

Carnival group questions merger

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Members of the Decatur County Amusement Authority looked at figures on money brought in and the expenses from the home-owned carnival last summer, and talked about the idea of merging with the county Fair Board during a meeting last Thursday.

Treasurer Candy Ketterl said she hadn't received a bill from Raye's Grocery yet for food, but did have the other expenses, and handed out a report. The expenses add up

to about \$41,093 thus far, she said.

The carnival brought in \$10,392 Tuesday night, \$7,498 Wednesday, \$10,337 Thursday, \$12,436 Friday and \$12,101 on Saturday for a total of \$52,768, she reported. Donations totaled \$1,709.

There was money in the account before the carnival started, said Mrs. Ketterl. The idea is to pay most of the bills out of that money and then use the money raised this year for the carnival next year. Mrs. Ketterl said the authority did have money in the account before the carnival but didn't know

the exact figure.

She said she thought it would be a good idea next year to keep track of how much money the concession stands bring in each night.

Member Dana Koerperich said the authority still owes \$400 for the concrete work for the new ticket booth, too.

The members briefly talked about a new state law, passed late in the session this spring with little notice, which requires that all rides have to be inspected 30 days prior to running, workers have to be trained and

certified, the operator has to carry \$1 million in liability insurance and the rules for each ride and game have to be posted.

It would be hard to certify volunteers to run the rides, said Mrs. Koerperich. Especially when some people just sign up to work that night, Mrs. Ketterl added.

This bill stinks from the get go, said member Jim Wesch.

It includes fines for every day a carnival were to run in violation of the bill, noted County Commissioner Stan McEvoy.

The group carries \$500,000 in liability

insurance now, and that costs \$9,000 a year, said Mrs. Koerperich. They couldn't afford \$1 million.

For next year, said Mrs. Ketterl, she thinks the concession stand needs a hot dog cooker that rotates. Also, she said, it needs signs to mark which window is for placing orders and which is for picking them up. A small safe is also needed to keep the money.

There needs to be some rules about the concession stand, too, said Vice President Stephanie Blau, because there were several (See CARNIVAL on Page 5A)

Small group talks about wind energy

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Fifteen people learned a little more about wind energy and what's happened in Colorado over the past years with renewable energy during a public meeting at The Gateway last Tuesday.

Mike Bowman, who lives near Idalia, Colo., spoke to the Decatur County commissioners that morning, at the Oberlin Rotary Club over the noon hour and during the public meeting that night.

Lee "Doc" Franklin, a candidate for county commissioner, said Mr. Bowman is the Colorado governor's expert on wind and has an excellent background in renewable energy.

It seems that suddenly this area is a hot property for wind farms, said Mr. Franklin.

In August, Mr. Franklin said, he attended a meeting in Oakley with commissioners and representatives from the 18 counties in northwest Kansas to discuss joining forces to bring in wind power developers.

Those at the public meeting included county Commissioners Doyle Brown and Ralph Unger, Mayor Joe Stanley and Council-

women Marcia Lohofener and Rhonda May, Connie Grafel, marketing director of the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. and a handful of others.

Mr. Bowman said he grew up on a ranch near Idalia, just across the state line from St. Francis. In April 2004, he helped start 25/25, an initiative in Colorado that by the year 2025 the state will be getting at least 25 percent of all energy from renewable sources on farms, ranches and forests. Although the initiative started with 12 people, he said, it now has 750 groups backing it.

Energy development is coming, said Mr. Bowman, and it gives people in northwest Kansas and eastern Colorado an opportunity to create some wealth in rural areas again.

The largest outflow of money in rural areas now is for energy, he said. What if counties, cities and regions could keep that money here?

People need to start thinking of energy as a commodity like wheat, milk and other things, said Mr. Bowman.

About a month ago, he said, a (See WIND on Page 5A)

City administrator serves 18 years before resignation

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Over 18 years as an employee of the City of Oberlin, half of that as city administrator, Gary Shike has seen and helped with a lot of projects.

Probably the biggest, he said, was the new waste water treatment plant south of town, with a price tag of a little less than \$2 million.

As administrator, Mr. Shike said, he played a big role in the city building the waste water plant, a new water well, several street and highway projects, improvements on the water distribution system, and many day-to-day projects. Mr. Shike has worked closely with city department heads and the elected council members to run the city.

Many of the projects Mr. Shike has had a hand in are not yet completed, including the plan to build a longer runway at the city airport. That project, he said, has been an interesting one. It is surprising how slowly aviation bureaucracy moves, he said.

Mr. Shike started working for the city water department in 1991. That August, he moved into the job of city superintendent, now called the city foreman. The name changed when Dan Castle, then the power plant operator, was hired, said Mr. Shike.

For nine years, Mr. Shike served as the superintendent under City (See MAN on Page 5A)

Council starts search

With the resignation of the City of Oberlin administrator, the City Council is preparing to sign a contract with the Kansas League of Municipalities to lead the search for a new person.

Mayor Joe Stanley said the council will look at and sign the contract during a goal-setting meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday at The Gateway.

Administrator Gary Shike will have his last day with the city on Tuesday.

The league, said Mayor Stanley, will actually do the search for the new administrator, putting advertisements in trade magazines. Then the league will narrow those applicants down to three to five of the best candidates and the council will do the interviews.

The process could take a couple of months, said Mayor Stanley. The search for a new administrator should cost a little less than \$4,000, he said.

The council has no plans to name an interim administrator, said Mayor Stanley.



COMMISSIONER DOYLE BROWN (above) spoke to the junior and senior classes last Tuesday during county government day sponsored by Decatur Tomorrow. Nora

Urban (below) talked with Wade Juenemann, Logan Fortin and Ryan McEvoy in the clerk's office.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Students tour county

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Juniors and seniors from Decatur Community High School learned a little about county government by spending the morning at the courthouse last Tuesday.

Escorted by teachers Dick Ahlberg, Susan Nelson and Carol Dixon; Principal Charles Haag; and Gary Anderson, Abby Hisson and Steve Nelson with Decatur Tomorrow, the students started the day by posing for a group picture on the steps of the first floor of the courthouse before heading up to the third-floor courtroom.

There, state Rep. John Faber and Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer talked. The men encouraged the students to come to Topeka and be pages for them for a day during the legislative session this winter.

"Some of you have already done the job," said Rep. Ostmeyer, "but there's an opportunity for others to be a page in the years to come."

He also encouraged the students to register to vote when



they turn 18 and then exercise their right to vote.

Candidates in the upcoming election, including Gene Gallentine and Lee "Doc" Franklin who are running for county commissioner, and Kari Ketterl, who is running for register of deeds, also were present.

Getting registered to vote, said Mr. Gallentine, is important, but then it's important to vote.

Volunteerism, said Commissioner Doyle Brown, is a big thing in this county. Without volunteers,

there wouldn't be an ambulance service, fire department, carnival, fair or other things. People in big cities pass bills that affect all of us, like the bill requiring carnival inspections. It's important for all of you to vote and talk with those in government about what you want.

When making decisions, he said, the three commissioners have to ask themselves what's best for the entire county.

There's a national election going on now, so those who are 18 should

exercise their right to register and then vote, said Mr. Brown.

"With the national election, believe nothing of what you hear and only half of what you see, and make up your own mind," he said. "Be a concerned citizen and make up your own mind."

Mr. Anderson asked how the county gets money to operate.

Some people may have heard parents' talk about taxes, said Mr. Brown. All real estate is appraised whether it's homes, land or other (See STUDENTS on Page 5A)

Time's running out to enter parade

The 50th Anniversary celebration for the Decatur County Last Indian Raid Museum is less than two weeks away, leaving busi-

nesses, individuals and organizations just a little over a week to sign up for the parade.

For the past few months, a vol-

unteer committee has been organizing the parade to help celebrate the museum's first half century.

(See PARADE on Page 5A)

Homecoming celebration is this week

By **DECATUR DICTATOR STAFF**

Students at Decatur Community High School are getting ready for this year's homecoming celebration this week.

Each day will build up to the homecoming parade at 2:30 p.m. Friday on Main Street, the football game at

7 p.m. that night against the Rawlins County Buffaloes and the dance from 7 to 11 p.m. on Saturday.

Throughout the week, different activities have been planned: Spirit Week is a time for the students to dress up and have fun, with window decorating on Tuesday. (See HOMECOMING on Page 5A)

*Wind promoter stops to talk

(Continued from Page 1A) meeting in Oakley served as a call for the 18 counties of northwest Kansas to work together as a region. The question is whether, in those counties, this region, if people and their leaders are going to be proactive with wind or not.

Mr. Bowman said he doesn't know of any other group of counties in the nation banding together like this, so it is an opportunity for northwest Kansas to show a leadership role. In Wyoming, he said, there are some ranches working together.

Who is heading up the 18 counties? asked Rusty Addleman, owner of Addleman Drug. The economic development director from Oakley approached all of the commissioners, said Mr. Brown. None of the commissioners from Decatur County was able to make it to that meeting, so Mr. Franklin went.

It sounds like the 18 counties acting as a group will do better, said Mr. Brown, and will give the region more clout.

Is there good general interest from the 18 counties? asked Mr. Addleman. The representatives at the meeting, said Mr. Bowman, seem interested.

Ms. May asked if the 18 counties are trying to form a cartel to deal in energy. What about getting a transmission line in here to move the power out? she asked. And what is Colorado Green?

Colorado Green is a project near Lamar creating renewable energy, said Mr. Bowman, with 108 wind turbines. The project has exceeded the expectations for the amount of power it has put into the system.

"A cartel," said Mr. Bowman smiling. "If I were in your shoes, I would hope so," adding later that he liked the word.

This could be like the OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) of wind, he said.

Ms. May asked about relationships of individual landowners and wind turbines. The landowners have the right to deal collectively with wind developers or on their own, he said, but then they have to deal with the transmission issue.

The strength of a cartel or a regional group, he said, is that it could put a transmission line in or bring in a developer or someone else and bargain for the line.

Today, he said, Kansas has no laws preventing wind energy from being put into the distribution grid, he said; the road blocks are public policy issues on how to distribute that energy.

Wind power, said Jim Wesch isn't the answer to everything. There

has to be enough power that when someone wants the air conditioning on and the wind isn't blowing, there is power to get the unit going. There has to be coal plants or something to supply that need when the wind isn't blowing.

"Wind is not the end all, be all," said Mr. Bowman. "It's part of the diversified portfolio we need."

The area has to be able to say where we want to be 10 years from now, he said.

Mr. Wesch asked what kind of regulations or guidelines Colorado has on the placement of wind turbines? Mr. Bowman said Colorado is a home rule state, so it goes back to the cities and counties. Some counties are zoned and others aren't.

In Logan County, Colo., he said, they are looking at not having to collect property taxes because of the revenue the county could get from the wind power. Think of the economic development value in that, he said.

The wind industry has been around long enough, said Mr. Bowman, that there are good developers and people building the turbines.

What's the cost of a turbine? asked Gene Gallentine, a candidate for commissioner. It depends on the size, said Mr. Bowman. Construction prices doubled when steel and other prices went up, but it's around \$3 million for a 100-megawatt turbine. Wind development isn't for the fainthearted, he said, but a wind farm should be in place for a long time.

Also, said Mr. Bowman, colleges are now training kids to become turbine technicians. These kids are going to school for two years and walking into jobs making \$60,000 to \$75,000 a year. There's a high demand for these technicians.

Maybe, said Mr. Addleman, the 18-county group needs to get the college in Goodland on board with this.

It's a great opportunity to keep young people in the area, said Mr. Bowman.

"Everyone wins in a system like this," he added.

The project needs to come from the bottom up, with people wanting to be leaders and then get the government involved to pass public policy, he said.

When did Kansas legislators decide that wind farms should be tax exempt? asked Ms. May. No one knew.

Mr. Bowman ended the evening by promising that the people from 25/25 would be ready to help any Kansas group interested in wind development.

Commissioners talk about wind

The Decatur County commissioners invited a Colorado man to talk to them about wind energy before he spoke at a public meeting last Tuesday evening.

Mike Bowman, a farmer/rancher from near Idalia, Colo., talked with the commissioners about wind energy in Colorado. He was accompanied by Lee "Doc" Franklin, who is running for commissioner, and Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp.

In Colorado, said Mr. Bowman, he is promoting wind energy in general, but also talked about building capacity in rural areas.

In the last four years, he said, he has helped build a coalition of 700 groups that work extensively on Capital Hill on renewable resources, including wind. Although Mr. Bowman lives in eastern Colorado, he said he spends a lot of time in Washington.

This region, eastern Colorado and western Kansas, is rich in renewable resources, said Mr. Bowman, predominately wind.

If every rural county used the resources it had, the renewable energy, then there wouldn't be a concern over how those areas were going to keep their schools open or their downtowns thriving.

In Colorado, wind farms must be taxable, said Commissioner Stan McEvoy, but in Kansas, wind farms are tax exempt, and it's more of an expense to the county to maintain roads, bridges and other things.

That's something people in Kansas could go back to the legislators about, said Mr. Bowman. Maybe the developers could pay some kind of royalties or do something like that. There are developers who want to do the right thing, he said; maybe there could be a negotiated payment to the county. There are developers, he said, who want to have this con-

versation with this county.

Ms. Grafel said she believes Ford County is getting some kind of payment in place of taxes for a wind farm near Dodge City.

It sounds like if the 18 counties in northwest Kansas got together to promote wind power, it would make an attractive package for developers, said Commissioner Doyle Brown.

If the 18 counties got together, said Mr. Bowman, that kind of collaborative would likely attract some kind of manufacturers to make towers, blades and other things. The fight would be which county would land the plant.

What would make a developer go through the county and pay some kind of fee instead of just having an agreement with the landowners? Mr. McEvoy asked. With a good developer, said Mr. Bowman, they will see that building a long-term relationship with the county is important.

The group also briefly discussed that by working as a collaborative of the 18 counties they could go to people who would want to come in and build a transmission line to move the wind power. The biggest issue, said Mr. Bowman, is with the federal policy allowing the energy to move back out of the lines.

Wind energy is the coming thing, said Mr. Brown, the question is whether Decatur County is on the bandwagon now or not.

Have you ever seen a wind farm shut down? asked Mr. McEvoy. Mr. Bowman said all the wind farms he knows about are still operational.

If a wind farm does shut down, said Mr. McEvoy, do the developers have to remove the turbines? That's all part of the negotiations in the contracts, said Mr. Bowman.

Mr. Unger said he's talked to landowners who say the turbines throw ice across roads and that you

Just a drop or two



GIVING A UNIT OF A positive, Frieda Goetze was one of 71 donors at the Red Cross Blood Drive in Oberlin on Wednesday. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

*Carnival rides need work

(Continued from Page 1A) nights there weren't enough workers and authority members ended up in there.

The group gave Mrs. Ketterl the go ahead to look at prices for the hot dog machine and a safe.

There were lots of good comments on the ticket idea for all the games and rides, said Mr. McEvoy. Someone did suggest using tickets for the concession stand, too.

Someone, said Mrs. Koerperich, needs to do a toy inventory. Member Vicky Ray said Dana Marintzer knows pretty much what the group has. Most of the little stuff was given out, said Ms. Ray.

The group discussed toy cranes that the authority used in the past and agreed to try to sell them on the Internet. The group will start with trying to sell one and see what happens, and then try to sell the others.

Some work needs to be done on the rides, said Mr. Wesch, including putting a new base under the center of the Octopus. There's still some problems with the Ferris wheel going out of balance. It just doesn't have as much zip as it used to, either, he said. The Twist Over can be fixed, said Mr. Wesch, instead of moved out, and the big wings need some work.

The group briefly talked about the fact that the top of one of the Tilt-a-Whirl cars came flying off during the carnival and that a rider flipped over in the big swings. Mrs. Blau suggested that riders on the swings not be allowed to touch others during the ride.

There are also lots of minor repairs needed at the fairground, said Mr. Wesch. It's going to cost to keep the rides going. Maybe they need to consider a price increase.

Aqua Shield Roofing volunteered

to help fix the Twist Over, said Mrs. Blau. The ride was shut down this year because of problems with the seat belts and flooring.

The Lions Club from Jennings has run the ride, said Mrs. Ketterl, and has offered to help fix it. They talked about getting some bids.

"We have to see how much money we have to operate first," said Mr. Wesch. "We don't want to get the cart before the horse."

Member Tim Thornton asked if the group could maybe get businesses to sponsor each ride. That way it would be easier to gather support for that ride, instead of the board running around trying to put out individual fires.

Someone probably needs to look at the wiring on the carousel, said Mr. McEvoy.

Mrs. Koerperich asked about possibly merging the authority with the fair board.

Some group would still need to worry about the carnival and work on it, said Mr. Wesch. The fair board has enough to deal with.

It could be one group, said Mrs. Koerperich, since the two are pretty much working towards the same thing.

It would probably be a decision for the Chamber of Commerce board, said Mr. McEvoy, on whether the authority should try to merge, since the group falls under the Chamber.

*Homecoming events planned

(Continued from Page 1A) float building on Thursday night and Friday morning, and the bonfire, which will begin at 8 p.m. in front of the high school.

The homecoming queen and king will be announced at the assembly, which begins at 1:15 Friday in the high school auditorium.

Queen candidates chosen by the football team are Tamara Ketterl, Annamarie Larue, Cherish Man-

ning, Heather Ploussard and Alyssa Rippe. The king candidates chosen by the volleyball team are Derek Chambers, Logan Fortin, Lucas Juenemann, Nathan Simonsson and Everett Urban.

The royalty will be featured in the parade, along with floats made by each of the classes, the bands, cheerleaders and sports teams. Everyone is invited downtown to support the students during the celebration.

*Man serves city

(Continued from Page 1A) Administrator Jerry Fear until he retired. Then Victoria Gordon was the administrator for a year. When she left, the City Council named Mr. Shike as interim administrator for six months. At the end of the six months, the job was made permanent, said Mrs. Shike.

Most of his training and education has been on the job, he said. Over the years, he's taken classes through the Kansas League of Municipalities and other organizations. He said he just finished the the Municipal Leadership Academy certification through the league.

Mr. Shike has been a member of the Oberlin Rotary Club, serving a term as president, served on the executive committee for the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency, where he also served as president and in other offices, and on the Kansas Municipal Utilities board.

At the beginning of September, Mr. Shike decided to hand in his resignation. His last day with the city will be Tuesday.

Mr. Shike said he has no idea what he's going to do next, adding that he's still evaluating his options.

In any organization, said Mr. Shike, there should be a change in the leaders occasionally. Anyone can argue with the timing. He said he didn't want to leave in the middle of the budget process, because that would be a tough time. The fall is probably the season that's the easiest for the council to make the transition, he said.

It is going to be tough on Mayor Joe Stanley, he said, adding that he hopes everything goes smoothly. The city has good people, he said, adding that's it's been fun to watch Mr. Castle grow into his position as foreman.

Over the years, he said, he has learned that the people with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, the Kansas Department of Transportation and other state agencies are not the city's enemies. All of those groups have people who have been good to work with. They by and large are trying to do the best for the people.

Mr. Shike has lived in Oberlin for 30 years. His wife Jody teaches special education in Selden.

*Parade entries needed

(Continued from Page 1A) Members include Connie Grafel, Gary Walter, Sid Metcalf, Carrie Morford and Judy Scott.

So far, the group reports around a dozen entries and the committee members are hoping for more before the parade kicks off at 10 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 4.

Dr. Robert and Nadine Simpson of Pleasant Hill, Tenn., will be the grand marshals. Dr. Simpson was a surgeon here for a number of years and his wife worked at *The Oberlin Herald*.

Anyone who wants to enter the parade can call Ms. Grafel at 475-2901 or stop by the Chamber of Commerce office or her office, both in the Business Enhancement Entrepreneurial Center on Main Street.

The entry fee for each float is \$10. Entries will start in the parking lot at The Gateway at 8:30 a.m. Saturday and then cross U.S. 83 and wind down Adams to Penn Avenue, then hang a right down Main Street.

*Students met with officials

(Continued from Page 1A) erwise, he said. Then there is a tax on that value. That money allows the county to provide services like roads, bridges and the landfill, said Mr. Brown.

The county also collects taxes for the school, cities and townships, and then that money is paid out to those municipalities, said Commissioner Ralph Unger.

The students went into small groups and then the adult volunteers took each group through the different offices in the courthouse for the rest of the morning.

County Government Day was sponsored by Decatur Tomorrow.

NOTICE OF BUDGET HEARING

The governing body of DRESDEN CITY

will meet on the 6th day of October, 2008 at 8 p.m. at the Dresden City Hall for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of all funds and the amount of ad valorem tax.

Detailed budget information is available at the Office of the Decatur County Clerk and will be available at this hearing.

BUDGET SUMMARY

Proposed Budget 2009 Expenditures and Amount of 2008 Ad Valorem Tax establish the maximum limits of the 2009 Budget. Estimated Tax Rate* is subject to change depending on the final assessed valuation.

Fund	2007		2008		Proposed Budget 2009		
	Prior Year Actual Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate	Current Year Est. of Expenditures	Actual Tax Rate	Expenditures	Amount of 2008 Ad Valorem Tax	Est. Tax Rate*
General	10,977	9.231	13,000	11.532	13,000	2,412	11.755
Special Highway	3,240		3,200		3,200		
Solid Waste	2,979						
Totals	17,196	9.231	16,200	11.532	16,200	2,412	11.755
Total Tax Levied	1,863		1,888		2,412		
Valuation	201,812		163,713		205,189		

NOTE: Tax rates are expressed in mills and that means per thousand dollars worth of valuation.