

Council plans to help motel owners

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

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Although nothing's been signed, the Oberlin City Council agreed Thursday to donate the port of entry tract at the U.S. 36-U.S. 83 junction to the new owners of the Oberlin Inn motel and to help tear down the old filling station out front.

Council members talked with Troy Podoll of South Dakota at their meeting Thursday about plans for the motel at the highway intersection.

Mr. Podoll said he feels like the situation is a "win/win" for the city and for him.

The old port of entry is not on the tax rolls today, he said, and the motel is closed and isn't employing anyone. Renovating it and opening

the motel up, he said, will help the city.

He said when he came out to look at the buildings, he asked about the

old port of entry. Mr. Podoll said he needs that property for a sign for the motel and also because they don't want someone else building

something and blocking access to the motel.

Mr. Podoll said he would appreciate it if the city could help knock

down the old restaurant or old filling station, as the council calls it.

He said it's not his intention to buy the property, fix it up and flip it. Mr. Podoll said they want to run the motel.

Councilman Ray Ward asked if the port of entry would be restricted to motel use only. No, said Mr. Podoll. Trucks can still park in the lot. He would just like to keep that, as much as possible, to the south of port building so people can see the motel.

He said his company has motels in Wheaton, Minn. and New Rockford, N.D.

Mr. Podoll said he plans to have the motel open as soon as possible and wants to start cutting down the dead elm trees this week.

He said the firm plans to have one or two suites with big-screen televisions and other amenities. The rest of the rooms will be modernized.

Mr. Ward said he didn't see a problem with donating that property or helping tear down the old station if it will help get that motel back in business.

There was some discussion about whether the old port of entry is needed for some other purpose, but no one could think of anything.

This is far less, said Mr. Ward, than the city was willing to offer someone else to come in and build a hotel.

"This is a strange question," said Councilman Bill Riedel, "but will it be nice enough for my mother to (See MOTEL on Page 12)

Council Roundup

At a meeting Thursday, the Oberlin City Council:

- Accepted the resignation of the city administrator after spending 35 minutes behind closed doors. Story below.
- Approved prepaying a Norcat man for work on the historic band shell in the City Park. Story on Page 3.
- Approved a new contract for solar mixers for the sewer lagoons. Story to come.
- Approved hiring a company to do geographic information systems mapping for the sewer, water and electric lines. Story on Page 12.
- Agreed to donate the port of entry lot at the U.S. 36-

U.S. 83 junction to the new owners of the former Oberlin Inn motel and to help tear down the old filling station out front. Story at left.

• Agreed to hire a Wichita company to serve as bond counsel for an upcoming water treatment plant, potential recovery zone bonds and future airport revenue bonds. Story to come.

• Approved hiring a code enforcement officer for the city and following policy in sending letters she wrote to 10 landowners. Story on Page 12.

Herndon plans traditional ox roast in June

By VERASLOAN

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Small towns just seem to hang onto their traditions, and the little town of Herndon in Rawlins County is no exception.

What started in 1914 as an ox roast for the close-knit German community will take place again this year, as it has every five years since, on Saturday, June 12.

The day will start with a parade in the morning, the traditional barbecue at noon, mud volleyball, outhouse races, cow-patty bingo, games for the kids and a kiddie train. The day will end with a street dance and fire works.

Long time Herndonites come from as far away as California, New York, Arizona and Hawaii, and places in between, to return to their roots and celebrate an event they grew up with, right down to the six-foot-by-eight-foot handmade

pan used to cook in the oxen.

"It's not unusual for the crowd to reach 3,000 people to take in the once-every-five-years celebration, to have a taste of the wonderful food and join in the fun," said Herndon resident Nadine Green.

Mrs. Green said the first celebration in 1914, drew 2,500 people to a feast that involved barrels of lemonade, 60 gallons of ice cream and a party that lasted 'til dawn.

"The same recipe for the barbecue is used today as it was then," Mrs. Green said. "The barbecue takes three cows, carrots, apples, green peppers, tomatoes, onions and many spices. It takes about 15 tons of wood to make a bed of hot coals for cooking the meat and veggies."

The vegetables are put into the pan first, then the meat and spices, along with 20 gallons of water. The lid is put on, the pan is lowered into (See COMMUNITY on Page 12)

Juniors and seniors to promenade Saturday evening

Guys and gals will show up in their best Saturday evening for all the town to see before the Decatur Community High School prom.

The students, dressed in fancy dresses and tuxedos, will stroll down Main Street in the annual promenade before heading to The Gateway for the dinner and dance.

The promenade, a tradition for more than 75 years, will begin at 7 p.m. Students and their dates are asked to meet at 6:45 p.m. in front of the Sunflower Cinema. The students will then march south on Main Street to Hall Street, turn around and walk back.

Principal Charlie Haag said they are hoping to have a designated

place to introduce the students in the promenade.

Kortnie Fisher was selected as this year's prom marshal and will lead the students down Main Street. As of Monday, the queen and king candidates had not yet been named. Both will be named during the dance.

This year's prom theme is Remembering You, chosen by the junior class.

Parents, grandparents and others can view the decorations at The Gateway from 6 to 7 p.m. Saturday.

The senior parents and the Oberlin Rotary Club will sponsor a post-prom party at The Gateway.

Storm chasers pass through town

Trucks with the Vortex 2 project were spotted in Oberlin Thursday night and then again on Friday between Norton and Oberlin.

Storm chasers said Thursday they had been chasing severe storms which passed between Oberlin and McCook that evening. Their equipment included two portable weather radars mounted on huge trucks with generators, as well as cars equipped with all kinds of antennas.

One said the storms had produced some rotation, but it was just too cool for a tornado to dip down out of the clouds. The crews returned to Hays for the night.

According to the website, the team was in Norcat on Thursday when it first deployed the radar for the season.

"It was a relatively weak storm that became elevated and never posed a tornado threat," wrote Ari Preston on the site. "However, this storm still allowed for us to practice our Vortex 2 deployments.

The project name stands for "verification of the origins of rotation in tornadoes. Weather scientists plan to build on information gathered last year, the website says.

The project started May 1 and ends the middle of June. The idea is to find out more about how, when and why tornadoes form.

In just over a week since the project started, the team has been in Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado and Texas. Last year, one member said, the crew set up a base in Goodland and worked all directions from there. This spring, the group is living a more nomadic life, stopping for a few days where storms are likely. There is no "base camp."

Getting some fresh air

ON MONDAY, the kindergarten class took 10 minutes in the afternoon to play outside while it was misting. Riley Ketterl (above left) and Breckyn Jensen dug in the gravel while Haylee Schurr (right) played on the merry-go-round.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



Administrator resigns from Oberlin City post

After two closed sessions for 20 and 15 minutes at the close of its meeting Thursday, the Oberlin City Council accepted the city administrator's resignation. The administrator reportedly has taken a new job closer to home.



A. Gilley

"As much as I hate it," said Councilman Rob McFee, he made the motion to accept Administrator Austin Gilley's resignation. Councilman Bill Riedel said it saddened him to second the motion, which was approved by all members.

Mr. Riedel said he would publicly like to thank Mr. Gilley for his

support and what he's done for the city. While he's ruffled some feathers, said Mr. Riedel, that happens with change. He added that it saddens him greatly that Mr. Gilley is leaving.

"He had Oberlin moving in the right direction," said Mr. Riedel.

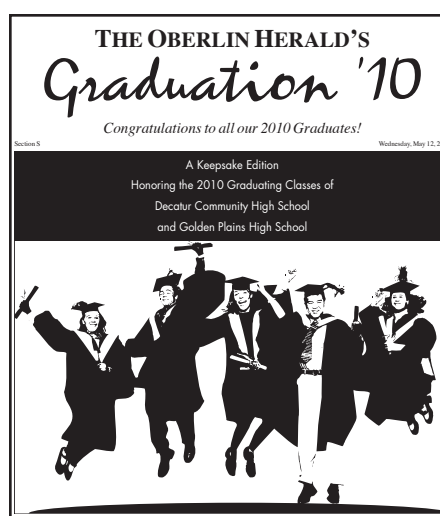
Mayor Joe Stanley said the city will begin the work to find a replacement, which will take some time.

Mr. Gilley said that he has taken a job at a small city near Wichita to be the administrator. He will be working in Oberlin until the end of the month.

Graduates' pictures inside paper today

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the 2010 Graduation Section, including information on seniors from Decatur Community and Golden Plains high schools.

The section has pictures of the graduating seniors from each school and data on what the students were involved in school, scholarships they've won and their plans for the future.



Helping others



AT THE GATEWAY last Tuesday, Pastor Charlotte Strecker-Baseler donated blood during the American Red Cross drive. The organization holds a blood drive in Oberlin every few months. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

*Community plans parade, food and fun

(Continued from Page 1A) the pit on the bed of hot coals, covered with about three feet of dirt and left to cook for 24 hours.

She said the wood is usually cut three to four months in advance to give it a chance to cure. Then a big pit is dug near the city park and the fire is started two days before to get the coals just right before cooking the food.

When it's been 24 hours, she said the pit is uncovered, a front-end loader lifts the pan out of the pit, and the meat and veggies are lifted out of the pan to make room for a big pan of gravy from all the juices.

"It takes many boxes of cornstarch for the thickening," Mrs. Green said, "and the gravy is stirred with garden hoes and rakes."

Events for the day include a parade in the morning, the noon barbecue, mud volleyball, outhouse races, cow-patty bingo, games for kids and a kiddie train. Dinner is

available from the town restaurant, and street dance and fire works will conclude the day's fun.

"The entire community gets involved," she said. "Prairie Land Electric Co-op donates the beef, Ben-Lee (Processing in Atwood) donates the processing, Williams Brothers Grocery donates other necessities for the meal, Finley Construction donates and serves the iced tea, along with many other area businesses who give money or share their time and energy to make the day a success."

The theme for this year's celebration is "What happens in Herndon, stays in Herndon."

Everyone can come join the celebration. Contributions are asked for the noon meal and to help continue the tradition.

For information, call Mrs. Green at (785) 322-5583, Peach Beims at (785) 322-5373 or Jennifer Beims at (785) 322-5331.

*Motel owners plan renovation

(Continued from Page 1A) come visit?"

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Podoll.

He said they want to get 12 units up and running right away and then see about the others. The initial plan was to have it open by Memorial Day, said Mr. Podoll. It might be a little ambitious, but the plan is to move full steam ahead.

Jan Ackerman of Hoxie, who was in the audience, noted that the city would need to have the building checked for asbestos when tearing it down. She said there wouldn't be

a problem in getting someone here to check it.

Mr. Riedel said he doesn't see any problem with the city donating the labor to tear that down, but if they run into cost for asbestos, the city couldn't pay that.

City Administrator Austin Gilley said the city could work out an agreement before the next meeting.

No vote was taken, but council's consensus was to proceed to give the land to the developer and help tear down the station.

Fun day postponed

The Oberlin Elementary School fun day is postponed until Monday because of the cold and rain.

The original date for the fun day or grade school track meet was Friday, May 7, but it was postponed because of weather until Monday.

Rain and cold on Monday put it off again. Principal Duane Dorshorst said on Monday, May 17 they

school plans to hold the fun day at the high school track. Kindergarten through third grade will start at 9 a.m. with the fourth through sixth grade starting at 12:30 p.m.

The Oberlin Jaycees and Support Our Schools group will hold a burger fry for students and the parents who said they wanted to participate.

2010 Dispatch

Decatur County Emergency Communications is accepting applications for the position of part-time dispatcher.

Successful applicant will be trained to answer 911 phone calls and dispatch the County and City Police, EMS, City, County and Rural Fire Departments. Applicant should have a high school diploma or GED and be willing to work with the public. Successful applicant must pass a criminal background check and be able to pass and maintain NCIC certification. Decatur County is an equal opportunity employer. Applicant must reside in Decatur County.

Persons wishing to apply may pick up an application on the fourth floor of the Decatur County Court House, 120 East Hall St., Oberlin KS 67749 (Phone 785-475-8100).

Grand Opening New Life Christian Bookstore

New Owners: Rick and Lisa Wilcox
Phone Number: (308) 345-6889
212 Norris Avenue
Mc Cook, Nebraska



May 19 — May 22
9:30 — 5:30

Daily Prize Drawings!

Council hires company to map utilities

The Oberlin City Council agreed Thursday to hire a Missouri company to do geographic information system mapping for the sewer, water and electric systems.

The bid from Midland GIS Solutions came to \$36,984. Broken down, that was \$10,846 for the sewer system, \$11,069 for the water lines, \$13,573 for the electric lines and \$1,496 for printing, project set up, project management and expenses.

The company, said Matt Sorensen, will basically develop a computerized mapping program for the city for its utilities. He said they will work with the city staff on the location of the utility lines and equipment and get the global positioning locations for all of it.

It's a comprehensive mapping system of all the utilities, he said.

It's important to have these maps in case outside help is needed, he said. The information gathered will be given to the Kansas Municipal Energy Agency in case there is a storm and the maps are needed.

From past experience in Kansas, said Mr. Sorensen, it's a nightmare if electric lines and poles are knocked out in a storm and no one knows where the lines were or were supposed to be.

Part of the agreement is providing on-site training on the data layers, he said. The city will receive full colored hard-copy maps, map books for the trucks and also maps on the computer. It's pretty much a turn key mapping program.

Mayor Joe Stoney asked how long the project will take. The sewer mapping will take two to three weeks, said Mr. Sorensen, the water system and electric will also both take a couple of weeks, so roughly it would be six to eight weeks from start to finish.

He added that the firm will work closely with the city crew and will need some "pre-locates" done. Mr. Sorensen will either have the city crew go out with his crew or look at a map together.

Mr. Sorensen said the crew will do a five-point condition rating on all the manholes. The crew will open each one, he said, adding that they can add a rating system for the water lines if the council wants.

Once the mapping is in data form,

added City Administrator Austin Gilley, the crew could do the condition rating on the water lines.

The cost is mostly up front, said Mr. Sorensen, and then there's a minimum maintenance rate. He didn't say how much.

There's lots the city can do with the maps, he said, once the foundation is built.

The mapping, said Mayor Stanley, will give the crew the capability to find all the utilities. This is something the council has talked about doing for three or four years.

Although there was some question about whether the water and sewer mapping was needed, the council approved the bid as proposed.

Business celebrates 30 years of helping people

By VERASLOAN

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Emergency Pregnancy Services, where young women or couples can go for help coping with an unplanned pregnancy, marked 30 years of work this week.

The idea for the service began in the late 1970s and early 1980s when a group of Colby women heard about a college student who couldn't afford to buy larger clothing to hide her pregnancy.

The young woman told a friend and classmate about her problem, and she in turn talked with her mother about it. The prospective parents wanted to give life to their baby. Both wanted to finish college and eventually marry when school was over, but their finances would

not cover the immediate need for maternity clothes, medical care and in a few months, the needs of a newborn.

A big concern was how to talk with their out-of-state parents about their situation. They feared the parents would want an abortion, which was not something the couple was considering.

Friends and their families came to the couple's aid, and Emergency Pregnancy Services got its wings.

Questions like "how do we begin" were answered when organizers met to discuss how they could best serve the needs of people in that situation. They decided it was best to start small and grow, so they developed a plan to train volunteers, arrange for free pregnancy testing and solicit

maternity clothing, baby clothes and other supplies.

A phone number was listed as soon as possible and later a toll-free number to call for confidential support was put in place. The commissioners offered space in the Thomas County Office Complex, 350 S. Range Ave. in Colby.

"Emergency Pregnancy Services has always been a nondenominational service," said Geri Landry, a member of the volunteer group, "and we are extremely grateful to members of the Thomas County Ministerial Alliance, private donors and to the county commissioners for their generosity in providing a place for the service to house an office where young women and families can come for loving sup-

port and care during a crisis time in their lives."

Mrs. Landry said many faithful volunteers have given hours and money over these 30 years. The service offers anonymous free pregnancy tests, medical referrals, emotional counseling, financial assistance and adoption information, educational guidance, shelter housing, maternity and baby clothes, referral for professional counseling, help with job placement and post-abortion counseling.

Office hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 2 to 4 p.m., or any time by calling the office at 462-3022. The toll-free number is (888) 462-3022.