

City moves forward for golf carts

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The Oberlin City Council voted to move forward with allowing both golf carts and All-Terrain Vehicles to be allowed on the city streets, but not until July and no ordinances or policies have been set yet.

In a special meeting on Monday, May 4, the council discussed whether to allow the carts and ATV's on city streets and kicked around some ideas for regulations.

Although the council voted to move forward and eventually allow the vehicles, they didn't vote on or agree to any regulations.

The state has left the decision on whether

or not to allow the vehicles up to the cities, with the law change at the beginning of July, said Mayor Joe Stanley.

Other towns are allowing this to be done, said Councilman Bill Riedel. Oberlin shouldn't handicap itself by not allowing the vehicles on city streets. Golf carts aren't cheap, he said, so there probably won't be a huge influx of them.

The golf carts, said Councilman Ray Ward, is something that he sees the city ending up allowing. He suggested that the owner would need liability insurance and have a fully licensed driver behind the wheel.

Mayor Stanley said he checked with the

insurance providers in town and they said they have a way to write the insurance.

The house bill on the golf carts would allow the carts to be driven on the city streets and cross the highway, but not be driven on the highway, said Mayor Stanley. Other things covered in the house bill are brakes, brake lights, driving them only between sunrise to sunset and various other items.

According to home rule, he said, the city can require more regulations.

The council and the 12 members of the audience brought up issues that could be covered in the ordinance. None of those were voted on, but they included:

- liability insurance, possibly with a

minimum amount.

- regulations on kids riding in the carts, possibly no kids under 12 or child safety seats required.

- long flags on the back of the carts.
- cross treads on the tires.
- no one under 18 years-ld driving.
- no one driving unless fully licensed.
- a safety inspection for the vehicles once a year.

- seat-belts for all riders and driver.

Mr. Riedel said he didn't see any problem with allowing the all-terrain-vehicles on the street, too. The vehicles are economical and the cities around Oberlin are allowing it.

The council approved it, again not setting anything in stone.

The group discussed possible regulations for the vehicles which included:

- insurance.
- a long flag.
- an age limit, fully licensed driver needed.
- a year inspection.
- a helmet for riders under 18-years-old.

Although micro-trucks are included in the state law, the council decided to wait to discuss them.

Class of 2009 to graduate on Sunday

It's just about time for the Class of 2009 to walk the halls of Decatur Community High School one last time.

The past four years have been building up to one final ceremony — graduation, which will start at 2 p.m. Sunday, in the gym at the high school.

This year the high school will graduate 34 seniors in the formal ceremony. Graduates include: Nathan Shay Baker, Haley Jessica Barrett, Jacinta Maria Carter, Derek Michael Chambers, Amanda Lynn Edmiston, Jacob Lynn Fortin, Logan James Fortin, Danyel Renea Jeffrey, Elisha Kay Jones, Lucas Keith Juenemann, Tamara Marie Ketterl, Christopher Adam Larson, Annamarie Lea Larue, Cherish Rae Manning, Cole Lee May, Farra Errin McChesney, Ryan Lee McEvoy, Jordan Lee McHugh, John Alan Meitl, Emma Marie Merrill, Ethan Jack Merrill, Robby Lee Mortinsen, Cynthia Gale Murray, Makenzie Susan Nelson, Heather Dee Ploussard, Andrew Paul Richards, Alyssa Marie Rippe, Desirae Sara Shields, Nathan Jon Simonsson, Sammuel Ross Stapp, Jordan Eugene Tally, Everett James Urban, Jay Libory Wessel.

The valedictorian is Miss Rippe and salutatorian is Mr. Larson. Both will have the opportunity to give a speech during the ceremony.

Throughout the ceremony high school students will perform both instrumental and vocal numbers. Performances will include the brass ensemble, including Nolan Henningson and Darian Bose on trumpet; Samantha Anderson on French horn; Katie Glading and Bret Ashley on trombone; and Jaxen Alstrom on tuba playing "Three Spirituals,"; Miss Rippe on flute and Mr. Larson on clarinet playing "Duo No. 7," by Geminiani, the choir singing "Friends" and the DCHS Singers performing "May the Music Never End."

The class motto is "We came as strangers, we stay as friends, we leave with the memories that will never end."

The seniors have chosen their class colors as royal blue and silver, flower as a red-tipped white rose and class song as "Second Chance," by Shindeown.

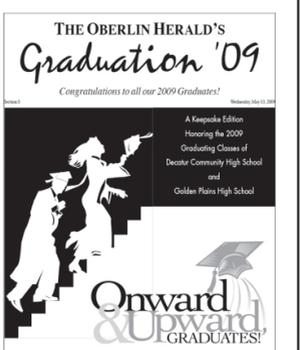
This year's class officers are President Miss Larue, Vice President Miss McChesney, Secretary Miss Carter and Treasurer Mr. (See SENIORS on Page 5A)



Grad tab inside

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the 2009 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.



Oberlin to appear on Nebraska news

Attractions in Oberlin will be featured on a news channel out of Nebraska tonight (Wednesday) evening.

Zach Richie, with N-TV, said the channel is the ABC affiliate out of Kearney, but covers this area. The feature on the city is aired on the news as part of The Road Less Traveled. Mr. Richie said that part of the news started when the main anchor woman thought it would be good to highlight some of the positives in the coverage area.

Since then, the channel has done features on towns from populations of four people up to 15,000 people.

Every Wednesday night after the previous story airs, someone draws a town's name out of a fish bowl. Last week, Oberlin was drawn.

On Monday, he spent the day in Oberlin, eating lunch at the LandMark Inn, visiting the Last Indian Raid Museum and talking to people about Sappa Park, the airport project, the new movie theater, bowl-

ing alley and senior center and the home-owned carnival.

People in Oberlin must have watched the show when the name was drawn, said Mr. Richie, because some of the viewers called in to suggest what were highlights. He also got help from the chamber.

The interviews and filming from Oberlin will be featured three times tonight on N-TV, said Mr. Richie, which is channel 6. During the 5 p.m. news, there will be a small trivia question, then during the 6 p.m. news there will be one minute, 20 seconds on the town and during the 10 p.m. news, three minutes.

He added that he also does shows called Food Finds and One Tank Trips, and will highlight the museum and LandMark, but he didn't say when.

People in Oberlin should get the Nebraska cable station, some just with the rabbit ears on their television, he said.



Students parade for prom

SENIOR ANDREW RICHARDS and his date, Courtney Strine (above) stopped to smile for his aunt to snap their picture. The promenade Saturday was led by Jordan Tally, prom marshal, and his date Heather Ploussard, (left). The juniors and seniors, including Nikki Wessel and Nathan Baker (below) walked Main Street before they headed to the banquet and activities at The Gateway.

—Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis



Appraiser plans to research new mapping

The Decatur County appraiser got the OK to get some more information and prices to update the mapping system for the office after a meeting with county commissioners last Tuesday.

The current system, said Appraiser Alan Hale, is unmaintainable. He suggested going to a computerized system with updated maps. The system now, said Mr. Hale, is using 30-year-old topographic maps.

The office can continue to use the old system, he said, with the old maps, but he's becoming concerned with the integrity of the system. It's a manual system and there are a lot of people working on it, he said.

It might be time to go to digitized mapping, a geographic information system, he said. Other counties are already doing this.

This isn't the first time the commissioners talked about the mapping system, but no decision had been made.

Mr. Hale said he knows this is a tough time for the budget, but the county will know more about this year's valuations in 60 days. He added that he thinks some of the oil valuations will drop. Last year, he said, the oil valuation were 30 percent of the entire county valuation. That is probably down, he said, but he doesn't know what will happen with the land. In the last five years, said Mr. Hale, the county has lost half of the agriculture valuation. Those values used to be more stable

from year to year, he said.

Last year, said Mr. Hale, he budgeted \$20,000 to start with this project. He said he isn't suggesting to do the whole thing at one time.

Mr. Hale said his recommendation is to start working on the mapping system. He added that he wants to do some more research on the needs and systems.

With changing to a digitized system, he said, there will be maintenance and training costs. The costs won't be all up front, he said; they will continue.

There are newer maps of the urban areas, said Mr. Hale, but not of the rural parts of the county. He said they do have some photography available.

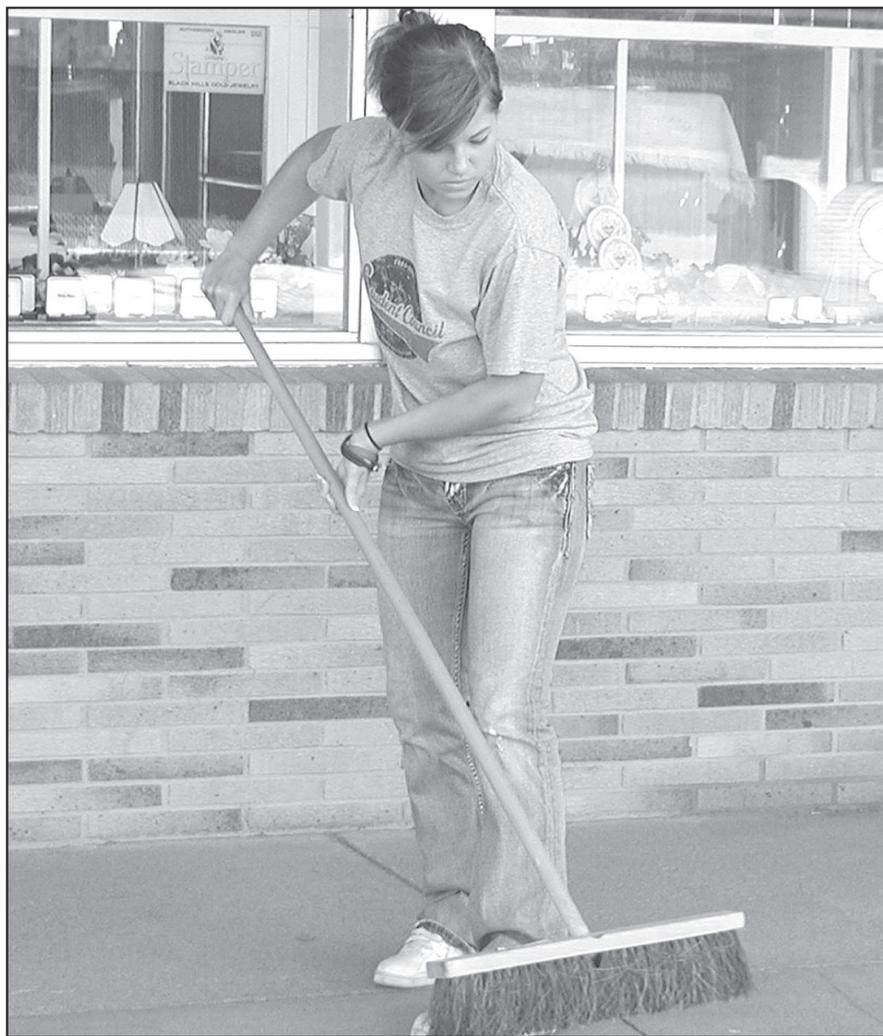
The mapping, he said, will be only as good as the photography.

Mr. Hale asked if the commissioners see any value in exploring the digitized mapping and seeing what the costs are. He said that his biggest concern is that once the county spends the money to do the maps, they'll have to have people to work on it and money to update it.

The commissioners gave Mr. Hale the go ahead to check into prices and information on the mapping.

All of the county departments are looking into the geographic information system need to be on the same page, said Commissioner Ralph Unger, so each one isn't reinventing the wheel.

Serving the community



WITH A BROOM, Jessica Fredrickson cleaned the sidewalk in front of Ray Jewelry last Wednesday with her fellow Kayettes from Decatur Community High School. The girls swept the walks as a service project.

— Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

*Seniors to walk Sunday

(Continued from Page 1A)

Chambers.

GOLDEN PLAINS

Thirteen seniors will receive their diplomas during commencement exercises at 2 p.m. on Sunday at the Golden Plains School gym in Rexford.

School board member Paul Bruggeman will present diplomas to the following: Jason Ackerman, Oriana Beltran, Tess Brown, Taste Bruggeman, Maria Garcia, Kelton Jones, Randa Lewis, Angel Lobato, Tanner Moss, Damin Plank, Nicholas Rall, Torry Roehl and Ivonn Vargas.

Baccalaureate services will begin at 7 p.m. tonight at the school.

Superintendent of Schools is Mary Ellen Welshon and Travis Smith is assistant administrator.

Dates change for show

The Mini Sappa Antique Engine and Thresher Association plans to move their show from the first weekend in October to September this year.

Penny Fringer, club member, said this is the 29th year for the show, which is normally held the first weekend in October at the Decatur County Fairground.

This year, she said, the group plans to hold the show on Saturday, Sept. 19 and Sunday, Sept. 20.

A lot of the members of the association, said Mrs. Fringer, are farmers and with the growing season changing over the years, they made the decision to move the show up. The members are busy at the beginning of October, said Mrs. Fringer.

The members are working on fliers for the show now, although they don't plan to change anything else.

Extension district needs new officers

Anyone interested in serving on the Extension District No. 9 Twin Creeks, or the district formed with Decatur and Norton Counties, can fill out an application in the clerk's office on the second floor of the courthouse.

Byron Hale, county extension agent, said the Decatur County commissioners get to appoint four board members and then there will be four board members appointed by the Norton County commissioners. Two of the appointees will serve until April 2011 and two until April 2013. In both of those years, there will be an election and the people will decide who serves on the board.

In both counties, the positions are at-large, so anyone can serve; they don't have to live in a certain area of the county.

He said he would like to have the appointees in place before July 1, when the joint district starts.

Commissioner Ralph Unger said he thought the extension board was like any other appointed one for the county and people interested need to fill out the application in the clerk's office.

Commissioner Gene Gallentine asked if the people interested in serving would then be interviewed. Mr. Unger said the commissioners have done that in the past, but there wasn't a decision made.

Mr. Hale gave the commissioners an agreement to sign for the extension office to continue using the current office space. The agreement will be good for a year

County Roundup

At the meeting last Tuesday, the Decatur County commissioners:

- Talked about needing applications from people who are interested in serving on the newly formed Extension District No. 9 Twin Creeks, formed between Decatur and Norton Counties. Story at left.

- Talked with the road and bridge supervisor about the crew starting to put up the address signs on the residences and businesses in the county. Story at right.

- Heard the Oberlin-Decatur County Area Economic Development Corp. received a letter stating the group is tax exempt for the movie theater, bowling alley and senior center project. Story on Page 3A.

- Approved purchasing 20 five gallon pales of foam for the fire department. Story below.

at a time. The commissioners said they need to have the county attorney look at the agreement, so it wasn't signed.

The extension board has an upcoming meeting, said Mr. Hale, so he will take some of the applications to see if anyone wants to serve

Road crew will put up signs

The Decatur County road and bridge supervisor told the commissioners that the crew plans to start working on putting the address signs up at the residences in the county.

Supervisor Tim Stallman said he's figured there are 468 signs needed. The crew won't put signs up at the vacancies in the country, only where people live and businesses. He said he thought each sign would cost \$25, which doesn't include the installation cost.

It will probably cost on average \$1,000 for each township for the county to purchase and install the signs.

Mr. Stallman said there was a good

turn out for the both the recent free days at the landfill and the Hazardous Household Waste day.

There were 126 people who participated for the landfill days. In past years, said Mr. Stallman, there's been an average of 110 to 125 participants.

There were 43 people who took part in the household waste day. There was 2,013 pounds of latex paint, 394 pounds of oil based paint, 80 gallons of old oil and 350 pounds of used car batteries.

It's been two years since the county has had one of these days.

The road crew is going to need half inch by six inch grader blades. Mr. Stallman said he has no idea how much the blades will cost, but it could be \$5,600 to \$5,800. The commissioners approved the purchase.

The commissioners ratified the purchase of a 155 gallon drum of 80/90 oil, which will cost over \$500 and 250 tons of rock from Venture Corp. for \$1,000.

Chamber hires new secretary

The Decatur County Area Chamber of the Commerce has a new secretary hired.

The board hired Carolyn Hackney to do the job, although a start date hasn't been set.

The hours the chamber is open have changed. The office will be closed Saturday, Sunday and Monday, then the office will be open from 10 a.m. to noon and 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., Tuesday through Friday.

Mrs. Castle said the board decided to change the hours of operation to help save some money with payroll. The group will now have to start carrying some directors and officers insurance. The chamber doesn't have any income, since the organization operates on the dues of members and fundraisers.



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Fire department to purchase foam

The Decatur County commissioners approved buying 20 five gallon pales of foam for the fire department.

Chief Bill Cathcart said the pales cost \$110 each. The fire north of town at the Venture Corporation mixing plant used up part of the fire department's foam supply. After the fire, said Chief Cathcart, the firefighters did some training with the foam to.

The supply on hand, he said, has exceeded its shelf life. The distributor said the price on the foam is going up. It has a 15 year shelf life, he said.

Chief Cathcart said they use five pales of the foam at the fire north of town and will be sending the company a bill for it.

Also, he said, they need new coveralls for grass fires. Chief Cathcart said they probably need 15 at around \$300 a pair.

Commissioner Ralph Unger asked if Chief Cathcart could get

but he found a loose valve and Total Turf was called and replaced it. Mr. Berls said he was concerned the the problem valve was going to be the one under the concrete, but it wasn't.

The men also talked a little about replacing the existing fire trucks. Gaylen Huntley, noxious weed director, said the Honda engine, used to run the pump on the sprayer is down. It will cost \$225 to fix it, he said, and \$400 for a new one. Mr. Huntley said he would like to purchase a new one. The old one has 15, if not more, years on it. The commissioners approved the purchase.

The heating core is also going out in the Dodge pick-up. Mr. Huntley said the road and bridge crew is fixing it. The part was \$75 and it was going to cost \$1,100 or more to take it in to fix.

In other business, the commissioners:

- Ratified fixing the air conditioner in Bus 22 for \$1,000.

- Talked with Custodian Bob Berls who said he thought they were going to have a problem with the sprinkler system at the courthouse,

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