman's Fun Day, with a parade, games, food and entrance to the Czech Museum.



A young cowboy showed off his animal during the beef show at the county fair. The livestock auction during the fair helps many young 4-Hers earn money for college.

## Events Schedule

- April 19-20 — High Plains Artfest Show and Sale, The Gateway, Oberlin.
- April 27 — Arts and Humanities Local History Tour of Dresden, Clayton and Jennings.
- May 10 — The Decatur Community High School Promenade, Penn Ave., Oberlin.
- Mothers' Day Weekend — Black Powder Shoot, Sappa Park, Oberlin.
- May 24 — The Decatur Community Alumni Banquet, The Gateway, Oberlin.
- May 26 — Memorial Day activities at the Oberlin Cemetery.
- May 31 — The Last Indian Rain Museum Car Show and Summerfest, Penn Ave., Oberlin.
- June 13-14 — The Decatur County Relay for Life, high school football field, Oberlin.
- June 3-5 — Marketplace 29 A.D. Vacation Bible School, Sappa Park, Oberlin.
- July 4 — Fireworks at the fairground after dark, fairground, Oberlin.
- August 5-9 — The Decatur County Fair and Home-Owned Carnival, fairground, Oberlin.
- Aug. 13 — The annual free Back to School picnic, City Park, Oberlin.
- Aug. 16 — Firemen Fun Day, Jennings.
- October 4 — Mini Sapa Day, Decatur County Museum, Oberlin.
- Oct. 4-5 — Antique Thresher and Engine show, fairground, Oberlin.
- Oct. 31 — Trick or Trunk kids costume parade, Main Street, Oberlin.
- Oct. 31 — Pheasants Forever Banquet, The Gateway, Oberlin.
- November 28 — Parade of Lights and Christmas opening, featuring Santa, Penn Ave., Oberlin.
- Nov. 30 — Annual Holiday Arts and Craft Show, The Gateway, Oberlin.



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- \* Last Indian Raid Museum
- \* Scenic Sappa Park with walking trails and frisbie golf course
- \* Canopy covered sidewalks - Downtown
- \* 9 Antique stores
- \* Ralph Moody & Western Cattle Trail Markers
- \* Beautiful Golf Course
- \* Decatur County Fair, World's Greatest Home Owned Carnival

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