



TREES ALONG this street in Greensburg were stripped bare after a monster EF-5 tornado almost leveled the town at the

beginning of May. Most of the houses on the street were demolished. — Photo by Steve Hirsch

* Man volunteered service night of storm

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 Hollering for people to come help, so the and eight other officers at the fire school took off. Lakin is about 120 miles west of Greensburg.
 The tornado hit around 10 to 10:30 p.m. that night. Mr. Hirsch said the firemen arrived about midnight, in the dark.
 He said they went to the fire command trailer, which was being run by the Ford County fire chief. He paired four of the officers up with firefighters from Minneola.

wearing full bunker gear and walking through water. Mr. Hirsch said they must have been near where the water tower had been.
 At about 2 a.m., he said, the firemen came to a house and knocked on the door. No one answered, so they forced the door open. An elderly woman, probably in her 80s, lay on the couch. Mr. Hirsch said she wanted to stay in her home, which she said wasn't badly damaged. He said a window was missing, but there was a trailer house



Steve Hirsch

This team was sent to the south central part of Greensburg to evacuate people from their homes. Mr. Hirsch said the commander gave them a street intersection to start, but none of the firemen knew where that was. Fortunately, he said, he had grabbed his global positioning system out of the truck, and it had a map of Greensburg in it.
 Methodically, he said, they checked house to house for anyone trapped by the storm.
 The wind was blowing bad, he said. The men were carrying forcible-entry tools and first-aid kits,

on the roof.
 He said they had to tell the command post where the woman was so someone could pick her up. At that time, he said, vehicles were running around, helping evacuate people.
 The woman, said Mr. Hirsch, gave him an address but by looking at the global positioning system, he knew it was wrong. As it turned out, he added, she was so shaken she had given him her previous address.
 That global positioning equipment, he said, really came in handy. Evacuees were being taken to the Dillons store and then to a nearby

town where there was an old college.
 Mr. Hirsch said he thought he helped evacuate around 30 people, most of them in the basement of a motel. Those people wanted to stay there, but there was nothing, no food, no water, no sewer.
 He said he felt sorrier for those people in the motel. All they had left was what they had on them. Their vehicles were all gone, they didn't have any friends in the area and they were being evacuated to a town they had never heard of before.

From the experience, he said, he learned that one of the first things that needs to be done in a disaster is to stop traffic from getting in or out of town and control access. People were coming in to pick up family members, he said, but no one knew who was coming or going.
 "It was a chaotic situation," he said.
 A lot of Kansas emergency responders are more prepared to handle emergencies in their own areas because of this incident, he said.

Mr. Hirsch said he hasn't gone back since the storm, although he has been asked. He just hasn't had the opportunity to go.
 He said he helped a few years ago after a tornado hit Hoisington. In terms of devastation, said Mr. Hirsch, there wasn't a whole lot of difference between the two except the scale. In Hoisington, the business district and a third of the town were left standing.
 That wasn't the case in Greensburg, he added; most of it was gone.
 Mr. Hirsch said by 8 a.m. Saturday, he and the other officers were heading back home.

Firemen from Colby have gone to help, he said, as well as the Thomas County emergency manager. Mr. Hirsch said a Christian church in Hoxie raised money and members went to Greensburg to help.

Oberlin man's fate up in air

The fate of a former Oberlin man charged with burglary and theft after being accused of having impersonating a Red Cross worker and looting from a store in Greensburg earlier this month, is up in the air.
 James Carlisle, 22, formerly of Oberlin, has retained Mark Cowell of Larned as his attorney, but no date for him to appear in court has been scheduled.
 The *Kiowa County Signal* in Greensburg quoted County Attorney Candace Lattin as saying "judicial pressure to move swiftly in charging the alleged looters may have led to miscommunication in regard to Mr. Carlisle and his case

is on hold at present."
 "Right now we're having to revisit some of the information we initially received on his (Carlisle's) involvement in this. Right now, I can't say when he'll next appear in court."
 Mr. Carlisle, formerly of Oberlin, and David Sheley, 19, formerly of Norton, both currently live in Pratt, officials said. The two were arrested for allegedly trying to loot the damaged Greensburg Dillons store on Sunday, May 6.
 Bond was set for \$75,000 and both men were being held in the Pratt County Jail, since Kiowa County's jail is unusable.

Both asked to be released, using Mr. Carlisle's month-old daughter as a reason, an article in the *Signal* said.
 Mr. Carlisle was convicted of domestic battery in Decatur County for an incident on Dec. 10, 2005, when he had an incident with his former girlfriend. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail.
 Mark Anderson, editor of the *Signal*, who is covering the case, said a preliminary hearing for the two had been set for Thursday, May 17, but that didn't happen. He said Mr. Sheley's next court appearance is set for Thursday, July 19, but he isn't sure about Mr. Carlisle.

Vocal students see musical

Over the weekend, 39 Decatur Community High School vocal students ventured to Denver to see a Broadway musical, explore the outdoor mall and have fun at Six Flags Elitch Garden.
 Susan Nelson, school vocal director, said for many of the students this was their first chance to see a musical. The students saw "Wicked" at the Temple Beull theater. The musical, she said, is about the witches in the "Wizard of Oz" before Dorothy visits the Munchkins.
 The students, said Mrs. Nelson, also got to explore the 16th Street Mall and see an art fair which was going on.
 On Saturday, everyone went to Six Flags Elitch Gardens, an amusement park near downtown Denver. Mrs. Nelson said the trip went well.
 "The students represented us well and seemed to enjoy the show," she said

* Money needed for livestock barn

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 at the livestock barn, too.
 The two board members challenged some of the people who show hogs and work with hogs to help raise or donate money for the project, since will need to get hog crates for the building.
 At the recent meeting, said Mr. Badsky, someone asked about having the livestock auction during the fair at the new building. He said this year, the auction will be held at the Oberlin Livestock Auction sale barn on U.S. 83, but they will talk about having it the

fairground next year.
 After the building and new pork burger stand are done, said Mr. Badsky, the fair foundation will have very little money left. The open class building, he said, is the next one on the list for an upgrade.
 Anyone wanting to make a donation for the livestock building or to the fair foundation can do so by sending a check to Jean Hale, treasurer, 120 E. Hall Oberlin Kan. 67749, he said.
 If the money is for a certain project, he said, make a note on the check.

* Cars on display starting Friday on Main Street

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 Store.
 • 2:30 p.m. Terrace Gardens RV Park will sponsor a hub cap throw.
 • 3 p.m. Fidele Electric, Woodcrafting and Building Supply will sponsor a burn out, where people will try to spin their tires to make the most smoke in front of the museum.
 • 3:30 p.m., engine blow up. Officials will no oil in it and see how long it runs until it blows up. Mrs. Wurm said people can buy chances to guess when the car will blow up.

The vehicle will be parked in front of Decatur County Implement.
 • 4 p.m. trophies donated by area business will be given.
 Drawing for a child's bicycle given by the Cesti Vlastenci Western Fraternal Lodge, also known as the Bohemian Lodge.
 Following the awards, said Mrs. Wurm, the museum board will hold a barbecue beef supper in the Bohemian Hall.
 All money raised, she said, will go for operating expenses and maintenance at the museum.

* County to keep license renewals

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 across the state.
 He said the total surpassed any petition ever delivered to him dealing with a federal law. The congressman also got 70 resolutions supporting the renewal service in county courthouses.
 Michael Chertoff, secretary of homeland security, assured Rep. Moran that federal rules would not force Kansas to change its system.
 "Kansas will not lose access to services at their county courthouses," said Congressman Moran.
 It is important, said Mrs. Hale, for Decatur County to retain this service. If the county couldn't offer it,

people would have to take off several hours of work to go to a full service Department of Motor Vehicles office in Colby, Hays or Phillipsburg.
 "This is just a good service for our people to have locally," she said.
 People who already have a Kansas license can come to the courthouse for a renewal, she said. The process takes 15 to 20 minutes. Anyone needing a new license still needs to go to a state office, she said.
 Mrs. Hale said the treasurer's office will be closed on Tuesday, June 12, for the workers to go to driver's license training, which is required to keep the renewals here.

Swim club raising cash

The Oberlin Swim Club is gearing up for a home meet on Saturday, June 16, and needs to raise money to put on the event, the first here in at least five years.
 Penny Soderlund, a swim mom who sits on the board of the non-profit group, said they haven't had a meet in Oberlin since 2002.
 Since the Oberlin swimmers haven't held a meet at the Oberlin City Pool lately, she said, they need

several items, including new lane ropes at a cost of \$1,200, medals and ribbons, flags, concession supplies and new tent supplies. Mrs. Soderlund didn't know how much the final bill might be.
 Recently, she said, swimmers dropped letters off at businesses downtown asking for donations.
 Mrs. Soderlund said anyone who wants to donate can mail a check to the club at 210 E. North Street.

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