

Welcome home alumni!

THE OBERLIN HERALD

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BEFORE GRADUATION, Jenny Ploussard (above) hung out in the library with her class and read. Amber Mason (below) carried her robe on her walk to the high school before graduation Sunday. — Herald staff photos by Kim Davis

Seniors become alumni

Dressed in long black and red robes, each walked slowly into the gymnasium packed with parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers and others, who had supported them the past 13 years of their educational careers.

Forty young men and women became Decatur Community High School alumni on Sunday with their diplomas in hand and the tassel on their mortar board hats turned from the right to the left.

The Class of 2008, said Principal Charlie Haag, has given everyone many great moments and memorials. These are 40 great young people, he said.

He mentioned some of the achievements of the class and apologized for missing many, as it would take too long to say everything. Some included three yearbook editors, seven cross country runners, five football players, six on the volleyball team, one swimmer who will continue in college, two wrestlers and athletes, who have received academic honors from the Northwest Kansas League.

"This is an exceptional class," said Mr. Haag, "with exceptional young people."

Each year the top scholars are selected to speak at graduation.

This year the salutatorian was Jessica Bremer, who had a 3.96 grade point average and 33 hours of college classes already completed. She is the daughter of Judge John and Dianne Bremer. She plans to attend Washburn



University. Miss Bremer thanked her grandparents who have been her greatest supporters the past 12 years and congratulated valedictorian Gage Reichert for his hard work. It wasn't long ago, she said, that the class was bonding over graham crackers and playing duck, duck goose. It's been a great trip getting to (See SENIORS on Page 5A)

Activities planned for Memorial Day

With Old Glory flying high, the Oberlin American Legion will honor past and present members of the armed forces during the Memorial Day Service at the Oberlin Cemetery.

The service will start at 10 a.m. Monday near the monument on the west side of the cemetery.

The Oberlin American Legion, Sons of the Legion and the Legion

Auxiliary will join together for the service.

Each year the groups ask someone who is serving or has served in the past to say a few words. This year Jordan McHugh, daughter of National Guardsman Randy McHugh, will be the guest speaker.

Starting at 7 a.m., volunteers will put up the 232 American Flags around the cemetery. Anyone can

come help put them up.

Each is a coffin flag of deceased veterans. Over the years many of the older flags have been retired or returned to the families.

Everyone is invited to the service.

BIG TIMBER-JENNINGS

Services will begin at 10 a.m. on Sunday at the Big Timber Cemetery, followed by a potluck at 12:30 p.m.

at the Senior Center in Jennings. The Jennings American Legion Post will be in charge. They will also conduct services at 10 a.m. on Monday at the Jennings Cemetery.

NORCATUR

The 119th Memorial Day services will be held on Sunday at Norcat. Those planning to march in the parade are to meet at 1 p.m. at the (See SERVICES on Page 5A)

Students improve math scores

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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The junior and senior high math teachers showed that their students have made improvements in state standardized tests this year after a small change in the math program and have said they don't want to change the math curriculum.

At the board meeting last Monday night, around 20 school staff and teachers were in the audience to hear about a math study conducted by Superintendent Pat Cullen. Dr. Cullen said he thought he needed to give the information to the teachers.

On the phone Monday, Dr. Cullen said the study is confidential because it includes ACT scores of students. He said he compared those scores to the curriculum. At this point, he said, there isn't a recommendation from the study.

Math teacher Pat Dorshorst said when she received the study she had some concerns and so she asked Duane Dorshorst, grade school principal and her husband, to look up some scores for reading, science and composited for the same individuals, whose math scores are

in the study.

Dr. Cullen said the concern was for algebra at the junior high level.

The current curriculum teaches algebra in eighth grade. The study, said Dr. Cullen, was given to the principals and teachers to see if there is a problem.

After looking at the standardized test scores for this year, the lower level students are well above the state level, said Mrs. Dorshorst.

Mrs. Dorshorst handed out information showing that the students tested this year for math did better than the previous year.

She said instead of changing the curriculum, for example not offering algebra until freshman year, she would like to leave the curriculum as it is.

The teachers decided this year, said Mrs. Dorshorst, to revisit the state indicators before testing and that worked. The scores are coming up. With that one change, she said, the students have made tremendous improvements in math.

The change the teachers have made is paying off, said Mrs. Dorshorst. (See TEACHERS on Page 5A)

Group plans BBQ cook-off at Sappa Park

By KIMBERLY DAVIS
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Ten barbecue fans reserved the shelter house at Sappa Park for a cook-off for the first weekend in October during the recent Oberlin City Council meeting.

Bill Riedel asked the council what it would take to have a barbecue cook-off at Sappa Park, saying the group would like to see if it would work. Other towns in the area have similar cook-offs, he said, and this one could bring in 60 contestants.

The group would like to hold the event in conjunction with Mini Sappa weekend, when there are celebrations at the county museum downtown and an antique engine show at the fairgrounds, he said, asking how to go about reserving the park?

The shelter house is the only part of the park that can be reserved through the city office, said Administrator Gary Shike. He suggested the group reserve the shelter house.

The event would be open to the public, said Mr. Riede, asking if overnight camping is allowed at the park.

Yes, said Carolyn Burtis, with the

park committee, but it's "primitive" camping with no water or power available.

She told the council she thinks the cookoff idea is great. A barbecue and campers in conjunction with Mini Sappa, she said, that means more active and more people.

Is the electricity on at the shelter house? asked Robert Groneweg, with the barbecue group. Mr. Shike said yes.

What about outhouse use? asked Cindy Lincoln.

It's primitive, said Mrs. Burtis.

The city does have water going to the first campground, south and west of the bridge and youth ranch turnoff, said Mayor Joe Stanley.

It would be nice to have lights by the outhouse there, said Mrs. Burtis, and Mr. Shike said that is on the city crew's list of things to do at the park.

The group reserved the shelter house.

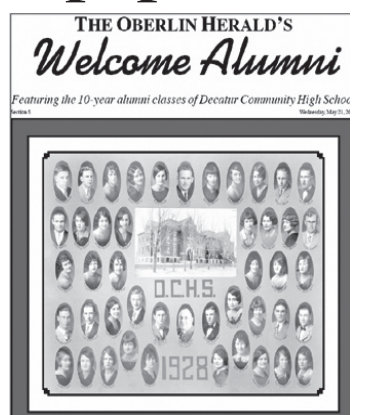
Meat cooked at the contest will be sold to the public, said Mrs. Lincoln.

There won't be any beer for sale, said Mr. Riedel. The group had asked about allowing beer for spon- (See GROUP on Page 5A)

Section about alumni inside today's paper

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the first spring section featuring graduates of Decatur Community High School, just in time for the annual alumni weekend, reunions and banquet at The Gateway.

The section includes stories and pictures about classes that graduated in 1928, 1938, 1948, 1958, 1968, 1978, 1988 and 1998, all of which will be holding reunions Saturday in Oberlin.



*Teachers want math classes to stay same

(Continued from Page 1A) shorst, adding she didn't think there needed to be any other changes. If the teachers keep doing what they are doing, she said, the students will continue to excel.

Does anything below junior high need to be addressed? asked board member Dewayne Jackson.

At the grade school, said Mr. Dorshorst, when the state scores come back, the teachers look at them and see if anything needs to be tweaked. Those issues are then addressed.

The math curriculum for the district, set three years ago, he said, is working.

Another thing to remember is math standards change every year, said Mr. Dorshorst, unlike reading, which stays the same.

The teachers have addressed the problem the North Central Association said there was in math, he said, now everyone just needs to keep moving forward.

When the association had its final visit two springs ago, the representatives pointed out that the math scores were the weakest and said it was an area the district needed to address.

At both the seventh and eighth grades, said Mrs. Dorshorst, the classes were one student away from getting the standard of excellence in math this year.

"There aren't many schools in the state that make standard of excellence in math," she said.

Sounds good, said Mr. Jackson.

*Group plans barbecue at park

(Continued from Page 1A) sorship reasons, said Mr. Lincoln.

The council is still considering some way to allow beer at the event, said Councilman Ray Ward. There are lots of legalities to deal with.

If someone wanted to have a function at Sappa Park and wanted beer, asked Mr. Riedel, how does that work? How does it work at the golf course?

There is an ordinance that allows beer at the golf course, said City Attorney Steve Hirsch.

If there is a wedding and the guests toast the bride and groom, then those people are breaking the law? asked Mr. Riedel.

"Technically," said Mayor Joe Stanley, "I guess they are."

It seems like a lot of outdoor events include beer or wine, Mr. Riedel said. Maybe the rule is handcuffing people on some of the events that might take place at the park. Is there a way around it?

It would be the same process as the golf course, said Mayor Stanley. It would take a vote from the

council, and ordinance that would be published.

Can beer be allowed on an event basis? asked Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener. Yes, but if the allowance is made for a certain date each year, the actual day of the week would change each year, said Mr. Hirsch. It could be allow a weekend of a certain month and then in a certain area, he said.

Mrs. Burtis said she's been asked by several people about getting the shelter house on the National Historical Registry, and allowing alcohol could be a conflict.

"We want to have the barbecue no matter what," said Mrs. Lincoln, "whether we can have beer or not."

Mayor Stanley said the council will continue checking into possible options and see what other towns are doing. He said the council will also look into making it on an event basis. Maybe by the next meeting the council will have something new, he said.

*Services scheduled for Memorial Day

(Continued from Page 1A) bank. The parade to the cemetery will begin at 1:30 p.m. Kyle Douglas, pastor at Maple Grove Church, will be guest speaker. Pastor Ray Gilstrap will offer the prayer. This is the 36th year for the Avenue of Flags. There will be chairs at the cemetery. Refreshments will follow at the Norcatat Educational Building. The cafe will also be open.

SELDEN-LEOVILLE

Memorial Day services will begin at 9:30 a.m. at Leoville and at 10:30 a.m. at Selden with the Selden American Legion in charge.

HERNDON

A Memorial Day program will begin at 2 p.m. on Monday at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in Herndon. Crystal Corcoran Mahan of Hays, a veteran and member of the post, will speak. She

is the daughter of Paul and Angela Corcoran of Oberlin. Pastor Keith Reuther will offer the prayer. The Rawlins County High School choir will sing the National Anthem. Assisting the Veterans of Foreign Wars will be members of the Oberlin American Legion.

LYLE

Memorial services will begin at 10 a.m. Sunday at the Lyle Cemetery with the Lebanon and Wilsonville American Legion Posts in charge. A potluck dinner will follow at 11 a.m. at the Lyle Community Building. will be guest speaker. Pastor Ray Gilstrap will offer the prayer. This is the 36th years for the Avenue of Flags. There will be chairs at the cemetery. Refreshments will follow at the Norcatat Educational Building. The cafe will also be open.

Commissioners OK two bills from AT&T

The Decatur County commissioners approved paying two bills to AT&T for the Emergency 911 service at their meeting last Tuesday.

Treasurer Jean Hale said she had a monthly bill for \$672 and then three months of service bills for \$2,049.

Commissioner Ralph Unger asked why the county had a bill for three months. Why hasn't each bill been paid monthly? he asked

Mrs. Hale said she thought this was the first bill that had been sent out. There isn't any late charge on

it, she said.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Ratified a \$5,000 oil purchase for 500 gallons of 15w40 oil and one drum of 50 weight.

- Approved the purchase of a muffler for the landfill dozer for \$535.

- Heard that the free dump days at the landfill brought in 110 people who brought 149 car tires, four tractor tires and 954 pounds of used oil.

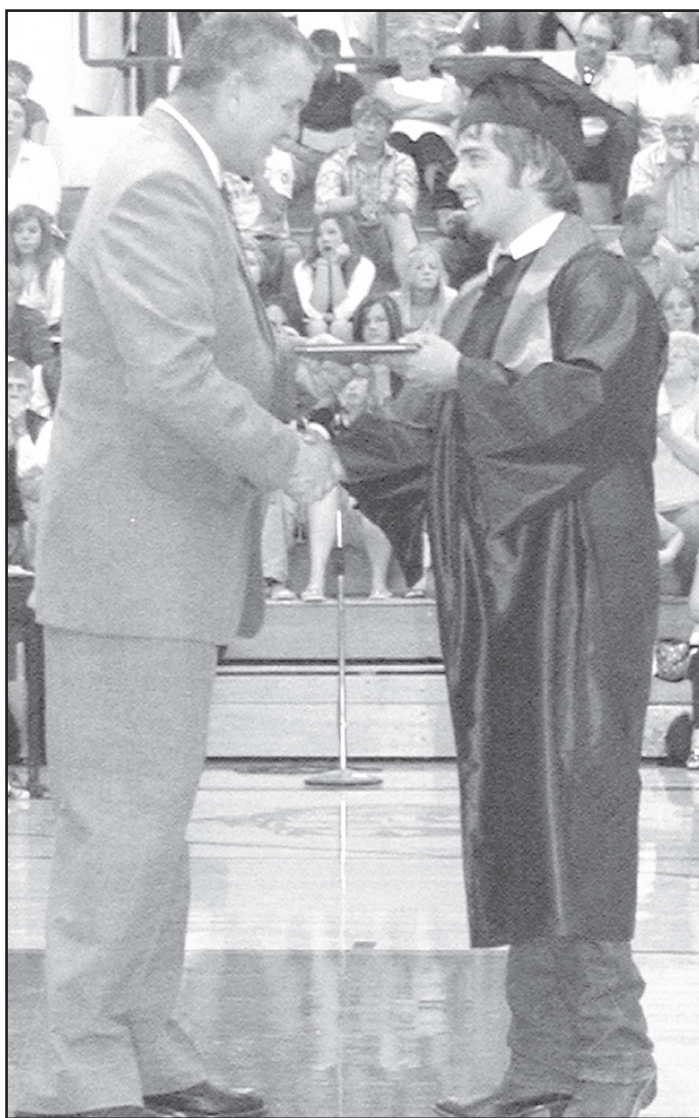
Council to hear park report

The Oberlin City Council will hold the second meeting of the month at 7 p.m. Thursday, with only one new item on the agenda as of Monday.

Administrator Gary Shike said Gary Anderson is working on a re-

port from Decatur Tomorrow about Sappa Park and might present it at the meeting.

The council meeting will be held downstairs at The Gateway and is open to the public.



*Seniors graduate

where the class is now. Over the years, said Miss Bremer, the students have made lifelong friendships.

Over the years, she said, some have hit speed bumps, times where they just needed to slow down and determine what to do next.

Everyone's life is a highway, she said, with speed bumps, ups and downs and road blocks. Each person is the only one who can achieve their dreams. Remember the trip, said Miss Bremer, not just the destination.

Mr. Reichert, said Mr. Haag, earned a 3.995 grade point average and received a 32 on his ACT test. He plans to attend Kansas State University and is the son of Wilbur and Jill Reichert.

"We stand here on the threshold of the future and exclaim, 'Bring

it on,'" said Mr. Reichert.

The Class of 2008 is a competitive class, he said. Each graduate has earned a seat here and their diploma. Each graduate has stuck it out even through "The Grapes of Wrath."

"I know we will all succeed," said Mr. Reichert, "as we build on the blocks established here."

The class is ready for the world, he said.

"The questions is, is the world ready for us?"

The senior class slide show was created this year by Heather Glodt and Lacey Ream. It featured baby pictures and pictures from this year of each student. It also showed candid shots of the students and included a song written by senior Kenzie Fisher.

Colonel inspects former youth ranch

A representative of the Kansas National Guard met with the city administrator, a council member, a county commissioner, the undersheriff, emergency preparedness director and a couple of other earlier this month to look at the former Sappa Valley Youth Ranch.

At a council meeting Thursday, May 8, Councilwoman Marcia Lohofener said Lt. Col. Eric Peck from the National Guard office in Topeka was here to look at the ranch. The Guard plans to have four training outposts in the state, she said, with its hub moving to Salina. The ranch could be a training site for city and county law enforcement officers, fire fighters and other responders to be ready for terrorism, storms and other emergencies, she said.

The Guard, she said, didn't commit to anything, but the representative did say Oberlin has a lot of things that would be useful. It will be at least September before the state would be ready for anything, she said.

Mrs. Lohofener did say since Oberlin is on the edge of the state, the city might have to offer some inducements to make its package attractive

On another matter, City Foreman Dan Castle said the lift station for the new waste water treatment plant needs some repairs. Dave Blau, with

Miller and Associates, the engineers who designed the plant, said the pipes need to have new coating. The work will be done in the next two to three weeks, he said.

The work is covered under warranty, Mr. Blau said.

Councilman Jay Anderson asked if the wiring to the high school is efficient? Mr. Castle said it is sufficient to handle the school's power needs. There wasn't any explanation about the question.

In other business, the council:

- Heard that MidStates Energy Works out of Salina came in to run new wire for the east side bank.

- Got invited to check out the entrance to the cemetery, where sexton Nan Stanley has removed lots of bushes. It looks good, said Mr. Castle.

- Talked about skunks in the city. City Administrator Gary Shike said Max Hafner has a license to trap skunks and is getting rid of as many as he can.

- Held a 20-minute closed session for attorney-client privilege with the administrator, attorney and council. There was no action taken and nothing said about what it was about.

- Reappointed Joyce Ploussard and Lee Ploussard to the city Housing Authority for four years. The group is in charge of the Sappa Valley Manor apartments

Economic corporation to take part in job fair

The Oberlin-Decatur Area Economic Development Corp. plans to advertise job openings during the Northwest Kansas Employment Expo coming up in Colby.

Marketing Director Connie Grafel said the agency purchased booth space at the expo on Saturday, May 31. Businesses that want to participate in the booth or advertise openings should contact Ms. Grafel at 475-2901.

She said she knows both Bus and Coach International out of Jennings and RAS Inc. out of Oberlin plan to participate. People can also help man the booth from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

if they let Ms. Grafel know they are interested.

The expo, she said, is being sponsored by KansasWorks and KXXX/KRDQ Radio.

The information about job openings will also be included on the Oberlin website at www.oberlinks.com.

Anyone can have a listing on the page, she said, but the listings must be kept up to date and it will be the businesses placing the information's responsibility to do that. Submissions can be sent to updates@oberlinks.com.

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