



**AT SAPPA PARK** last Monday, Garrett Berry (above) dug a hole while Sara Kyte held the tree to be planted. Rachelle Scott (below) carried cedar trees from the back of Rick Pauls' pickup truck for the project. Also helping was Martin Burton. Altogether, the volunteers from Pheasants Forever and the high school planted 600 trees.  
— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

## Students help plant 600 trees

Members of Pheasants Forever taught 23 teenage volunteers how to plant trees at Sappa Park last Monday.

The students and adults together planted 600 trees on the northern border of Sappa Park, which will serve as a windbreak for the wetlands and trails in years to come. The trees will also serve as animal habitat, said Rick Pauls, with the Sunflower Chapter of Pheasants Forever.

He said they planted 300 cedar trees, 150 fragrant sumac trees and 150 American plum bushes. The crew also filled some gaps where trees had died in windbreaks planted earlier.

The group worked in teams, with one person placing the trees on the ground near a black plastic weed barrier. Another pair cut a hole in the plastic where each tree would be planted, then a two-person student team came with one digging the hole, another putting the tree in and the first person going around it with dirt.

It took about an hour and a half to get the 600 trees planted, said Mr. Pauls. He said he appreciated Football Coach J.D. Johnson and Principal Charlie Haag getting the word out to the students about the planting job. At the end of the evening, Pheasants Forever bought the students pizza and pop



for their work, he said.

Mr. Pauls said the chapter first had student help planting trees about three years ago at the park.

Future plans for the park, be-

sides the wetlands construction now under way, include replanting three of the 30 fruit trees west of the "big" island that died. Mr. Pauls said they also plan to seed

grass on some of the trails that have been elevated and to plant some more grass along several of the trails.

## Counties face same problems

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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About 25 people from Decatur, Meade, Wallace, Sheridan counties in western Kansas talked about four issues facing their home towns at an areawide "community conversation" last Tuesday.

Those items included recreation, housing, child care and retaining young people, especially those who might take over a family business.

A year ago, said Gary Anderson of the Decatur Tomorrow steering committee, members decided they needed to have a regional conversation with other members of the western Kansas Public Square Communities. The group in Greeley County invited representatives from Oberlin and Hodgeman County to Tribune for a discussion.

Terry Woodbury started the group as Kansas Communities and then when a Missouri community was added a year ago, the name changed to Public Square Communities.

The idea is to connect business, education, health and human services and government through one-on-one and group conversation. With the public square, the idea is to engage more citizens who are currently not involved, deliver ongoing results and connect people, said Mr. Anderson.

He also said while they talked about the topics that counties had in common, they didn't necessarily talk about how they could help each other. A few months ago, the

recreation director and others from Greeley County came here to talk with people about starting a year-around recreation program. Since then, the Decatur County group has formed a "special action team" which has been meeting weekly.

At that meeting last fall in Tribune, the people from Jetmore were talking about a vintage baseball team. They are coming here to play against a town team in September, he said.

Those at the Oberlin conversation split into four groups to talk about the four issues and brainstormed ideas that could possibly help in all of the counties. After a 30-minute discussion, each small group reported on what it discussed.

Those at the child care table, for instance, found that all of the communities are short of child care facilities in their counties.

Oberlin appears to have a center with no one to run it. Hoxie needs a center and someone to run it.

Some ideas the group came up with were to make it a profitable job, check into community organizations to help subsidize the center and recruit someone with a degree in early childhood education to come home and run the center.

All the communities recognized that "youth retention" — keeping graduates in town or getting them to move back later — is a big deal but we teach kids from the time they are little to grow up and go (See CONVERSATION, Page 12)

## Seniors plan an open house at new center

By **MARY LOU OLSON**  
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Members of the Golden Age Center and the Oberlin Senior Meal Site will mark completion of a long-time dream with an open house at their new building in downtown Oberlin from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Constructing a new building was prompted by the leaking roof and other structural problems in the senior center and adjoining theater. The Economic Development Corporation, along with Marketing Director Connie Grafel, and Greg and Mary Lohofener had a vision for a new recreation complex for the county.

Volunteers worked long hours and sponsored many benefits to help raise money for the building, which also houses the new Sunflower Cinema, a recreation area and a future bowling alley.

In the middle 1970s, when senior citizens first began getting together for cards and other activities, they rented a building from the late Hazel Barrett which now houses Pauls Funeral Home.

Members organized on March 1, 1976, with Aleen Van Vleet as the first manager. In 1979, they bought the south part of the former Pepsi building with the help of a federal grant, which was matched by Decatur County. Golt Construction was the general contractor. With much volunteer labor and donated supplies, the seniors moved to the new location at 220 N. Penn on Jan.

1, 1980.

That year, the group raised \$10,000 to renovate the back room for a dance hall and all-purpose room. The government-sponsored meal site has used that room since it opened in November 1989 with Julie Gallentine as the first manager. Since the kitchen was too small, meals have been prepared in Atwood and delivered to Oberlin for the daily lunch. Home deliveries are offered, and Helen Gee is the present manager.

Operational money for the senior center comes from a property-tax levy which Decatur County added for all senior centers in the county, along with income rental, memorials and donations.

Several groups rent the building for monthly meetings, along with occasional use for reunions, birthdays, alumni get-togethers, clubs, benefits and more. Nearly 150 people were in the new building last week for the Decatur County Health Fair, Cottonwood foot care clinic, two card groups and a club meeting.

Other Golden Age Center managers have included Myrna Corcoran, Alice Morton, Irene Corcoran, Wilma May and the present manager, Dorothy Moore, who had served the past four years. Other meal site managers have included Anna Hill and Delores Zodrow.

Of the 62 charter members, three are still living: Mrs. Van Vleet, Edla (See SENIORS on Page 12)

## Senator plans to visit on Saturday afternoon

U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, the leading candidate for Kansas governor, plans to stop in Oberlin to talk to people Saturday afternoon.

Sen. Brownback will meet with voters from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m. at the LandMark Inn for a stop on his listening tour.

He also plans to stop in Hays, Stockton, Phillipsburg, Norton and Atwood and finish the evening in Colby.

## Committee looking at school buildings

The Oberlin School Board got a report from the first meeting of its new facilities committee at its monthly meeting last Monday.

The committee includes Superintendent Duane Dorshorst, board members Abby Hissong, Doug Brown and Dan Grafel, and Paul Shields, a farmer and citizen representative who has been active in previous efforts to improve school facilities.

The group recently walked through the high school and junior high schools, looking for areas that need to be improved.

Mr. Dorshorst said the group started with the front entrance at the

high school, which still needs to be revamped.

The board had talked about the entrance many times, coming up with a plan to repair it. The entrance hasn't yet been repaired.

The linoleum in the high school needs to be replaced, the superintendent said. There are areas where the flooring is coming up. The committee suggested starting with the linoleum and doing a little bit each year, he said.

The junior high gym, said Mr. Dorshorst, needs deflectors on the fans.

Other areas needing work included (See GROUP on Page 12)

## Gala opens Artfest this Friday night

The sixth annual Artfest will be open this weekend for residents to view pieces from both professional and student artists from around the area.

The show will be open to the public from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday and from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, said Connie Grafel, who helps organize the show.

On Friday, sponsors will attend an opening gala at The Gateway with appetizers and entertainment. Ms. Grafel said they have around 50 sponsors, which is an increase over the last few years.

Ms. Grafel said there is more art this year from both high school and college students. Since last year, the show has added artists from the Colby area and central Nebraska.

She said artists from Kearney will be back again this year, as well as some from the McCook area and Oberlin.

There's no charge to people wanting to view the art on Saturday and Sunday. Sponsors paid \$100 to be listed in the program and attend the opening gala Friday night.



**SMOKE BILLOWED** out from a junk vehicle (above) on Thursday as firemen worked on putting out a fire apparently started when fuel leaked from the tank. Assistant Chief Larry

Ayers (below) pointed to melted siding at a home on N. East Avenue on Tuesday night.

— Herald staff pictures by Kimberly Davis and Cynthia Haynes

## Firemen put out flames

The Oberlin Fire Department worked two calls last week, the first causing minor damage to a house and the second in a car being salvaged.

At 9 p.m. Tuesday, the department was called to 109 N. East Ave., on the corner of East and Maple, where the side of the house was on fire.

Fire Chief Bill Cathcart said the people living in the house apparently put some hot ashes or cigarette ashes out in the trash.

They had moved the trash can up against the house because of the wind.

The trash can caught on fire, he said, and that caught the side of the house on fire, melting some siding.

Mr. Cathcart said one of the residents called for help. The home belongs to Noland Pierce of Cozad, Neb., and is rented to Missy Gullion.

Damage was confined to the siding, he said.

Chief Cathcart said by the time firemen arrived, the renters had already put the flames out using a garden hose.

They were at the scene for only about 15 minutes.

At 11:35 a.m. Thursday, the volunteers were called to the former bowling alley south of town on U.S. 83, where a junk vehicle was on fire.



Chief Cathcart said Chris Kuhlman had been using a cutting torch

to salvage some parts and fuel leaking on the car caught fire.

The crew was on the scene about 25 minutes, he said.

# \*Conversation brings issues to same table

(Continued from Page 1A) somewhere else.

Those at the table said that there is a sense of failure for kids who don't leave. One solution was to change our definition of success so that kids understand that they can return home and be successful.

Another idea is to encourage youths to become independent contractors. The statistics show that as high as 85 percent of young people want to come back home, but often they can't find jobs.

The other half of the discussion was "business succession," having someone to take over vital family-run businesses. One suggestion was to get business owners prepared to retire and to teach succession.

Some towns reported a lack of

quality housing. Rentals stay full in some, while in others there isn't any housing available. One idea was to create incentives to build new housing.

Recreation is important to all the towns, particularly younger residents and those with families. One suggestion was for a central office where paperwork can go through.

One problem mentioned was the condition of city pools. People suggested listening to what the young people want out of recreation.

Lance Woodbury, Terry Woodbury's son, with Public Square Communities, said a compilation of information discussed at the conversation would be sent to each of the people at the meeting.

# \*Seniors to hold an open house

(Continued from Page 1A)

Olson and Myrtle Waldo. Marion Wenger served many years as the volunteer janitor for the meal site

While the new building was under construction, meetings and meals were moved to the Grapevine Cafe building across the street.

Members watched the progress anxiously as the old building was demolished and the new one constructed by Kevin Brown and his crew from Sappa Valley Construction.

Olson Studio, owned by Rex Olson of Boulder, Colo., was the architect and subcontractors were Dallas Johnson, Garrett Plumbing and Jerry Vrbas, mason. Each room of the new senior center has seating for 110 people.

Present Golden Age Center board

members are Dewaine Stapp, president; Mrs. Gee, secretary; and Max Carman, treasurer; and Mary Ann Amack and Veanna Carman.

"The open house is a thank you to the builders and community, as well as celebrating 30 years in this location for the Golden Age Center and 20 for the meal site," said Ms. Moore.

## UPCOMING EVENTS in Kansas

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### Combat Air Celebrity Pancake Breakfast

April 24, Topeka  
This fun event at Combat Air Museum allows you to experience 30+ aircraft from WWI to present. Enjoy entertainment by Judy Coder. (785) 862-3303, CombatAirMuseum.org

### KU Spring Football Extravaganza

April 24, Lawrence  
Enjoy KU's spring football game & the energy of Downtown Lawrence including a Family Fun Zone & enjoy shuttles to campus from downtown. VisitLawrence.com

### Th' Gatherin'

April 30-May 2, WaKeeney  
14th Annual Beltone Celebration in a gorgeous setting. Celtic Musicians & Artists, an evening feast, fire festival & competitions, food & wares vendors. ThGatherin.com

### Kansas Sampler Festival

May 1-2, Leavenworth  
Sample what there is to see, do, hear, taste, buy and learn in Kansas. Ray Miller Park A project of the Kansas Sampler Foundation (913) 417-7575, KansasSamplerFestival.com

### Art in the Park

May 2, Lawrence  
Artists display and sell their original artwork in a beautiful outdoor setting. Musical entertainment & children's activities. VisitLawrence.com

### 3i Show

May 5-7, Great Bend  
Wed. - Fri., 9 am - 5 pm daily, Expo Center Over 500 agri-business exhibits, consumer programs, high school ag day and health screenings. (620) 227-8082, 3ishow.com

### Wichita River Festival

May 7-15, Wichita  
Nine days of food, fun and entertainment! Over 50 events including a parade, concerts, river events, kids' activities, fireworks and more. (316) 267-2817, WichitaRiverFestival.com

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# \*Group looks at school

(Continued from Page 1A)

cluded:

- Touch up paint in the senior high gym.
- Bookshelves in the library made of particle board are bowing in the middle.
- Updates in the cafeteria and multi-purpose room.
- Guttering all over the building.

Board member Dan Nedland suggested making some of these points be action ones for the May meeting.

The auditorium, said Mr. Dorshorst, is a priority. One problem is, he said, two people have come in to look at replacing the lights, but neither wanted to give any prices.

The facilities committee needs to meet again to walk through the grade school and look at the grounds as a whole, he added, and then it can work on a priority list.

# County OKs low bid to replace bridge

Decatur County commissioners approved the low bid to replace the Ashley Bridge on the 700 Road south of Dresden.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman said at the meeting March 30 that the project drew four bids with Klaver Construction of Kingman having the low bid at \$205,675.

Mr. Stallman said the bids came through the Kansas Department of Transportation. While he was told there were three other bids, he

wasn't told how much they were or with what companies

The bid will cover the grading and bridge work on the structure, which is 3.4 miles south and 9.1 miles west of Dresden on the 700 Road. Mr. Stallman said Klaver is a state-qualified bidder.

He said the crew has put steel stringers in place on Vic Ritter's bridge, which is about three miles north and three miles east of Dresden on H Lane.

The commissioners signed a

"wireless 911" grant request for \$14,635 from the state to help pay for the new equipment in the dispatch office. The grant, said Chief Dispatcher Marilyn Mack, was supposed to be for \$11,000, not the \$14,635. She said a new voice logger is already installed and paid for.

The commissioners asked Clerk Colleen Geihlsler to get some numbers together on what the county could save if the offices shut down an hour early or went to a four day

work week, both in salaries and utilities.

In other business, the commissioners:

• Approved the county employees having a float in the Oberlin 125th Anniversary parade coming up in October.

• Asked the clerk to put an ad in *The Oberlin Herald* to hire a summer recreation director.

# Commissioners question change in road status

While the Decatur County commissioners approved publishing a request to have a hearing for a road in Beaver Township changed to minimum maintenance Tuesday, April 6, they questioned whether it was a good thing to do because there's a bridge on it.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch asked if it makes sense to have a minimum-maintenance road leading up to a bridge or right after one. The bridge will still need to be inspected and maintained, he noted.

The bridge, said Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman, is over

the creek and needs to stay. He said he didn't think it could be replaced with a culvert.

If the road is going to be treated as minimum maintenance, said Mr. Hirsch, the county still could spend quite a bit of money on the bridge. That just might not be good

policy, he said.

The minimum maintenance proposal is on the 700 Road, six miles north and three miles west of Oberlin. The commissioners approved publishing a notice for the hearing, which will be held at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, April 20.

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# PUBLIC AUCTION

Saturday, April 24, 10 a.m.

Location: 4-H Building, N. Hwy 25, Atwood, KS  
Sellers: Joan Jackson and Etal

**Vehicles/Recreational/Equipment:** 2005 28' Dutchman Pack-n-Play Slide-Out Travel Trailer with Stove Refrigerator, Oven, Microwave, AC/Heat Sleeps 8, (excellent condition) • 1984 S10 Chevy PU, (runs good) • 1985 Buick Electra, (runs good) • Pop-Up Pull Camper, (good condition).

**Shop and Lawn Equipment:** 6" Drill Press Vice • J.D. Lawn Tractor • Lawn Trimmer, (gas) • 16" Tire Chains • 15" Tire Chains • 14" Tire Chains • 2-14" Tires.

**Furniture and Appliances:** King Size Mattress (Pillow Top) • Lane Recliner • 4-Oak/ Wicker Chairs • Vanity with Stool • Rocker Recliner • End Tables.

**Household and Miscellaneous:** Oreck Vacuum • 9" TV & VCR (12 Volt) • Luggage Set • TREK Bike • Misc. Dishes • Pots & Pans • Typewriter • Frames.

**Antiques:** 24-Solid Oak Church Pews with Knee Rest • Solid Oak Pump Organ • Solid Pine Cabinet with Glass Doors.

**Model Toys:** John Deere 8310T • John Deere Baler 336 • John Deere Toy Carry Case, (new) • 56 Chevy Nomad Model • 1/16 Pennzoil Gas pump.

**Note:** This is a partial listing of items, many more items by sale day!

Lunch will be served.

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