

## Board hires new leader for district

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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A Nebraska educator who grew up in Colorado will lead the Oberlin School District for at least the next two years.

Dr. Pat Cullen, now superintendent for the Brady Public School District in Nebraska, was chosen Thursday after an interview with the Oberlin School Board last Wednesday.



Dr. Cullen

He has served in the Nebraska job for three years.

After two hours and 15 minutes behind closed doors Thursday, the board voted 5-0 to offer a two-year contract to Dr. Cullen. Board members Chris Bailey and Kurt Vollertsen were unable to attend the special meeting, but the board called Mr. Bailey to get his opinion before the decision.

Thursday, Dr. Cullen accepted the contract starting July 1 with a salary of \$82,000. Board President Dewayne Jackson said that includes benefits, with life and health insurance and a car allowance. The district was able to hire Dr. Cullen for

\$5,387 less than it paid the outgoing superintendent, Dr. Kelly Glodt, this year.

Dr. Glodt announced his resignation in March after he decided to take a superintendent's job in South Dakota to be closer to his family and home area.

Dr. Cullen told a group of teachers, students and community members during a forum before his interview with the board that

he and his wife, a teacher, have lots of family in Kansas, so this job and move would be a good transition for them.

He said he received a bachelor's degree in business and physical education from Chadron State University in Nebraska, then a master's in physical education from Chadron and a specialist in education, or administrative, degree. He then went on to earn a doctorate in education from the University of Nebraska in Lincoln in 1998.

He has 15 years experience teaching physical education, 11 years as a high school assistant principal and (See BOARD on Page 5A)

## School board interviews four candidates

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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The Oberlin School Board interviewed four candidates for superintendent last week and hired one to fill the job, which opened up when Superintendent Kelly Glodt resigned in March.

The candidates each spent half a day in Oberlin getting a tour of the schools, meeting with a community committee, having either lunch or dinner at the LandMark Inn and then an interview with the board.

With the help of Charles Mansfield of the consulting firm McPherson and Jacobson, the board chose the top four candidates to interview: Chris Vignery, John Brazzell, Dr. Pat Cullen and Brad Reed.

Mr. Vignery and his wife Amy, who live in Courtland, met with the board first. He said he received his bachelor's degree from Fort Hays State University and then a superintendent's endorsement from Em-

poria State.

He and his wife, who is certified to teach kindergarten through ninth grade, have four children, three in school.

Mr. Vignery said he is the principal at Pike Valley and coaches several sports.

"At a small school," he said, "you do about everything you can to help out."

He said he and his wife also ran the Fellowship Christian Athletes group at the school for a while.

Second up was Mr. Brazzell, a Nebraska native, though he said his wife Jean is from Kansas. Mr. Brazzell graduated from Hastings College and was an instrumental music teacher. He received his superintendent endorsement from Adams College in Nebraska.

The couple have four girls and 12 grandchildren, he said. Mr. Brazzell said their second daughter is married (See FOUR on Page 5A)

## Council works on emergency plan after Greensburg

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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After a tornado wiped away the south central Kansas town of Greensburg, the Oberlin City Council decided to update the city's emergency plan in a special meeting Thursday night.

City Administrator Gary Shike handed out a sheet with some ideas for the city crew and workers on how to assess, isolate and restore storm damage.

Mayor Joe Stanley said one of the things the council needs to address is a place to conduct business for the city, especially if The Gateway is destroyed or damaged. He suggested the county courthouse or one of the schools.

Although the council leaned toward planning for a tornado, they agreed other emergencies could strike the city. Mr. Shike said the city already responds to smaller disasters, such as the recent blizzards and ice storms.

Councilman Jay Anderson said the council could use the old city hall, which is now the police office, or the courthouse as a command center. The third choice could be one of the schools.

If it is a storm like the one that hit Greensburg, said Councilman Rob McFee, there could be nothing left.

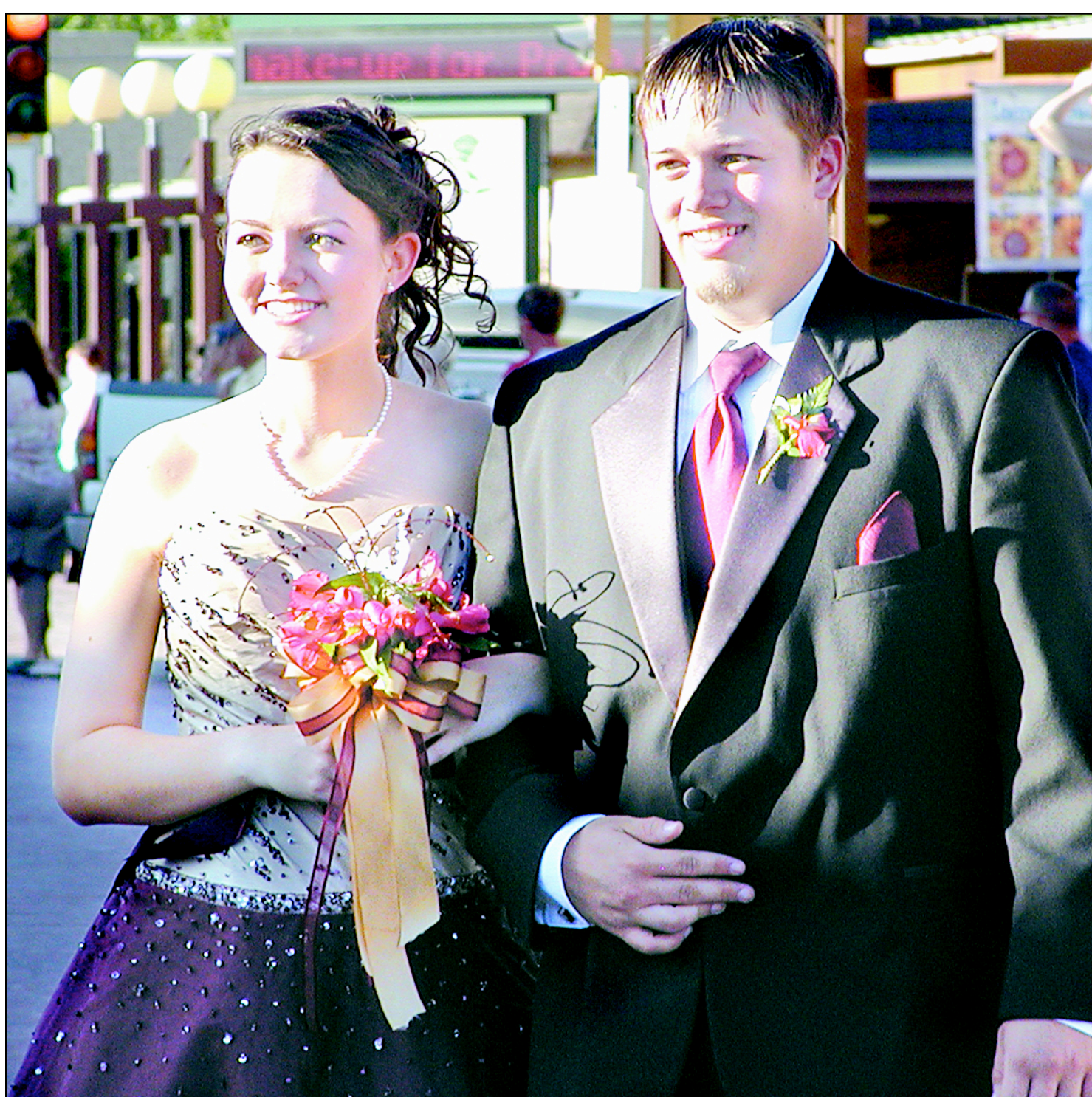
Foreman Dan Castle said the city should work with the county because a big disaster will need a combined effort and all available manpower to get the job done.

"We all need to work in the same direction," agreed Councilman Ray Ward.

Mayor Stanley said the city will need to do its business during a disaster and the county will need to do county business.

First, said Mr. McFee, the council members need a place to come together after they have made sure their families are safe.

Maybe the city needs to designate (See CITY on Page 5A)



**ON MAIN STREET** this Saturday, Kenzie Fisher and Riley Cochran (above) stopped and smiled during the Decatur Community High promenade. Karli Fredrickson, Bronson Scott, Jacob Unger, Anne Wasson, Brock Euhus, Lakin Lahe and Kegan Macfee (below, from left) sat in a Hummer stretch limousine ready to go to the prom. Kyle Glodt (bottom) led the promenade as the prom marshal with his date, Bridget Clarke. — Herald staff photo by Kimberly Davis

## Students parade on Main

Prom goes dress their best

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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It seemed like it went on forever as it backed into the driveway off U.S. 36.

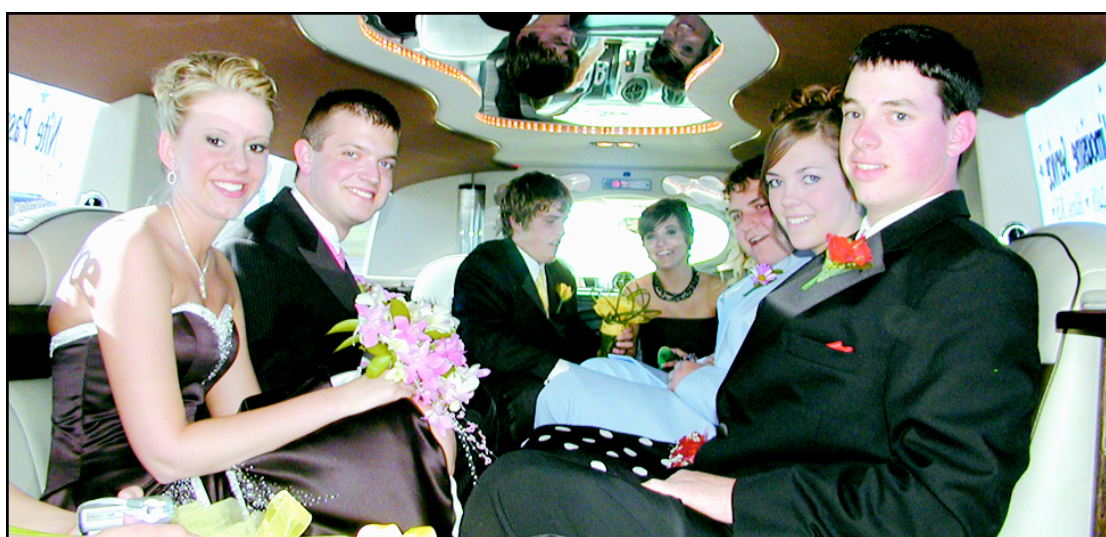
Outside Dr. Gary and Sarah Fredrickson's house stood parents, grandparents, friends and five couples dressed in their best ready for the Decatur Community High prom.

The couples were at the house to be picked up by the long white Hummer limousine that had just arrived from Hays.

The ride was a graduation gift for Bronson Scott, a senior this year, from his grandmother, Alene, and her late husband, Donald Scott.

About 45 minutes before the traditional promenade downtown, the couples loaded into the limousine and headed out for a ride.

Around 6:30 p.m., Main Street started to fill with cars and people



waiting for the students to walk down the street.

Led by prom marshal Kyle Glodt and his date, Bridget Clarke, the students started their stroll down Penn Avenue.

The girls, some dressed in bright orange, pink, green, blue and a few in black, walked with their dates in tuxedos, some with matching vests and ties.

After the promenade, they headed to The Gateway for dinner served by the sophomore class.

Then it was time to dance the night away in the arena. At the dance, Jessica Soderlund was named prom queen and Aaron Helm was named king.

The Oberlin Rotary Club held an after-prom party at The Gateway with games, food and movies for the students until 4 a.m.



## Seniors say goodbyes as graduation nears

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**  
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Forty-eight seniors will say goodbye to Decatur Community High School, and for some, a lifetime of friends and memories, Sunday as they move into the next step in their lives.

For many, that will mean college far from home and for others jobs, but for all, it will mean the end of an era in their lives.

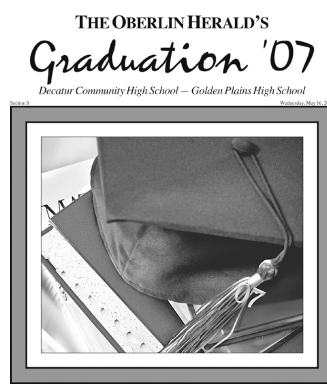
Sunday might be the last time they will be referred to as a high school student. After graduation, they'll be Decatur Community High School alumni and young adults heading off in new directions.

The ceremony will start at 2 p.m. in the high school gym. The graduating class, scholars, athletes, artists, musicians and more, will walk into the gym to "Pomp an Circum-

## Grad section inside

Inside today's *Oberlin Herald* is the 2007 Graduation section, including Decatur Community and Golden Plains high schools.

The section has pictures of the graduating seniors from each school and information about what they were involved in school, scholarships won and what their plans are for the future.



stance." High school students will perform on their instruments, the DCHS Singers will sing "Letting Go" and

the choir will sing "Time of Your Life."

The students have put together a senior slide show for the audience,

with pictures of the kids from when they were little and today.

Valedictorian Aaron Helm will talk, as will salutatorian Nolan May.

This has been a good, competitive class, said Principal Charles Haag, with lots of good leaders. It is a class, he said, that the school will miss.

There are lots of seniors who have been participants in everything, he said, and they are good students.

"When about 30 members of the class have a 3.0 grade point average or above," the principal said, "that is pretty impressive."

The students picked "My Wish" by Rascal Flatts as their class song, which will play as they are leaving the gym. The class of motto is "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are," a quote from President Theodore Roosevelt.

(See SENIORS on Page 5A)