

***By Tawny Burmood***

***UNL Student Intern***

A long time Grant resident and former manager of Westview Retirement Community, Tanya McArtor, has now become Perkins County School District's new bookkeeper.

McArtor will be replacing Jan Schilling, who retired at the end of the 2009-2010 school year after 26 years working as the bookkeeper in the Venango, Grant and Perkins County School systems.

The position opened at a good time, McArtor said. It was at a point where she felt she needed a new challenge in her life.

"It was exactly what I wanted," McArtor said. "It just fit for a lot of reasons."

Now she said she is looking forward to mastering the skills the job entails. As a bookkeeper her duties will include taking care of payroll and accounts payable, and providing financial reports to the superintendent and board of education.

One of the biggest reasons to make the change was to be on the same schedule as her two sons, James, who will be entering sixth grade, and Sam, who will be in third grade. She said she's looking forward to spending more time with them and seeing them around the high school in a few years.

It will also allow her to be on the same schedule as her husband, Mike, who works at Ogallala High School as the guidance counselor. He was also a guidance counselor and ag teacher at PCHS for over 20 years.

Once she met Mike, who is also a farmer near Grant, she said she knew she wasn't going anywhere.

"I love the small town life," McArtor said. "I don't think there's a better place to raise kids."

McArtor grew up and graduated in Wahoo. She attended Hastings College where she received her bachelors degree in Speech and English in 1984. She later received her juris doctorate degree from the University of Nebraska School of Law in 1987.

She went on to work at McGinley Law office, working as the city attorney for three years. But the profession just didn't seem to fit her, she said.

"It didn't fit the person that I realized I was when I grew up," McArtor said.

Later she made the move from city attorney to manager at Westview, where she worked for 16 years. It was there that she found she loved bookkeeping.

Although working for the schools was just the change she needed, she said she misses the staff and the residents at Westview.

"We truly were a family," McArtor said.

After starting her training at school in June, she began to build a family with those working at the high school.

She also said she is grateful to everyone who has helped her transition into the new position.

"I've been very lucky to have Jan Schilling training me. She has been a wonderful teacher," McArtor said. "I have some big shoes to fill."

Even the administration, Superintendent Tobin Buchanan, Principal Dean Friedel and Activities Director Chip Kay have made her very welcome, she said.

"They're a good team," McArtor said. "I'm glad I'm part of that team. And I'm looking forward to just being a part of this excellent school system."