

## Area slowly coming out of drought

The area might slowly be pulling itself out of a drought as the La Niña conditions over the Pacific Ocean have weakened, forecasters say.

Jerry Killingsworth, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service office in Goodland, said it takes a long time to get out of a drought. It took a good six months to get into this one, he said, but the good news is that it looks like closer to summer, the area will be receiving closer to normal rain fall.

The drought, said Mr. Killingsworth, really started late last year and peaked about two months ago. It's worse along and south of I-70. That area is still classified in a severe drought.

As you go north, he said, things get a little better. From I-70 to the Nebraska line, said Mr. Killingsworth, the area is in a moderate drought.

The latest drought monitor report was May 10, he said.

In order to look at drought numbers, me-

eteorologists look not about just what happened recently, but at what has happened in the past six months.

From October through March, said Mr. Killingsworth, the biggest rainfall deficits were from Norton to Hill City to Atwood to Quinter and southwest to Oakley.

The biggest deficit right now is from a cooperative observer southeast of Norton who had just one inch for the year, instead of the normal five.

The deficit ranges are from three to four

inches. Towards Colby and Goodland, he said, it looks like things are a little better.

Near St. Francis and the Colorado state line, the deficit is one to two inches.

From October to March, Oberlin's deficit was about 2 1/2 inches.

There has been some rainfall in the area. So far for the month, Oberlin received 1.61 inches of rain, with the moisture for the year at 6.23. That is 4.18 inches less than last year.

A year ago this time, Oberlin had re-

corded 10.41 inches.

While the drought isn't over, it looks like the area is turning the corner.

The root cause of the drought is the La Niña current in the South Pacific. This has been seen over and over again, he said.

Mr. Killingsworth said he doesn't think this drought will be as severe or as long as the drought in the early 2000s, which lasted for years.

## Three poachers file guilty pleas to lesser charges

Three of the men arrested for poaching deer in Decatur County in December have pleaded guilty to reduced charges.

John Jacobs III, 53; John Jacobs IV, 30; and Joseph Jacobs, 23, of Wisconsin all pleaded guilty to one count of commercialization of wildlife, a class A misdemeanor, and one of unlawful possession of wildlife, a class C misdemeanor.

Each of the men will have to pay restitution of \$1,000 to the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, \$5,000 in fines and court costs.

The men have also had their Kansas hunting licenses suspended for three years starting from the date of the judge's journal entry. Each of the entries was filed in April in the clerk of the district court's office.

The men were arrested in early December on charges of illegally

killing trophy-size mule deer. They were arrested in the Lyle area.

Besides the three who have pleaded guilty to the reduced charges, Mark Jacobs and Paul J. Jacobs were also arrested and booked into the Decatur County Jail.

State wildlife officers seized 12 bucks in all, a mix of white tail and mule deer, and piled them high on a trailer which was parked that day in front of the courthouse.

Among the pile of carcasses was at least one deer that meets the requirements for a trophy buck, which means the inside spread of its antlers measured at least 22 inches.

Several days after the first arrests, charges were filed against two local men, David and Jake Swisher.

No plea has been entered by the remaining four men.

## School calendar set for next year

The Oberlin School Board approved the school calendar for the 2011-2012 year, similar to this year's schedule.

After summer break, which starts on Wednesday, May 25, school will start on Friday, Aug. 19. The teachers will report back on Monday, Aug. 15, for two days of in-house

training and two work days.

Other scheduled training days during the year are Monday, Sept. 19, and Monday, Feb. 20.

Days that the district won't have school include:

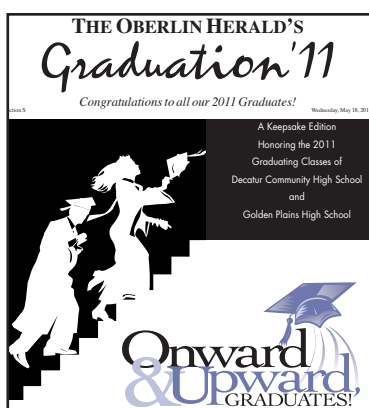
- Monday, Sept. 5 for Labor Day.

(See CALENDAR on Page 5A)

## Graduation section in today's paper

Inside today's Oberlin Herald is the 2011 Graduation Section, with photos and information on seniors from Decatur Community and Golden Plains high schools.

The section has pictures of the graduating seniors from both schools and details on what the students were involved in school, scholarships they've won and their plans for the future.



## Seniors to graduate Sunday at high school

Twenty-five graduates will walk the halls of Decatur Community High School one final time Sunday.

The Class of 2011 will say their good-byes after graduation at 2 p.m. Sunday in the senior high gym. The doors to the gym will open at 1 p.m. for anyone who wants to get seats.

The class colors are red and white, the flower is the calla lily, motto is "Dance to the Beat of a Different Drum" and the song is "Shadows" by Yellow Card.

As of Monday, the grade averages determining the class valedictorian and salutatorian were still too close to call, said Principal Charlie Haag.

The school choir will sing "Seasons of Love," and the DCHS

Singers will perform "I Hope You Dance." Mr. Haag said there will also be a couple of instrumental pieces.

Graduates are Tiffany Anderson, Bret Ashley, Nakita Bose, Rhianon Davies, Jori Diederich, Dalton Dolan, Jordan Dreher, Zach Farr, Keithen Fortin, Katie Glading, Jacob Helm, Joseph Hirsch, Erin Jeffrey, Sara Kyte, Timothy Larson, Jacob Larue, Christifer Lines, Laysha Medina, Lacy Mizek, Nolan Peters, Joshua Ritter, Jonathan Samson, Rachelle Scott, Dakota Soderlund and Carissa Wentz.

Mr. Haag said this class has been very successful. They took second in state volleyball, third in forensics and the boys basketball team played as well as they have in a long time.

The Class of 2011, he said, has provided lots of good memories.



LEVI NIXON (above) carried a large brown teddy bear Director Lisa Paulson (below) held up a fruit basket as she explained the rules to the game Fruit Basket Upset. Center last Tuesday for the Teddy Bear Picnic. Activities

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

## Kids bring teddies

By KIMBERLY DAVIS  
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They walked in a single file line, with their colorful bears of all sizes, from the Oberlin Elementary School.

The first graders carried the teddy bears in their arms two blocks to the Decatur County Good Samaritan Center. The boys and girls brought their bears from home to join in the center's annual Teddy Bear Picnic.

Some of the bears were big, others tiny, and one stuffed animal wasn't a bear at all. One first-grade boy brought his stuffed brown monkey instead.

Each year, first graders all team up with one of the residents at the Good Samaritan Center, said Teacher Cindy Sattler, to be First Hand Friends. The students walk to the center twice a month to read to the residents. The

(See KIDS on Page 5A)





## Students and staff honor their principal

AT AN OPEN HOUSE at the high school last Tuesday, Susan Nelson (left) helped cut pieces of a cake honoring Principal Charlie Haag, who is retiring at the end of the term. Mr. Haag and grandson Kyler Joel, 18 months, watched. The DCHS Singers did a song for Mr. Haag during the presentation.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

## \*Kids attend picnic

(Continued from Page 1A) residents, said Mrs. Sattler, help the students and cheer them along as they improve their reading skills.

The students, she said, are really proud when they can read the big books and the residents praise them. Besides the benefit of reading, she said, the students also get the chance to visit with the elderly residents. Some don't have living grandparents, said Mrs. Sattler, so it's good for them to interact with older people.

At Christmas, she said, the students make little gifts for their friends. The residents also give them little gifts.

Janette Votapka started the program over 19 years ago, when she was teaching at the school, said Mrs. Sattler.

Last Tuesday, the students and residents got together for the last time this school year. The kids brought their teddy bears for a picnic.

They sat in a circle on the floor while the residents sat in chairs in the front dining room watching the kids. The students ate "teddy bear" crackers and drank water before they played Fruit Basket Upset.

Before they left the center, activities director Lisa Paulson told the students they are welcome to come read to "their" residents over the summer.

# Technical College plans 46th graduation ceremony on Friday

Northwest Technical College will celebrate the 46th annual commencement at 1:30 p.m. on Friday at Max Jones Fieldhouse, where 155 students will receive technical certificates and associate degrees.

The commencement program will include opening remarks by College President Dr. Ed. Mills, and a welcome by Dick Short, vice-chairman of the area board of

control.

Frank Otter, chairman of the board of control, will introduce the commencement speaker, Mark Smith of Wallace County.

Smith served on the Northwest Technical College board for 30 years, and was chairman of the board for 10 of those years.

He is a farmer and rancher in the Wallace County and Greeley County area, as well

as owner, operator of the famous Pleasant Valley Ranch located in Sharon Springs. He is a member of Kansas Livestock Association, and was Past President of Kansas Livestock Association. As member of National Cattleman's Beef Association, he was asked to be on the association's Executive Committee.

Following the speaker will be a song

"The Climb" by Cosmetology vocalists Amber Beougher of Oakley, Vanessa Jaynes, Canon City, Colo., and Kamisha Nonamaker, Goodland.

College Counselor Paul Chaffin will present the Students of the Year nominees and announce the winner. Those nominated include Jance McKee of Brewster, a diesel tech student.

The alumni speaker will be Christine Smith, associate director of development and career service.

Dr. Mills will give some closing remarks and the graduates will march out to the recessional "Pomp and Circumstance" by Pastor Carol Edling Jolly.

## \*Calendar set for new school year

(Continued from Page 1A)

- Friday, Oct. 28, for state volleyball.
- Wednesday, Nov. 23 through Friday, Nov. 25, for Thanksgiving.
- Friday, Dec. 23, through Monday, Jan. 2, for Christmas break.

- Monday, March 12, through Friday, March 16, for spring break.
  - Friday, April 6, and Monday, April 9 for Easter.
  - Friday, May 11 for the Northwest Kansas League track meet.
- Late-start days are scheduled for

- Monday, Oct. 17, Monday, Nov. 14, Monday, Dec. 12, Monday, Jan. 16 and Monday, April 16.

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 25 and 26, and Monday and Wednesday, Feb. 6 and 8.

## Hospital fun walk planned for Sappa Park

The Decatur County Hospital will sponsor its annual community walk at Sappa Park starting at 4:30 p.m. Thursday.

The walk will go until 7 p.m. with

a noncompetitive 5K Lake Trail Fun Run/Walk starting at 6 p.m.

Decatur County emergency medical technicians will be grilling hot dogs, provided, along with water

and an appreciation gift, by the hospital for all participants.

For questions, call respiratory therapist Deb Klima at (785) 475-2208.

## Work night set to paint Sappa shelter

The Sappa Park Shelter house will get a paint job tonight with the help of money from the Modern Woodmen of America and a bunch of volunteers.

The work night starts at 5:30 p.m. at the park, east of town. Volunteers are welcome. The Sappa Park Committee will have other things for volunteers to work on besides painting.

The Oberlin Camp of the Modern Woodmen, said committee

member Kimberly Davis, is paying for \$500 in paint to redo the areas of the shelter house that have been painted before.

The original color has been matched as closely as possible, she said.

The Modern Woodmen are also doing a matching raffle. Board members have until the end of June to sell tickets at one for \$1 or six for \$5. The drawing will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday,

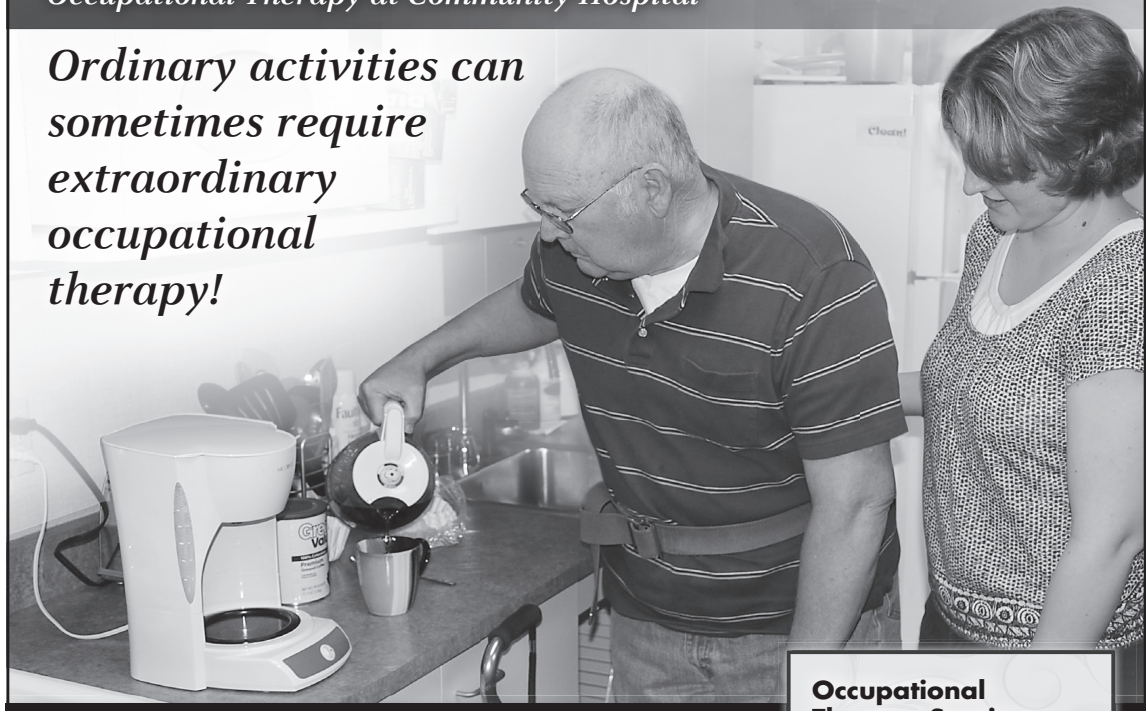
June 29, at 805 E. Frontier Parkway, the Marie McKisson home.

The first place winner will take home \$100, second place \$50 and third \$25.

The committee can sell up to \$2,500 in tickets to win a matching \$2,500 to help pay for bathrooms at Sappa Park. Committee members include Gary Anderson, Connie Riedel, Amy Carman, Rick Pauls, Becky Ayers and Mrs. Davis.

### Occupational Therapy at Community Hospital

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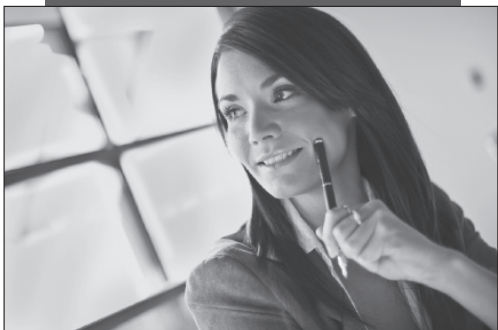
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- Cognitive and memory rehabilitation
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### Help Wanted

# Ad Designer



The Oberlin Herald, an award-winning weekly newspaper, is looking for a **FULL OR PART-TIME AD DESIGNER.**

Knowledge of InDesign preferred.

Call Cynthia Haynes, Publisher or Kim Davis, Assistant Publisher for more information at **785-475-2206.**

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