

## Cubs' home opener is a family affair

It's a great day for owner Tom Ricketts and his siblings: The Cubs win, and the family gets to sing. **SPORTS**



## MOWERS, MOWERS EVERYWHERE

Business is booming for the industrial tech students servicing lawn mowers at Burke High School. **MIDLANDS**

OMAHA.COM  
BREAKING NEWS

# Omaha World-Herald

METROPOLITAN EDITION

TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2010

### MUST READ



### Going for 'Glee' role

Nebraska native Mikah Meyer, 24, would gladly put his studies aside to be in the popular TV show, which resumes its season Tuesday night.

### Living

### 10 names are on court list

President Barack Obama's list of potential Supreme Court nominees includes at least one person who was not a contender a year ago, a federal judge in Montana.

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### A good look inside the workplace

An annual study finds that employees' workloads are increasing, though employers are preserving most benefits.

### Money

### COMING WEDNESDAY

### It's not just for breakfast

Bacon is showing up covered in chocolate and in other sweet treats. We look at the hot new food trend.

### Omaha weather



Low tonight: 57  
High Wednesday: 77  
Full weather report: Page 6B

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## OMAHA CITY COUNCIL

# 'Open-minded' Mulligan gets Sigerson's seat

By MAGGIE O'BRIEN  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Thomas Mulligan is the newest Omaha City Council member, Council President Garry Gernandt said Tuesday. Gernandt said council members had reached a consensus and selected Mulligan from among the five finalists for the vacant northwest Omaha seat.

The council was to vote on his selection Tuesday.

Mulligan "met all the criteria that the council was looking for," Gernandt said. "He's open-minded on all issues."

Mulligan, a 59-year-old Republican, will replace Chuck Sigerson, who resigned this year due to health problems. Sigerson is a Republican.

The selection means Democrats will continue to hold a 4-3 majority on the council.

Three of the finalists for the District 7 seat were Democrats — Stephen Kraft,

Gary Kudym and Jeri Regan. The other finalist, Scott Yahnke, was a Republican.

The council interviewed the five finalists at a special meeting last week.

Mulligan served on the Candlewood subdivision's sanitary and improvement district board of trustees from 1994 until the city annexed the neighborhood in 1999.

Gernandt said council members believed his experience on that board, es-

pecially on budget issues, would be an asset to the city.

Mulligan has worked at Union Pacific Railroad for 39 years.

He has been the railroad's director of passenger train operations with Amtrak since 1993.

Mulligan, 12311 Charles St., attended North Platte Junior College and Creighton University.

Contact the writer: 444-3100, maggie.obrien@owh.com



Mulligan

## PROM PROPRIETY

# MODESTY VS. FASHION



JEFF BEIERMANN/THE WORLD-HERALD

Chillin' outside Bellevue East's prom at the Durham Museum were, from left, Nattlye Ericksen, Sam Thomas, Amber Houston and Veronica Zuccarello.

## Parents, principals rein in overly revealing attire

By JOE DEJKA | WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Katie Wanek of Omaha knew immediately that the purple dress was perfect.

After weeks of scouting dresses for the Bryan High School prom, the 16-year-old found one that delivered on what she said every girl wants in a prom dress: "Do I feel beautiful in this? Do I look like Cinderella?"

Using her cell phone, she fired off photos to her friends. Then she phoned her mom, Deb Wanek, who drove to the store to inspect the dress and, if necessary, wield her veto power.

Sometimes there's another hurdle: meeting school standards.

Nebraska and western Iowa principals said they talk to students and parents about



Katie Wanek

what's acceptable, though enforcement and dress codes vary from school to school. Some send letters home stating the rules. In Kearney, Neb., girls are asked to run any questionable dresses by the administration ahead of time.

Principals said they have avoided the drastic action officials in Oxford, Ala., took this spring when they disciplined 25 students for violating the dress code at prom.

One Omaha Catholic school principal,

See Prom: Page 2

## UPCOMING PROMS

APRIL 24	
Elmwood-Murdock	Papillion-La Vista
Fremont	Council Bluffs
Fremont Bergan	Lewis Central
Omaha Benson	
MAY 1	
Creighton Prep	Westside
Gretna	Council Bluffs
Omaha Burke	Thomas
Omaha Central	Jefferson
Omaha North	Glenwood
MAY 8	
Millard South	Council Bluffs
Omaha Northwest	Abraham Lincoln
Millard North	
MAY 15	
Brownell-Talbot	

Source: Pride Omaha, area high schools

## Omaha apparently lures new UFL team

League, officials plan Thursday announcement.

By THAD LIVINGSTON  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Omaha, welcome to the United Football League ... almost.

The commissioner of the upstart professional football league will be joined by Omaha officials Thursday at the Qwest Center Omaha for what the UFL bills as a "major announcement" regarding the league.

UFL officials were in Omaha two weeks ago talking to local officials about the possibility of playing this fall at Rosenblatt Stadium and perhaps moving to the new downtown stadium in 2011-12.

As for Thursday's announcement, the UFL — heading into its second year of attempting to meet the needs "of football fans in major markets currently underserved by professional football" — is remaining coy.

"Right now, we have nothing to say other than what's in the release," said UFL spokesman Michael Preston. "We'll have an announcement on Thursday. The UFL has been in Omaha to discuss possibilities, but I can't say more than that."

UFL Commissioner Michael Huyghue, Omaha Mayor Jim Suttle and officials from the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce and Metropolitan Entertainment and Convention Authority are scheduled to be on hand for Thursday's announcement at 9:30 a.m.

Some of the UFL's discussions with Omaha officials have been on a possible playing venue. The manager of downtown's TD Ameritrade

See UFL: Page 2

## WORLD-HERALD EXCLUSIVE

# Sarpy pinch-hits for Brashear

Board has sticker shock over his work done for new Royals stadium

By JOHN FERAK  
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

The pitchman who helped Sarpy County score a home run by bringing the Omaha Royals to the suburbs is being sent to the showers — as his total pay nears the million-dollar mark.

The Sarpy County Board has voted to halt further payments to Kermit Brashear's law firm for work involving the 6,000-seat stadium venture under construction west of Papillion.

The board's decision shifts legal

work on the project back to Sarpy County Attorney Lee Polikov and his staff. Polikov has been a strong advocate of luring Omaha Royals baseball to Sarpy County and of bringing additional development to the ballpark area.

Polikov said his office is capable of managing any legal issues tied to the stadium construction and contract ne-

gotiations. His staff includes four full-time civil attorneys.

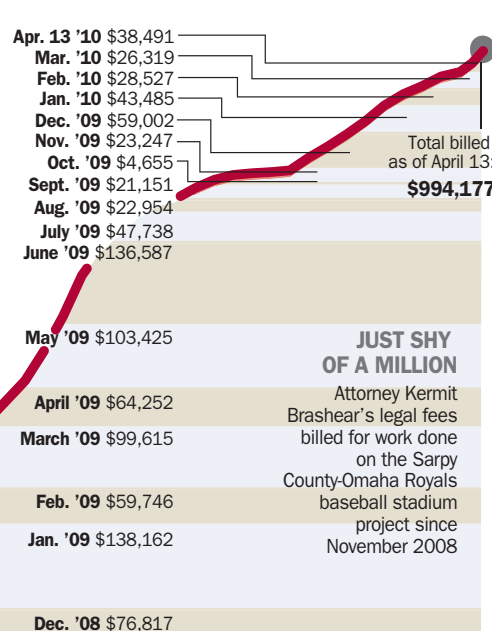
During the 17 months that Brashear LLP worked on the project, the lawyer negotiated a 25-year contract with the Omaha Royals and oversaw the site selection. The stadium will be built on Roger Langpaul's farmland along Nebraska Highway 370 near 126th Street.

Brashear also lobbied state lawmakers to help fund the project, but they rejected the proposals presented

See Brashear: Page 2



Brashear



## JUST SHY OF A MILLION

Attorney Kermit Brashear's legal fees billed for work done on the Sarpy County-Omaha Royals baseball stadium project since November 2008

SOURCE: Sarpy County

THE WORLD-HERALD

COMMUNITY TODAY  
IN MIDLANDS, PAGE 6B

A roundup of community events.

ON OMAHA.COM

Click on Movies and Movie Times to see what's playing. **Entertainment**

Watch the weather forecast and check out the current conditions, radar and satellite images 24/7. **Home Page**

LOTTERIES

**POWERBALL**  
Saturday, April 10: 21-22-49-52-58. Powerball: 34. Power Play: 2. No jackpot winner. **Jackpot for Wednesday, April 14:** \$175 million.

**MEGA MILLIONS**  
Friday, April 9: 15-18-39-48-53. Megaball: 3. Megaplier: 4. No jackpot winner. **Estimated jackpot for Tuesday, April 13:** \$105 million

**NEBRASKA**  
Pick 5 — Monday, April 12: 3-7-9-18-24. No jackpot winner. **Jackpot for Tuesday, April 13:** \$182,000.

**MyDaY** — Monday, April 12: 5-14-78. 2by2 — Monday, April 12: red 12-25; white 6-10.

**Pick 3** — Monday, April 12: 6-7-8.

**IOWA**  
Cash Game — Monday, April 12: 8-9-31-33-35.

**Hot Lotto** — Saturday, April 10: 14-23-32-33-35. Hot Ball: 10.

**Pick 3** — Monday, April 12: midday 7-0-4; evening 8-5-0.

**Pick 4** — Monday, April 12: midday 0-3-9-2; evening 6-4-4-4.

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# Brashear: One board member questions timing of decision

Continued from Page 1

by the former speaker of the Legislature.

The law firm will collect a total of \$994,177 for its work, if the County Board approves what is expected to be the firm's final billing Tuesday.

The move to end Brashear's involvement comes even though the county and the Royals are still finalizing the project's costs with the Weitz Co., the stadium contractor. Sarpy and the Royals also are still seeking a stadium naming rights deal with a corporate sponsor.

Sarpy County Board Chairwoman Joni Jones, who wasn't at the meeting when the decision was made, questions its timing and plans to ask the board to reconsider its decision later this month.

"Kermit should never be taken off the project. There are just too many things still in negotiations. I think it will harm

the project at this point," Jones said.

"Kermit brought it all to the table," Jones said. "You don't just bring Sarpy County Attorney Lee Polikov in now, at a very critical time, with so many issues with Weitz. It just doesn't make sense to me."

Other board members said the timing is right to remove Brashear from the project.

Sarpy County Board members Rich Jansen and Pat Thomas said the county ultimately was shortchanged by Brashear's services. They saw it as a waste of money to keep Brashear on the county payroll.

"With the amount of money being spent, I think we can do it cheaper," said Thomas, the retired former eight-term Sarpy sheriff. "I don't want to tear (Brashear) down. He's a very competent, hardworking, intelligent lawyer, but we need to have the County Attorney's Office involved now."

Brashear declined to comment for this article.

Sarpy County hired Brashear as the project manager in November 2008.

Jansen and Jones are the only current board members who were in office when Brashear was picked to oversee the stadium project.

Brashear originally estimated that his billings could reach a high of \$500,000. His fees do not include payments to architecture and engineering firms.

Former Omaha Mayor P.J. Morgan had offered to do the work for a flat fee of \$150 an hour.

Instead, the board hired Brashear and gave him an open-ended contract. Brashear charged the county \$350 an hour for his own work. Three of his law firm partners charged between \$230 and \$250 an hour.

"It was becoming expensive," Thomas said.

The higher spending comes

at a time when Sarpy's revenues have flattened amid the national economic downturn. As a result, the county has delayed several road repair projects.

Jansen said he expected Brashear to secure state funding for the stadium project.

"Kermit Brashear more or less told us he had a good chance to get us financing for this thing," Jansen said. "He told us he had an 'in' down at the Legislature. That he would get one, two, three or four different things done, and it kind of backfired, I guess. It just never worked."

Various bills put before the Nebraska Legislature during the past two years failed to win state lawmakers' support for awarding state sales tax subsidies to Sarpy's baseball stadium partnership with the Royals.

Brashear and Polikov have both said that the county could build the stadium without the state's funding but that having a state sales tax subsidy would

make it even less likely that property taxes would be tapped to pay stadium debt.

Jones called the firm's legal fees justified, given the scope and complexity of the project and the tight construction schedule.

She said Brashear has charged less than the stadium architects.

The DLR Group architectural firm is guaranteed 8 percent of the total costs to design the stadium. That could be at least \$1.6 million, based on the original agreement with the Omaha Royals, which estimated that the stadium would cost \$20.3 million.

"What is the motivation?" Jones asked. "If Kermit and his law firm had done something wrong, that would be one thing, but that is not the case. If this is all over money, give me a break."

Contact the writer: 444-1056, john.ferak@owh.com



JEFF BEIERMANN/THE WORLD-HERALD

Students wait for the doors to open Saturday evening for the Bellevue East High School prom at the Durham Museum.

# Prom: This year's trend in gowns more conservative

Continued from Page 1

however, once sent a girl home to change.

Every spring, high school girls and their families embark on a quest to satisfy what can be competing interests: a daughter's yearning for beauty and style and adults' demand for modesty.

In most cases, administrators say, parents are setting appropriate standards.

Katie Wanek's purple dress, which she wore to prom Saturday night, won her mother's approval. It came strapless, but her father, Gary, asked her to make use of the optional spaghetti straps.

Approvals didn't end there, however.

Her grandparents, Rita and Del Chipps, also signed off, Katie said.

"My grandparents will pretty much go with anything as long as I look pretty," Katie said. "I'm a grandpa's girl."

Kelly Seipold, 46, and her daughter, Erin, see pretty much eye-to-eye on style — neither is a big fan of revealing dresses.

They don't anticipate any conflict choosing Erin's dress for the Westside High School prom.

Kelly wore a long dress to both of her own proms, and "there wasn't much showing," she said.

Erin has gone online and window-shopped a bit. When the two hit the stores, Erin will pick dresses out and present them to Mom.

At Skutt Catholic High School, Principal Patrick Slattery sends a letter advising parents that students not properly dressed for prom could be denied entry.

Parents, he wrote, should assist their daughters in choosing "a modest prom dress, i.e. no plunging necklines, no bare midriff, no strapless gowns which are difficult to keep on, etc. Most current fashions do

## WHAT'S IN VOGUE THIS PROM SEASON?

**DRESSES:** Just about every style of dress is in style. The standouts: jeweled necklines, bows, ruffles, one-shouldered, multicolored, sequined, princess and '80s-inspired.

**JEWELRY:** Go for a statement necklace if it works with the dress, or try oversized earrings and a cuff or a stack of bracelets.

**HAIR CLIPS:** Add a girly touch. Feminine hair accessories include feathers and clips with stones.

**WRAPS:** Pashmina wraps in a variety of colors add softness to any prom look. Or try a transparent one in sheer organza.

**HANDBAGS:** Try wristlets. These wallet-size bags have detachable straps that attach to the wrist. They make it easy not only to eat but to dance the night away.

Source: New York Times

not incorporate these guidelines. It may take a little extra time and effort to find just the right dress."

In an interview, Slattery said that only once in six years has he had to take action on an objectionable dress.

"We simply made a student go change, and she did, and came back to prom, and everything was fine after that," he said.



Sarah Dunn

Bellevue East senior Sarah Dunn, 18, wore a floor-length, strapless, black lace dress Saturday to her prom at the Durham Museum.

Dunn said her classmates showed some restraint in their gown selections this year.

"There's been years before when it was pretty bad, but this year it's pretty tasteful," she said.

At Glenwood High School in Iowa, Principal Kerry Newman agreed that fashions are trending more conservative.

About six years ago, however, cut-out dresses that showed the belly or lower back were in style, and they "danced around the line" of propriety, she said.

After Christmas, Newman keeps an eye on the trends in clothing stores for clues as to what may lie ahead at prom.

If the styles look over the top, she lets the girls know ahead of time.

Glenwood High softens its dress code for prom, she said, allowing, for instance, spaghetti straps, which aren't allowed in the classroom.

However, Newman dredges up a vivid memory from her own prom to illustrate for students the perils of strapless dresses. A classmate of hers experienced a wardrobe malfunction while walking across the stage. The girl stepped on the front hem of her dress and it came down, she said.

Most Omaha Public Schools high schools follow their code of conduct guidelines, although Burke High School's Web site does include a brief prom dress code, advising that girls may wear a long dress or a dress no more than 3 inches above the knee or a pant suit.

The conduct code states that school administrators have responsibility for helping students develop "good taste in manners of dress and appearance."

The Lincoln Public Schools don't have districtwide rules regarding prom wear, according to spokeswoman Mary Kay Roth. Each high school defines appropriate limits.

Doug Weatherholt, associate principal at Lincoln Northeast High School, said his school enforces a "pretty strict" dress

code for the school day but relaxes it a bit for prom.

"I've raised my eyebrows over some of the girls' dresses," he said.

Kearney High Principal Steve Wickham said prom sponsors talk to the girls ahead of time, telling them to run any questionable dresses past the administration.

Wickham said a couple of girls brought him photos of dresses.

"One of them had slits in the front, it was like there was a piece of material every six inches and the rest of it was slits," he said. "I said, 'You know, if you want to put a piece of material underneath that, that would be good.'"

At this year's prom, he had to intervene because students were showing too much skin. But girls weren't the problem.

Warm weather and an idle air conditioner warmed up the dance floor at the University of Nebraska at Kearney student union, where the prom was held.

A few of the boys took their shirts off and just put their vests on, he said.

"I told the DJ, 'Get on the microphone and tell those guys that when this dance is over, they need to change back because they look like Chippendale dancers.'"

Contact the writer: 444-1077, joe.dejka@owh.com

# Astronauts solve bolt problem on spacewalk

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A pair of astronauts finished installing a fresh storage tank outside the International Space Station on Tuesday.

The installation, a main goal of the mission, required three spacewalks. But a stuck valve on the tank had engineers back on the ground scrambling.

Venturing out on the final spacewalk of shuttle Discovery's flight, Rick Mastracchio quickly hooked up the fluid lines for the ammonia tank that feeds the station's cooling system.

But as flight controllers began activating the tank to join it with the space station's cooling system, a valve appeared to be stuck. The trouble was on the ni-

trogen side of the tank.

Engineers tried without success to get the valve working.

Flight Director Ron Spencer said that the problem needs to be fixed relatively soon and that a spacewalk might be needed after Discovery leaves this weekend.

At the same time, 215 miles above Earth, Mastracchio and Ashland, Neb., native Clayton Anderson struggled with a stubborn bolt on the old ammonia tank, which had been removed on the previous spacewalk.

One of the four bolts on the tank would not engage. Mastracchio and Anderson were trying to secure the 1,300-pound tank in Discovery's cargo bay when

the problem cropped up.

It appeared to be a misalignment.

Mission Control told the astronauts that they had to drive in all four bolts all the way, one way or another.

"How you guys feeling?" asked shuttle pilot James Dutton Jr.

"I'll feel better when we get this thing bolted in," Mastracchio said. "No kidding," Anderson added.

Mastracchio finally drove in the bolt.

NASA wants to return the old tank to Earth next week in order to fill it and fly it back up this summer as a spare.

stockpile as many big parts up there as possible.

Only three shuttle missions are left after this one, and there will be limited room on the much smaller Russian, European and Japanese cargo ships that will be supplying the station until its projected end in 2020.

The spacewalkers indulged in some picture-taking of their own.

"Look over here," Anderson told Mastracchio. "Oh, baby, you're going to want to take this one to the grandkids."

A few hours later, Anderson commented: "The Earth is a beautiful place. Too bad more people can't have that view. Maybe one day."

# UFL: Omaha may be part of expansion plan

Continued from Page 1

Park, MECA, confirmed to The World-Herald in late March that it has held discussions with the UFL. But MECA President Roger Dixon said at the time through a spokeswoman that no agreement had been reached.

The UFL, which currently has four teams, features former players from the National Football League and former college players hoping to get there. Current franchises are in Orlando, Fla.; Sacramento, Calif.; Hartford, Conn.; and Las Vegas. The league reportedly had considered four cities for two expansion franchises.

The league had listed Omaha, Salt Lake City, San Antonio and Austin, Texas, as contenders for a new franchise.

In a previous interview, Huyghue said a local ownership group is not required upfront. He said the league could start out owning the team and add a local group later.