



City's new sewer plant put to test

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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The city put its new waste water treatment plant south of Sappa Creek into use earlier this month, temporarily drying the stream south of town.

The old sewer plant discharged into the creek and the new one is designed to do the same, but no one knows when. David Blau, an engineer with Miller and Associates, said he hopes the new plant will be discharging into the creek by the end of the year, but he doesn't know for sure.

City Administrator Gary Shike said theoretically the plant should discharge once all three of the lagoons are filled. The old mechanical plant north of the creek had much smaller ponds to fill before it discharged.

The city started to prepare the plant at the beginning of May, pumping city water from the well system and the irrigation well south of town into each of the lagoons. The water, said Mr. Shike, was needed in the bottom of the lagoons to keep the liners from pulling up.

Sewage from the city is now going into one of the first two lagoons. No one knows for sure how quickly the three will fill up, Mr. Shike said.

Construction on the project started nearly a year ago, on June 6. The revised cost estimate for the plant is \$1,910,594, nearly \$500,000 under the original \$2.6 million, said Mr. Shike, so the city is under budget.

Mr. Shike said the bid from the

primary contractor came in way below the estimate.

The liner for the three lagoons was also cheaper than what the engineer estimated.

The city needed the new wastewater treatment plant, said Mr. Shike, because the old one couldn't meet new Environmental Protection Agency water standards for discharging.

Although most of the work on the project is done, the administrator said, the old plant still needs to be demolished and the area seeded to grass.

Mr. Shike said the city's proposed new water treatment plant will go in the area of the old waste-water plant.

In February, the city received a claim from Julie Cunningham for \$250,000 alleging the waste water treatment plant will reduce the value of her land south of the lagoons.

The claim says the lagoons are just north of and adjacent to land Ms. Cunningham owns.

According to the claim, Ms. Cunningham moved back to Oberlin from Missouri and purchased the property because she had grown up there.

She planned to build a home on the land and restore the farm.

At the time of the claim, the city had 120 days to act on it, which would be the middle of June. After the claim was filed, City Attorney Steve Hirsch said it had been sent to the city's insurance company.

Mr. Shike said there hasn't been any settlement or action on the claim so far.



THE CITY received a petition about this house at 107 N. East Avenue to declare it abandoned. — Herald staff photo by Kim Davis

Neighbors ask city about vacant house

The City of Oberlin has received a petition asking officials to do something about an abandoned house on N. East Avenue, and officials said they will send the owner a notice.

The house at 107 N. East is owned by Francis Wahrman of Herndon.

City Attorney Steve Hirsch said a petition needs the signatures of five residents of the city to force the city to act. The petition was mostly signed by neighbors and those in the general vicinity of the house.

City Administrator Gary Shike said he and Mr. Hirsch are working on a form notice to send to property owners when a petition comes in. Mayor Joe Stanley said he expects the council to get a letter complaining about abandoned houses.

Mr. Hirsch said the minimum housing code says the city will send a notice to the homeowner and they can have a hearing with the city administrator. Any appeal from his decision goes to the minimum housing board, a three-member panel appointed by the council. A fourth non-voting member comes from the council, which is Councilman Rob McFee. The city can demolish a house and put the cost on the owner's tax roll.

"We can't afford financially to tackle a bunch of these houses at once," he said.

City Roundup

At its meeting Thursday night, the Oberlin City Council:

- Adopted a revised emergency operations plan. Story on Page 3A.
- Agreed to write an endorsing the airport expansion project to state and federal officials. Story on Page 3A.
- Heard that the had city received a petition asking the city to do something about an abandoned house on East Avenue. Story at left.
- Approved pay rates for temporary seasonal and other employees. Story to come.
- Approved a 50-year lease extension with the Oberlin County Club for the golf course property at \$1 a year. Story to come.

Councilman Ray Ward noted that some yards in the city are starting to look bad. City Clerk Deanna Castle said they have sent out 21 mowing notices. After the homeowner receives the notice they have 10 days to mow, said Mr. Shike. If the homeowner chooses not to the city can charge \$100 an hour.

AT GRADUATION on Sunday, Jessica Soderlund (above) walked across the gym to get her diploma, stopping so Superintendent Kelly Glodt could switch the tassel on her hat.

Victoria Winters (below) got help from a friend with her collar before the ceremony.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Senior graduation in gym Sunday full of emotions

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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Students laughed, shed tears, gave a fellow graduate a standing ovation and one called a fellow classmate his hero Sunday during Decatur Community High School graduation.

The 48 seniors walked slowly into the packed gym just after 2 p.m., dressed in red and silver caps and gowns. Each took their program out of their chair and sat down. Commencement had begun.

For the first time in the last six years, at least one of the graduates received a standing ovation when she received her diploma. Seniors gave Jessica Soderlund a standing ovation, setting off one in the audience, too. There wasn't a dry eye in the gym as Miss Soderlund, who has spina bifida and uses a wheelchair, walked across the stage with a walker to receive her diploma.

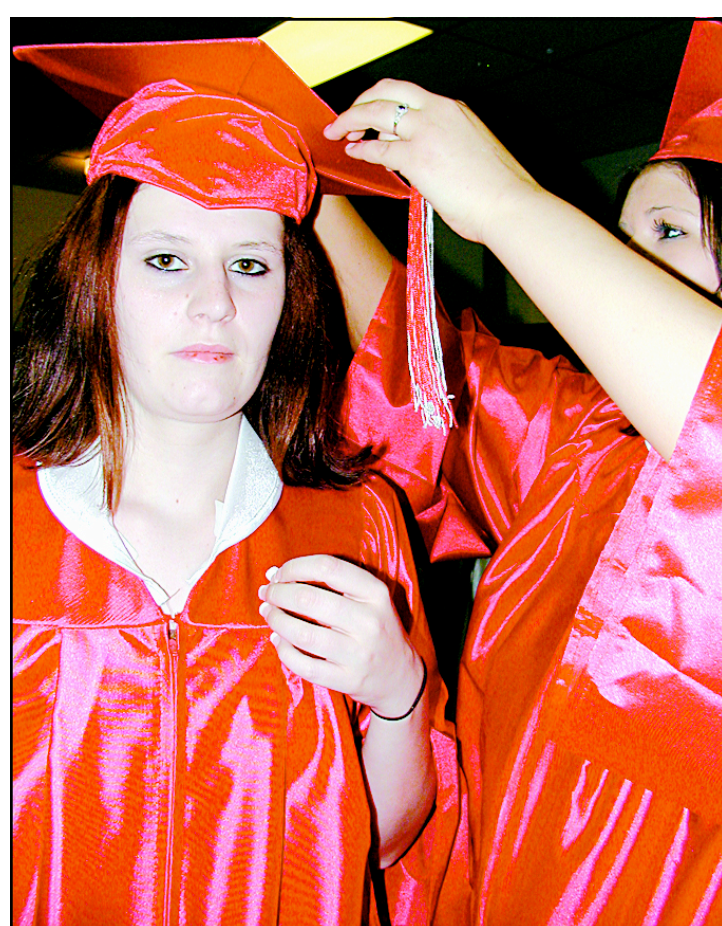
Principal Charlie Haag bragged about the class, apologizing for not being able to mention all that they have done. Three students chosen because of their grades spoke, two co-salutatorians and the valedictorian.

Up first was Co-salutatorian Karli Fredrickson, daughter of Dr. Gary and Sarah Fredrickson. She thanked her parents for pushing her to do her best, with a nod to Kaine, "the best little brother."

Miss Fredrickson told her fellow classmates that each of them can do anything they put their mind to. "Each of us has been successful in something we have done," she said.

She said they will face mountains in their lives and they all need to overcome those, because once they are past they will seem more like bumps in the road.

Co-salutatorian Nolan May, son



of Dr. Richard and Delayne May, took a different approach, giving out some random facts that his fellow classmates or those in the audience might need sometime. "These may be useless," said Mr. May, "but so was a lot of the (See SENIOR on Page 7A)

Memorial Day ceremonies scheduled

Phil Law of Lakewood, Colo., will give a program on bugle calls at Memorial Day services, which begin at 10 a.m. Monday at the Oberlin Cemetery.

Mr. Law, a retired music teacher, graduated from Decatur Community High School in 1954.

A total of 381 American Flags

will be flying over the cemetery in the Avenue of Flags this year. The tradition started in 1967 with 46 flags donated by the families of veterans. The flags are flown in honor of veterans buried at the cemetery. Several have been given back to the families who donated them and others have been retired.

The Oberlin American Legion color guard and auxiliary sponsor the annual service. Members of the Herndon Veterans of Foreign Wars Color Guard also will take part.

Legion Commander Gary Hunziker will be the master of ceremonies and Susan Nelson, Decatur Community High vocal teacher,

will sing the national anthem. Stan Chapin, a Catholic deacon, will give the opening and closing prayers.

The Sons of the American Legion will lay a wreath and the auxiliary and junior auxiliary will do a Gold Star Memorial.

At the close of the services, there (See SERVICES on Page 7A)

* Senior class celebrates at graduation

(Continued from Page 1A)
stuff we learned in school.”
From the start, he had the audience and the Class of 2007 laughing. He told them that Dr. Sues first coined the word nerd. If only he would have known the psychological damage it would do to people later, he said, dropping the name Aaron Helm, this year’s valedictorian.

Mr. May said he had a new diet program for the students. People burn more calories in their sleep than watching television, he advised, so they should sleep more. The United States, he said, has never lost a war in which a mule was used. There are mules being used in Iraq now, he noted. The most ever paid for a cow at an auction, said Mr. May, was \$1.3 million. Too bad it wasn’t Jacob Unger’s at the Decatur County Fair. “You grads of 2007,” said Mr. May, “are the future and will be successful in whatever you are supposed to be successful in.”

Mr. Helm, son of Mike and Deb Helm, said it was hard for him to decide what to talk about and settled on a question out of the General Equivalency Degree test, which seniors were asked to take recently: “How do you gage success?”

Mr. Helm said he really thought about that and came up with the idea that success means being a hero. That doesn’t mean being a hero to everyone, he said, but being a person who someone else can look up to. Just be a hero to one person, he advised.

He said his mom is his hero. She was diagnosed with cancer in January and still has helped him and has always been in a good mood.

Mr. Helm said his other hero is Kyle Glodt, a fellow graduate, who has shown that he can persevere. Mr. Glodt broke his neck in a snow boarding accident over spring break, but was able to lead the class down Main Street last Saturday for the traditional promenade and walk across the stage to receive his diploma Sunday.

“I challenge everyone to be a hero,” said Mr. Helm. “I will be a

Sound system installed

The idea for a new sound system in the Decatur Community High School gym started as a senior English project for one 2007 graduate, and became a reality over the last month.

Senior Kurt Olson came up with the idea for his senior English project, said Principal Charlie Haag during graduation on Sunday, and school officials caught wind of it and helped make it happen.

Mr. Haag thanked Ron Jansonious, school district technology director, for his hours of work to get the sound system and two large screens on either end of the gym up in time for graduation. On behalf of Mr. Jansonious, Mr. Haag thanked Terry Ream, district grounds supervisor, and Senior Corey Cook for their work on the project.

The principal said senior class organizations helped pay for the project as well as Col. Delbert Townsend, a 1938 graduate.

Mr. Haag suggested that those who like the new system thank one of those who helped make it happen.

There were a few technical glitches with the microphones, but the system was working by the end of the ceremony.

hero someday. Will you?”
Each of the 48 students received their diplomas, some from parents who serve on the board. Superintendent Kelly Glodt presented his son’s.

A helping hand



MEMBERS OF THE Stick-to-It 4-H club mowed the grass at the Kanona Cemetery on Saturday. Hannah May (left) and Samantha Anderson pushed a lawnmower together through the tall grass. — Photo by Gary Shike

* Services planned for Memorial Day

(Continued from Page 1A)
will be a 21-gun salute. For anyone who wants to help put up the flags can, the work schedule is in the Memorial Day ad on Page 9B.

NORCATUR

This will be the 118th year for the observance of Memorial Day in Norcatour and the 35th consecutive year that the Avenue of Flags will be on display.

A parade will start at 1:30 p.m. Sunday at the bank corner and proceed to the Norcatour Cemetery for

services at 2 p.m. Parade participants should meet at the bank corner at 1 p.m.

A formation at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier will be followed by “The Star-Spangled Banner” and an opening prayer by the Rev. Ray Gilstrap. Lt. Col. David Johnson of Norcatour, who is serving in the National Guard at Topeka, will speak.

BIG TIMBER/JENNINGS

Memorial services will begin at 10 a.m. Sunday at Big Timber Cemetery, followed by a potluck dinner at the Senior Center in Jennings.

Memorial Day services will begin at 10 a.m. Monday at the Jennings Cemetery.

LEOVILLE/SELDEN

There will be services at 9:30 a.m. Monday at Leoville and at 10:30 a.m. in the American Legion Hall in Selden.

The invocation will be given by Bernita Aumiller, chaplain of the Selden American Legion Auxiliary. Brittany Ritter will provide music and Russ Aumiller will speak.

LYLE

Memorial Day services will be

held at 11 a.m. on Sunday at the Lyle Cemetery with the Lebanon and Wilsonville American Legion posts in charge. A potluck dinner will follow at the Lyle community building.

HERNDON

Memorial Day services will begin at 2 p.m. at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall in Herndon. “Taps” will be played by Adam Ketterl and Anikka Martin. Members of the Oberlin American Legion and Herndon VFW will form a firing squad.

Activities over the weekend in a nutshell

Activities over the weekend include:

- 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday — Oberlin Business Alliance burger fry in the drive through at the Business Enhancement Entrepreneurial Center, Penn and Commercial.
- 1 to 4:30 p.m. Friday — Alumni hospitality room in the Business

Enhancement Entrepreneurial Center. Not open Saturday.

- 5:30 p.m. Saturday — doors open for the Decatur Community High School alumni banquet, which starts at 6:30 p.m. at The Gateway.
- 5 p.m. Saturday Jennings alumni banquet at Community Hall.
- 10 a.m. Sunday — Memorial

services at Big Timber Cemetery, followed by potluck at Jennings Senior Center.

- 11 a.m. Sunday — Memorial Day services at Lyle Cemetery.
- 9:30 a.m. Monday — Memorial Day services at Leoville Cemetery, followed by services at Selden

American Legion Hall at 10 a.m.

- 10 a.m. Monday — Memorial Day services at the Oberlin Cemetery.
- 1:30 a.m. Monday — Memorial Day parade in downtown Norcatour, followed by services at 2 p.m. at cemetery.

Six bridges selected for replacement over the next five years

The Decatur County commissioners approved a revised five-year plan for “off-system” bridges through the Kansas Department of Transportation at their meeting last Tuesday.

Under the program, the department pays for 80 percent of a project from state and federal bridge replacement money while the county pays for 20 percent.

Road and Bridge Supervisor Tim Stallman said he looked at all the bridges

and tried to pick the ones that have more than one span for the state program. Most of the three-span bridges have already been replaced, he said.

The six bridges in the plan, he added, will get replaced over the next five years starting in summer of 2008. They are located:

- Two and a half miles south and three-quarters of a mile west of Oberlin.
- Two and three-quarters mile south and one mile west.

- Nine miles north and 14 miles east.
- 17 and a half miles south and four miles west.
- Five and one-quarter miles south and four miles west.
- 13 miles south and a mile west.

Mr. Stallman said he probably needs to buy some more fuel, maybe a split load of diesel and gasoline. He said he is trying to decide if he should wait to see if the prices will go down any.

Commissioner Doyle Brown said to do what he needs to do, adding that the commissioners trust him.

If he orders 5,000 gallons of gasoline, said Mr. Stallman, that should carry the department into the summer. He said he will probably have to come back in two weeks and get more off-road diesel.

The commissioners approved Mr. Stallman ordering two loads of fuel this month. There weren’t any bids or prices.

Every road in the county, the supervisor said, is bladed for the first time since Christmas. There are still some soft spots and problem areas, but the crew will go back and work on those.

Next, said Mr. Stallman, the crew will start mowing the road sides before Memorial Day.

The commissioners held a five-minute closed session with Mr. Stallman to discuss nonelected personnel.

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THE OBERLIN HERALD
and the Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce welcome Best Kept Secret to the business community
The Chamber Board welcomed Chelsey Zodrow of Best Kept Secret Beauty Salon, located at 102 W. Commercial. She works on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and Sharla Ritter works on Friday and Saturday. They are open by appointment on Saturday.

Let us help pay for your Memorial Weekend fuel costs!
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