

Wheat-plot tour shows solid crop

By STEPHANIE DeCAMP
sdecamp@nwkans.com

The fungus known as stripe rust is “winning the battle” as the wheat disease gains resistance to fungicide, farmers at Monday’s annual Extension Wheat Plot Tour heard.

The wheat in the plot west of Oberlin so far is above average, they found, but with the lack of rainfall and warm winter, those gathered had reason to be concerned.

“The disease just eats it like candy,” said Jim Shroyer of Manhattan, a state agronomy leader and wheat expert with Kansas State University Research and Extension.

Stripe and leaf rust were hot topics as farmers from Decatur County gathered to share an early breakfast and walk the test plots to see various strains of wheat. Representatives from the Kansas Wheat Alliance and K-State spent the morning reviewing and discussing which were the most and least resistant to fungus, drought and other threats.

With each passing year, Shroyer said, the fungi have

grown more tolerant of higher temperatures and more resistant to fungicide, allowing them to attack what were previous favorite varieties for wheat planting at an escalating rate.

When asked what they thought yields would be this year, Roger May and Paul Shields both predicted this year’s harvest to be at least in the 40-bushels-per-acre range, and possibly as high as the 70s.

“I don’t expect the numbers to really be that low,” Shields said, adding that he would be disappointed if it came to that.

Because of the warm winter and lack of rain this winter and spring, drought has also been a serious concern. Issues discussed included the advantages and drawbacks of each individual type of seed, resistance to drought and fungus, response to fungicide, plant height and winter hardiness.

Both Mr. Shroyer and Daniel O’Brien of K-State agreed that all of the farmers’ considerations basically boiled down to quantity versus quality, and the top strains they suggested (when pressed) were Texas (See WHEAT on Page 8A)



K-STATE EXTENSION SPECIALISTS Jim Shroyer (front on the left) and Daniel O’Brien (behind him) discussed this year’s wheat plots with farmers during the annual wheat plot tour at the May farm.

— Photo by Susan May

Citizens give city answers

Council gets list of survey opinions

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkans.com

Oberlin City Council members looked over results from a survey that went out earlier this spring to city residents.

Mayor Bill Riedel said that 335 of 1,265 surveys, or 27 percent, had been returned.

“This is a really tremendous return,” said City Administrator Karen Larson, noting that a similar survey sent out four years ago brought only about 200 responses when there were more people living in town.

The mayor said that 57 percent of those who responded have lived in Oberlin for 20 or more years and almost 40 percent said they were retired and 70 or older.

Overall, he said, the respondents thought that the city government is effective by more than 75 percent, and that city employees are courteous and professional by almost 90 percent.

About 60 percent were satisfied with the city services, but only 12 percent were interested in serving on a city board or committee.

Looking at priorities, 93.1 percent said improving the water service is important; 85.8 percent, improving city streets; 74.9 percent, improving electric service; 82.1 percent cleaning up blighted or unsightly property; 77.6 percent, lower taxes; 73.7 percent, improving storm drainage; 65 percent, more youth programs; 61.5 percent, improve swimming pool; 55.5 percent, access to new technology; 44.2 percent, improving Sappa Park; 36.7 percent, more senior programs; 32.8 percent, more information on the Internet; 32.5

(See SURVEY on Page 8A)



Pipe inches along

A NEW WATER MAIN SNAKED across Penn Avenue last Wednesday, blocking traffic for a few hours in the morning. By noon, the pipe had been pulled and pushed into to its new underground home by employees of Midlands Contracting. The traffic lights were still out Monday, and the stop sign remained in the middle of the intersection of Penn Avenue and Hall Street. The line is one of several being replaced as part of a project to update the city’s water system.

— Herald staff photos by Cynthia Haynes



Stephanie DeCamp

Reporter from Colorado starts work at newspaper

A new reporter has joined *The Oberlin Herald* and the Oberlin community as of Monday.

Stephanie DeCamp grew up in Kansas City and went to college at Metropolitan State University of Denver. She graduated with degrees in journalism and Spanish.

Ms. DeCamp said she never lived in a small town growing up, but rather Shawnee, a suburb of Kansas City, and later downtown until she was 20. She then moved to Denver, and two years later decided to return to school. It was a passion

for language and travel that eventually led her to pursue her degrees, she said.

“Culture is something that has always fascinated me,” Ms. DeCamp said. “I was fortunate enough to spend a year studying abroad in Argentina, and have traveled throughout Mexico and South America.”

“When it came time to make the decision on whether or not to pursue this opportunity in Oberlin, I thought, ‘Why not?’ I’ve started over twice before, and I felt it was high time I

started learning more about my own country for a change.”

Sprawling suburbs and cities have their advantages, she said, but small-town America offers different experiences and views on subjects that all of us hold dear.

“I think Americans as a whole are deeply polarized these days,” she said. “Between politics and the economy, and even just regular issues of the day, I feel like we’ve grown apart from (See REPORTER on Page 8A)

Police chief to retire at end of month

By CYNTHIA HAYNES
c.haynes@nwkans.com

After 15 years as Oberlin’s top cop, Police Chief Wade Lockhart plans to retire at the end of the month.

Chief Lockhart, who will be 66 in July, said he started work in Oberlin on Aug. 1, 1995, as a patrolman for Chief Gary Reiter, who died later that year. The Oberlin City Council approved him for the chief’s job in early May of 1996.

Before moving to Oberlin, Chief Lockhart said, he had started as a sheriff’s deputy in Osborne County in 1985. After seven years, he moved over to the Osborne Police Department and served there for three.

A former police chief in Osborne knew Chief Reiter, he said, and knew Oberlin was looking for an officer. Mr. Lockhart said that he felt it was time for a change, so he applied for the job here.

Before he got into law enforcement, he said he was an emergency medical technician

on a service where the responders were paid by the run, similar to what occurs in Decatur County.

He was a maintenance man for Parkview Manor, a nursing home in Osborne, and worked for a farm manufacturing company, Gilmore-Tadgy, which has its home base in Clay Center. At that job, he said, he did everything from being night supervisor to working in the shop.

“Whatever they were behind on,” was what he worked at, Chief Lockhart said, adding that he could do about anything in the plant — painting, welding, whatever.

It was welding that got him in trouble once in his youth, he said.

He was working for a business that did quite a bit of welding. That day he was working on a forklift and accidentally got gasoline on his pants. Just then someone started up a welding unit and his pants caught a spark. His leg was burned pretty badly, he said.

Chief Lockhart said that he became an emergency medical technician after he saw his father being taken to the hospital many years ago.

“I thought to myself, ‘I can do better than that,’” so he took the class and went to work.

He went into police work for about the same reasons, he said with a smile.

Chief Lockhart said that he and his wife Nancy plan to stay in Oberlin.

“This town’s been very good to me,” he said. “this has been a good job. I’ve enjoyed it. It’s going to be hard to leave it.”

The chief added that he plans to keep his law enforcement certificate up to date and perhaps work vacations or sick leave for Oberlin and the many small police departments around here.

But the first order of business, he said, is a trip, perhaps to Branson, Mo.

“I owe the wife a vacation,” he said.



Chief Wade Lockhart plans to retire June 30.

No Profile in this week

While the *Relish* magazine will make its debut in *The Oberlin Herald* this week, there will be no *American Profile*.

Relish, which features recipes and cooking, will appear in the paper the first week of each month, and *Spry*, devoted to senior topics, will be inserted the second week of the month in those papers that receive inserts.

This week’s shipment of *American Profile* was damaged by insects and had to be destroyed. While new copies of the magazine are being sent from the printer, they will arrive too late to be inserted this week. The issue will be made up next week.



Cool temperatures could delay harvest

Cooler temperatures and rain over the past week might have pushed this summer's wheat harvest back a few days, but it's still anyone's guess when the first load will come in.

Entry forms for *The Oberlin Herald's* 27th annual Harvest Countdown contest are available at sponsoring businesses, including Fredrickson Insurance Agency, Stanley Hardware, Ward Drug Store, Decatur County Title and Abstract, Hansen Mueller and the Decatur Cooperative Association.

Anyone 18 or older is eligible to enter the contest. Entries need to include the day, hour and minute the first load of dry, new-crop wheat will arrive at one of the participating elevators in the county. The grain's moisture needs to be 14 percent or less.

No purchase is necessary to win; just fill out an entry slip and drop it in the box provided at any sponsor's business.

The first-place winner will receive \$50 in scrip money, second will get \$35 and third \$15. The scrip is good at the sponsoring businesses only.

Winners in the last five years and anyone who has delivered the first load of wheat in that time are ineligible, as are their relatives.

Relatives of the person delivering the first load and employees of *The Herald* and their immediate families also are ineligible.

The eligible first load may be taken to Hansen Mueller in Oberlin and Cedar Bluffs or to Decatur Co-op elevators in Oberlin, Norcatur, Jennings or Kanona.

School board hears about summer projects

The Oberlin School District has several projects planned for the summer.

At the May board meeting two weeks ago, Superintendent Duane Dorshorst told the board members about the upcoming work. These include:

- A minor remodel of the high school library to make room for six more computers and allow for better supervision while students use them.
- New lighting for the junior high and high school gyms.
- Finish the lighting project in the high-school hallways
- Continue the lighting project in the classrooms and lunch room at the grade school. The lights are being replaced with newer units that use less power.
- Thermal window coverings

for the west windows at the grade school to save power and keep the rooms cooler.

Mr. Dorshorst said he is getting prices for insulation for some of the windows at the high school.

A summer project that the staff isn't doing is replacing the windows in the original part of the high school and the junior high gym. That will be done by a contractor.

Mr. Dorshorst said they received two bids. The first one, from Norton Glass, was for \$152,216 plus \$11,159 for interior trim. The second came from Colby Glass for \$321,000. The board approved the low bid from the Norton firm.

All the work will be paid for from the district's capital outlay fund.

* Wheat crop still hanging on

(Continued from Page 1A)

A&M strains 111 and 112.

O'Brien also spoke to the group regarding the market for crops this year, specifically the recent trends for corn and wheat. In the current economy, O'Brien said, "investors are fleeing every market." Last week, the market in Kansas City

Foundertakes in tour



WALTER MAY, 89, and his wife Betty founded the annual Extension wheat plot tour at the May Family Farm. He joined the tour Monday from the Good Samaritan Center nursing home with the help of his sons.

—Herald photo by Susan May

* Reporter starts work

(Continued from Page 1A)

each other. I'm really very excited to try new and even uncomfortable things in order to learn as much as I can from Oberlin."

Ms. DeCamp, 27, is the only child in her family to leave home. Both of her parents and two older brothers remain in Kansas City, and her

boyfriend of one year has stayed in Denver, where she plans to visit both him and her other friends often.

DeCamp said her hobbies include crochet and cooking ("though I'm not very good — yet"), as well as teaching herself guitar, reading and watching movies.

"I love to learn," she said, "so I always have my nose in a book or unwind with a movie of some kind. Ever since I discovered it, I knew journalism was my dream job."

More than anything, DeCamp said, "I'm deeply honored to have taken this position at *The Herald*. To be able to record a community's history, to really grow with it and within yourself, is a wonderful privilege. From the bottom of my heart, thank you!"

* Survey gives city people's opinions

(Continued from Page 1A)

percent, airport expansion; 23.9 percent, improving The Gateway.

"(This) really sets the stage for what's important to people," said Mayor Riedel.

The mayor noted that the comments were largely about needed improvements, since people who want change tend to write more comments than those who are content.

Some of the complaints included:

- "Health care system needs to be fixed."
- "Don't think we can afford both the bowling alley and new swimming pool."
- "Why does the street sweeper only clean some of the streets and not all?"
- "The airport expansion, swimming pool, Gateway and Sappa Park improvements are not worth high taxes."
- "Who takes care of the dirt alleys? Need graded badly."
- "Clear snow off streets without delay."
- "Why do we need water in the Sappa Park lake?"
- "The streets need lots of work. The water is deadly. The utilities are too pricey. The taxes are outrageous."
- "There is nothing to do in this town, minus waiting to die."
- "I definitely have an opinion about blighted/unsightly property. It is an embarrassment to the city to have so many unkempt properties."

There were also suggestions:

- "For every new regulation the city passes, two need to be revoked."
- "I wish we had a couple of small factories or maybe a small organic egg production place on the edge of town."
- "Get new agents to study/plan new water service."
- "The bowling alley to have daytime hours on weekends and after school."
- "It would be nice to have a new swimming pool."
- "Really feel stronger enforcement of underage drinking. It is against the law and it will protect Oberlin's youth."
- "We need to have more forward thinking. The communities around

us progress. We remain stagnant."

"We don't need million-dollar projects; we need to start with what we have and work our way up. One person can't do it all, but we have talents we can offer up and make our town a good place to live, a fun place, enjoyable for all ages."

"Need new motel to support airport expansion/Gateway."

"Please publish all public storm shelters in local paper, post flyers — let the public know where to go during inclement weather."

"Please stop the burning twice a year."

"For those that cannot afford the paint, the city might have a program where they provide paint and some of the youth could do the work on a volunteer basis."

Many people listed priorities:

- "In order to grow, we need airport service and water for all purposes and keeping people here to support our hospital and schools."
- "Quality drinking water is top priority."
- "Would like to see economic development made a priority to bring more business, people, jobs to our community."
- "Improving city streets is a must."

"The Gateway is important for Oberlin community for working together."

"Our town needs to be more upscale."

"City's job is water, sewer, streets and electricity. We have to have a livable environment, which all the other issues and projects do not contribute to."

"City should make mowing of yards and keeping trash picked up a must do."

And there was even a sprinkling of compliments:

"I am very grateful for the time — effort — passion that goes in by Oberlin community members for results we enjoy now."

"I am glad you have held off on the water treatment plant and looked for different sources of water. Hold your head high, be proud of our town, work hard and resolve one issue at a time. Thank you."

"City employees do a good job and stay very busy."

The full report of the survey is available at the city offices at The Gateway.

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