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EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Kenneth C. Krych
 kkrych@propertiesmag.com

MANAGING EDITOR/ART DIRECTOR

Mark Watt
 mwatt@propertiesmag.com

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Linda Bloom, Jeanne Bluffstone,
 John Elliott, Lou Kren, Jessica Nelson,
 Alec Pacella, Gordon & Lynn Priemer,
 Diane DiPiero Rodio, Nancy Loyan
 Schuemann, John Slagter, David
 Woodburn

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

Mark Gerboc
 mgerboc@propertiesmag.com
 216.251.6649

Andrea Keener
 akeener@propertiesmag.com
 216.849.4350

David Larkin
 dlarkin@propertiesmag.com
 216.251.6753

Gina Marie Lenzo
 gmlenzo@propertiesmag.com
 440.423.1811

SALES CONSULTANT

James Pelligrino

MARKETING ASSISTANT

Lisa Larissey

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR

Debbie Boehm

Cover photo: Parker Hannifin Corp.
 Headquarters, by Scott Pease

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Image courtesy of TRG Studios

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Turning Over a New Leaf



KEN KRYCH

Ground hog or no ground hog, can spring be very far away if we are featuring our annual Landscaping special section? Let's hope not!

In this year's Landscaping special section, we offer a variety of features from experts in the field, including both the current and immediate past president of Ohio Landscapers Association (OLA), who provide their insights on the state of the industry. We also highlight several products, projects and people tied to landscaping in Northeast Ohio.

This month's cover story features an expansion that adds a significant amount of space to one homegrown company's headquarters. In 1997, *Properties* placed Parker Hannifin Corporation's Mayfield Heights world headquarters on the cover. And here we are again.

For this expansion, Parker brought the same winning team back for the 97,000-square-foot addition. The history of Parker, a Fortune 500 motion and control company founded 90 years ago and still based in the Cleveland area, is a success story not just for the company itself but Northeast Ohio as well. With this recent addition, Parker's future looks just as bright. As you'll read, the company's past, present and future are the focus of a central part of the expansion project: namely a group of unique interior spaces designed by Karen Skunta & Company.

Also this month, we are happy to bring you a feature on Center Street



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Village in Mentor. For this project, Junior Properties is developing basically a new downtown in the center of Mentor – with a mixture of condominiums, townhouses and retail spaces. In our story, we focus on a key part of the development: the conversion of a landmark historic school into modern living spaces with high-end amenities for discerning buyers.

Coming in March

University Hospital unveiled its one billion dollar master expansion plan recently and next month we will feature its latest and newest ambulatory medical center facility in Twinsburg.

Along with that is the beautiful new Premier Soccer Academy in Lorain that will be showcased.

Each month we focus on a different aspect of the construction industry and next month will be our third installment of “Masters Of Design/Build,” featuring several profiles on the best and more innovative design/build experts in Northeast Ohio.

NAOIP & Properties partner

We are very proud to be bringing you an in-depth look at 25 years of NAOIP in our April issue and providing NAIOP with a special supplement magazine that will be used for its Awards of Excellence event May 10th at Windows on the River. *Properties* and NAOIP are now accepting sponsorship ads to create this one-of-kind piece. Please call us for details or more information on how your firm can become involved.

As always we welcome your feedback on our issues and ideas for profiles of companies, anniversaries and major projects you would like to see in these pages.

Try to stay warm and be well.

Positively,



Kenneth C. Krych
Owner/Publisher



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PROPERTIES PEOPLE

Highlighting notable industry events



An Evening of BOMA Stars

The Greater Cleveland Chapter of Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA Greater Cleveland) held its annual awards event recently at Sammy's University Club with an Academy Awards theme. This year, the hundreds who attended enjoyed cocktails, appetizers, great food, fun and gambling games, psychic readings and "The Good Time People's Choice Awards Distribution," as well as many prizes and gift baskets donated by BOMA sponsors. **P**

- 1 **Donna** and **Lou Vitantonio**, of Delta Industrial Services
- 2 **L.L.** and **Deborah Davis**, of New Image Building Maintenance
- 3 **Frank** and **Denise Pschirer**, of Colliers Ostendorf Morris International
- 4 (From left) **Vicki Neece**, of BOMA Greater Cleveland, and **Marianne Compton**, of Forest City Management
- 5 (From left) **Laurie Masters**, of KeyBank, and **Renee Evans**, of The Harbor Group
- 6 **Vicki Neece**, of BOMA Greater Cleveland, and **Pat O'Connell**, of One Source Facility Services
- 7 **Johnna Walter**, of OM Workspace, and **Mark Schroeder**
- 8 **Keri-Ann Kalavity** (at right), of Gillmore Security, and guest **Emily Laube**
- 9 **Paula Fishman**, of Colliers Ostendorf Morris International, and husband **Jeff Sindeler**, of Neptune Plumbing & Heating Company
- 10 **Alan** and **Elizabeth Gillmore IV**, of Gillmore Security Systems



Open House at BOMA Greater Cleveland Headquarters

Recently, BOMA Greater Cleveland moved its headquarters to more open and spacious surroundings from the Halle Building to 200 Public Square, Suite 209 in downtown Cleveland. To celebrate members and associate members were invited to an open house complete with cocktails and buffet. **P**



- 1 New entrance to BOMA Greater Cleveland's new headquarters at 200 Public Square
- 2 **Renee Evans**, of The Harbor Group, samples the fare.
- 3 BOMA Greater Cleveland Executive Vice President **Janice Parham** and **Damon Mancini**, of Graebel Corporation
- 4 (From left) **Melissa Johns**, of BOMA Greater Cleveland, **Mike Springer**, of GSA, and **Vicki Neece**, of BOMA Greater Cleveland
- 6 **Jeff Troxell**, of DAS Construction, and **Nicole Deremer**, of DBS Communications
- 7 (From left) **Johnna Walters**, of OM Workspace, and **Keri-Ann Kalavity**, of Gillmore Security



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Healthcare Connection

University Hospitals pledges local contracts for ongoing construction projects

University Hospitals (UH) recently announced that it has pledged 20% of its construction jobs in Cuyahoga County to Cleveland residents, including its ongoing Vision 2010 plan that incorporates more than \$700 million in construction at various locations throughout Greater Cleveland, including new facilities, expansion projects and renovations. The hospital system also will require that 15% of all work be handled by minority-owned companies and 5% by woman-owned companies.

Brokered with the assistance of Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson, the hospital system has made a deal that calls for small union and non-union companies to create partnerships larger enough to take on projects they could not handle alone.

With a target completion date of 2010, the project sites include UH's downtown campus and a greenfield location on Cleveland's east side.

Primary projects include the construction of a new, freestanding, 150-bed, cancer center on the campus of University Hospitals Case Medical Center and the Ahuja Medical Center, a 144-bed hospital to be built in phases at Chagrin Highlands in Beachwood. Other Vision 2010 construction plans include relocation and expansion of the Center for Emergency Medicine at UH Case Medical Center, renovations to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, multiple renovations and additions at other suburban campuses, and a new, 800-car parking structure at the downtown campus.



Rendering courtesy of Gilbane Building Company

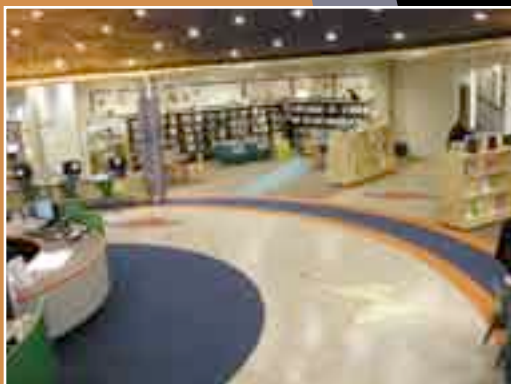
TAKING SHAPE The Vision 2010 plan includes a new Cancer Center on the campus of University Hospitals' Case Medical Center.

Design activities will involve four national architects. Cannon Design of St. Louis will design the new cancer center, OWP/P Inc. of Chicago will renovate and expand the Center for Emergency Medicine, Parkin Architects Ltd. of Toronto will design the new Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and HKS

Inc. of Dallas will design the new Ahuja Medical Center.

Gilbane Building Company is serving as construction manager for these four projects while Ozanne Construction Co. is providing construction management services for multiple enabling projects on the Case Medical Center campus. **P**

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Resurrecting the Casket Company Building

Local architecture firm begins renovation for new headquarters

In 2007, Cleveland-based mbi | k2m Architecture, Inc. began its search for a new corporate headquarters. The firm, which has experienced tremendous growth since its inception in 2001, got its start in a 500-square-foot space in the Grand Arcade Building. In 2005 they moved to a much bigger 3,000-square-foot space in the Art Craft Building, but after purchasing local interior design firm Spectrum Design Services in 2006, they were busting at the seams.

The search ended with the purchase of an old Casket Company building located at 3121 Bridge Avenue in Ohio City. mbi | k2m Architecture's directors, Scott C. Maloney and Michael B. Ingram, were both drawn to the building because they knew it had the potential for something new and felt it was an opportunity to invest in the redevelopment of the great mixed-use neighborhood of Ohio City. They realized the project of restoring this building would also provide them the opportunity to showcase the firm's design talents and nurture its core purpose of finding new ways to improve existing methods, new uses for materials, and innovative solutions for commonplace problems.

"As the owner, architect, interior designer and tenant of the building, we had a real opportunity to investigate, test and utilize cutting-edge design and building system management solutions," Maloney says. "This is why our team immediately opted to take the challenge of designing and constructing the building capable of achieving LEED Silver certification by the U.S. Green Building Council by utilizing the New Construction design guidelines. mbi | k2m is committed to being a leader in sustainable design in all areas of design practice. To this end we have a 2008 goal of at least 75% accreditation for our professional staff company-wide."

The mbi | k2m team has planned a space that is not only design forward, but environmentally and economically responsible. With considerable efforts to select the most environmentally conscious and cost effective materials, the design for the new office space will bring together three key concepts: sustainable (green) design, budget and style. Often times these elements are thought to be mutually exclusive, but the team has achieved a balance between the three,



BACK FOR BUSINESS Architectural firm mbi | k2m recently purchased an old Casket Company building that will be renovated into the company's new headquarters.

aided by manufacturers who are making this balance more and more possible.

Highlights of the design include:

- A smart lighting system that adjusts automatically according to daylight levels within the space for cost and energy savings
- Ventilation of copy and print rooms
- High efficiency HVAC systems, tailored to tenants' needs to avoid overuse
- Natural daylight and window views for every workstation, office and staff area
- GreenGuard certified interior finish materials to reduce VOC levels and promote the use of products manufacturer with recycled content
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A closer look

"Reusing an existing building is the highest level of recycling there is," says Jim Fish, mbi | k2m's project designer and LEED-Accredited Professional. "This building in particular has some beautiful features and finishes, inside and out, and we knew that highlighting them would be our starting point."

The exterior building will predominantly remain intact. The bricked-in openings facing the street will be removed and all the windows throughout the entire building will be replaced.

The building will also undergo minor masonry restorations and cleaning in



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hopes of restoring it to its original grandeur. New exterior wall sconces will be placed at each brick pilaster to provide added accent and a level of safety/security to the public walking along the building at night.

Most importantly, the main entry has been relocated to the former loading dock location. This provides direct access from on-street parking and to staff parking lots, and provides full accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Throughout the design process, mbi | k2m worked closely and received overwhelming support from the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio City Near West Development Corporation, local block club, and area businesses.

Scott Maloney worked closely with the Cuyahoga County Department of Development to obtain financing through the county's Commercial Redevelopment Fund. The fund is specially designed to overcome barriers to the full re-use of abandoned, idled or underutilized commercial, industrial and institutional properties within Cuyahoga County.

"This program has been a critical component to making this project viable for our company," Maloney says. "We have been very pleased with the working relationships we have developed at the county and highly recommend the program to qualified developers."

Under the direction of a project team consisting of TES Engineering (mechanical, electrical and plumbing engineers), Nyman Construction Company and mbi | k2m, the construction process is expected to last six months and cost a little over \$1 million with an occupancy date of September 2008.

Spreading the word

For the Casket Company renovation project, Cleveland's Green Building Coalition is partnering with mbi | k2m to offer young architecture, interior design and engineering professionals the opportunity to follow the design and construction process of a LEED Silver certified building. The program is envisioned as a series of workshop discussions and demonstrations through the period of renovation of the building with an interactive learning program and construction walk-thru at one of Cleveland's green buildings. **P**



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December Construction Unchanged from Prior Month

At a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$518.4 billion, new construction starts in December were essentially unchanged from November, according to McGraw-Hill Construction, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies. Modest declines were reported for nonresidential building and non-building construction (public works and electric utilities), which were offset by a small increase for residential building. For the full year 2007, total construction came in at \$611.2 billion, down 11% from 2006 and marking the first annual decline for the construction start series since 1991. The weakness reflected the steep correction for housing over the course of 2007 – excluding residential building, new construction starts for the full year 2007 advanced 3%.

The December statistics produced a reading of 110 for the Dodge Index (2000=100), the same as the revised level for November. The Dodge Index began the year at 137, and then trended downward through 2007 as the steady decline for single-family housing was joined by a pullback for multifamily housing. For most of 2007, nonresidential building and public works were able to stay close to the elevated pace achieved during 2006. However, during the final two months of the year, both nonresidential building and public works lost momentum, pulling the Dodge Index down even more. At 110, the November and December readings for the Dodge Index were well below the full year 2007 average for the Index at 129.

“Like 2006, the pattern for total construction in 2007 was shaped by the single-family correction, which grew even more pronounced with the tur-

moil in the financial markets caused by the subprime mortgage meltdown,” says Robert A. Murray, vice president of economic affairs for McGraw-Hill Construction. “The weakness spread over to multifamily housing in 2007,

The pattern for total construction in 2007 was shaped by the single-family correction, which grew even more pronounced with the turmoil in the financial markets caused by the subprime mortgage meltdown... but for much of last year the commercial and institutional structure types held up fairly well, as did public works.

but for much of last year the commercial and institutional structure types held up fairly well, as did public works. The picture began to change for commercial building towards the end of 2007, however, given the slowing economy and tighter lending standards. The continued presence of these factors will contribute

to an expected decline for commercial building in 2008. Institutional building may also see some dampening this year, as state fiscal conditions erode. On the plus side, public works should be helped by greater federal funding for transportation projects, as well as the renewed emphasis on infrastructure maintenance.”

Nonresidential building

Nonresidential building in December slipped 1% to \$187.7 billion (annual rate). For the commercial structure types, weaker activity was reported for stores and warehouses, each down 5%; and hotels, down 18%. Office construction grew 5% from a weak November, helped by the start of a \$136 million office project in Nashville, Tennessee.

December's pace for office construction was still 22% below what was reported during the first ten months of the year. Manufacturing plant construc-

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tion registered a strong 52% gain in December, boosted by groundbreaking for a \$110 million medical equipment plant in New York, an \$85 million ethanol plant in Minnesota, and an \$80 million automotive plant in Georgia. For the institutional structure types, December showed growth for schools, up 3%; transportation terminals, up 5%; and churches, up 24%. Declines were reported for public buildings, down 12%; healthcare facilities, down 15%; and amusement-related projects, down 32%.

For 2007 as a whole, nonresidential building climbed 3% to \$221.0 billion, which followed an 18% increase in 2006. Store construction continued to be very strong, rising 11% in dollar volume, due to the ongoing expansion efforts of major retailers.

“To this point, store construction has withstood any downward pull from the weaker housing market, but that’s expected to change in 2008,” Murray says.

Warehouse construction also increased in 2007, rising 6%. Office construction, while down a slight 1%, essentially maintained the improved pace established in 2006 when contracting jumped 44%. The top five markets for office construction starts during 2007, in dollar terms, were: New York, New York; Washington DC; Atlanta; Chicago; and Charlotte, North Carolina. Like offices, the hotel category reported a modest decline for construction starts, down 7%, although this followed a 92% surge in 2006. Las Vegas, Nevada maintained its top ranking in 2007 as the leading metropolitan area for hotel construction starts, while down from its exceptional 2006 amount. Other markets in the top five for hotel construction in 2007 were Los Angeles, Chicago, Orlando, Florida and Washington DC. The manufacturing plant category in 2007 grew 15%, as the elevated rate of ethanol plant construction continued.

The institutional structure types showed mixed behavior in 2007. School construction moved up an additional 4%, with college and university construction in particular showing strength. The public buildings category climbed 36%, lifted by gains for detention facilities, courthouses, and military buildings. After achieving a record high in 2006, healthcare facilities settled back 5%. Declines for the full year 2007 were also

December Construction Contracts for Cleveland Area

McGraw-Hill Construction recently reported on December contracts for future construction in the metropolitan statistical area of Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, consisting of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties. An authority on the construction market, the firm produces Dodge Reports and Sweets Catalog Files. According to the Dodge Analytics unit of McGraw-Hill Construction, the latest month’s construction activity followed this pattern:

	2007	2006	Percent Change
Nonresidential	\$54,050,000	\$55,894,000	-3
Residential	\$50,451,000	\$69,680,000	-28
Total Building	\$104,501,000	\$125,574,000	-17

For the year-to-date on a cumulative basis, the totals are:

	2007	2006	Percent Change
Nonresidential	\$1,160,721,000	\$1,152,577,000	+1
Residential	\$972,699,000	\$1,209,980,000	-20
Total Building	\$2,133,420,000	\$2,362,557,000	-10

- Nonresidential buildings include commercial, manufacturing, educational, religious, administrative, recreational, hotel, dormitory and other buildings.
- Residential buildings include one- and two-family houses and apartments.

Source: McGraw-Hill Construction

reported for amusement-related projects, down 9%; transportation terminals, down 10%; and churches, down 12%.

Residential building

Residential building in December edged up 3% to \$221.6 billion (annual rate), as a multifamily upturn outweighed a further reduction for single-family housing. Climbing 24% relative to a very weak November, multifamily housing was supported by the start of a \$196 million condominium tower in Lahaina, Hawaii. December’s level for multifamily housing was still 16% below the average of the first ten months of the year, supporting the belief that the broad downward trend for multifamily housing is still in progress. Single-family housing in December fell 2%, continuing the steady slide for this structure type, which has now shown decreased activity in eleven out of the twelve months of 2007.

The 2007 annual total for residential building was \$260.2 billion, down 24% from 2006. Single-family housing plunged 26% in dollar volume and 30% in dwelling units. The regional pattern for single-family housing showed the steepest dollar decline in the South Atlantic, down 32%, as this region was weakened especially by a substantial 49% drop in Florida. The next largest

regional decline for single-family housing was the West, down 28%; followed by the Midwest, down 24%; the South Central, down 19%; and the Northeast, down 17%.

“In 2006, single-family housing was hit hard by the loss of investor-led demand, and in 2007 the negative factors broadened to include sharply diminished mortgage availability and the precarious financial position of housing developers,” Murray says. “With the inventory of unsold homes at high levels, further reductions for single-family housing lie ahead.”

Multifamily housing for all of 2007 was down 16% in dollar volume and 20% in dwelling units. The top five markets for multifamily housing in 2007, in dollar terms, included three with large declines relative to the prior year – New York, New York, down 31%; Los Angeles, down 27%; and Miami, Florida, down 57%. At the same time, two of the top five showed gains relative to 2006 – Chicago, up 7%; and Las Vegas, up 60%.

Nonbuilding construction

Nonbuilding construction in December fell 4% to \$109.0 billion (annual rate). Slipping back from earlier strength were sewers, down 6%; and water supply systems, down 18%. River/

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harbor development was also down 18% in December, and a larger 36% drop was reported for bridge construction. In November, the bridge category had soared 72%, boosted by the start of a \$612 million bridge replacement project in New York, New York and \$234 million related to the reconstruction of the I-35W Bridge in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Highway construction in December increased 19%, lifted by the start of a \$343 million road-building project in Maryland. The "other public works" category in December climbed 10%, with support coming from \$730 million related to work on a liquefied natural gas facility in Georgia. The amount of new electric utility starts for December was weak, falling 39% from the previous month.

For the full year 2007, nonbuilding construction increased 2% to \$130.0 billion, which followed a 23% advance in 2006. Large gains were reported for sewers, up 9%; and water supply systems, up 25%; with the water supply category pushed upward in 2007 by the start of numerous water treatment plants. The other environmental project type, river/harbor development, fell 12% in 2007 after the 17% gain in 2006 that reflected reconstruction work in the Gulf of Mexico region. Highways and bridges continued to show expansion in 2007, climbing 3% and 8% respectively.

"With the federal-aid highway program getting a 5% hike for fiscal 2008, one of the safer bets for more growth in 2008 would be highway and bridge construction," Murray says.

The "other public works" category in 2007 rose 2%, with more work for such diverse project types as natural gas facilities, rail and mass transit lines, and outdoor sports stadiums. The electric utility category settled back 19% in 2007, following the 89% surge in the dollar volume of new starts that took place in 2006.

The weaker construction activity at the national level during 2007 was also present at the five-region level.

The largest declines for total construction for full year 2007 were reported in the West and South Atlantic, each down 13%; followed by the South Central, down 10%; the Midwest, down 8%; and the Northeast, down 6%. **P**

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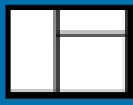
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Spring Cleaning

As a long winter draws to a close, it's time to think "green" in more ways than one. Today's green, high-efficiency buildings are geared towards sustainability, and that means cleaning your facility with products that are environmentally friendly while utilizing equipment and trained staff in support of facility maintenance goals.

The three T's

A Team approach + advanced Technology + Trained staff = an effective cleaning plan. Team cleaning methods increase efficiency and thoroughness. High-efficiency filtration vacs and virtually dry Green Seal carpet cleaning products are cutting edge technology. Highly motivated and well-trained technicians understand the role they play and have the tools they need to get the job done.

What to clean, when to clean it

Spring is the ideal time to banish the grit and grime of winter from carpets, tile floors and windows. Of course, carpeting and other building assets will benefit from an ongoing maintenance program. Stains or embedded soil can be difficult or impossible to remove. Sharp-edged grit that can easily cling to shoes and boots can permanently damage carpets and floors if allowed to accumulate. A well-planned ongoing cleaning program not only allows the facility to put its best face forward year round, it extends the life of the facility.

Carpets are particularly vulnerable to abrasive dirt particulates during the winter months. Routine dry vacuuming is important. A professional cleaning with a quality encapsulation cleaner will suspend soil and then extract it without leaving a detergent residue that would attract new soil. Quick drying reduces downtime and eliminates the potential for fungal growth.

Vinyl composition tile will benefit from restorative maintenance, especially if winter grime has become embedded in the protective film.

Improved indoor air quality (IAQ)

An effective cleaning program places a premium on extending a product's useful life while safeguarding the health, safety and productivity of building occupants. Improved IAQ pays for itself in reduced absenteeism and increased productivity, according to the USGBC, whose LEED rating system calls for sustainable cleaning practices in LEED-certified buildings. When a clean, healthy building is also a profitable building, why not set high standards for IAQ?

Outsourcing advantages

There are advantages to outsourcing janitorial work:

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Janice L. Parham
Executive Vice President
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Power Move

Leff Electric's new look incorporates improved technology, green features

Leff Electric, an 86-year-old Cleveland company and one of the largest regional distributors of GE lighting products and distribution equipment, recently completed its move to a new headquarters building and main distribution center at 4700 Spring Road in Brooklyn Heights (suburban Cleveland).

According to Bruce Leff, president of Leff Electric, the new facility will provide all the functionality needed to better serve the company's customers – including greater accessibility, new technologies and more efficient space.

He adds that, timed to coincide with the move, the company also has introduced a new branding campaign, including an updated company logo, color schemes and marketing tools including a new tagline: "wired to serve you better."

Practice what you preach

After advising its customers for years on upgrading their workspaces and promoting the green movement in building products and maintenance practices, Leff Electric has applied those same concepts to its new facility.

"We've retrofitted all the lighting throughout the new building – in the warehouse area and the offices," Leff says. "We've moved beyond theory to actual application. We felt that if we were going to counsel our customers, then we wanted the most energy efficient and functional lighting system available for ourselves."



Photos courtesy of Leff Electric

FAMILY FOUNDATION Established in 1921 by Harry Leff, Cleveland-based Leff Electric is now led by grandsons (from left) President/CEO Bruce Leff and Vice President Sandy Leff Jr.

According to Leff, the new lighting conforms with the most recent ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) standards and will provide more light for less money. The retrofit should pay for itself within two years. The new fixtures will result in lower energy costs, reduced maintenance, more natural color appearance and higher light levels. Leff expects the new fixtures to provide as much as 33% to 50% energy savings. He adds that the company actually will achieve greater

light levels with fewer fixtures, and the new fixtures will significantly lower maintenance costs. Compliant with the Federal Energy Policy Act of 2005, the new building features dual switching and occupancy sensing fixtures throughout all the offices.

Better space

Leff notes that the company's previous facility could not accommodate all the needs of a modern headquarters and distribution center. The new facility will have triple the amount of shipping and receiving area, a larger staging area and new material handling equipment to improve inventory management of more than 17,000 sku's.

"All this permits us to manage our inventory more efficiently," he says. "Now we can stock more inventory and the right kind of inventory to meet customer demands, but also the speed and accuracy of our order fulfillment will increase dramatically."

In addition, during the first quarter of 2008 the company will install a state-of-the-art RF barcode-scanning warehouse management system that will streamline

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SIGN FOR THE TIMES Coinciding with its move to a new headquarters building, Leff Electric has introduced a new branding campaign, including a new company logo.

receiving, storing, picking and shipping operations.

Back to the future

With the new facility, Leff also decided that it was time to modernize the company's image – and yet retain some familiar elements of its heritage.

"We've used a symbol of the water tower as part of our brand for decades and we didn't want to lose this connection to our customers," Leff says.

The solution was to create a bold new logo design and monogram for Leff Electric in gold and charcoal gray, while keeping the water tank icon in a commemorative seal to preserve the

After advising its customers for years on upgrading their workspaces and promoting the green movement in building products and maintenance practices, Leff Electric has applied those same concepts to its new facility.

company's family-owned legacy and tradition.

"It's a perfect blend of old and new," he says. "We'll use these designs to update our signage, website, literature and customer promotions to communicate our new message."

In addition to its eight branch offices located throughout Northeast Ohio, Leff Electric will also continue to operate a full-service counter and will-call facility at its previous location in downtown Cleveland. The new facility is in the drive path of a large percentage of its customer base and is within easy access to nearby interstates. **P**

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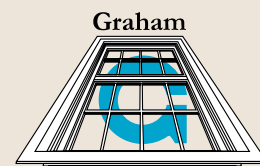
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Strategy in Motion

Parker Hannifin showcases engineering innovation at newly expanded headquarters

By Mark Watt | Photos courtesy of TRG Studios

From a humble beginning as a one-man operation 90 years ago to its current position as a global motion and control technology company with \$11 billion in revenues, Parker Hannifin Corporation has always thrived on creating innovative solutions to problems and turning conceptual ideas into reality. So when it came time to design an exhibit area in a recently opened three-story wing addition at the company's Mayfield Heights world headquarters, it's not surprising that the firm latched onto a bold idea presented by local graphic design firm Karen Skunta & Company.

What began as a 1,960-square-foot space, to be designed with informative and visually interesting displays telling the story of the company's past, present and future, evolved into an expansive, experiential four-part environment to educate and inspire guests.

"Honestly, some of the ideas I presented [to Parker] were pretty risky and bold to suggest at the time," Karen Skunta says.

In the fall of 2005, Ron Reed of architectural firm Westlake Reed Leskosky,

which was in the process of designing the 97,000-square-foot North Wing addition at Parker's headquarters, invited Skunta to join the project team for a singular purpose: design an exhibit area limited to a common area on the new wing's first floor. After several meetings between Parker and the design team, Skunta asked Reed if she could put together a design brief – a narrative outline of her ideas and the intentions behind them – to present to Parker. Reed gave her the green light.

"The trouble that I recognized was that, because of the location of the new common area in relation to the main entry, a visitor would not be able to access the new space unless he or she was escorted by Parker personnel," Skunta says. "I got a little daring, I suppose, and I created a new goal for them."

Her proposed plan was to engage visitors with a memorable and educational experience that would begin before they even walked through the front doors. In the entrance plaza, she imagined

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Photo by Ken Knych



COMING AROUND A cantilevered arc, glass canopy (left) has been added to the original entrance at Parker's headquarters. Inside the entrance lobby (right), the company's global presence is represented by a series of five suspended, illustrated scrimms.

a water feature where motion-control sensors would send laminar streams of water up and over a walkway whenever anyone passed by. This was inspired by research which uncovered that Parker was responsible for the system technology that allows the Bellagio fountains in Las Vegas to dance.

"The concept was to allude to Parker's role as a leader of motion control technology in a unforgettable way," Skunta says. Parker focuses on eight technologies that service the motion control marketplace, including aerospace, automation, climate and industrial controls, filtration, fluid connectors, seals, hydraulics and instrumentation. Even with 900,000 products, 1,200 markets and 125 divisions, nearly all of its engineering efforts are based upon controlling liquid or gas to create motion. So the fountain would become a simplified way to subtly introduce Parker's field of work.

Visitors would then enter a remodeled main lobby, where a short video on a four-screen multimedia display would connect the dots between the fountain streams outside to aerospace and a myriad of other industries utilizing Parker technology.

An adjacent, existing exhibit space would be remodeled as well with a state-of-the-art theater and a timeline display covering the company's history

and numerous other features to better educate visitors.

Finally, the space in the new wing – the original target space for her work – would feature innovation and the spirit behind where Parker is going in the future.

"My hope for all of this," she says, "was for a visitor to be able to walk out the front door after one visit and be able to say to someone else, 'Hey, did you know

that this Cleveland company is a global leader in motion and control technology, anything from airplanes to construction vehicles to NASA spacecraft usually incorporates Parker technology?"

With her design brief in hand, Skunta visited Parker and presented her proposed plan in March 2006.

"It was risky on my part because the ideas weren't limited to the 1,960-square-foot space in the new addition, as



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originally planned," Skunta continues. "Then again, I figured the worst thing that could happen was for them to say 'no.'"

But Parker said, "Yes."

Engineering a new environment

"We have always been a conservative company," says Richard Kanzleiter, Parker's vice president of operations support. "But with this entire project [from Karen Skunta's work to the entire three-story addition], there was an effort to do something a little different here. Management didn't want to get crazy or ostentatious, but we wanted to get a little more modern, fancier. We are a high tech company after all."

The new design and construction at Parker headquarters – including the 97,000-square-foot North Wing and Skunta's remodeling efforts – is in part a reflection of a recent change in the company's decision-making process and corporate culture strategy called "Winovation." Created in 2004, the slogan became a company-wide mantra to keep a focus on disciplined product development "based on the voice of the customer," according to Craig Maxwell, the company's vice president of corporate technology and innovation.

Essentially, introducing the Winovation strategy was an effort to bridge gaps that had grown between the various divisions at Parker over time and encourage collaboration between these engineering experts. With 57,000 employees worldwide, many Parker



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groups had arguably been operating in their own bubbles, according to Kanzleiter.

“People here always used to say, ‘if Parker only knew what Parker knows, we would be dangerous,’” Kanzleiter says. “That’s because we have been developed into eight business groups and they’ve pretty much been segregated. But now with this Winovation strategy, for instance, the Aerospace guys can hook up with the guys in Pneumatics and Filtration and Refrigeration. We want these guys to collaborate with each other. Who knows what they’ll come up with?”

To encourage this interaction between the engineering groups, Parker began considering a physical space where

this type of collaboration could thrive. Steady growth of the company had also led to a shortage of office space overall. So Parker sought a solution for its combined space needs by enlisting Westlake Reed Leskosky, the architectural firm that had originally designed its L-shaped Mayfield Heights headquarters in 1997.

This led to the construction of the new North Wing, which provides expanded office space on the top two floors, a new third-floor boardroom, a 150-seat auditorium, an area devoted to the company’s Winovation engineers and the primary exhibit space designed by Skunta.

Of steel-frame construction with an exterior composed of precast concrete, metal panel systems and generous

amounts of glass, the addition was built under the direction of Robert McCoy, of construction management firm AMEC. As project manager, McCoy, along with superintendent Ralph Repp – both now principals of Choice Repps Construction Advisors – reprised a role they played in the construction of Parker headquarters in ‘97 (then working as project manager and superintendent with Morse Diesel International).

“Part of what Parker did in regrouping the team they had before was getting around issues they might have had in building a relationship with a new project team,” McCoy says. “Coming into this project, we knew from our previous experience what Parker’s expectations were.”

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IMITATING MOVEMENT In the Innovation Area, a variety of features are designed to create a sense of motion, including a wave-like, tiled ceiling and a series of multimedia display walls arranged in a pinwheel formation. The touch screen interactive modules in this area were developed by Blue Robot.

Even with the advantages inherent to bringing the original team back together, constructing the new wing did present some challenges. For instance, while the addition was intended to match the existing wings in some aspects, such as offices of the same size and shape, it was also designed to feature ample amounts of glass on exterior surfaces. This led to modifications to portions of the original building as part of a secondary phase after the addition was completed in March 2007. (This secondary phase also included landscaping and the interior fit-out for Skunta's exhibit spaces.)

"Precast [on the exterior of the original building] was literally unbolted and removed and glass was swapped in to match the new wing," Kanzleiter says. "We also added a cantilevered arc, glass canopy at the entrance that is a nice, unique, modern design that helps to achieve continuity between the original building and the addition."

The exploded view

Inside the new facility are four main features that attract attention. First is the

third-floor boardroom, which includes high ceilings, a servery hidden behind a sliding wooden wall and a unique, channel-glass window wall system imported from German specialty glass manufacturer Bendheim, which overlooks the entrance plaza outside.

Second is the wedge-shaped, amphitheater-style auditorium on the first floor. State-of-the-art technology in this space includes automated video cameras

"The idea in these spaces was: let's exhibit what we do, where we came from and where we are going to our employees, visitors, vendors and customers."

**James Cartwright
Parker Hannifin Corp.**

that, for instance, are able to pinpoint an audience member asking a question during a video conference and then project his or her image on a screen at the front of the room.

Thirdly is the innovation/technology space where Parker's Winovation

engineers can brainstorm with international company divisions and partners, utilizing videoconferencing and a virtual whiteboard system within an oblong shaped glass-walled space on the first floor, internally known as the Corporate Think Tank.

Lastly is the cluster of exhibit areas designed by Skunta and fabricated and installed by Visual Marketing of Chicago.

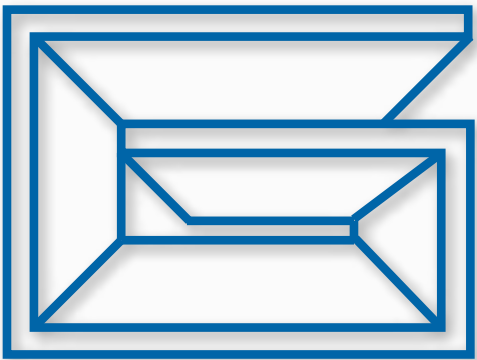
"The idea in these spaces was: let's exhibit what we do, where we came from and where we are going to our employees, visitors, vendors and customers," says James Cartwright, corporate communications manager for Parker.

In the Innovation Area, located within the new wing, a variety of features are designed to create a sense of motion, including a wave-like, tiled ceiling; a column-shaped, 360-degree DynaScan video display; and a series of multimedia display walls arranged in a pinwheel formation.

One small area, with desk-style seating and a SmartBoard, serves as an "Inspiration Lounge," where employ-



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THE BIG IDEA Parker's new Inspiration Lounge serves as a getaway environment where employees and/or guests can meet and brainstorm.

ees and/or guests can have brief brainstorming sessions in an open environment with a floor design that incorporates engineering doodles by Parker employees.

The Inspiration Lounge is separated from the rest of the room by three floor-to-ceiling panels with constantly changing lights that symbolize the thousands of Parker distributor locations worldwide. This specialty lighting, along with all the exhibit area lighting, was designed and installed by Bright Focus Sales of Cleveland.

Also in the space are a pair of translucent, multi-panel art pieces, created by UK-based artist Nick Veasey, which depict X-ray images of a Boeing airplane and an earth mover, representing two significant markets employing Parker technology and systems: aerospace and heavy equipment.

Back in the remodeled portions of the original building, the entrance lobby



now includes the new four-screen multimedia display; custom-molded, art glass panels illustrating the story of the founding Parker family; wall-mounted displays framing three video screens; and five hanging scrims designed with images of a globe to convey Parker's worldly reach.

The former exhibit area has been redesigned with a state-of-the-art Dolby Digital 5.1 surround sound theater, outfitted by Audio Visual Innovations of Cleveland. Visitors can view a three-minute video, produced by Glazen Creative Studios of Cleveland, showcas-

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Photo by Ken Koych

CONFERRING CAPABILITIES Adjacent to the Innovation Area is a new amphitheater-style auditorium with state-of-the-art videoconferencing features.

ing Parker's effect on the lives of people worldwide.

"This brief introduction to the company presents its depth supported by high-definition video and an original soundscape," Skunta says.

The circular theater room is wrapped in a tiled weave of Japanese balsa wood.

Close by, thousands of U.S. patents filed by the company are highlighted on a series of three display columns that appear to project through the room's ceiling. Also in the space is a 30-foot-long, wall-mounted timeline display emphasizing key people, products and events in the company's 90-year history.

"The new spaces were never meant to be linear," Skunta says. "There is no implied sequence for experiencing the exhibits. Instead, it's designed so that visitors – and even employees – can pick up bits of information about Parker here and there at their own leisure."

The last portion of the project – the water feature – has been designed and implemented by Kathy Jankowski of Knight & Stolar landscape architects

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of Cleveland. A 50-foot pool with dramatic, art glass sculptural fins (designed, fabricated and installed by SWON Design of Montreal) is still under construction. Multi-colored lighting, laminar stream fountains and other water features will be debuting this spring, Skunta says.

Recently installed is a bronze statue of Patrick S. Parker, who successfully led the company for 37 years after following in the footsteps of mother Helen and father/company founder Arthur Parker. The sculpture, by Cleveland sculptor David Deming, is situated near a pond just southwest of the facility.

Committed to Cleveland

With the new wing completed and occupied, Kanzleiter says Parker employees are enjoying the new space.

“The new building truly gives us the capability of bringing engineers together to work on great new ideas,” he says.

Skunta says she is pleased with how the project turned out and credits Choice Repps’ team and Visual Marketing for vital help in transmitting her ideas into



Photo by Scott Pease

WINDOWS ON THE WING Large amounts of glass are used on the exterior of the addition, including a unique window wall system imported from German manufacturer Bendheim.

reality with their knowledge of the building, assistance in constructability issues and exceptional execution.

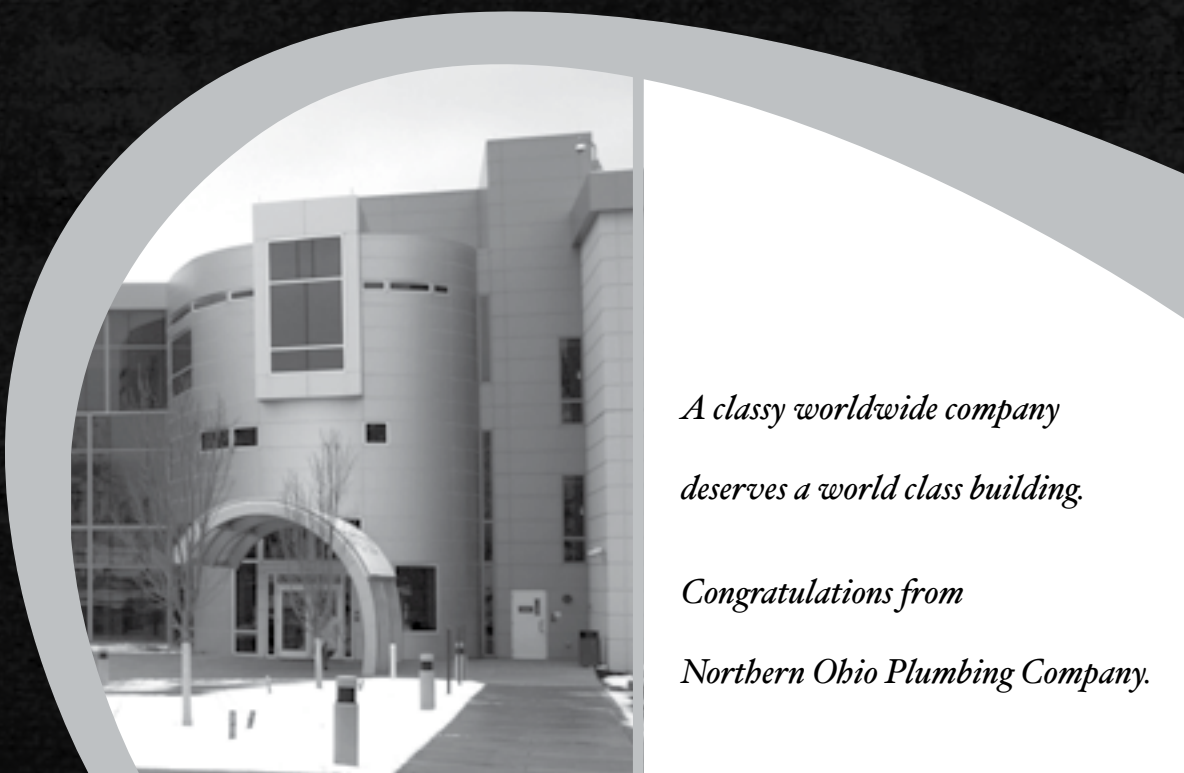
She adds that she is honored to have contributed to better telling the Parker story to the company’s visitors and even its employees.

“While working on this project, it was a joy to discover what a tremendous legacy this company has,” Skunta says. “It was wonderful to learn more about a company that is so successful and one that has shown a vested interest in staying in Northeast Ohio.” **P**

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ALEC J. PACELLA

Don't Look Back

Last month, we reviewed the year that was but really didn't talk too much about what the New Year may bring. However, 2008 promises to be very interesting and possibly a turning point in many ways. Each day brings stronger indications that the country is headed toward at least an economic slowdown and maybe a recession. Wall Street has been on a serious slide for the past several months. The housing market continues to be colder than Lake Erie in February. And on top of all this, it's a presidential election year and the race appears up for grabs.

So how will the real estate markets react to all of this turmoil? Will vacancies increase? Will the sale velocity slow? Sounds like a great introduction for another round of Pacella prognosticating.

Hanging tough

Despite a barrage of disparaging headlines in 2007, the commercial and industrial markets actually continue to improve. Vacancy rates in the office, industrial and multifamily sectors again dropped, with all approaching 10-year lows. The retail segment was the only one to show an increase in vacancy but this can be attributed more to a dearth of new construction than anything else. Leasing activity was brisk and rental rates showed moderate increases. Contrary to popular opinion, I actually believe that the office, industrial and multifamily sec-

tors are going to continue to improve. A primary reason is that none of these segments is overbuilt. Further, the amount of shadow space, or space that is leased but not occupied, is very low. So the combination of prudent owners coupled with low vacancy exposure should fare well in a potentially choppy market.

Best of times, worst of times

The mortgage market promises to be one of the great paradoxes in the real estate industry. The residential market, particularly the subprime area, will continue to be a bloodbath. And this, despite ever-increasing efforts by the Federal Reserve to offer relief. Too many lenders made too many bad loans to too many overextend borrowers and '08 will be the year that the piper gets paid. Conversely, the commercial arena will enjoy a stable, if not brisk year. Aided by the aforementioned solid market fundamentals, this segment will offer a safe haven for lenders. In fact, I expect to see mortgage activity actually increase, as equity-strong investors will take full advantage of low long-term rates and plentiful capital. The lone exception to this will again be the CMBS or conduit market, which will be shut down until the second half of the year, at the earliest.

It's not a bird or a plane, but a crane

Again, call me crazy but expect to see a brisk increase in construction activity



next year. Consider the following – in the office segment, the vacancy rate for Class A space downtown is approaching 10% but over 2 million square feet of Class A leases are expiring over the next 36 months. And in the industrial segment, the vacancy rate among buildings constructed since 2000 is 0.4%. That is not a typo: less than half of 1%. Expect to see new speculative multi-tenant construction popping up across the region this year. I don't anticipate the floodgates to open, but I do think that there will be at least half a dozen office and industrial projects of scale breaking ground. The exception will be the retail segment. Believed by many, including yours truly, to be overbuilt, don't look for any major projects to be kicked off for several years to come.

Street talk

Expect to see savvy investors look not only up and down the local streets for attractive real estate investments but also increasingly to Wall Street. REIT stocks have been no exception to sagging share prices among public companies. As a result, most are off their historical high share prices by anywhere

Heard Here First

ONE OUT OF FOUR While Northpoint Tower has kicked off the New Year with a new owner, several others will not have any immediate changes. One Cleveland Center, Penton Media and 55 Public Square have all been shopped but none have solid commitments from perspective bidders. –AP

from 30% to 50%. However, astute investors will soon realize that, although the share prices have been “guilty by association,” the underlying value of the assets has not decreased much, if at all. And the cash flows from these assets have not and likely will not erode. So investors have the prospect of a strong dividend yield, in most cases over 9%, as well as future capital appreciation, as the aggregate value of the assets on a per share basis are typically well above current share prices.

Down but not out

In 2007, the Cleveland investment market had its strongest year ever, with a sales volume of \$1.7 billion. 2008 will certainly be off this pace, but how far off? Consider the following. The year should get off to a fast start, carried by the sales of Duke Realty's remaining suburban

office assets as well as a high-profile downtown office property. Interest rates will continue to decrease and commercial investors will capitalize on this. The market fundamentals will again improve, with declining vacancy rates and increasing rental rates. And investors will be plentiful, particularly those looking to expand their footprint in this region. But all is not rosy. The economy will have tenuous footing, or so the media tells us. The subprime mortgage crises and its ancillary impact will get worse before it gets better. And companies will grapple with depressed share prices and a cloudy economic and political future. So put this all in a bottle, shake it up and what comes out? I think this year will be another strong one and, for the fourth straight year, top the \$1 billion mark. However, it won't be strong enough to approach last year's record volume, a number that may well stand for years to come. **P**

Alec Pacella is regional manager for First Industrial Trust, Inc. He can be reached by email at apacella@firstindustrial.com or by phone at 216.525.0968.



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DAVID W. WOODBURN

Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of '07 – Boom or Bust

It's no secret that the subprime lending crisis has had a chilling effect on the economy of this country. Whether as a homeowner who finds himself or herself struggling to meet mortgage payments as a result of increasing interest rates, as a real estate developer whose projects have dropped off considerably because of the down-turn in the real estate market, or as an ordinary investor who has watched the stock market plummet in recent weeks, we have all been affected by the subprime lending crisis.

Fortunately, Congress and President Bush have recently worked together to adopt the Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of 2007 (the "Mortgage Relief Act").

This article examines the issues related to the Mortgage Relief Act and the impact it will have on those of us in the real estate world.

As stated previously, the Mortgage Relief Act was signed into law by President Bush on December 20, 2007. The Mortgage Relief Act has far-reaching implications and, most importantly, provides significant relief for those homeowners fortunate enough to re-work their lending situation and discharge some of their indebtedness.

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Few people realize that if their property is foreclosed or a "work-out" occurs whereby some of their existing mortgage debt is discharged, the "cancelled debt" becomes taxable income to the homeowner. Thus, while the homeowner may think he or she has reached some sort of an accord with the bank which is solving his or her financial problems, the reality is that a whole new set of adverse tax consequences has arisen. Historically, a homeowner dealing with discharged indebtedness will quickly find himself or herself with a potentially hefty income tax bill at the end of the year in which the cancellation of indebtedness occurs.

The Mortgage Relief Act is designed to address this unfortunate result. Effective January 1, 2007 and continuing through December 31, 2009, cancelled qualified principal residence indebtedness will be excluded from the homeowner's gross income. Qualified principal residence indebtedness refers to "acquisition indebtedness" which generally arises out of the purchase, construction or improvement of a taxpayer's primary home. Such indebtedness is secured by the residence, as in a typical mortgage situation. However, such indebtedness may also include refinancing (i.e., a home equity loan) to the extent it does not surpass the value of the original acquisition indebtedness. The relief provided by the Mortgage Relief Act excludes from income taxation discharges worth up to \$2 million. One tax source estimates that the relief from this Act may exceed more than \$600 million (see Complete Tax, www.completetax.com/taxguide/news/07-004mortgage.asp).

For an understanding how this works, let's look at a very simplistic example. Assume Homeowner owns a residence subject to a \$300,000 mortgage. If Bank forecloses on Homeowner's residence any time after January 1, 2007 (but before December 31, 2009) and the property is sold during that time period for \$200,000, Homeowner has \$100,000 of discharge of qualified principal residence indebtedness income. In the past, Homeowner would need to report this \$100,000 on his or her personal 1040 income tax return. With the new law, such indebtedness will not be taxable to Homeowner.

It should be noted that the Mortgage Relief Act also applies to situations where property is not specifically fore-

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closed. If the lender offers a mortgage work-out, whereby the duration, interest rate or other terms related to the debt are modified, any resulting change which reduces the indebtedness will be protected under this new Act.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Mortgage Relief Act is that it applies to the individual homeowner's "principal residence." Under the Internal Revenue Code, a principal residence is one where the taxpayer resides most of the year. Although this is based on a facts-and-circumstances type analysis, it certainly precludes vacation homes and other investment type properties. Accordingly, speculators and those who gambled their personal finances in Florida or other jurisdictions, will not be able to use this Act to avoid discharge of indebtedness income.

Although the Mortgage Relief Act has significant benefits with respect to one's personal residence, it is not with-

The Mortgage Relief Act provides significant relief for those homeowners fortunate enough to re-work their lending situation and discharge some of their indebtedness.

out its consequences. Specifically, if a homeowner takes advantage of the Mortgage Relief Act, the basis in the homeowner's residence will be reduced by the amount excluded from income under the law. Thus, when the property is ultimately sold, there will be a greater income tax hit at that time.

While this may simply seem like a tax deferral, the fact remains that an individual homeowner will still be able to avail himself or herself of the Internal Revenue Code § 121 exclusion on the sale of a residence. This section of the Internal Revenue Code protects the first \$250,000 in gain upon the sale of a home by an individual (\$500,000 in gain on the sale by a married couple). For most families, this would cover virtually all of the potential gain.

Finally, the Mortgage Relief Act also has a benefit relating to the exclusion of the sale of a residence gain for surviving spouses. For sales and exchanges of property occurring after December 31, 2007, a surviving spouse may avail himself or herself of the \$500,000 capital gain exclusion if the surviving spouse

hasn't remarried and continues to meet all of the ownership and use tests present under § 121 of the Internal Revenue Code. This change essentially allows the surviving spouse to protect an additional \$250,000 of gain upon the sale of a residence from taxation for a period of two years after the decedent spouse's death.

As you can see, the Mortgage Relief Act will provide significant help to those facing the realistic possibility of losing their home or engaging in a work-out, which will significantly reduce their debt. Although the Mortgage Relief

Act certainly doesn't solve the problems relating to subprime lending itself, the law at least provides a temporary benefit to homeowners who found themselves caught up in this financing fiasco. **P**

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Howard Hanna Real Estate President Appointed to NAR Exec Committee

Helen Hanna Casey, president of Howard Hanna Real Estate Services, the parent company of Cleveland-based Howard Hanna Smythe Cramer, was recently appointed to the Executive Committee of the National Association of Realtors® for 2008.

The committee is comprised of 50 members who are instrumental in conducting the affairs of the association. In addition, it recommends new policies, policy revisions and rescissions to the NAR Board of Directors.

Casey has been a member of the real estate industry for 30 years and has earned the advanced professional designations of Graduate Realtors Institute and Certified Real Estate Brokerage Manager. She is the first woman to be elected to the West Penn Multi-List, and has the honor of being the only woman to serve on its board.

Working Woman Magazine named Casey and her company among the “Top 500 Woman-Owned Businesses” in the United States.



Helen Hanna Casey

mation on key issues for all real estate and construction personnel looking to improve their businesses in these challenging times,” says Robert A. Hager, chair of the Real Estate & Construction Practice Group.

The complimentary seminar will take place from 3-5 p.m., with registration beginning at 2:30 p.m. and a reception immediately following the seminar. The seminar has been approved by the State of Ohio, Division of Real Estate, for two hours of CE credit. For more information concerning Buckingham’s annual Real Estate & Construction Law Seminar or to register for the event, please contact Jennifer Schuster at 330.643.0311 or jschuster@bdblaw.com.

Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs Present Real Estate/Construction Law Seminar

Robert Y. Bowman, deputy mayor of economic development for the City of Akron, will be the keynote speaker at Buckingham, Doolittle & Burroughs’ tenth annual Real Estate & Construction Law Seminar at the Hilton Akron/

Fairlawn on Wednesday, February 27, 2008. This seminar is designed for business professionals involved in the real estate & construction industry.

Bowman’s topic is “How Public/Private Economic Development Partnerships Can Work: The Goodyear Headquarters’ Project.” Other topics and speakers include “New ConsensusDOCS

Construction Contract Documents,” with Donald B. Leach, Jr.; “Title Insurance Companies: What Are They, What Do They Do, and Why You Should Know and Love Them,” with Richard J. Lolli; and “Significant Changes in the 2007 Edition of the AIA Contract Documents,” with Henry I. Reder.

“This program will deliver insights and critical infor-

Schill Grounds Management Expands to Strongsville

Schill Grounds Management recently announced the opening of its newest office in Strongsville. Located at 21500 Drake Rd., the 4,000-square-foot facility will allow



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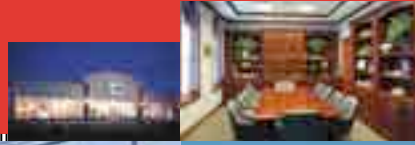


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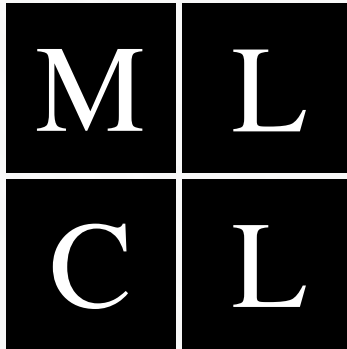
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the company to more efficiently serve its customers from Cleveland to Medina, and support an expansion of the company's operating footprint further south of its headquarters in Sheffield Village.

"Providing personalized service is key to the success of our company," says Jerry Schill, vice president of Schill Grounds Management. "Our clients in Lorain and western Cuyahoga County have appreciated that commitment from us for nearly 15 years. We're excited about our new home and have looked forward to opening this location and bringing that attention to detail to new markets."

Officially opened on January 7, the new facility

caps off a two-year effort to identify the right location and put a team in place to fulfill client expectations of the Schill experience.

"Strongsville is an excellent location and will allow us to service a much larger market with great access to major interstates," says general manager Craig Pavlich. "We're very excited about this new opportunity. As new members of the Strongsville Chamber of Commerce, we look forward to being an active citizen in the community."

The new Strongsville facility will also be integrating the company's green initiatives into its business practices: investing in hybrid and flex-fuel vehicles, adopting more

environmentally friendly packaging options, recycling green waste and establishing an integrated pest management philosophy for a more responsible use of chemicals.

Galion Community Hospital Opens Surgery Center

The Krill Co., Inc. and Galion Community Hospital recently celebrated the opening of Galion Community Hospital's new 30,000-square-foot surgical suite and ambulatory surgery center with a ribbon-cutting ceremony in December. Galion Community Hospital is located in Galion at 269 Portland Way South. The Krill Co., Inc. completed the \$7.8 million construction project

two months in advance of Galion Community Hospital's originally planned completion date.

The new space for Galion Community Hospital features four large state-of-the-art operating suites, two endoscopy suites, fully integrated ambulatory surgery facilities, a ground-floor physical therapy department, skylight atrium, public spaces and a conference center, in addition to 10,000 square feet of unassigned space for future growth.

In addition to providing pre-construction services during the design phases of the Galion Community Hospital addition, The Krill Co., Inc. managed all phases of the physical construction

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Jergens Appoints Product Manager Jeff Martin

Jergens, Inc. recently announced the appointment of Jeff Martin as product manager for Kwik-Lok™ Pins, Inserts and Spring Loaded Devices in the company's Tooling Components Division. Martin previously operated his own business related to the machine tool industry. His experience in sales, marketing and manufacturing engineering will be an asset to Jergens as well as to the company's customers. He



Jeff Martin

is replacing Matthew Schron, who has been appointed general manager of Jergens Industrial Supply (JIS).

Martin holds a B.S. in Industrial Technology (Manufacturing Engineering) from Ohio University.

Jergens, Inc. is composed of the Tooling Components

Division, Jergens Industrial Supply and the ASG Division, all located in Cleveland, and Acme Industrial, in Chicago.

KeyBank Appoints Ettore VP/Regional Manager

KeyBank recently appointed Paul Ettore as vice president and regional manager of Key's Community Development Lending (CDL) for the Great Lakes North Region. He will lead a team of committed relationship managers in Detroit, Youngstown, Canton/Akron and Cleveland and report to Jim Poznik, senior vice president of CDL.

Ettore and his team will focus on financing projects that stimulate new and reha-

bilitated housing, as well as reinvestment and economic growth in economically disadvantaged communities. The CDL group partners with for-profit and non-profit developers, government and community-based organizations on urban redevelopment including housing, for- and non-profit small business lending, and other vital community development projects. Prior to joining Key, Ettore was the urban development director for a local residential developer.

CB Richard Ellis Names Brokerage Services VP

The Cleveland office of CB Richard Ellis, Inc. recently named Jim Vanco to



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CBLH Hires New Business Manager

CBLH Design recently announced that Nicole M. Berardi has joined the firm as business manager. Her primary responsibilities include human relations and financial reporting.

Berardi's experience includes event planning, pro-

gram management, public relations and preparing and analyzing specifications and bid packages. She holds a B.A., Communications degree from Cleveland State University and a Certificate in Human Resources Management from the University of Akron.

Berardi will be replacing Donna Maurer, who has served as the firm's business manager for the past 20 years and will be retiring in May of 2008.

ka Architecture Announces New Principals, Board Member

Cleveland-based firm ka Architecture recently announced the election of its newest member of the

board of directors and five new principals. The newest board of directors member is Craig H. Wasserman, RA, senior project manager. New principals at the firm include Todd A. Brandt, RA, AIA, project architect; Ruta Greiner, environmental graphic design studio leader; Ibrahim Hakki, LEED AP, AIA, project architect; John S. Tepfenhart, director of corporate business development; and Richard A. Wilden, RA, AIA, senior design architect.

Siegel, Siegel, Johnson & Jennings Names New Partner

Nicholas M.J. Ray was recently named partner at Siegel, Siegel, Johnson &

Jennings Co., LPA, a law firm headquartered in Cleveland that specializes in state and local tax minimization and litigation.

As the director of the Columbus office located at 3001 Bethel Rd., Ray focuses his practice on real and personal property, franchise, income, and sales and use tax.

Prior to Siegel, Siegel, Johnson & Jennings, Ray was the head of the state and local practice group for another local law firm in addition to serving as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). He has a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from The Ohio State University and received his law degree from Capital University. **P**

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Center of Attention

School building adapted into condo units as part of new Mentor lifestyle development

By John Elliott | Photos by Ken Krych

The city of Mentor, which has long been one of Northeast Ohio's most progressive communities for homeowners, is getting even better, thanks to the development of Center Street Village, an eight-acre residential complex located in the center of town that includes the renovation of the Center Street School into condominiums, plus the construction of two coach house buildings with two residential units each, 36 townhouses and some commercial buildings.

The lifestyle center, developed by a local development concern headed by Rick Osborne Jr., the scion of one of the city's most visible business families, gives Mentor something that it has never really had: a recognizable downtown.

The recent renovation of the Center Street School, an elementary school built in 1914, marks an important step in the development of the complex, which is owned by Osborne's company, Junior Properties Ltd., who is acting as general contractor and developer.

The school, closed in 2004 due to declining enrollment, offers an anchor to Osborne's new development at the northwest corner of Mentor Ave. (Route

20) and Center Street. He estimates the total development's price tag at around \$20 million.

The school itself has been divided into 17 condominium units. The building has been renovated in a way that preserves the 19th century character of the community but also offers the amenities of modern architecture.

Construction has begun on the coach house units just west of the school. One of the commercial buildings on Center Street, home to Lake National Bank, has also been completed. Merrill Lynch and Pizza Market are already tenants in the building. The property owner, Junior Properties, Ltd., is presently taking reser-

ervations on townhouses, retail space and office space.

New roads connect buildings

The new and renovated buildings are connected by new access roads made of brick pavers that retain the community's historic character. The roads are constructed of permeable 3.5-inch by 14-inch pavers that drive water into the soil beneath it so that it doesn't drain into local streams.

The streets in the development are all part of the Old Mentor neighborhood that was settled in the early and mid-1880s. Homes built from that time still stand in the immediate neighborhood.

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The Old Village Hall on Mentor Ave., which borders the development, is another historic structure that has been renovated to retain its turn-of-the-century character, even though it has been transformed into an office building.

Center Street Village marks another lifestyle center for Northeast Ohio, such as Legacy Village in Lyndhurst and First & Main in Hudson, where residents will be able to work and live without having to drive.

The master plan calls for a group of townhouses that will be built along the extension of Presley Avenue, which leads to the rear of the school.

Project fulfills long-held dream

The school's renovation offers the community a chance to fulfill a long-held dream of creating a real downtown. As a development project, it afforded the design team, headed by Cleveland architectural firm FORUM Architects, the chance to combine historic spaces into state-of-the-art living.

From the city's perspective, the development answers the need to rejuvenate a section of the city that needed it. Ray Kirchner, now a Mentor councilman at large who was mayor and council president when the project was first proposed, says there was a mixture of historic buildings and run-down buildings in the area.

"It was becoming blighted," Kirchner says. "It was just run down. This project really breathed new life into the area."

Kirchner says the community is grateful that Osborne took such interest in the school building since everyone realized it would have been a lot easier and less expensive just to demolish it.

For Osborne, the project has plenty of personal meaning.

"Everyone wanted to save the school," he notes.

While he himself did not attend Center Street School, his grandfather, father and his wife all did. A big decorative school bell supported by a ground-level brick foundation in the front of the building was a gift from his uncle, Mike, in honor of his grandmother. The low brick walls bear commemorative plaques.

The school bell is one of many historical elements. Another plaque on one of the outside walls commemorates the building's place on the National Register



PRESENCE OF THE PAST Above one of the renovated school's entryways is a stone engraved with the words: "Enter to Learn."

of Historic Places. There are also globe lights hanging outside the entrances that match the original décor.

One side of the building bears a stone with the engraved words: "Enter to Learn."

Many of the original brick walls and hardwood floors have been retained. The original stage and dressing rooms in the old auditorium have found new uses as living spaces and the gymnasium has been reconfigured for indoor parking.

Excavations found during construction included old inkwells, chalkboards, desks and a large engine block.

Fascinating, but challenging

"You don't get a chance to do things like this very often," says Mike Stockhaus, superintendent and lead carpenter on the project for Junior Properties, Ltd. While the project was interesting, it was also a

challenge getting the utilities installed in spaces divided by 13-inch thick walls. The crews installed plumbing, electrical, gas and sprinkler lines, and had to make sure they were properly installed before they were covered up. Big beams and concrete pieces had to be moved out.

All the doors and windows in the building were replaced, which involved a fair amount of masonry work. The roof had to be cut in places to allow access to the newly built decks. Equipment used on the project included a gas welder and a concrete cutting saw.

Stockhaus says concrete in the auditorium had to be removed to allow the seats to be taken out. Concrete then had to be re-poured.

"Rick's vision was just amazing," Stockhaus says. "How he ever came up with the plan... You can't give the guy enough credit."

Architects recognizes opportunity

FORUM Architects was quick to recognize the potential that the school offered for a multi-family development. The firm approached Osborne with the design and Osborne immediately envisioned his plan for a lifestyle center. Because the area was zoned single family residential and general business use, it was necessary to get the city on board, which wasn't difficult.

Peter Spittler, a long-time Mentor resident and partner in the FORUM Architects firm, had previously recognized the opportunity that the school property offered, explains Denver Brooker, also a principal of FORUM and the lead designer for the project.

"We had developed a master plan concept for the property prior to the sale



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PURVEYING PLANS Rick Osborne Jr. (at right), of Junior Properties LLC, goes over drawings and future developments with *Properties* writer John Elliott.

of the school and associated property,” he says.

Converting schools to residential use is not uncommon nowadays, Brooker notes.

“There are other examples in this part of the country where schools are converted to residential,” he says. One reason developers choose to convert schools is these buildings contain a lot of character that would be hard to duplicate from scratch.

“It comes with some features that typically developers wouldn’t put into a new building,” he says, such as a 12-foot high ceiling and eight-foot high windows.

Renovations include the addition of steel framed, cantilevered, second floor balconies.

“That makes the units all the more interesting and unique,” Brooker says. “The units lend themselves to being fit out in any number of ways.”

While each living unit has a unique design, all retain a loft-like character, similar to what one might expect in Cleveland’s Warehouse District.

“You still have some kind of relationship with the building’s original use,” Brooker explains.

City supports the project

The city was more than willing to work with Osborne to get the zoning he needed. Scott Marn, who was the councilman for the ward where the property is located, says Osborne’s original plan called for a lifestyle center when he first

saw it in the fall of 2005. Marn, who is now a councilman at large, says he sat down with Osborne and examined possibilities for a new zoning classification.

The city had a historic preservation plan that it had never formalized. They decided to take aspects of the historic preservation plan and aspects of the city’s first planned unit development, Newell Creek, in coming up with a new, mixed use zoning classification.

“My main concern was preservation of the Center Street School,” Marn says.

Now that the school has been renovated, he is very pleased by the results.

“I think it’s great,” he says. “I love the architecture. I love the brick pavers. The sewers are bone dry even after a storm.”

“It gives us the opportunity – at the center of town and at the juncture of two important streets – to create a retail and residential environment unlike anything else we have in this city and one that takes advantage of an old school,” says Ron Traub, Mentor’s economic development director.

Traub says the city planning commission, which approved the plan, was very impressed by the Osborne design team’s technical thoroughness and vision.

“It was a very complete picture,” he says. “I find it a very exciting project. It retains a historic building in the community and it promotes a type of lifestyle we didn’t have in the city of Mentor or in Lake County.”

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A new lifestyle center

Traub characterizes the project as “urbane” lifestyle, whereby residents can have all of their needs met within walking distance and at the same time gives the city a traditional “village center.”

“We had a scattering of old buildings but not a historic downtown,” he says.

The center will bring a new clientele to Mentor as well, Traub notes. The individuals who will live in this area are people who would otherwise live in Cleveland’s Warehouse District, he says. These are affluent young people.

“There is a certain vibrancy that younger individuals bring to a neighborhood,” he said.

“It’s going to take a certain type of individual who wants to be in the school,” agrees Mentor Mayor Robert Shiner. “It’s marketable or they wouldn’t have done it. It opens up to different demographics. We have a little of everything in the city.”

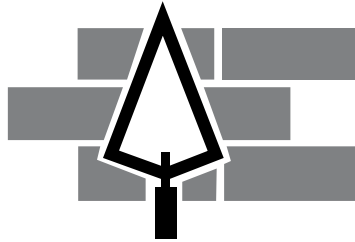
Part of the building was demolished in late 2006. The entire inside was gutted and the basement, which mostly housed a boiler, has been filled in. The exterior brick walls have been pressure-washed with walnut spray.

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The roof of the remaining 32,000-square-foot structure was overlaid with a foundation that has allowed for terraces for the second story units that give magnificent views.

Metal doors replaced the original doors to meet the fire code.

New heating was installed, providing temperature control in individual units. All units will also have individual security modules. New water and sanitary lines and a modern sprinkler system have also been installed.

The renovated gymnasium allows for 14 indoor parking spaces, complemented by first floor parking beneath the adjacent coach house units. Each resident will have two parking spaces.

"You come in here and you still know it's a school, but at the same time, it doesn't necessarily have to be," Osborne says.

He explains that the building offers three different grade options, a standard model and two upgrades. Some units feature skylights.

Living spaces rich in amenities

Living units feature granite kitchen counters, modern appliances, cherry-stained oak wood Kraft Maid cabinets and built-in desks. The cherry-stained oaks can also be found in baseboards, windowsill trims and stairway railings. Tenants will have an easy time carrying these themes with furniture and picture frames, as some of the finished units already demonstrate.

The massive, double-hung, school-room windows allow for ample light and

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views of the newly installed landscaping. Beige-colored walls match the hardwood maple floors. Many dining room areas have views of a new courtyard. One courtyard has a round patio covered with an overlay that resembles a flag stone slate.

The 380-square-foot round patio was installed by Ultimate Overlay, based in Huntsburg. An acrylic surface was poured over a concrete oval, notes Al Hirsh, owner of the company. He says the substance is 100% seamless and completely non-porous; the surface is between 1/16th to 1/8th of an inch thick.

The first floor hallway retains much of the school building's character with quarry tile floors and wood trim on the walls.

Two units subdivide the school stage, with the dining and living areas on the original stage floor. The proscenium arch appears on the second floor of these units, another reminder of the building's former use. The ceiling has



FITTING FEATURES Living units feature granite kitchen counters, modern appliances and cherry-stained oak wood Kraft Maid cabinets

Photo by Skip Tomberlin

been removed to expose the original steel and wood frame.

The units all follow a three-color design, explains Laura Gills, the Mentor-based interior designer who did the project's interior design work: totally tan for the first floor, August moon in the second floor guest bedrooms and the hallway, and silver mist in the master bedroom.

Gills said there was a lot of measuring required by the tradesmen.

"Almost no two units were alike," she says. "You're constantly mixing contemporary elements with restoration elements. The challenge was to know when to switch to which one."

"I like the fact that I've mixed woods and nobody's commented on it," she says. "It was purposeful but it works. It came out with that warm but nostalgic impression that we wanted. There are not many projects of this sort out there."

Gills noted that some of the millwork in the walls features a dark espresso-like finish that matches the kitchen cabinets. It required a two process staining.

"I tried to keep the nostalgia alive from the old building," she says.

The closet floors have special overlays that were installed using a unique process, Gills notes.

"When you're dealing with existing surfaces, you have thickness issues," she says.

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The task is to ensure that the surfaces of the different areas are even.

The second floor of this unit has the master bedroom with walk-in closets and a bathroom complete with a shower, Jacuzzi, dual sinks with under cabinets, and a bathroom storage area. The walk-in closets and bathroom storage areas were installed by CSU Cabinets and Closets of Willoughby.

Company president Michael Ehrhardt says installing the closets was a challenge due to the tight spaces. He is grateful to Osborne for providing him with a mechanized lift to get the closet materials in through a window to the second floor.

“[Osborne’s organization] went above and beyond helping everyone out, making sure everything went smoothly,” Ehrhardt says.

While the closet spaces were small, they were also high, and Ehrhardt attempted to take advantage of this. Some of the closet shelves are eight feet tall.



Photo by Skip Tombeiti

TOUCH OF CLASS Massive, double-hung, school-room windows allow for ample light and views of the newly installed landscaping from within the living units.

“Trying to maximize space is a challenge,” he says.

He used melamine shelving and rattan baskets.

“It was fun,” Gills says. “An older space offers its challenges, especially for the trades.”

The master bedroom has a view of the outdoor patio.

built-in desk in the open living area. Kitchen and living areas have overhanging lamps.

From the roof terrace overlooking the intersection of Mentor Ave. (Route 20) and Center Street, it is possible to see the farmhouse where Osborne’s grandfather Jerome still lives. On the north side, it’s possible to see the house where his father, Rick Sr., grew up.

The two-story Lake National Bank on Center Street also has the contemporary traditional style, featuring traditional brick with stone cornices and multi-

Living units offer unique spaces

Each unit has its own design scheme. In one unit, the stairway in the first floor offers an exciting visual backdrop to the



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HOME STRETCH The Center Street Village project, which also includes groupings of four to six townhouses, should be completed by this fall.

pane, double-hung windows. It offers modern amenities, such as an elevator. The bank was established in 2005 by Jerome Osborne Sr. At 85, he is still active as bank chairman.

“Center Street Village has been a great project to work on,” says Sean Rogers, of Blue Line Painting & Contracting, who provided services at Lake National Bank. “Rick Osborne, Jr. knows how to bring together a team of quality contractors that will get him the results he expects.”

The bank is the first phase of the project’s commercial use portion. The next will be between the bank and the school building.

Townhouses with matching design

There will be groupings of four to six townhouses. Brooker says the townhouses will be similar in style to the coach houses, with multi-pane, double-hung windows and steep pitched roofs. The entire project should be completed by the end of summer.



City officials are excited that the project has created new possibilities for other areas.

“It’s one of the biggest and best things we’ve got going,” says Scott Marn, the councilman. The new zoning classification will make it possible to preserve other historic structures in the city and create a better environment.

Ron Traub, the economic development director, says that he is looking forward to the construction of the community center, to be located west of the townhouses.

Brooker is most proud of the variety of living spaces the project has provided.

“Living in a renovated school is unique in itself,” he says. “That, plus the fact that each unit is unique, provides individuality for every resident.”

Once it is complete, Center Street Village will provide Mentor with some things it has never had: a real downtown and a modern lifestyle center.

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PROP-08

Landscaping Challenges in the Year Ahead

By Bob Oster

The landscape design/build and maintenance industry is currently facing some incredible challenges. As a landscape professional and business owner, I deal with these challenges everyday.

As with all service-related businesses, the landscape industry is caught in a labor crunch. Across America, there is a shortage of young adults who are interested in performing manual labor. Our industry is in a growth stage and our workforce is diminishing. To make matters worse, Congress has failed to extend the H2B guest worker program that many service industries — including landscaping — rely on for a source of legal employees. Legislation expanded the number of visas issued from 2004 through 2007, allowing companies to grow and hire more Americans in higher level supervisory positions. Now, Congress has allowed this expansion to sunset, and many companies will not be able to use this program to obtain a legal workforce. Some of Ohio's leading landscape development and maintenance companies are scrambling to find the balance of their needed employees for the upcoming season. As a result, you may see a short delay in the start of your landscape services this spring.

The Ohio Landscape Association, based in Broadview Heights, along with national lobbyist groups and landscape development firms, are diligently working to get legislation passed to save the H2B guest worker program.

Another concern is the rising costs of fuel. Almost every piece of equipment used to construct and maintain your landscape consumes a great deal of fuel. Soon, you may be encountering fuel surcharges on your service invoices from your landscape vendors, if you have not already experienced these charges in recent years. Usually, they are very fair rates that ease the cost of inflation of the

fuel that it takes to maintain your property. Surcharges allow for fluctuation so that you are not charged artificially high rates in speculation of fuel pricing.

Look for your landscape provider to restructure the ways they deliver your service. One possibility is the elimination of multiple trips to your property. Lawn

As with all service-related businesses, the landscape industry is caught in a labor crunch. Across America, there is a shortage of young adults who are interested in performing manual labor. Our industry is in a growth stage and our workforce is diminishing.

maintenance, weeding, fertilization and pruning may be performed all at once, instead of by separate crews performing these tasks on different days. This has the potential to eliminate a considerable amount of fuel and wasted travel time; however, some companies may find this

is not economical, depending on the talents of their staff members.

Landscape contractors will need to review the efficiencies of their company. Some may decide to streamline and offer a less diverse pallet of services. These companies will focus on their strong points and specialize their offerings to reflect these strengths. You may feel the impact by needing to contract with multiple vendors. The company that maintains your turf may not be the one that will perform your snow removal.

Others may decide to increase the types of services they offer. Snow removal, low voltage lighting installation, holiday lighting service, and building wood structures, such as arbors, gazebos and pergolas, are all great ways to stretch the working season past the traditional nine or 10 months.

Sustainability will play a big role in the future growth of the landscape industry. We are the stewards of the environment. Properly placed trees and shrubs reduce

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heating and cooling bills, while turfgrass is a great source of oxygen.

Consider some of these widely accepted statistics (supplied by The Northern California Turf and Landscape Council) about your landscape:

- Front lawns of just eight average houses have the cooling effect of about 70 tons of air conditioning. The aver-

age home-size central air unit has only a three- to four-ton capacity.

- Turfgrasses trap much of an estimated 12 million tons of dust and dirt released annually into the atmosphere of the United States.
- With up to 90% of the weight of a grass plant in its roots, a good lawn

provides a very efficient erosion prevention device.

- Turfgrasses help purify water that is entering the water table. The root mass and soil microbes act as a filter to capture and break down many types of pollutants. Run-off is often alleviated or minimized by healthy turf.
- Well-maintained landscaping and lawns add 15% to a property's value according to buyers.
- The investment recovery rate is 100% to 200% for a landscape improvement.
- A turf area just 50 feet by 50 feet absorbs carbon dioxide and ozone, while releasing enough oxygen to meet the breathing needs of a family of four.
- The grass and trees along the United States Interstate Highways System release enough oxygen to support 22 million people.

Fuel prices have forced some landscapers' costs up by 35%!

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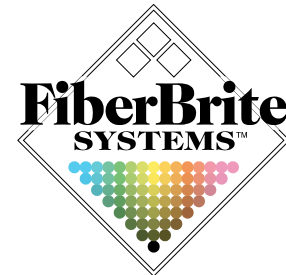
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After all, it is all about first impressions, isn't it? **P**

Bob Oster is 2008 president of the Ohio Landscapers Association (OLA). He is the founder of Outside Design Ltd., a full-service residential and commercial landscape design/build firm based in Lyndhurst. For more information, visit www.thinkoutsidedesign.net or call 440.796.3924.

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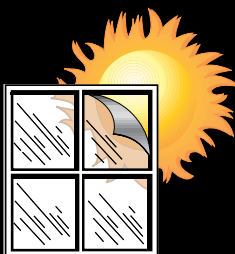
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Project Profile:

The Barkley Pet Hotel & Day Spa Presents Landscaping Challenges

By Carol Palansky

Any landscaper will tell you that no two projects are the same, that each presents its own special set of challenges. Such was the case when Nature's Way Landscaping was selected to provide a landscape plan for The Barkley Pet Hotel & Day Spa in Orange Village (see full feature in *Properties*, May 2007). The facility, designed and built as a full-service resort for family pets such as cats or dogs, understandably presented quite unique challenges.

When Howard Perlmutter, CEO of The Barkley, approached us, his number one concern regarding the landscape plan was pet safety. We had to design with pet safety foremost, comply with Orange Village regulations, deal with soil and water management and road salt exposure, and look beautiful with the lowest maintenance possible.

For us, the main challenge was the need to prevent erosion of a sloping site. Typically specs for slopes are to cover them with a quick groundcover such as crown vetch. Our design had to go above typical and break the traditional use of crown vetch, a plant that is invasive, offers no benefit to wildlife and whose seeding takes three years to germinate needing a cover crop of rye seed. Using erosion blankets of heavy jute, our design proposed a custom wildflower seed mix on the far east of the property. It took three months just to cross-reference wildflower varieties to toxicity of hundreds of breeds of dogs. Additionally, every plant used within the design was

checked for potential problems if a pet ingested any part of plant, flower, seed or bark.

From the roadside heading west, a vast sloping area is visible including the fore bay and detention basin. We specified a mass of schizachyrium "Little Blues," a type of blue stem ornamental native grass, for a section of the slope grading into wildflowers. For use within and surrounding the fore bay and detention basin, we selected plants and wildflowers that can tolerate wet and dry conditions. We basically created large rain gardens. Not only will the planting slow and filter storm water runoff into the nearby creek, but all the native plants selected will provide a much needed resource for wildlife.

We wanted to apply our "out of the box" thinking to solve all the challenges and provide an environmentally responsible landscape. In our early stages of developing the Barkley landscape plan, we found no other examples of storm water management in Ohio. We did find

some commercial roadside projects for storm water management in Michigan that were functioning with great success.

Reducing pollutants and erosion was a must at The Barkley site, not only for regulation compliances, but also for our own personal philosophies. Many of our designs promote conservation of our natural resources, storm water management, and natural low maintenance landscapes. We design and install prairie and wildflower areas to provide a much needed resource for wildlife. Subsequently, we use as many native plants as possible in every project we design and install. We practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to limit the overuse of pesticides. Whenever possible we use organic products, as in our commercial design for The Barkley.

The Orange Village Zoning Board members were very open and interested in this type of plan as we were proposing not to use the typical turf cover. We believe this landscape plan at The

Barkley is the first of its kind using all native plants and large-scale rain gardens for storm water management. Nature's Way Inc. hopes to have this landscape pioneer what is now mandated by soil and water districts. I have been designing natural areas for many years in this way and it is nice to see sustainability gain ground over typical turf in the commercial setting.

Initial installation of a natural or sustainable landscape is higher in cost, but long-term maintenance expenses are significantly reduced; if the plant selection is right from the beginning, the landscape will evolve and care for itself. This type of design is not meant to be maintained, but managed.

For another aspect of the project at The Barkley, Nature's Way Inc. Landscaping designed and installed an interior garden featuring a fountain and colorful display of floral and fauna. Although not a live planting, the plant selection brightens even the cloudiest of days – and, of course, is dog friendly.

In all, we believe we created enduring solutions for the challenges encountered at The Barkley. **P**

Carol Palansky is landscape designer with Nature's Way Inc. Landscaping, a full service design, build and maintenance company based in Chesterland. Palansky can be reached at 440.729.3779.

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Stormwater issues present ongoing challenges to engineers, owner/developers, contractors and governing authorities for a number of important reasons. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Stormwater Program, enacted in 1999, extended permitting requirements to smaller communities (under 100,000) and larger construction sites (one acre or more) with strict criteria for runoff control and post-construction management. Developable land continues to be at a premium, and water storage remains a constant design challenge.

Federal, state and local authorities have increasingly restricted stormwater runoff to pre-development conditions; both detention (dry) ponds and extended storage ponds offer effective solutions. While both types of ponds provide runoff rate control, extended storage ponds allow particulates and debris to settle out, improving water quality as well.

Thus, developers are faced with meeting current stormwater quality standards and regulations while maximizing land use. A number of conventional approaches provide adequate solutions. But three Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) systems offered by Atlanta-based soil reinforcement and ground stabilization manufacturer/provider Tensar International provide innovative, cost-effective solutions to increase storage volume while minimizing the impact on usable land. Each of these systems can be used to steepen the interior sides of a pond or the external sides of a berm.



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The Sierra® Slope Retention System is a complete and fully integrated MSE system. Working together, these components create a solution whose structural integrity and dependability have been proven in a variety of detention pond applications. The Sierra System is estimated to save 30%-60% over concrete retaining walls, blends with the surrounding environment and offers soil-engineered green facing options.

Locally, Tensar's MSE systems are available through PS Construction Fabrics, which has offices in Berea and Wadsworth. According to PS Construction Fabrics Sales Technician Rob Theibert, the company has installed these systems in different applications across the region. **P**

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H2B Guest Worker Program Faces Challenges in 2008

By Steve Rak

The landscape industry in the state of Ohio and across the country is facing an unprecedented labor crisis this year. Without going into too many of the specifics I will explain this situation and what it potentially means to both the landscape industry and to you as a commercial property owner or manager.

A good number of both landscape maintenance and design build companies use a guest worker program to fulfill their seasonal labor needs. This program is in big trouble this year and there are quite a few companies that have been shut out of it all together. What this means is that without our guest workers, our industry is facing what could quite possibly be our most devastating landscape season ever. About half of the landscape companies in Ohio have gotten their visas approved for 2008; they are the lucky ones. The rest have few options.

A good number of both landscape maintenance and design build companies use a guest worker program to fulfill their seasonal labor needs. Without our guest workers, our industry is facing what could quite possibly be our most devastating landscape season ever.


Some say they will have to downsize and others may have to close their doors altogether. So what is this program and

such as landscapers, restaurants, amusement parks and fishermen use guest workers to fill seasonal jobs within their companies. The jobs are generally six to eight months out of the year, and a lot of them are physically hard work and thus undesirable to most people here. The companies have to advertise in the help wanted sections of local newspapers

why is it in trouble? Let me explain.

The program I am referring to is called H2B. It's a guest worker program regulated by the federal government. How it works is simple. Seasonal employers

first, then hire any local people before they can use the program. Companies also have to prove that the jobs are seasonal and not full-time, year-round positions. There is a lot of paperwork



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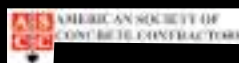
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involved and the program is not cheap, but it is legal.

So what is the trouble then? There are only 66,000 workers allowed to come here and fill these positions for the whole United States through the H2B program. Our need is much higher than that and until this year we have been able to get Congress to pass a bill (H.R. 1843 & S. 988) that has given us access to additional workers. The logistics of the bill are complicated and I won't go into that here. I will say that the bill has had overwhelming bi-partisan support in Washington D.C. the past several years and passed without incident. Last year it expired, was up for renewal and never made it to the floor. Despite repeated efforts to convince Congress of our need for these reliable, legal and hard working people we were let down. Repeated trips to Washington by The Ohio Landscape Association and over

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30 Ohio landscape companies yielded us many promises but no results.

The bottom line is this: the companies that use the H2B program are trying to follow the law and not hire illegal immigrants. Most of the workers we hire through this program are from Mexico. They pay taxes just like any other worker; they contribute to our economy and bring more full time jobs to our companies. Our managers, office staff and field supervisors are mainly local people whose jobs are in jeopardy if this program does not get fixed.

Let's talk about what this means to you. I work in an industry that prides itself on hard work and customer satisfaction. My friends and colleagues in this busi-

[The workers] pay taxes just like any other worker; they contribute to our economy and bring more full time jobs to our companies.

ness will do anything to keep you, their customers, happy. I surely don't want to let anybody down in my business either. But the reality is that there will be some issues if we don't get our H2B program fixed. There will be possible delays in service, or landscape projects will take more time to complete. It may be harder to find a qualified landscape company to take on your project or maintain your property. Prices may increase due to a smaller pool of landscape companies to choose from.

As the immediate past president of The Ohio Landscape Association, I can assure you that we are working very hard to get our bill passed so we can get on with our businesses. We just want to be able to fulfill our obligations to our customers and create a beautiful environment for them to live, work or play in. **P**

Steve Rak II is immediate past president of the Ohio Landscapers Association (OLA) and president of Southwest Landscape Management, a commercial/residential landscape maintenance company based in Columbia Station. He can be reached at 440.748.6000.



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Industry Profile: Sabrena Schweyer

Salsbury-Schweyer co-founder combines varied passions in creating unique designs

Deep passion for the complexities of landscapes is what has propelled Sabrena Schweyer to success. Today, Schweyer and her husband, Samuel Salsbury, run Akron-based Salsbury-Schweyer, Inc. Her unique vision of landscape design combines her history and science background with her connection to the earth. This vision allows her to create more than simply landscapes. As Schweyer says, she creates “outdoor experiences.”

Schweyer says she first realized her passion for the environment while growing up on a farm in Northeast Ohio. Years later, while pursuing a dairy science degree at The Ohio State University, Schweyer was persuaded by friends, who noticed her passion, to take a few wood identification and gardening classes. Also studying history at the time, she began to see how the two disciplines could complement each other.

“Gardens are just one of the many art forms that reflect what’s going on politically and culturally,” Schweyer says. “They reflect who we were and who we are today.”

Eventually, Schweyer earned both the dairy science degree and a degree in history from Kent State University. Her interest in the spiritual, emotional and scientific aspects of nature led her to an internship with the National Trust in England, where she made a point



Sabrena Schweyer

to visit as many museums and gardens as her one-year stay would allow. It’s clear, hearing her speak enthusiastically, that the experience meant a lot to her professional development – so much so that she still visits gardens as part of her ongoing research. As a result, her designs are infused with ideas borrowed from history and other cultures.

Early on, her unexpected design principles helped her stand out from the field.

“Everyone was using hostas and irises,” she recalls. “But I was interested in perennials.”

She was introduced to perennials while working at a groundbreaking specialty garden center; perennials then became part of her signature. And in 1989, Schweyer began her own company, Gardens by Sabrena.

Schweyer says she initially experienced bias against her gender; often she and her work were brushed off by men in the industry or by potential male clients.

“These obstacles spurred me to find my niche and take the steps necessary to become an exceptional designer,” she says. “It forced me to recognize that I needed to find ways to be taken seriously.”

So she got busy. She pursued projects that showcased her talent for perennials and natural and European-style gardens. Teaching continuing education classes taught her more about gardening. Mentors, such as Wolfgang Oehme and, later, her husband, helped her grow professionally.

Over time, she also earned merit and beautification awards from the Ohio Nursery & Landscape Association, Ohio Landscapers Association, and the Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD), among others. She was certified by the APLD. The certification process can take more than 100 hours and required her to submit drawings of projects and to explain to a jury, in writing, the content and intent of her designs. No easy feat.

When she met her husband, Samuel Salsbury, and eventually formed their current business in 1996, it was an aesthetic fit.

“We both work to create something personalized to the needs and tastes of homeowners with the goal of fostering connections to nature,” Schweyer says.

Salsbury-Schweyer employs one in-house crew and also uses specialized subcontractors under close supervision. In addition to design, Schweyer is



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involved with the installation, surveying the layout of the plants.

"She's a great all-around designer," says Salsbury, who recently became president of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers (APLD), an international organizational organization for professional landscapers. "She has a wonderful feel for the sites and the people, and she can create magic. I have yet to meet anyone who can surpass her ability to paint with plants."

Originally, Salsbury-Schweyer was known for original European-style gardens and water features. Today, its reputation includes landscapes that reflect homeowners' individual sensibilities. For example, the company recently revamped a small backyard to include a pond with stepping stones, a woods area with a hammock, a floating deck, and Pawpaw trees, among others.

Salsbury-Schweyer is also known for earth-friendly, sustainable gardens that often use native plants. In fact, sustainability is something that Schweyer and her husband have made a point to practice and teach. Schweyer insists that "a landscape can be beautiful, highly designed, personal, and sustainable." **P**

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 (614) 461-4664 FAX (614) 280-8881

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER: Thorson Baker &
 Associates
 3030 W. Streetsboro Road
 Richfield, OH 44286
 www.thorsonbaker.com
 tba@thorsonbaker.com
 (330) 659-6688 FAX (330) 659-6675

PN-50302026

DETAILS: 25 acres; 58,000 SF; 3 stories; possible
 urgent care facility and medical offices;
 details to be determined; three stories;
 sitework; concrete; glass and glazing;
 metals; doors and hardware; drywall;
 insulation; mechanical; electrical; paint-
 ing; plumbing; floor coverings; masonry;
 structural steel; landscaping; paving.

PN-50625072

SOFTBALL WORLD

North Ridgeville, OH (Lorain Co.) Cook Road

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$4,000,000

CONTRACTING METHOD: G.C. Bids (By Invitation
 Only)

UPDATE: Bidding is expected in March 2008.

OWNER: Softball World
 5500 W. 130th Street
 Cleveland, OH 44147
 (216) 362-8200 FAX (216) 362-1059

DETAILS: SF to be determined; to include bar, full
 concession stand, decks, 10 softball fields;
 three volleyball courts; sitework; fencing;
 electrical; lighting; wood and plastics;
 toilet and bathroom accessories; HVAC;
 floor coverings; painting; plumbing; dry-

wall; insulation; doors and hardware; glass
 and glazing; fire protection; masonry; fin-
 ishes.

PN-T0118036

TRIPPOINT MEDICAL CENTER

Concord Township, OH (Lake Co.) Auburn Rd

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$150,000,000

CONTRACTING METHOD: G.C. Bids (By Invitation
 Only)

STATUS: Project has been approved with conditions
 by city; bid schedule to be announced.

OWNER: Lake Hospitals Systems
 10 E. Washington Street
 Painesville, OH 44077
 (440) 354-2400

ARCHITECT: Karlsberger Architecture, Inc.
 99 East Main Street
 Columbus, OH 43215
 www.karlsberger.com
 (614) 461-9500 FAX (614) 461-6324

ENGINEER: CT Consultants - Columbus
 2700 E. Dublin-Granville Road
 Suite 500
 Columbus, OH 43231
 www.ctconsultants.com



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330-239-1995

fax 330-239-0265

4843 Ridge Road

Wadsworth, Ohio 44281

DETAILS: (614) 891-6000 FAX (614) 891-6003
 45 acres; 300,000 SF with 119 private beds; 28 bed emergency department; sitework; thermal and moisture protection; concrete; foundation; masonry; windows and doors; wood and plastics; metals; finishes; specialties; HVAC; electrical; mechanical; flooring; carpentry; specific details to be determined.

PN-R0519089

BUILDING RENOVATIONS

Health/Physical Education/Recreation

Lorain, OH (Lorain Co.)

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$4,500,000

CONTRACTING METHOD: Public Bids

UPDATE: Bidding possible February 2008.

OWNER: Lorain County Community College
 1005 North Abbe Road
 Elyria, OH 44035
 www.lorainccc.edu
 (440) 365-5222

ARCHITECT: Clark & Post Architects, Inc.
 6125 South Broadway
 Lorain, OH 44053
 www.clarkandpost.com
 (440) 233-8487 FAX (440) 233-8658

ARCHITECT: WTW Architects - Pittsburgh
 Timber Court, Suite 301
 Pittsburgh, PA 15212
 (412) 321-0551 FAX (412) 321-2431

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4665 Beidler Rd., Willoughby 44094

216.229.3900

1862 E. 123rd St., Cleveland 44106

DETAILS: Addition and renovation for aerobic exercise, weight lifting, circuit training and general classroom use; office renovation and technology upgrades; SF to be determined; painting; various flooring; framing; plumbing; electrical; HVAC.

PN-S0531038

CABELA'S STORE

Brunswick, OH (Medina Co.) South Industrial Parkway

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$50,000,000

CONTRACTING METHOD: G.C. Bids (By Invitation Only)

UPDATE: Announcing developer; planning is preliminary.

OWNER: Cabela's Sporting Goods
 1 Cabela Dr.
 Sidney, NE 69160
www.cabelas.com
 (308) 254-5505

DEVELOPER: Richard E. Jacobs Group
 25425 Center Ridge Rd.
 Westlake, OH 44145
www.rejacobsgroup.com
 (440) 871-4800 FAX (440) 892-2308

DETAILS: Approx. 125,000 SF; 3.5 acres; sitework; concrete; masonry; metal roof panels; stone veneer; structural steel; misc. metal; various wood and plastics; thermal and moisture protection; finishes; plumbing; HVAC; electrical; asphalt paving; lighting; signage; landscaping.

PN-T0115051

LOWE'S HOME IMPROVEMENT STORE

Brunswick, OH (Medina Co.)

CONTRACTING METHOD: G.C. Bids (By Invitation Only)

STATUS: Planning is preliminary; bid schedule to be determined.

OWNER: Lowe's Home Centers Inc.
 P.O. Box 1111
 North Wilksboro, NC 28656
 (336) 658-4000 FAX (336) 658-3257

DETAILS: SF to be determined; single story; steel frame; masonry; CMU; landscaping; slab-on-grade concrete; cabinetry; electrical; mechanical; HVAC; single-ply standing seam roof; storefront; plumbing; flooring; painting.

PN-S1211091

WATERWAY GAS STATION

Bainbridge Township, OH (Gauga Co.) Giles Rd

CONTRACTING METHOD: Owner Subcontracts

UPDATE: Owner has received rezoning; bidding possible spring 2008.

OWNER: Waterway Gas & Wash Company
 727 Goddard Ave
 Chesterfield, MO 63005
 (636) 537-1111 FAX (636) 537-1115

ARCHITECT: SP Architects
 9904 Clayton Rd
 St. Louis, MO 63124

sparchitects@sp-stl.com

(314) 872-9700 FAX (314) 872-7726

DETAILS: 6,946 SF; sitework; thermal and moisture protection; concrete; foundation; masonry; metals; wood and plastics; windows and doors; finishes; specialties; HVAC; electrical; plumbing; toilet and bath accessories; additional details to be announced.

ceiling; rooftop HVAC unit; lighting; tile floor; painting; dock door; asphalt paving; signage.

Westlake, OH (Cuyahoga Co.) 29103 Center Ridge Road

CONTRACTING METHOD: G.C. Bids (By Invitation Only) or Negotiated G.C.

STATUS: Planning is preliminary; project is in design phase; bid schedule to be announced.

OWNER: ENA Enterprises

PN-T0111049

BUILDING ADDITION
Spa West

PN-S1102048

ADVANCE AUTO PARTS STORE

North Ridgeville, OH (Lorain Co.)

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$1,000,000

CONTRACTING METHOD: Developer Subcontracts

UPDATE: Construction possible August 2008.

OWNER: Advance Auto Parts
P.O. Box 2710
Roanoke, VA 24012
(540) 362-4911

DEVELOPER: WXZ Development
22720 Fairview Center Drive
Suite 150
Fairview Park, OH 44126
(440) 801-1690 FAX (440) 801-1689

DETAILS: Approx. 7,000 SF, one story; sitework; site utilities; concrete slab-on-grade; split faced CMU; EPDM; glass and glazing; thermal moisture protection; gypsum board; aluminum storefront; tempered glazing; steel doors and frames; plumbing; wall mounted electric cooler; electrical; emergency exit lights; sprinklers; acoustical



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29209 Center Ridge Road
Westlake, OH 44145
(440) 899-7729

ARCHITECT: Eli Mahler Associates
3947 West Ash Lane
Cleveland, OH 44122-4778
(216) 831-3947 FAX (216) 831-3947

DETAILS: 6,940 SF; concrete; masonry; mechanical; electrical; HVAC; lighting; flooring; roofing.

PN-R0517009

WATERFRONT CONDOMINIUMS

Cliffs on Rocky River

Lakewood, OH (Cuyahoga Co.) Sloane Avenue
ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$20,000,000

CONTRACTING METHOD: G.C. Bids (By Invitation Only)

UPDATE: Project is in conceptual design phase; project is preliminary.

DEVELOPER: Foran Group
19537 Lake Road
Rocky River, OH 44116
(440) 331-2700

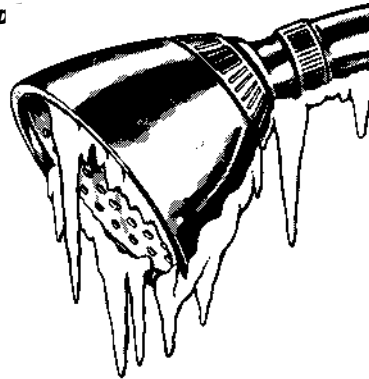
DEVELOPER: Montlack Realty Company
13211 Larchmere Boulevard
Cleveland, OH 44120
(216) 421-8400

ARCHITECT: City Architecture Inc.
3634 Euclid Avenue, Suite 100
Cleveland, OH 44115
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DETAILS: 110,000 SF; 46-unit riverfront condominium featuring a steep design from city street level to the Rocky River riverbank; it will be carved into 90' of bedrock rising from the former Krumreig Marina to Sloane Avenue; sitework; site utilities; concrete; masonry; structural steel; wood and plastics; roofing; insulation; caulking; drywall; painting; plumbing; HVAC; electrical; lighting.

PN-T0109053

SMT LEARNING CENTER

Akron, OH (Summit Co.)

CONTRACTING METHOD: Public Bids

STATUS: Planning is preliminary; bid schedule to be determined.

OWNER: Akron Board of Education
70 North Broadway Avenue
Akron, OH 44308
www.akronschools.com
(330) 761-1661 FAX (330) 761-3226

ARCHITECT: GPD Associates - Akron
520 S. Main Street #2531
Akron, OH 44311
www.gpdco.com
(330) 572-2100 FAX (330) 572-2101

C.M.: Ruhlin/Kenmore/Panzica/Stephens - Akron
400 W. Market Street, Suite 1
Akron, OH 44303
www.rkps-aps.com

(330) 376-4909 FAX (330) 376-8271
DETAILS: SF to be determined; concrete; masonry; mechanical; electrical; plumbing; HVAC; doors & windows; flooring; lighting; roofing; landscaping.

PN-T0107032

AFFORDABLE SENIOR HOUSING

Middlefield Township, OH (Geauga Co.)

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$6,000,000

CONTRACTING METHOD: G.C. Bids (By Invitation Only) or Negotiated G.C.

STATUS: Owner can apply for state housing tax credits; annexation of property could take up to nine months; construction could begin in 2009.

OWNER: Catholic Charities of Cleveland
7911 Detroit Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44102
(216) 334-2900

DETAILS: 40-unit independent-living complex; 30 two-bedroom units, 10 one-bedroom units and a community room; sitework; concrete; rough carpentry; shingle roof; plumbing; electrical; HVAC; finishes; fire protection.

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