

# Engine fire causes \$375,000 damage to tractor, planter

The Decatur County Rural Fire Department responded to a tractor fire which ruined the machine.

Chief Bill Cathcart said the fire that started around 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 4, totaled both the 2011 Case IH tractor and a planter.

Clay Anderson was getting the planter ready when he noticed smoke in the engine area of the tractor, said Chief Cathcart. He called the fire department, but by the time volunteers got to the field, it was pretty much totaled. He figured the loss at \$375,000.

The machinery, said Chief Cathcart, was purchased this spring by Anderson Farms and hadn't been used much yet.

He said he wasn't sure what started the fire. The fire fighters were at the call just shy of two hours.

At 1:45 p.m. on Thursday, May 10, the rural department headed to Vernon Ketterl's farm two miles west of Traer. The chief said Mr. Ketterl had been burning some

boxes and the flames caught some feed and bales on fire.

Around six bales were lost to the blaze, he said.

At 12:45 p.m. Saturday, the Oberlin city fire department responded to a call on Commercial Street at Elk Avenue, a car was on fire. The chief said Amanda Marshall had parked the 1971 Plymouth Barracuda at the Beauty Boutique. Chief Cathcart said she came out and started the vehicle and the carburetor backfired. The engine caught fire, causing damage to the wiring and hood.

At 8:45 a.m. Monday, the fire department and an ambulance were called to an accident 14 miles south of Oberlin on U.S. 83. Chief Cathcart said the fire department was called because of possible hazardous material issues. While the Decatur Co-op truck involved in the accident had a trailer with five chemical containers on it, he said, nothing spilled.

# Recreation director ready for summer

With the ball forms already turned in, Decatur County's new summer recreation director is getting ready to start games in June.

The county commissioners hired Melda Downing in April. Friday was the cutoff date for ball forms to be turned in to the county clerk's office. That morning, Mrs. Downing said, she checked on how many forms were in the clerk's office earlier in the week, adding that she had hoped for more.

There were lots of younger kids for T-ball, she said, but not a lot of older kids.

Mrs. Downing said she played ball when she was a child, and has experience working with kids, having been a special education teacher aide for eight months.

Mrs. Downing said she and her husband, Beau, were married in March. He is the city's newest police officer. He has a son, Ahearn, 5.

# Council takes tour of city's property

The Oberlin City Council toured several of the city's facilities during its regular meeting on Thursday.

City Administrator Karen Larson said the group toured the airport, the substation where the city's main transformer burned up last year, Sappa Park, the new sewer lagoons, the power plant and the city shop.

Some of the members, she said, hadn't been to all of the city facilities before. Foreman Dan Castle, she

said, did a nice job as their guide.

One of the comments, said Mrs. Larson, was that the city doesn't have enough people to take care of everything that goes on. There's a lot the city staff takes care of, she said, and the tour didn't even include the parks or swimming pool.

Mrs. Larson said the tour was to make sure everyone knows what the city owns and operates. No action was taken on anything.



**EASY DOES IT.** Ron Gallaway (plaid shirt), owner of Smith Monuments of Stockton, operated a hydraulic lift that swung a restored stone monument from a truck bed while two employees guided it to the ground at the Oberlin

Cemetery on Monday. Completely restored, and paid for with donations, the monument honors veterans who have served our country.

— Herald staff photos by Carolyn Plotts



Alan Marietta and Judy Scott.

Commander Avery said a rededication will be held later, but the post wanted to have the 50-year old monument ready to unveil at this year's Memorial Day service.

Ron Gallaway, owner of Smith Monuments, said his company appreciated the opportunity to help restore the monument.

"We're proud to help honor our service men and women," he said.

In addition to the monument, Oberlin's Memorial Day services will be highlighted by a speech by Juliet Madsen of Parker, Colo. She was injured in Iraq, where she was a paramedic with the 82nd Airborne Division. She speaks all over the

country on behalf of the Wounded Warriors organization.

Ms. Madsen has created pictorial quilts to honor the different branches of the armed forces. She has also written a book, "Objects for Deployment," depicting her life before and after Iraq. To learn more, go to veteransbookproject.com.

# Injured marker replaced

By CAROLYN PLOTTS  
c.plotts@nwkansas.com

The granite monument to veterans at the Oberlin Cemetery, damaged last summer in a 90 mph windstorm, has been restored to its proper place.

Monday, workers from Smith Monuments of Stockton carefully lifted the restored monument from the back of a flatbed truck using a hydraulic lift and heavy straps. First, the 2,800 pound base was lowered into place and secured to its foundation. A second piece of granite weighing about 1,000 pounds was placed on top. It carries a depiction of a flying flag and the inscription, "Silent Glory."

Rollie Avery, commander of the Oberlin American Legion Post, said area people and former residents really came through in helping to raise the \$5,000 it took to restore the memorial.

"We really appreciate all the support," he said.

Others on the fund-raising committee were Ruth Miesner,

# Man retires for second time

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
k.davis@nwkansas.com

For the past 16 years, Ken Shobe of Oberlin has been making the drive to McCook to teach computer and technology classes at the McCook Community College.

Now Mr. Shobe, a former mayor of Oberlin and City Council member, plans to retire for the second time. The first retirement was in 1995 after a 23-year career in the Air Force, where he spent much of this time piloting 150 tons of metal and fuel into the air and safely back to earth. Having made a career of flying the massive KC-135—a military version of the old Boeing 707 airliner—all over the world, he made what might not seem like a natural career transition to teaching college computer classes.

Mr. Shobe, who retired as a lieutenant colonel, teaches computer programming, Java and Visual Basic, as well as web design, business math and on-line Microsoft application classes in Excel and Access.

A Decatur Community High School graduate, he received a degree in computer science at Kansas State University, along with a Reserve Officers Training Corps commission in the Air Force.

While in the Air Force, he was an instructor pilot and classroom instructor for the KC-135, a 130-foot long aerial refueling aircraft. It was through his work on the tankers in California that he was able to put his college degree to work as a weapons system trainer. When the tanker simulator was developed, he said, computers were used to generate the three-dimensional visual flight scenes. Col. Shobe was involved in programming those three-dimensional graphics.

"We'd simulate the airports, the

terrain and even had to simulate what happened when you flew into the control tower," he said.

He eventually got a master's degree in systems management at the University of Southern California.

In 1997, he said, the McCook college was advertising for someone to teach some programming classes. He applied, landed the job and has been commuting ever since.

In his time as a teacher, he said he's seen a gradual change in his role from being the one who often introduced students to computer technology to the students of 2012—where there are very few students who come to college without being computer and tech savvy.

He said when the college added its graphic design program several years ago, it made a dramatic impact on his job. In addition to adding more numbers to his classes, he said, it brought a more focused group of students—those who wanted to learn to use technology to bring their creative ideas to practical use.

"There are some real talented students who are taking the creative applications and doing some pretty amazing things," he said.

In retirement, he plans to travel with Janice to some of the places they lived while in the Air Force.

"We plan to travel when we want to rather than during the summer when our schedules dictated we had to," Col. Shobe said, "and I'm sure we're going to continue spending a lot of time on my wife's family's 125-year old farmstead near the Nebraska-Kansas state line."

He'll continue to follow his beloved K-State Wildcats on football Saturdays, but instead of grading papers during the game, he said, he'd like to see a few more of them in person.

## Big Timber Memorial Services

### Sunday, May 27

10 a.m. followed by  
Potluck Dinner at 12:30 p.m.  
at the City Hall in Jennings.  
Drinks will be furnished.  
Please bring your own table service.

<p><b>WAR DEAD</b> Foreign Service</p> <p>Joseph Cilek John Fiala, Sr. Albert Janousek Matt Kaspar, Sr.</p>	<p>Fred Wentz James Janousek Joseph Urban</p>	<p>Frank Pachner Gustave Steffen Joseph Tucek Joseph Vacura</p>
<p><b>Civil War</b> Bartholomew Henry</p>	<p><b>Spanish American War</b> Anthony Kolsky</p>	
<p>Henry W. Heilman William Krizek</p>	<p><b>World War I</b></p> <p>Anthony Kaspar Joseph Petracek</p>	
<p>Edward Cilek Vollie Kathka Raymond Matousek Alfred W. Heilman Lys Carey</p>	<p><b>World War II</b></p> <p>Anton Vacura Carl Kasper Bernard Ehrlich Frederick A. Flaska Lumir Jesse Skubal</p>	<p>Raymond Pavlicek Myron Skubal John Petracek Stanley Mazanek Donald Shaw</p>
<p><b>Vietnam</b> Wayne Buchanan</p>	<p><b>Korea</b> Raymond Kaspar Norman Petracek Harwood Chandler Bennie Krizek Charles Votapka</p>	
<p><b>Peacetime</b> Elmer Petracek</p>		

# Thank You!

High Plains ArtFest would like to give a big thank you to the following people who helped make the recent 8th annual art show and sale a huge success. We couldn't have had such a great show without each one who helped.

• Patrons	• Oberlin FFA
• Artists	• Oberlin Herald
• Volunteers who helped hang and take down art	• McCook Gazette
• Volunteers in the Tally room	• Oberlin Gateway Staff
• Those who helped at Registration	• Juror
• ArtFest Committee members	• Musician
• Midwest Energy	• Hansen Foundation
	• Oberlin Arts and Humanities
	• Show Attendees

## May is National Foster Care Month

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