

LATE NEWS

ENTERPRISE DRIVING TO STRONGSVILLE SITE

■ Enterprise Rent-A-Car plans to move its 60 employees to a \$5 million, 25,000-square-foot North-east Ohio regional headquarters that Carnegie Management & Development Co. will build on Mohawk Drive in Strongsville. Enterprise runs 93 locations from Westlake and has doubled its staff over the last seven years at that office. As part of the deal, Carnegie will buy Enterprise's 11,000-square-foot building to bring its Westlake office portfolio to seven buildings. — **Stan Bullard**

CLINIC KIDNEY WORK NETS \$3.2M GRANT

■ Cleveland Clinic researcher Shuvo Roy received a \$3.2 million grant to create a bio-artificial kidney that could be a substitute for dialysis and kidney transplants. The three-year grant from the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering will finance creation of an implantable, self-regulating bio-artificial kidney that will filter toxins and absorb salts and water like a human kidney. — **Shannon Mortland**

CIA DRAWS PLAGE AMONG TOP SCHOOLS

■ The Cleveland Institute of Art has been named one of the world's top 60 design schools, according to a survey by *Business Week* magazine, which released the names of the schools in alphabetical order. The magazine asked design experts and companies to list the schools that have interdisciplinary design and business programs with a curriculum they respect, and schools whose graduates they prefer to hire. Other schools on the list include the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Royal College of Art in London and the University of Cincinnati. The list will appear in the Oct. 15 issue, which hits newsstands today. — **Shannon Mortland**

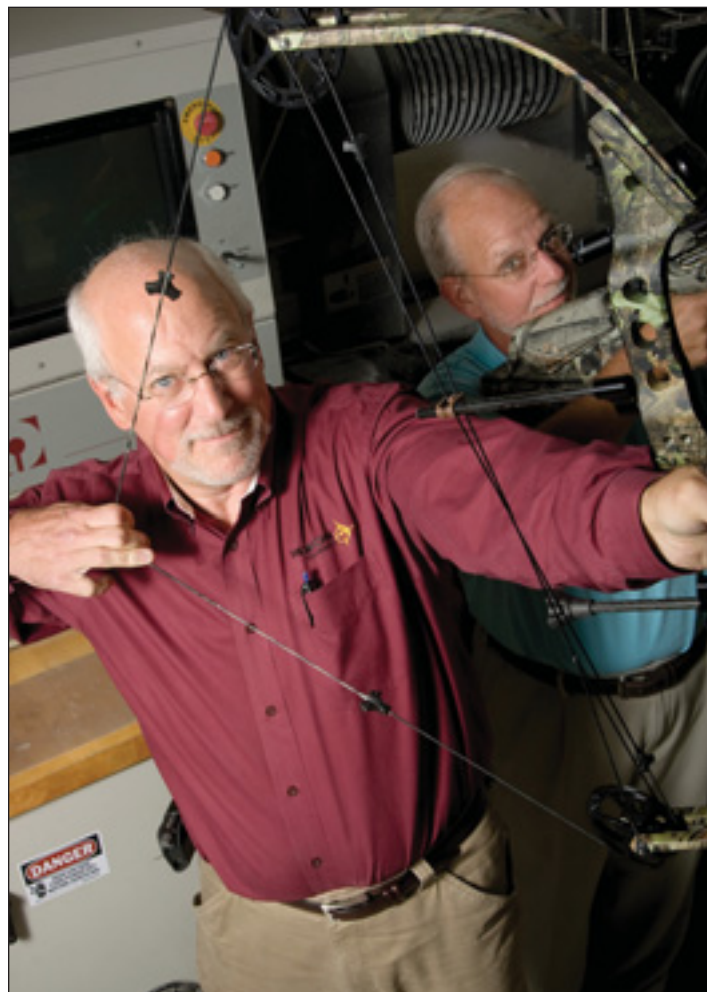
OBERLIN NANOTECH FIRM SECURES INVESTMENT

■ NanoTech Innovations LLC of Oberlin has received an investment from JK-Nano LLC to develop a more efficient way to grow carbon nanotubes, which are cylinders of carbon molecules that serve as building blocks for various nanotechnology. The company received an undisclosed amount of cash and the right to move into a small lab in the former Bayer Diagnostics plant in Oberlin, said NanoTech general manager Dennis M. Flood. JK-Nano consists of investors Kevin Flanigan, who owns the plant and General Plug and Manufacturing of Grafton, and Jim Tyree, who works for him. — **Chuck Soder**

CRAIN'S
CLEVELAND
BUSINESS

ANCHORED DOWN

■ RIVER DREDGING DEFICIENCIES CAUSING PROBLEMS AT CLEVELAND COMPANIES' DOCKS.
PAGE 3



JANET CENTURY

Horton Manufacturing Co., led by CEO Rick Szekelyi (left) and chief operating officer Mark Bower, has acquired Outdoor Products Group.

IN THE HUNT

Crossbow producer looks to snare wider market by acquiring vertical bow maker

By JOHN BOOTH
jbooth@crain.com

Horton Manufacturing Co. is hunting bigger game. With its recent purchase of a traditional compound — or vertical — bow company, the Tallmadge crossbow manufacturer is targeting a truly nationwide audience for the first time and is putting an infusion of private equity cash toward expanding its product line.

Horton's late-September acquisition of Outdoor Products Group of Salt Rock, W. Va., will lead to the unveiling of the company's first vertical bows in November, with an eye toward the 2008 hunting season. Outdoor Products founder Chuck Nease, well-known in competitive archery circles for both his shooting and compound bow designs, will partner with Horton to develop its bows.

See HUNT Page 8

Cedar Fair to solicit bids for Geauga Lake

Amusement park operator will entertain joint venture offers to redevelop property

By STAN BULLARD
sbullard@crain.com

Cedar Fair Entertainment Co. is preparing a thrill ride of sorts for real estate developers who might like to get their hands on its Geauga Lake property, where the landmark Big Dipper and other rides will operate no more.

Cedar Fair plans to seek sealed bids for nearly 540 acres of the sprawling amusement park site in southwest Geauga County and northwest Portage County, said Cliff West, a senior vice president and managing director of real estate broker Colliers Ostendorf-Morris in Cleveland.

Mr. West said Colliers International, a multinational brokerage network of which Colliers Ostendorf-Morris is a part, will begin promoting

bidding for the property in a national e-mail offering beginning today, Oct. 8. Mr. West said a deadline for the bids hasn't been set, though it will be in next year's first quarter.

In a move certain to attract more bidders for the park because it would reduce a prospective buyer's cash outlay, Cedar Fair will entertain offers to form a joint venture to develop the property.

Mr. West said if the offers from prospective master developers of the entire property are unacceptable to Cedar Fair, the company will sell the land in smaller pieces.

Any proceeds from the sale would go toward shrinking the debt Cedar Fair incurred with its \$1.24 billion purchase last year of Paramount Parks, according to Cedar Fair
See **GEAUGA** Page 33

With building plans in flux, county could sell key site

By JAY MILLER
jmiller@crain.com

Cuyahoga County commissioners have pushed back the construction timeline for a planned county administration center and are saying they would consider selling the site in downtown Cleveland to someone who would erect a new office building that another large tenant could occupy.

Commissioner Tim Hagan said the county now plans to hold off on financing and constructing a new county headquarters complex until 2009 to avoid overburdening the county's bonding capacity.

However, Mr. Hagan also figuratively put a "for sale" sign in front of

the site at East Ninth Street and Euclid Avenue when he told *Crain's Cleveland Business* last Thursday, Oct. 4, "If Eaton (Corp.) or Baker (the Baker Hostetler law firm) or somebody else were to look at our site and pay for our costs, we would consider selling it."

Mr. Hagan's county colleague, Jimmy Dimora, also would consider selling the site, which includes the modernist Ameritrust Tower, the former Cleveland Trust rotunda, two other buildings and two parking garages.

"I'm open to it. We've got to always consider every option," Mr. Dimora said. "We could always go other places."

See **COUNTY** Page 29

SPECIAL SECTION

SMALL BUSINESS

Owners grapple with deciding the right method and time for growing their businesses ■ Page 19

PLUS: GRAND OPENINGS ■ ADVISER ■ WOOD CARVING ■ & MORE

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COMING NEXT WEEK

The Power Pack

They may specialize in areas including health care, education and government, but their impact is far-reaching. Next week, meet the members of "The Power Pack," the individuals we consider to be Northeast Ohio's most influential.

REGULAR FEATURES

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CORRECTION

An Oct. 1, Page 5 story about Kinetico Inc. misidentified the company's former president. He is Keith Tompkins. The story also misstated the size of Bosch Security Systems Inc., the former company of current Kinetico president and CEO Shamus Hurley. Bosch is a \$400 million division of Robert Bosch GmbH.

BY THE NUMBERS



ON THE HIGH ROAD

The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, which last week was named the best public transit system in North America by the American Public Transportation Association, has seen ridership increase steadily in the last few years.

Year	Passengers
2002	52.7 million
2003	53.5 million
2004	55.5 million
2005	57.1 million
2006	57.2 million
2007*	28.1 million

SOURCE: RTA data on www.gcrtc.org; * — through June 30

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Mann to add to Euclid Ave. stable

Enigmatic developer's expected deal for Statler Arms on heels of Cleveland Athletic Club buy

By **STAN BULLARD**
sbullard@crain.com

Mystery real estate developer Eli Mann is the leading bidder to buy the 294-suite Statler Arms Apartments at 1127 Euclid Ave. in downtown Cleveland.

Sources familiar with the deal expect Mr. Mann, of Cleveland Heights, to close on the property soon.

The move potentially would add a trump card to Mr. Mann's gamble of buying four other nearby Euclid Avenue buildings to redevelop them as lofts and retail space. Those structures include the venerable Cleveland Athletic Club building, 1148 Euclid.

The CAC Building is across the street from the Statler. The other three buildings Mr. Mann owns are

sandwiched between the Statler and the Huntington Building and sit at 1001, 1021 and 1101 Euclid.

The low-profile Mr. Mann did not return three calls from *Crain's* by its deadline last Friday, Oct. 5. As a result, how the Statler would fit into his redevelopment plans for one of the most desolate parts of Euclid Avenue remains open to conjecture.

The current owner of the Statler is PAMI Statler Arms LLC, a unit of Lehman Bros. It paid \$16 million to buy the property from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development after the Statler's

prior owner, a partnership led by the Milstein family of Cleveland, defaulted on the HUD-insured mortgage on the building.

The CB Richard Ellis brokerage is marketing the Statler along with six other Lehman-controlled properties in a 3,124-unit portfolio. Vicki Maeder, a CB Richard Ellis vice president, declined comment on the identity of the winning bidder. However, she said she expects the sale to close this month. CoStar, a real estate information provider, also reports the property is under contract.

See **MANN** Page 31



MARC GOLUB

INSIGHT



MARC GOLUB

St. Mary's Cement Inc.'s Flats terminal, which John Coolidge manages, is one of many businesses along the Cuyahoga River suffering from low water levels and reduced dredging by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

LIGHTENING THE LOAD

Companies reliant on barge deliveries are running well below capacity thanks to low water levels and reduced dredging of the Cuyahoga River

By **JAY MILLER**
jmiller@crain.com

John Coolidge has a problem. The cement barges that shuttle between the processing plants of St. Mary's Cement Inc. in Ontario and the company's terminal in Cleveland's Flats, where Mr. Coolidge is the terminal manager, can't carry a full load.

The problem lies at the bottom of the Cuyahoga River, where silt is building up, cutting into the depth of the navigation channel. Were

they fully loaded, St. Mary's barges — along with the big boats that carry iron ore, limestone, coal and cement — would risk getting stuck in the muck.

And even with less than a full load, the St. Mary's dock crew struggles to get the ships snug and level against the dock because the river is even shallower closest to the banks.

If the barges aren't tightly tethered, they can rock in the river current. That motion makes it difficult to maintain

See **DREDGING** Page 29

"Our hands are tied to the dollar amount Congress appropriates. ... Our budget has declined steadily over the last several years."

— Kathy Griffin, chief of operations, Army Corps of Engineers' Buffalo district office

Clinic atrial fibrillation center's heightened pulse credited to labs, leader

By **CHUCK SODER**
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New leadership and new laboratories have helped the once-struggling Atrial Fibrillation Innovation Center in Cleveland attract nearly eight times more dollars for industry-sponsored research so far this year than it did during the like period last year.

The center, a partnership that houses most of its operations at the Cleveland Clinic, secured more than \$8 million in industry-sponsored research during the first nine months of 2007. That figure is way up from the year-ago period, when it attracted about \$1 million from companies working on techniques and devices to fight atrial fibrillation, a common heart rhythm problem that can cause strokes.

Executive director Alan Bentley attributed the increase to the emergence of steady leadership at the state-financed center after the hiring of Dr. A. Marc Gillinov as its principal investigator in mid-2006 and to new labs that opened at the

Clinic last March.

"There's no doubt that both of those were equally key elements in ramping up our partnerships," Mr. Bentley said.

The center, which was founded in mid-2005 after receiving \$23 million in state money, foundered early on, he said.

Its original principal investigator, Dr. Eric Topol, left the Clinic in February 2006 to teach and do research at Case Western Reserve University. In October 2006, Dr. Topol left Cleveland for Scripps Health of San Diego.

The center gained focus when it hired Dr. Gillinov to fill the vacancy. He helped move deals from discussion to action, Mr. Bentley said.

The center that fall sped up negotiations by making its research agreements friendlier to businesses, Mr. Bentley said. They now preclude the center from patenting any discovery made while doing research for a business unless the finding is unrelated to the company's product.

All the while, the center's leaders See **ATRIAL** Page 29

THE WEEK IN QUOTES

"We're opening our arms to the whole of archery. It's different from our current market, but we understand it."

— **Mark Bower**, chief operating officer, Horton Manufacturing. Page One

"It's kind of a real balancing act. ... On the one hand you try to grow, and on the other hand you're trying not to grow too fast so the company can't keep up with the sales."

— **Anita Campbell**, CEO, Small Business Trends LLC. Page 19

"It's not just a coffee shop. It's a social gathering place."

— **Bob Corna**, Stonebridge co-developer. Page 12

"It's not a business to get into if you're looking to get into money, which is why it doesn't attract a young crowd. ... We're not financially rich, but we're rich in other ways."

— **Jim Stadtlander**, Woodcarved Art Gallery & Studio. Page 22

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Kowit & Passov's Warrensville Heights plan met with plenty of leasing interest

Shopping center, office building on blueprint for seven-acre plot at Richmond Road and U.S. 422

By **STAN BULLARD**
sbullard@crain.com

A real estate development group formed by principals of the Kowit & Passov brokerage and attorney Gregg Levy is starting to build an office-retail complex on seven acres in Warrensville Heights.

Dubbed Richmond Highland in deference to its location on the west side of Richmond Road next to the

U.S. 422 spur from Interstate 271, the complex is near but not in the Chagrin Highlands corporate office park in the eastern suburbs. The project will start small but can expand in future phases to accommodate market demand.

"This is the largest property we've built ourselves so far, although we've owned properties this large that we have bought," said Brad Kowit, a principal in Richmond

"I think they could build a bigger building. (The three partners) are building up steam as an emerging development group."

— Steve Egar, president, Egar Steiger Associates office brokerage

Road Partners LLC.

Partners in the project include Steve Passov, Mr. Kowit's partner in the retail and office brokerage, and Mr. Levy, a partner at Roetzel & Andress LPA who shares a Beachwood office with Kowit & Passov.

The first phase of the project consists of a 12,000-square-foot shopping center and a two-story, 20,000-square-foot office building. Mr. Kowit said the brokerage would occupy a floor in the building. The partners sold the Beachwood office building where the brokerage now is housed to Predictive Services, a property management consultant.

Talks are under way with a prospective tenant for the Warrensville Heights building, Mr. Kowit said. He declined to identify that firm, which may occupy the first floor of the new office building.

Two businesses Mr. Kowit would identify only as a beauty salon and national sub shop have leased about half the shopping center. Leasing interest is so brisk in the first two phases of the project, Mr. Kowit said, that the investors might decide within the next month how large to build the third phase of the complex.

Plans call for two more buildings of a minimum of 10,000 square feet each to be constructed in the next phase of the complex, and a third phase of as much as 70,000 square feet of office space, which could consist of one or two buildings. The land can accommodate a total of five or six buildings depending on how they're designed, Mr. Kowit said.

Steve Egar, president of the Egar Steiger Associates office brokerage in Beachwood, said he's glad the developers are proceeding with a project because vacant office space is the scarcest he has seen it in 20 years. Mr. Egar said he recently could not find 5,000 square feet in a Class A office building in the eastern suburbs for a prospect.

"I think they could build a bigger building" than the one they plan, Mr. Egar said. But he noted that the three partners "are building up steam as an emerging development group."

With an asking rate of \$20 a square foot, the project will be particularly competitive because newer buildings in the eastern suburbs now command \$25 to \$27 a square foot, Mr. Egar said.

Mr. Levy said the complex would qualify for property tax abatement because it is in a state-designated Community Reinvestment Act area in Warrensville Heights. ■



What can you learn about health care from a man who makes ice cream?

Steve Schmid President of Smith Dairy Products Company

In 2001, Steve Schmid, President of Smith Dairy Products Company, was involved in a bicycling accident that left him fighting for his life. At MetroHealth, he underwent surgery and rehabilitation—including physical, occupational, and speech therapy—in order to return to the life he loves. Steve was impressed with MetroHealth's care. But he was even more impressed to find the quality of care he received is the same care MetroHealth provides each day to patients from across the region. Today, as a valued donor to MetroHealth, Steve is helping it remain the region's leader in critical care and rehabilitation.

Before his accident, Steve knew little about MetroHealth's capabilities. Now, it's his hospital of choice. And he's working to make it everyone else's hospital of choice, too.



To learn how you, like Steve, can support MetroHealth, call 216-778-5004.

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BBB reworks logo, grading system

By JOHN BOOTH
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Locally and nationally, the Better Business Bureau is looking to sharpen its image, and it's willing to make a few pre-emptive cuts along the way.

As part of a nationwide rebranding effort rolling out this month, bureau members now will be known as "BBB accredited businesses," and that label will be a bit more difficult to receive.

"Member' has a connotation that they paid money and they're in," said David H. Weiss, president of the Greater Cleveland Better Business Bureau, which has 3,200 members in Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain

and Ashtabula counties. "Accredited business' really makes much more of a statement."

Though the label change doesn't necessarily bring changes in BBB standards, Mr. Weiss said, it will be coupled with a new way of measuring businesses against those standards.

During the next year, the bureau will adopt a grading system that will establish performance minimums that will make it tougher for some types of businesses to become accredited. Mr. Weiss described those businesses as being in "certain industries that ... are so frequently problematic we would never want to invite a company in those industries

to apply for accreditation."

For example, Mr. Weiss said, businesses that advertise themselves as 'foreclosure rescue operations' are unlikely to be invited to apply for accreditation. Payday lenders also may find themselves on the outs, Mr. Weiss said, "not because it's illegal, but because of the effects it's had on many people that take advantage of it."

Mr. Weiss said the Cleveland BBB revokes the membership status of 12 to 15 businesses per year on average. Over the past year, he said, about three or four additional businesses were taken of the rolls in anticipation of the new processes coming into play.

Current members, Mr. Weiss noted, automatically will be considered accredited businesses, although they'll be subjected to the same grading system if someone requests a report on them.

The BBB also is updating its logo and tagline, which will become "Start with Trust," and is tying the web sites of all 118 local bureaus more closely to the national site.

"Really, the most significant thing is that we want the public to understand that the Better Business Bureau is a standards-based organization," Mr. Weiss said. "We really thought the previous model did not necessarily convey that." ■



The Better Business Bureau's new logo

ON THE WEB Story from
www.crainscleveland.com

Countrywide loan fulfillment dept. loses 20 staffers

Countrywide Financial Corp.'s Wholesale Lending Division said it has laid off about 20 employees in Independence following a restructuring of its distributed loan fulfillment operations.

A Countrywide spokeswoman said in an e-mailed statement last Wednesday, Oct. 3, that the residential and commercial lender will consolidate the Independence operation to "nearby offices," though she did not specify the locations of those offices. The spokeswoman, Janet Quan, did not respond to a request for a follow-up telephone interview to discuss details of the consolidation by Countrywide, which is based in Calabasas, Calif.

The consolidation affects loan fulfillment operations only, according to the statement. The company did not say how many people worked in the Wholesale Lending Division in Independence.

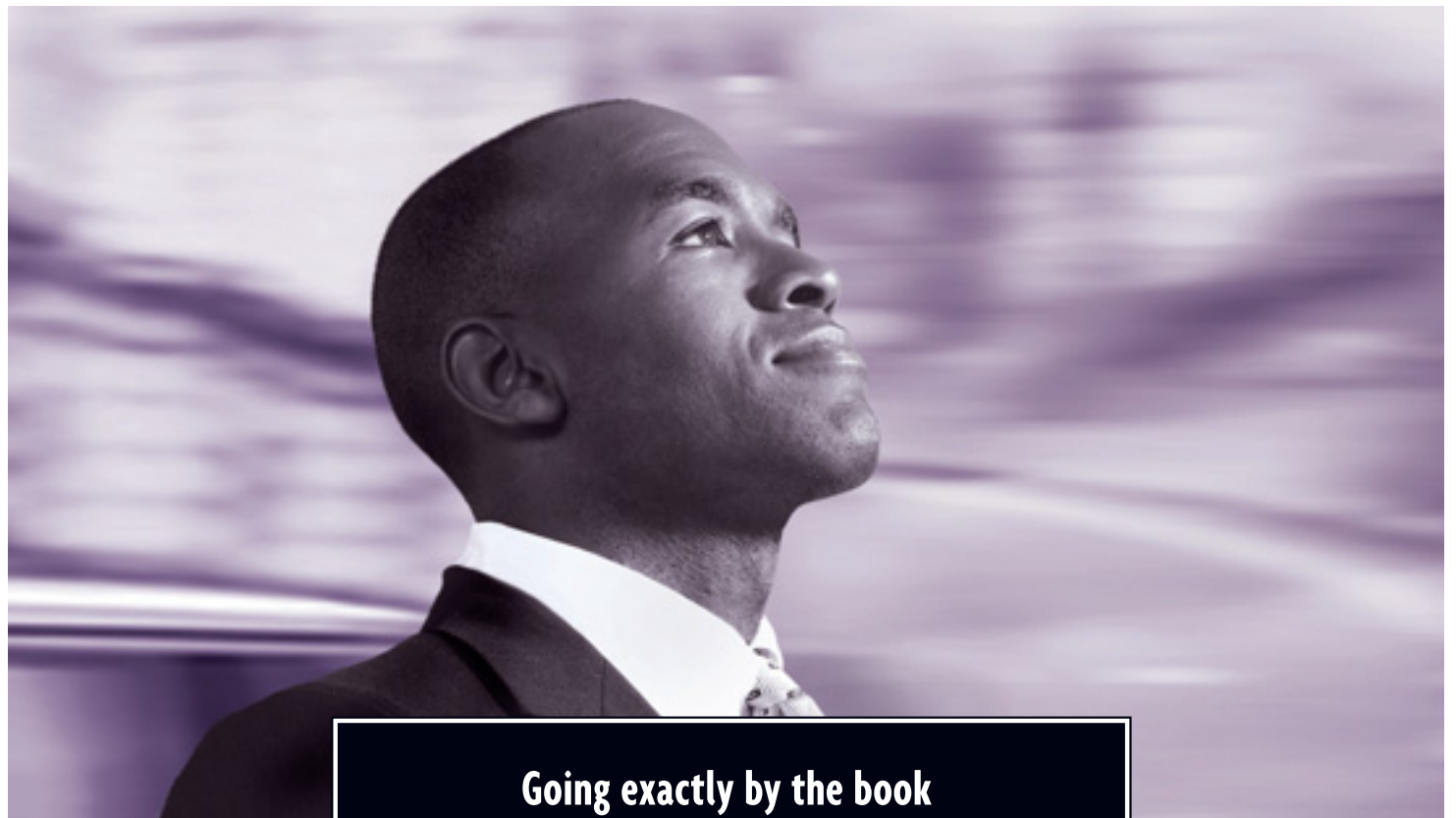
"Countrywide's commitment to the wholesale lending channel overall, and to its mortgage-broker business partners in the affected communities, remains unwavering," the statement read.

"Measures have been taken to help ensure seamless transfer of loan files to other fulfillment sites," according to the statement. "Despite the realignment, Countrywide retains one of the largest distributed loan fulfillment network platforms among all of the major wholesale lenders, with more than 40 branch offices and regional centers."

Countrywide has become something of a poster child for problems in the U.S. mortgage market. *The New York Times* on Sept. 30 reported that according to Countrywide's own data, the company "currently services almost 9 million mortgages, with a value of \$1.45 trillion. Of those, roughly 450,000 are delinquent."

The company says it is providing home preservation assistance on 39,582 loans, according to *The Times*. That figure amounts to about 9% of Countrywide borrowers who have fallen behind.

— Scott Suttell



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Kent State boss sees school as public version of Case

Increased marketing, focus on collaboration, diversity and research highlight Lefton's plan

By SHANNON MORTLAND
smortland@crain.com

Lester Lefton sees no reason why Kent State University can't become Northeast Ohio's public school equivalent of Case Western Reserve University.



Lefton

2006 has embarked on a series of initiatives he hopes will make Kent State a magnet for top students and faculty.

He is working on increasing diversity among students and faculty, is exploring collaboration opportunities among schools and departments within Kent State, and is encouraging faculty to apply for more research grants.

"We want us to be recognized as

the public analog of the private Case Western Reserve University, a university recognized for distinctive research and scholarship," Dr. Lefton said. "We want to be the Nordstrom of public universities."

He already has launched a more intense recruiting effort that culminated in a main campus enrollment increase this fall of 2.28% for undergraduates and 3.87% for grad students, as compared to the same time last year. The increases reversed a two-year slide in enrollment, but Kent State isn't content with just a turnaround.

Dr. Lefton said branding, marketing and advertising of the university significantly will increase in the current academic year, though he did not have a final cost of the effort. He said Kent State will buy more print, radio, TV and billboard ads that will highlight some of its strongest programs, such as liquid crystals, biomedicine, fashion and journalism.

In the past, Kent State has spent between \$200,000 and \$300,000 a year on marketing, which is much

less than the marketing budgets of competing schools, Dr. Lefton said.

"We're trying to brand our identity more clearly to people," he said. "We want them to know this is a traditional, residential, research university."

Specifically, Kent State will target areas outside Northeast Ohio such as Columbus, Chicago, New Jersey, Virginia and northern Maryland, Dr. Lefton said. Those are markets where he believes students will be most interested in Kent State's programs, he said.

Four years and out a goal

Dr. Lefton said the emphasis will be on attracting quality students. Many students aren't ready for college when they graduate from high school, Dr. Lefton said, so he formed a task force to find ways to work with high schools to better prepare students for college.

For example, Dr. Lefton said, Kent State is considering giving feedback to high schools that send a certain number of students to Kent State. The feedback would inform them of their students' strong points and shortfalls regarding their preparation for college.

Dr. Lefton said he already has overhauled the freshman colloquium class to engage students in topics such as

the AIDS crisis and the music and culture of Cleveland. The mandatory class used to teach students basic tasks such as how to use the campus library, time that he said students could better spend talking about more interesting subjects.

Dr. Lefton said he also favors a more flexible curriculum that would allow more students to graduate in four years. Only about 25% of Kent State students now graduate in four years, with many taking time off to work or study abroad, he said.

He also wants to make Kent State more inclusive of minorities. Though diversity hasn't been a big problem at Kent State, Dr. Lefton said, he has asked the university community to make Kent State as welcoming and inclusive as possible. He also is creating what he said will be a "substantial" special fund to retain and recruit minority faculty and students.

Going after grants

While Kent State continues to spend money on improvements, Dr. Lefton also wants more dollars to flow into the university. To that end, John West, vice president of research and dean of graduate studies, is working with faculty to increase significantly applications for research grants.

Though Kent State faculty in the 2006-2007 school year submitted a record 473 grant proposals, up 12% from the previous year's approximately 420 grant submissions, Dr. Lefton wants to increase grant pro-

posals to nearly 700 in the current academic year.

"We would like to see many more faculty apply for research grants," he said. "Many of them have not taken advantage of the federal money available to them."

Dr. West said more experienced faculty members will mentor other faculty members on writing grant proposals and the school will hire more faculty members with track records of securing grants.

One way to win grants is through collaboration, and Dr. Lefton has asked Faculty Senate leaders to explore ways in which colleges and departments throughout the university can work together in research and education. The Faculty Senate is the university's faculty governing body.

Dr. West said some collaboration already is happening on campus. For example, the chemistry, physics, biology, computer science and fashion departments now are working with the school's Liquid Crystal Institute on various projects, he said.

Dr. Lefton's plans to focus on areas of excellence mirror those of state education chancellor Eric Fingerhut and Gov. Ted Strickland to create a public education system in Ohio, said Ann Womer Benjamin, executive director of the Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education.

"Efforts of individual schools to improve on their mission certainly will strengthen the entire region," she said. "Dr. Lefton's efforts certainly complement the state's plans." ■

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STUFF

Hudson foundation doles out grants

Denison, E Prep, NorTech, College of Wooster land awards

Trustees of the Burton D. Morgan Foundation approved nearly \$940,000 in grants to promote entrepreneurship education and the free enterprise system.

The largest grant, for \$250,000, went to Denison University to support startup expenses of the Burton D. Morgan Program in Liberal Arts and Entrepreneurship Education for 2008 to 2011. Three other grants topped \$100,000.

The Hudson-based foundation awarded \$150,000 to Friends of E

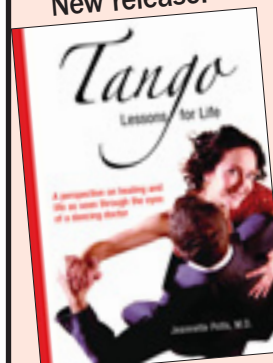
Prep Schools for operating support for the Cleveland Entrepreneurship Preparatory School's second year. The Northeast Ohio Technology Coalition, or NorTech, received \$150,000 to employ an advanced energy entrepreneur-in-residence for one year. And the foundation awarded \$125,000 to the Foundation for Teaching Economics to fund two "Economics for Leaders" programs and one "Economic Forces in American History" program at the College of Wooster during summer 2008.

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JANET CENTURY
Neil Warner of Akron assembles triggers at the Horton Manufacturing Co. complex in Tallmadge.

Hunt: Regulations limit crossbow market

continued from PAGE 1

"We're opening our arms to the whole of archery," Horton chief operating officer Mark Bower said. "It's different from our current market, but we understand it."

Horton, which was founded in Great Britain in the 1960s and moved to Northeast Ohio in 1987, holds roughly 60% of the crossbow market, according to company officials. It has been headquartered in Tallmadge since 1994. Last February, The Anderson Group, a Michigan private equity firm, bought a controlling interest in Horton after the company saw a need to invest in its future.

"In 2006, we realized we really needed funding to start bolstering product development," said Horton

CEO Rick Szekelyi, who joined the company in 2005. While Horton was well-established as the crossbow industry leader, its market share was taking hits from new competitors.

Horton doesn't release specific financial data, so details of its sales and the purchase of Outdoor Products Group aren't known. However, Mr. Szekelyi does talk in ballpark figures about Horton's revenue growth.

In 1987, Mr. Szekelyi said, Horton was doing "a couple million" dollars in sales. By 2005, sales were "in the low teens to the high teens/low 20s," and earlier this year revenues showed 20% growth over the previous two years.

Profitability, though, has been roughly flat recently, because Horton

"All of a sudden, from a marketing standpoint and a market expansion standpoint, it gives us a presence we haven't had before."

— Rick Szekelyi, CEO, Horton Manufacturing Co.

has put money into the acquisition as well as expanding its research-and-development and marketing programs, Mr. Szekelyi said.

Targeting new markets

The hunters' market for crossbows has been slow to expand mostly because state regulation of crossbow hunting varies greatly. When Horton came to Tallmadge, only Ohio and Arkansas allowed wide use of crossbows during archery hunting season, which typically is longer than gun season. Though most states now allow some use of crossbows, only nine are what Horton considers crossbow-friendly; few states put their usage on par with traditional bows, which generally are regulated less stringently.

For that reason, the company has never mounted widespread advertising campaigns. By entering the vertical bow market, though, Horton has a reason to put its name in all 50 states.

"All of a sudden, from a marketing standpoint and a market expansion standpoint, it gives us a presence we haven't had before," Mr. Szekelyi said.

Most of Horton's advertising has been through local and regional publications and television shows. Now, however, the company has bought time on the Sportsman Channel and will sponsor a week-night's worth of programming on the Wisconsin-based cable network. The company also has hired a sales representative organization to cover the western half of the country, a new territory for Horton.

Vertical integration

In its marketing research, Horton found that part of the appeal of its crossbows was as a transitional item for gun hunters who wanted to take advantage of the longer archery hunting season. Trouble was, if hunters enjoyed archery so much that they wanted to give vertical bowhunting a try, Horton had nothing to offer.

That's where Mr. Nease and Outdoor Products Group came into the picture.

Although Mr. Nease's company is small enough that Horton "can pretty much engulf most of his (production) capacity," according to Mr. Bower, the acquisition still may mean a handful of new jobs in Tallmadge. Horton's core staff at its 60,000-square-foot headquarters is roughly 65 to 70 employees and peaks around 100 when seasonal demand runs high.

Horton's first run of vertical compound bows, which incorporate cams and pulleys to flex their limbs, will consist of four models, compared with the eight crossbow models it manufactures.

It won't mark a huge shift in production emphasis: Horton sells about 50,000 crossbows annually. For their first vertical effort, company executives are planning to make between 3,000 and 5,000 bows.

"At the same time that we're really trying to build the business, we're trying to step out slowly and methodically," Mr. Szekelyi said. ■

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CHOICE BITS

Excerpts from recent Editor's Choice blog entries on CrainsCleveland.com.

Barron's for investors: Look at Nordson

■ *Barron's* showed a lot of love to Nordson Corp. in an Oct. 1 story that speculated the Westlake company's shares could climb more than 20% in the coming year.

The maker of automated dispensing equipment plus testing and inspection equipment for electronic components "holds leading market shares in its main businesses, and with 70% of its revenues coming from overseas, it is well-cushioned from economic deceleration in the U.S. The weak dollar is an added boon."

Barron's noted that Nordson's well-regarded CEO, Ed Campbell, "is confident that strength in his global business 'will more than offset' any weakness in the U.S., which he thinks could be under pressure for the next six to nine months as demand softens. What's more, the bulk of Nordson's U.S. exposure lies in less-cyclical consumer-nondurables industries — food and beverages and staples. So Campbell expects the impact from the housing crisis, high energy prices and auto-industry difficulties to be muted."

The paper also takes note of one "particularly promising sign": The semiconductor cycle is turning up, after a period of softness.

Barron's concluded that Nordson, always on the hunt for profitable acquisitions, is training its sights on the aerospace industry.

"With the evolution of composite-based aircraft, we think the demand for precision and material-dispensing capability is going to grow," Mr. Campbell said.

Cramer is banking on a Canadian invasion

■ The Canadians are coming — and they might be making a play for regional banks including KeyCorp and National City Corp.

That was the view of CNBC talker Jim Cramer, who said on his "Mad Money" show Oct. 2 that investors should take note of Toronto-based TD Bank's acquisition of Commerce Bancorp "because more Canadian buys of U.S. banks are on the way."

(For what it's worth, there have been about, oh, 45,000 stories in the last decade speculating that Key and National City are acquisition targets, and no deal has come to pass.)

Thanks to a strong Canadian dollar and great stock value, "Canadian banks are primed to absorb American regional banks, which lately have been viewed as small institutions with little room for growth," Mr. Cramer said.



Cramer

Unlike Chinese or Arab investors with the cash to buy American companies, Canadians are "warm and lovable," meaning the U.S. government will not intervene in Canadian acquisitions of U.S. companies, according to Mr. Cramer.

Further, if big Canadian banks want exposure to the American Northeast, they need to acquire multiple banks, he said. And with the Canadian dollar up 12% against the U.S. dollar since last year, Canadian banks can get more for their money by acquiring American banks.

Browns wideout sets the pace in style dept.

■ Cleveland Browns wide receiver Braylon Edwards (finally) is looking good on the field this season, but

Sports Illustrated's web site likes the way he looks off the field, too.

Mr. Edwards is one of the NFL's 10 best-dressed players, according to *SI*. In the web feature, he was pictured in a very fashionable black jacket.

The up-and-coming Browns star is in good company: Others on the list are New England quarterback (and supermodel-dater, and actress-impregnator) Tom Brady, New Orleans running back Reggie Bush and Dallas wide receiver Terrell Owens.

By the way, Cleveland is home to some sharp-dressed sporting men.

USA Today earlier this year profiled the sartorial style of Cleveland Cavaliers guard Damon Jones, who owns 450 suits — yes, 450 — and considers himself the best-dressed player in the NBA.



THEO WARGO/WIREIMAGE

Braylon Edwards showed some fashion savvy in February at the Super Bowl XLI-Gridiron Glamour Celebrity Fashion Show.

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OPINION

Blazin' idea

Every time we hear someone bring up the idea of trying to make government more efficient, we think of a great line from Mel Brooks' classic 1974 comedy, "Blazing Saddles."

Mel not only wrote and directed the movie, but he also played the part of Governor LePetomaine. The governor is a sex-crazed, simple-minded politician who's worried that the corrupt ways of his administration soon could be exposed. So, midway through the movie, he shouts to a bunch of his yes men, "We've got to protect our phony-baloney jobs, gentlemen!"

Most public officials don't work at phony-baloney jobs. However, many still go into protection mode whenever it's suggested that Northeast Ohio simply may have too many government bodies to use the public's tax dollars well.

The Fund for Our Economic Future, an economic development group backed by dozens of philanthropic organizations, would like to bring some facts to the ongoing debate about the pros and cons of the region's fragmented government structure. It and other parties will pay \$175,000 for a study that will attempt to measure the costs of government to the typical citizen in Northeast Ohio. The study then will compare those costs to similar regions with fewer government bodies per capita or greater forms of collaboration among governments.

"We hope the study's findings will provide the region with guidance on how best to proceed to maximize government efficiency and effectiveness in Northeast Ohio," said Brad Whitehead, the Fund's president.

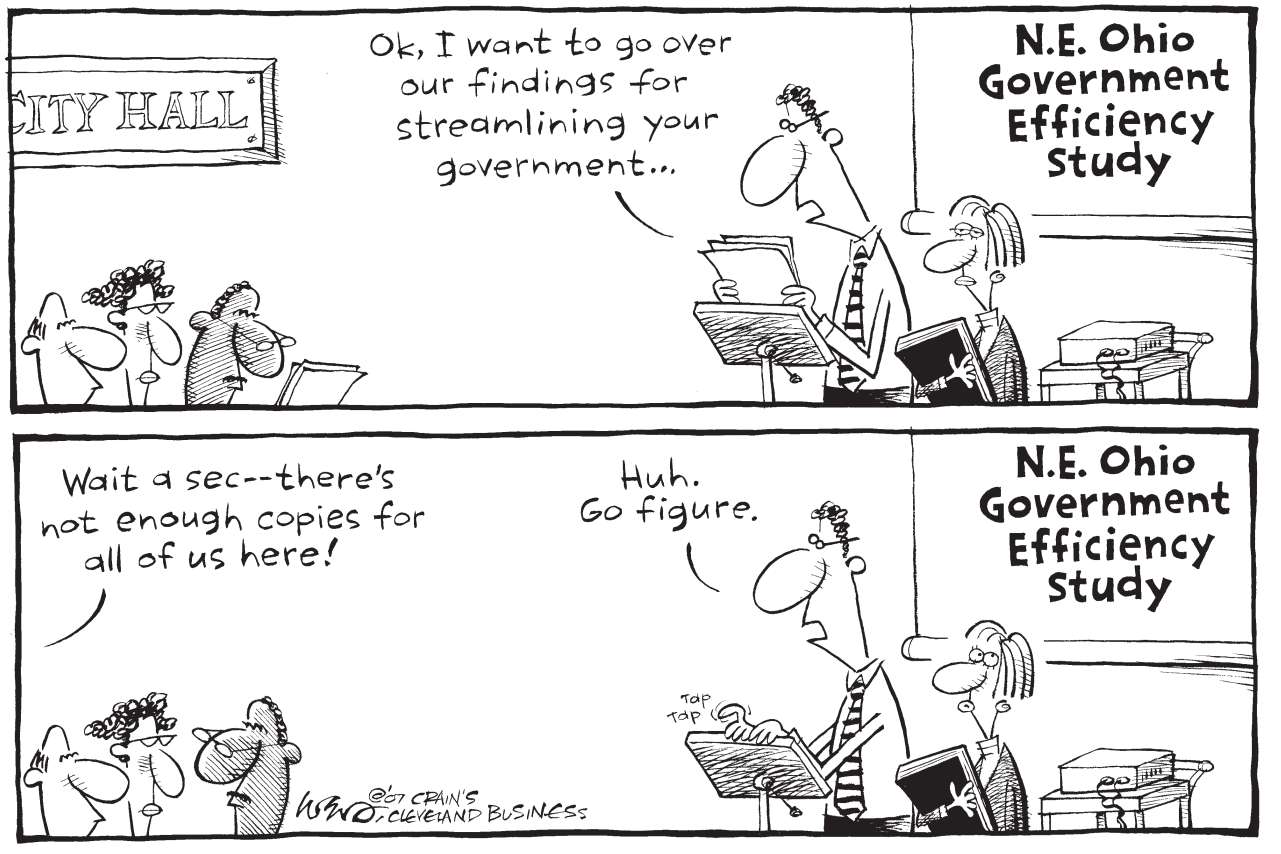
We hope for something more — namely, the willingness of public officials to put the public good ahead of their own self-interest if the study points to ways to save money by combining certain operations, or even entire government entities.

Though it may not be obvious, increasing the efficiency of government is a critical piece of creating a vibrant local economy. The better that governments operate, the fewer tax dollars they require. And the fewer tax dollars that businesses must pay in an area, the more attractive that area is when those businesses look to grow and add jobs.

Northeast Ohio does not enjoy a reputation as a low-tax region. That reputation will grow worse unless government leaders are willing to depart from the status quo if there are better ways of doing the business of government.

The findings of this study may not be taken as gospel when it's finally delivered. However, we hope the study also won't be cast on the pile of white papers in which good ideas were unearthed but never explored, much less acted upon.

We welcome this study, though to tell the truth, we've had enough food for thought around here. It's time for large numbers of government officials to swallow — hard, if necessary — and show the stomach needed to hold down, if not bring down, the cost of government in Northeast Ohio.



COMMENTARY

Bush does disservice with latest veto

Never have I looked forward to a presidential election season more than the coming one. (Well, actually, I can't remember the last time I actually did look forward to one, but that's another story.) The fact is, I've flat run out of patience with President Bush and the rest of his team.

There was a time when I thought the war in Iraq could have done much to stabilize that cauldron of a region, when I thought an Iraqi democracy — any type of democracy — would have done so much for America and the rest of the oil-consuming world. To say nothing of what it might have offered to the Iraqi people.

But years of hindsight have shown that the president and his team were ill-prepared for the aftereffects of the war and the magnitude of the government-building challenge. We're spending money like water over a dam and our greatest successes have been moderate stretches of peace in a province here and there.

This administration has spent and

spent while cutting taxes at the same time. It's an amazing testament to the scope and strength of our nation that our economy isn't worse than it is.

Now, along comes the president's veto of the bill that would have provided health care for the children of families that most often are referred to as the "working poor."

Even solid Republicans in Congress, like Iowa Sen. Charles Grassley, are attacking the president for his action and vowing to overturn the veto. The president says he doesn't want socialized medicine, yet he offers no plan to help the thousands and thousands of American businesses that are crushed by the costs of the health care they had traditionally offered to employees.

"This legislation would move health care in this country in the wrong direction," the president was quoted as saying in a statement released after he quietly cast his veto.

Well, where has his team been on this

issue, which is tearing at the fabric of middle America?

In the past, I have admired this president for his willingness to take unpopular stands.

However, this issue, like the war, finds him on the side of a smaller and smaller number of Americans, regardless of political stripe. He needs to begin thinking about the mood of the country, and what his actions mean for its citizens as well as for the future of the Republican Party.

IF ANY POTENTIAL SPONSOR had been close to buying the naming rights to Jacobs Field, I can imagine that the negotiators are kicking themselves right now. As I write this, the Indians are on the big stage, playing the New York Yankees on national TV in the American League playoffs.

Had the rights deal been done, media from across the country and around the world would be talking about the playoff games at (Fill-in-the-Blank) Field.

Now, that's a missed opportunity if there ever was one. ■

BRIAN TUCKER



THE BIG ISSUE

Are you willing to buy an American car?



ANGELA OSTER
Rocky River

I would buy an American car if it was fuel efficient and used more green technology. (She drives a MINI Cooper.) Fuel efficiency is the most important issue to me.



PAUL RESNIK
Cleveland Heights

Yes, absolutely. (He drives a Toyota, but used to drive a Chevy Blazer.) I'm a NASCAR fan, so I still like the Chevys and Dodges.



LINDA WEBER
North Olmsted

Yes. I've driven American cars in the past. (She has a Nissan now.) It's about the particular car for me. I don't have a political reason to buy or not buy an American car.



KATIE MAXWELL
Parma

No. I haven't owned an American car in a very long time, at least 10 years. (She drives a Honda Element.) Everyone I know with an American car has (quality) issues with it.

►► Watch more people weigh in by visiting the Multimedia section at www.CrainsCleveland.com

Aircraft supplier's \$25M expansion rooted in securing clients' confidence

Ravenna company hoping makeover improves efficiency

By DAVID BENNETT
dbennett@crain.com

Inside his company's expanded plant in Ravenna, Neil Mann Jr. has been feeling relaxed.

It isn't that the president and co-owner of Allen Aircraft Products Inc. is any less busy. It's just that business right now is so good.

The family-owned aerospace supplier last month finished a \$3 million, 25,000-square-foot plant expansion that was propelled in part by the demands of a French company that wanted to do more business with Allen, which makes hydraulic valves, engine sensors and fluid system components for commercial and military aircraft.

Although the 160-person company faces stiffer competition from overseas as domestic companies such as Boeing increasingly seek out international suppliers, Allen also finds itself on a short list of private aerospace companies in the United States that are serving suppliers to foreign aircraft companies such as Airbus.

Brian Fakler, Allen's vice president of sales and marketing, said the company gained visibility as well as some business contacts after attending the Paris Air Show in 2005. Last year, for example, aircraft brake manufacturer Messier-Buggati contracted with Allen to provide hydraulic valves for the brake systems the French company was producing for the new Airbus A380 and other Airbus models.

However, when Messier-Buggati, which recently built a plant in Kentucky, made site visits earlier this year to Allen's operation in Ravenna,



MARC GOLUB

As part of its \$3 million, 25,000-square-foot expansion, Allen Aircraft Products Inc. installed nine production cells of three workers each, in hopes of increasing efficiency.

"Basically, they liked our capabilities, but didn't like our facilities."

— Neil Mann Jr., president and co-owner, Allen Aircraft Products Inc.

it wasn't impressed with the scale of the plant on Woodbine Road.

"Basically, they liked our capabilities, but didn't like our facilities," Mr. Mann said of the French company's assessment of the plant's modernity and efficiency.

To satisfy Messier-Buggati as well as a growing need to expand anyway, Allen added more space plus new assembly and testing equipment, said Mr. Mann, who is part of the third generation of his family to run the business. He said the company put in place nine production cells of three workers each to increase the plant's operational efficiency. Allen also added 20 production jobs.

Including a 20,000-square-foot metal finishing shop at another

Ravenna location, Allen boasts about 80,000 square feet under roof.

Mr. Fakler said the additional capacity aids the company's operations across the board.

The 60-year-old Allen provides components for several military platforms, including the Army's Blackhawk helicopter. It also does metal treating for regional companies including diverse manufacturers Eaton Corp. of Cleveland and Parker Hannifin Corp. of Mayfield Heights.

Allen had sales of \$16 million last year and expects to top \$18 million in 2007, Mr. Mann said.

Being a niche player is a comfortable role for the Ravenna company, especially because competition among aerospace suppliers has



Company president Neil Mann Jr. said while there have been suitors, the company is committed to staying in Ravenna.

brought about more consolidation in the industry.

Mr. Mann said larger companies that serve the aerospace industry recently have called Allen with buyout offers. However, all suitors have been rebuffed, said Mr. Mann, who declined to reveal their identities.

Despite some attractive offers, the president said keeping the company in the family ensures that Allen Aircraft remains one of Ravenna's largest employers.

"We intend to stay committed to our employees and our community," Mr. Mann said.

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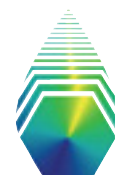
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Flats developers readying piazza for its premiere

Molded by movie-set makers, Stonebridge site will offer coffee, market, martini bar

By STAN BULLARD
sbullard@crain.com

Four veteran film-set makers from Italy are helping transform an old, former factory in the Flats that has been home to two failed restaurants into an indoor version of an Italian piazza.

The archway of the building at 2020 Center St. already opens into a Tuscan wall, which soon will be complemented with cobblestone floors mimicking a street in Rome. The entrance gives way to a room decorated with three, 9-foot replicas of Venetian party masks, similar to the New Orleans Mardi Gras variety, and to four tall coffee cups emblazoned with the colors and insignia of Cleveland's three major sports teams and the Ohio State Buckeyes.

This Tinseltown world formed

from fiberglass, plaster and paint sets the stage for a combination coffee shop, deli, market and martini bar that will occupy the building's 12,000-square-foot first floor.

However, the producers of this show aren't moviemakers but rather Stonebridge co-developers Bob Corna and Doug Price. The two men are bringing the old building to life as a retail and office venue next door to their just-completed Stonebridge Plaza, a 12-story, glass-walled condominium complex.

The director of the show is Twyla Garrett, president of Garrett Entertainment Corp., who expects to hire as many as 37 people to run the java, liquor and mini-mart combination, which is set to open Dec. 14.

The recreated piazza is intended as a meeting place for tenants of the new and prior phases of the Stonebridge apartments and condos that



sit next to the Superior Avenue Viaduct. Over time, the park-like top of the viaduct has served that purpose for the nearly 1,000 tenants of the buildings, Mr. Corna said. The indoor piazza will play that role in the winter months, though it will be open year-round.

"It's not just a coffee shop," said Mr. Corna as he walked through the building amid a gaggle of workers carving Styrofoam and wielding heat guns. "It's a social gathering place."

Next act

A combination of circumstances brought the foreign tradesmen to this Cleveland assignment from Rome.

While Mr. Corna and Ms. Garrett were discussing plans for outfitting the building's first floor in a novel way, Mr. Corna mentioned his concept for a piazza to his son, Bob Corna Jr., a videographer who operates Corndog Productions in Cleveland and spent seven years in Italy working in the film business.

The younger Mr. Corna said the rise of the Euro against the dollar has meant that the longtime center of American moviemaking in Europe has shifted from Italy to other low-cost areas and left many skilled set-makers looking for work or traveling



RUGGERO FATICA

TOP: Bob Corna (front) and his son, Bob Corna Jr., stand next to a mold for the piazza's pizza oven opening. **BOTTOM:** Artist and sculptor Artur Vasilevich paints one of his creations for the piazza at Stonebridge.

abroad to find it.

"Next thing I knew," Ms. Garrett said, "they were on the plane."

What brought the four setmakers over only was partially economics, said Oreste Tori, a plaster and resin specialist who lives near Rome.

"I got a call from my friend (Bob Corna Jr.) and he said his father needed help," said Mr. Tori in Italian, with the younger Mr. Corna providing the translation.

Mr. Tori put the skills he has honed in 15 years in the film business — most recently the film, *Lost Legion* — into forming the shop's super-size coffee cups, among other features.

Roberto Leone, a plasterer who worked on films ranging from *Rambo III* to *Gangs of New York*, made the wall and the huge masks. Cleveland was a detour for Mr. Leone and his son, Manuel, who came here rather than another assignment in Tunisia.

Ermando Olni, a set decorator and painter with 40 films under his belt, is painting the interior walls with a technique called "Venetian plaster," a traditional craft that provides a stone-like glaze to plaster walls.

The level of detail in the artisans' work is stunning. Take the efforts of Artur Vasilevich, the owner of The Art Studio based in Strongsville, who said it is taking four days to paint each mask. Providing a truly international flavor to the endeavor, Mr. Vasilevich emigrated here from Russia 13 years ago. The developers

hired him to paint the masks colorfully so they look like the beaded and feathered Venetian masks seen in Venice.

Just like the movies

Ms. Garrett said she estimates her firm will spend about \$375,000 outfitting the space, which builds on an investment of \$6 million in the building's makeover.

Ms. Garrett said she will operate each business in the piazza under separate names. The coffee shop will be "Mocha Fusion Coffee," the deli "Market on the Square" and the bar and restaurant portion the "2020 Martini Café and Lounge."

Plans also call for the building to contain a fitness center for Stonebridge residents plus rental office space.

Mr. Price, CEO of the K&D Group real estate company, said his Stonebridge partner Mr. Corna provided the vision to redo the space so fancifully.

"If it were left up to me, it would have all been office space," Mr. Price said. "But we need these services for our residents."

For the elder Mr. Corna, a trained architect with three decades of experience as a designer and builder, working with the setmakers provided a new experience.

"I don't feel like I'm building a project," Mr. Corna said. "I feel like I'm filming a movie. As a designer, I feel like I got to be a kid in a candy store."



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