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KEN KRYCH

Inside Look

elcome to our July issue! This month's cover story is on a project that's as unique as I have ever seen: a district-wide construction/renovation program for Medina County's library system. Amazingly, each of the six libraries is completely different from the others, although they were all designed by one firm, David Milling & Associates, of Ann Arbor, Michigan and built by The Ruhlin Company.

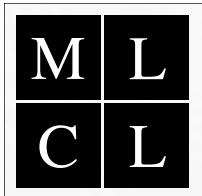
Another main feature is the new headquarters for Gateway Hospitality Group, which for many years has developed and built Hilton hotels and custom restaurants across the country. Gateway Hospitality Group had outgrown its previous location and just moved into its new facility near the firm's first Hilton project in Twinsburg. Interior Design

This month our special section is focused on interior design, with a variety of stories that we trust will enlighten and entertain you. We thank IIDA president Amy Todd and ASID president JoAnn Brown for their cooperation and input.

We would also like to thank the host of other contributors to this section for their time and effort.

Never too early

Thank goodness we are in the middle of summer and yet it is never too early to prepare for what is coming. We thought it a good idea to do a section next month on "Winterization," focused on setting up your building(s) and home(s) for the cold weather ahead of time, especially considering the cost of energy this year.



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Also next month, we are proud to bring you another perspective of the completion of newly renovated galleries at the Cleveland Museum of Art, finished by a joint venture of Panzica and Gilbane Construction. This Cleveland landmark was closed for almost three years and we are looking forward to providing you with a different view through the eyes of the architects and builders.

In addition we are putting together a comprehensive feature on Akron General Hospital's new wellness center in Stow.

Please feel free to contact us with potential features, profiles on projects, people and products at 216.251.0035 and remember you can check archived issues along with the latest issue in full at www.propertiesmag.com.

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Positively,

Kenneth C. Krych Owner/Publisher

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PROPERTIES PEOPLE

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- 1 (From left) NAIOP members and friends Steve Pumper, Bob Bakos, Dave Robar, Jim Streff, Matt Ambrose, and Tom Yanks
- 2 Russell Lamb, of Allegro Realty Advisors, Anthony J. Constantine, of Cohen & Company, and Craig Miller, of Cost Segregation.

NAIOP Charities Golf Classic

The 15th Annual NAIOP Charities Golf Classics was held at Weymouth and Fox Meadow Country Club in Medina recently. More than 200 members and friends participated in a charity auction and raffle. This year's golf ball drop from a helicopter netted five balls that went into the hole and the cash prize of \$1,000 was split between ticket holders. Charities included American Cancer Society, Our Lady of the Wayside, and others.



Cleveland Engineering Society Annual Meeting

The 128th Annual Meeting of the Cleveland Engineering Society was held recently at Massimo da Milano in Cleveland. At the event, the organization celebrated its accomplishments over the past year, honored outgoing board members, welcomed new ones and recognized 2008 CES Leadership Award recipient Dr. Omer W. Blodgett for his 63 years of distinguished service with Lincoln Electric. The evening culminated with a presentation by Cuyahoga County Engineer Robert Klaiber, Jr. on the history of Veterans Memorial Bridge and a tour of the structure.

- (From left) CES Outgoing Board President John Petkovsek, of Lincoln Electric, with Leadership Award Recipient Dr. Omer W. Blodgett, also of Lincoln Electric
- 2 Cuyahoga County Engineer Robert Klaiber, Jr.
- 3 Michelle Duke, of Fairview Hospital, husband Jeff Duke, of Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, and daughter Eliza Duke
- 4 **Dr. Omer W. Blodgett**, of Lincoln Electric, and wife **Dorothy**
- 5 (From left) Pat Nortz, of NTH Consultants; Joe Rustic, of CTL Engineering; Dave Mast, of NTH Consulting; and Matthew Danis, of Shook Construction

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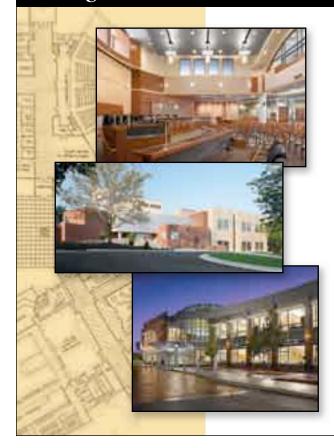
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May Construction Holds Steady

At a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$557.8 billion, new construction starts in May were essentially unchanged from April, according to McGraw-Hill Construction, a division of The McGraw-Hill Companies. Nonresidential building in May registered a particularly strong performance, led by the start of several large manufacturing plants. At the same time, residential building continued to show a loss of momentum, and the nonbuilding construction sector (public works and electric utilities) retreated after April's elevated activity. During the first five months of 2008, total construction on an unadjusted basis was reported at \$228.3 billion, down 14% from the same period a year ago. If residential building is excluded from the year-to-date comparison, new construction starts in the first five months of 2008 increased 7%.

The May statistics produced a reading of 118 for the Dodge Index (2000=100), the same as April's revised level, although 11% below the full year average for 2007 at 133.

"The construction industry continues to reflect the extended decline for homebuilding, but on occasion other sectors this year have shown heightened activity," says Robert A. Murray, vice president of economic affairs for McGraw-Hill Construction. "In April, the construction start statistics were lifted by large public works and electric utility projects, and in May the boost has come from manufacturing plants plus gains for educational buildings, healthcare facilities, and hotels. The weaker economy is still expected to have some dampening impact on nonresidential building as 2008 proceeds, and the public works sector may soon reflect tighter federal

and state budgets, but so far in 2008 this restraint has only begun to emerge."

Nonresidential building

Nonresidential building in May advanced 26% to \$264.7 billion (annual rate). The manufacturing building category soared 531%, due largely to the start of a massive \$3.8 billion oil refinery expansion in Indiana. If this project is excluded, the manufacturing building category would be up 55% in May while the nonresidential total would be up 4%. Aside from the large oil refinery project, the manufacturing building category featured the start of other major projects in May, including a \$350 million cement plant in Arkansas and a \$155 million upgrade to a semiconductor plant in Massachusetts.

"The high cost of energy has turned attention towards the need for greater

refinery capacity in the U.S., and over the past year there's been a pickup in refinery construction projects," Murray says. "Also, in a broader sense the weak U.S. dollar is encouraging manufacturers to go ahead with new plants and plant expansions within the U.S."

On the institutional side of the nonresidential market, the educational building category increased 14% in May, aided by a \$240 million medical research center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a \$95 million high school in Monroe, New Jersey. Healthcare facilities in May grew 8%, topping the strong volume that was reported in April. A number of large hospital projects reached groundbreaking in May, located in Chicago, Illinois (\$500 million), Beachwood, Ohio (\$235 million), Memphis, Tennessee (\$195 million), Wheat Ridge, Colorado (\$175 million), and Cleveland, Ohio (\$145

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million). Church construction in May advanced 21%, although its level of construction remains lackluster compared to mid-decade, and modest growth was reported for dormitories (up 5%), and public buildings (up 3%). The amusement category in May retreated 25% from April, which was boosted by a \$400 million convention center expansion in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. May did include the start of one large convention center project - the \$275 million expansion to the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. Transportation terminal work, sliding 17%, also retreated.

The commercial categories in May had a mixed performance. Hotel construction bounced back from a weak April, climbing 26%. Large hotel projects that reached groundbreaking included two hotel/casino additions, located in Las Vegas, Nevada (\$106 million) and Airway Heights, Washington (\$77 million). Store construction in May increased 8%, marking a brief departure from its recent downward trend, as a \$100 million shopping center renovation was started in Santa Monica, California. Modest gains in May were reported for garages (up 3%) and warehouses (up 2%). However, the office building category dropped 21% in May, despite the start of three large office projects in Washington, D.C. valued at \$82 million, \$73 million, and \$51 million, respectively.

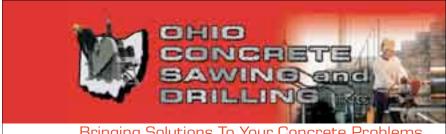
Residential building

Residential building, at \$174.4 billion (annual rate), fell 5% in May. Single family housing continues to recede, slipping 2% in May, and since early 2006 the extended single family correction has shown weaker activity being reported in all but three months. By region, single family housing in May revealed this behavior - declines in the West (down 6%), the South Central (down 4%), the Northeast (down 2%), and the South Atlantic (down 1%); while the Midwest ran counter with a 4% gain. Multifamily housing in May descended 13%, resuming its retreat after a brief upturn in April. There were several large multifamily projects that reached groundbreaking in May, located in Atlanta, Georgia (\$110 million), Austin, Texas (\$98 million), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (\$78 million), San Francisco, California (\$78 million), and Portland, Oregon (\$77









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million). However, the number of large multifamily project reaching the construction start stage is down considerably from last year.

The 14% drop for total construction in the January-May period of 2008, compared to last year, reflected this pattern by sector – residential building, down 40%; nonbuilding construction, down 2%; and nonresidential building, up 13%. The nonresidential building sector is being lifted in 2008 by two massive refinery projects - the \$3.8 billion refinery expansion in Indiana entered as a May start and a \$7 billion refinery expansion in Texas entered as a January start. Excluding these two refinery projects, nonresidential building in the first five months of 2008 would show a modest 1% gain. By region, total construction in the first five months of 2008 revealed double-digit declines in three regions - the South Atlantic, down 27%; the West, down 23%; and the Midwest, down 12%. The South Central, down 1%, was essentially steady year-todate; while the Northeast registered a 7% increase. P



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Green on the Inside

reen" is the new byword for the construction industry. Green building and sustainability are terms we hear frequently in today's marketplace. While many people believe green only applies to new buildings, it's important to remember it also applies to commercial interiors. A high performance, green facility is more efficient, boasts improved working conditions and uses durable products within the facility.

A LEED® Certified Commercial Interior space (or any renovated to similar standards) provides for a better environment. Benefits include improved HVAC systems, better lighting and natural daylighting. These internal comforts can be further enhanced with the addition of individual controls for lighting and HVAC within work areas.

Experience has proven the benefits of building green. Genzyme Corporation's corporate headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts reduced its energy consumption by 42% and water usage by 34% by incorporating green design into the building. Warner Brothers Studios renovated its Building 151 in Burbank, California and it reduced utility consumption by 38%. Average utility consumption and costs for a green designed facility are 10% lower than the conventionally designed building or interior.

Besides operational costs savings, benefits include increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and turnover, and increased moral. Toyota Corporation experienced a 14% drop in absenteeism when the customer-services unit occupied a LEED Gold Certified expansion at its North American headquarters. PNC Financial Services experienced a 50% drop in employee turnover in its Silver Certified building. Studies have shown that employee productivity is up 15% in green constructed facilities. A 1% increase in productivity is worth \$3.00/SF to a company, correlating to \$600 to \$700 per employee per year savings.

Green improvements to commercial interiors can incorporate many aspects of sustainability:

- High efficient water fixtures to reduce water consumption
- Low profile furniture to increase outdoor visibility
- Energy efficient lighting fixtures and
- Maximization of HVAC systems and controls
- Use of low VOC carpets, paints and finishes to improve air quality
- Office recycling procedures to reduce waste and disposal costs

Green improvements can be accomplishedly through research of available products and prudent selections of interior finishes. Today most manufacturers offer green products and materials with low VOC (volatile organic compounds) and reduced levels of urea-formaldehyde are readily available. As the green initiative gains momentum, costs of green products are becoming comparable to market line costs. With minimum increases in green construction costs, the benefits of increased productivity, and lower operating costs, and a company's ROI (return on investment) is increased, thus green improvements are profitable.

When considering the increased ROI and the human benefits of "going green," the decision of sustainable improvements is an easy choice. Green, sustainable construction is the air conditioning of the '50s. It's not a fad. It's here to stay.

BOMA Greater Cleveland is proud to provide this space to our Associate Members so they can inform, educate and share their knowledge with property management professionals. This article was written by Allan Welter, LEED-AP is a Project Manager with D-A-S Construction Co. He obtained his LEED Accreditation in New Construction in 2007 and an active member of D-A-S' Green Building Committee. He can be reached at 216+662.5577 x124 or awelter@ dascon.com. D-A-S Construction Co. has been a BOMA Greater Cleveland member since 2003.

elipsala Melissa Johns

> Communications Manager BOMA Greater Cleveland



A New Chapter

Medina County District Library completes dramatic, system-wide construction project

By Mark Watt | Photos by Bill Webb

ike Deiwert admits he was skeptical. Now general manager of the building division of The Ruhlin Company, a construction services provider based in Sharon Center, Deiwert was preparing to start a library renovation project for a Northeast Ohio community a little over a decade ago.

"At the time I was thinking, 'This is the computer age — in a few years, will anyone even go to the library anymore?" Deiwert says. His thought was that with the rise of the Internet, information was becoming exponentially more accessible from home computers and that, if anything, the need for libraries would be decreasing. But when the project was done, he came to a realization after learning that visits to the library increased dramatically.

"Even now when you can access almost any piece of information you want through the Internet, there is still something about libraries that just can't be replaced," Deiwert says, "and that's a sense of community."

A sense of community is just what can be found within the six libraries comprising the Medina County District Library today. As a result of a five-year, \$42 million construction project made possible by the passage of a bond issue in 2003, three existing libraries have been dramatically renovated and now boast new additions, while three other libraries have been newly built from the ground up. All six were completed under the direction of David Milling Architects, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, and The Ruhlin Company, which acted as construction manager.

Today, county residents are enjoying widely varying environments at Buckeye, Lodi, Medina, Brunswick, Highland and Seville libraries. From the rustic, wood cabin-esque setting of Lodi Library to the modernistic design of Buckeye Library, and from the 12,325-square-foot Highland Library to the 76,000-square-foot Medina Library, each provides a positive environment where patrons of all ages can read, relax, learn and gather together.



CHECKING OUT MATERIALS The new Medina Library expansion incorporates contemporary design elements, such as curved Eco-Resin panels that are suspended from the ceiling in the lobby (above) and the children's area nearby.

"The idea was that each library would represent unique designs for the community in which they were built and to try and reflect local architecture or surrounding landscapes," says David Milling, principal architect with David Milling Architects. "We wanted to end up with six very different libraries for six different communities."

The design and construction team met that objective and more, according to Carol Cowell, who became director for the entire district in January 2008 after serving as manager of Brunswick Library for six years.

"[The results] truly surpassed our expectations," Cowell says. "I can't think of anything that could have been done better. All of the libraries are distinct and beautiful. It's everything we wanted."

Milling, who specializes in library design, underscores the thought, crediting Ruhlin and the many subcontractors with turning ideas into reality.

"We are very satisfied," he says, upon completion of Medina and Highland libraries this year. "I am more pleased with the collection of six buildings for Medina than I am with any other library system that my wife [Interior



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Designer Helen Milling] and I have been involved in."

As for concerns about the demand for libraries in today's world, the numbers speak for themselves, Cowell says.

"There was definitely some concern that, generally speaking, libraries may be turning into things of the past and there were a lot of people worried about that here, but we're happy to say that the opposite has proved true so far," she says, noting that high-speed wireless Internet access, comfortable environments and other amenities have helped to not just bring in new users, but also to keep them in the libraries for longer periods of time. "Usage at all of our libraries has increased and stayed that way. It's not just a bump after they first opened. We're proud to say that, across the district, there has been a 27% increase in circulation of all materials from May 2007 to May 2008."

Buckeye Library

Construction cost: \$3.8 million Start: July 2004 Finish: October 2005

The first of the libraries to begin construction - and the first to open - was Buckeye Library, a new, 27,000-squarefoot facility at the intersection of Wolff and Columbia roads in Medina. Named after Buckeye Local Schools, a cluster of schools next door that serves grades K-12, the new facility sits on a triangular plot of land that was donated by an area family.

Designing the facility presented a unique challenge for David Milling



GREAT DIVIDE A massive cobalt blue, tiled wall separates public and back-of-house operations at the new Buckeye Library.

Architects, as the building serves two distinct functions. First, it is a community library serving York, Liverpool and Richfield townships. But it is also home to some of Medina County District Library's behind-the-scenes services, due to its location near the center of the county. For example, it acts as the base of operations for the Medina Bookmobile and includes a garage to service it and all other vehicles within the district's Outreach Services program.

"From a square-footage point of view, the public portion of the library was going to be half the size of the [17,700square-foot] back-of-house staff space, and that created some challenges," Milling says.

The architectural firm devised a bold. cobalt blue-tiled, 189-foot-long by 24foot-tall wall that would run the length of the building to visually divide the two distinct programs.

"The wall was used as an organizing element to push the public library area toward the corner that faces the intersection," he says. "The hope was to help create balance and draw more attention to the public portion of the building."

Today, the contemporary styled public library space fills a 10,300-square-foot space at the front of the facility. Bathed in natural light that enters through large windows and eight skylights, the space includes a children's area, which carries a subtle bug theme with insectshaped lights dangling above kid-size bookshelves; adult and teen reading areas: glassy bays for train-watching: centrally located checkout and infor-





FARM + **FUTURE** The new Lodi Library is intended "to evoke an image of a barn, but also to stand on its own as a fresh piece of architecture," says Principal Architect David Milling.

mation counters; and a fireplace that serves as a centerpiece feature. Nearby is a community meeting room, which includes a high-end audio/visual system and is used for special events for resident and community groups like 4-H and Boy Scouts of America.

Since it opened to the public in November of 2005, the library has enjoyed great popularity within the community, according to Kym Lucas, manager of Buckeye Library.

"People in the community are very excited that we're here," Lucas says. "We've issued about 900 new cards a month since we've opened. The staff is happy too. Part of that is because this building was built specifically to meet our needs. Instead of trying to make the best use of an existing space, we were able to think about how the library

would operate best and then create a library around those ideas."

Lodi Library

Construction cost: \$3.0 million Start: October 2004 Finish: December 2005

The second of the six projects to be started and completed is the Lodi Library, which is located at 635 Wooster St. in Lodi and is the community's first purpose-built library building. Previously, the Lodi Library had been housed in several locations since it was founded in 1960: a room in a local newspaper's office, an American Legion hall, and most recently in an old house downtown. Receiving a larger, more accommodating and truly dedicated library building was just what the com-

munity needed, according to Betsy Gilder, library manager.

"Our last location actually used to be a funeral home and [at about 2,000 square feet] it was too small for our needs," Gilder says. "We'd bump into each other all the time. That's not the case anymore. The new building itself is beautiful too."

Serving as a striking contrast to the sleek, almost industrial design of Buckeye Library, the new, 14,805-square-foot building provides a contemporary twist on lodge-style timber architecture, combining rustic white oak framing with modern architectural elements, such as a generous use of glass throughout. The heavy timber architecture plays off of the wooded surroundings of the hillside property and is designed to take advantage of spacious country vistas with a three-story wall of windows at the front of the building.

"The town of Lodi has an early 20th century farming community feel to it, and the design of the library plays into that," Milling says. "It is intended to evoke an image of a barn, but also to stand on its own as a fresh piece of architecture."

To provide the traditional materials for the library's post and beam construction, six veteran Amish timber framers from Holmes and Wayne counties crafted the entire structure off-site from 140year-old native white oak trees. Once completed, the wooden skeleton was shipped to the new site and assembled in place using traditional mortise and tenon joints secured by wooden pegs. To

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TIMBER TOP Post-and-beam construction provides the new Lodi Library with a warm, open and rustic environment.

maximize a sense of spaciousness within the library, the 34-foot-high structure does not utilize traditional timber support braces and instead is supported by brick masonry surrounding the timbers.

Although most of the interior was left wide open, the back of the building includes several closed off spaces – a children's activities room, a community room, a teen reading area and office spaces – with typical ceiling heights. Above these spaces is a mezzanine level that houses the library's mechanical system.

A particular focal point in the library is a field stone fireplace, which is flanked by comfortable seating to provide a relaxing reading space.

"Our patrons really gravitate toward that area," Gilder says.

Above the fireplace is a timber, from an old barn that was dismantled and removed from the site before construction started. The construction team also reused some of the old barn stones for a retaining wall outside of the library.

The building's exterior includes several interesting features, Deiwert says. First, the building utilizes a standing seam metal roof that was fabricated onsite. Secondly, there are no gutters. Instead, water falls into gravel around the building and is transported by a French drain system to a retention basin downhill. Lastly are the library's 24-hour pick-up lockers.

"All of the libraries now have 24-hour lockers," Deiwert says. "Someone can reserve a book and come by after-hours to pick it up. They just show up, punch

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BRIGHT IDEA Natural light pours into the renovated and expanded Brunswick Library through glass windows and skylights.

in their library account number, then a locker door opens up and they can pick up the materials."

Brunswick Library

Construction cost: \$4.5 million Start: July 2006 Finish: August 2007

Completed last fall, a substantial renovation and addition provides needed breathing room and considerable aesthetic updates to the Brunswick Library at 3649 Center Rd. in Brunswick. Originally constructed in 1979, the building was functioning well for the surrounding community but was simply running out of space, Milling says. So the idea was to expand upon the existing programming of the building, while adding fresh interior and exterior design features, and pushing the size of



the space from about 20,000 square feet to more than 30,000 square feet.

"We were encouraged to transform it," Milling says. "Even though we kept portions of the existing building, it does have a striking new image with a new entryway, new interior features, a new fireplace and a lot of glass."

A number of green building and design ideas were utilized at the library, including adding clerestory windows, skylights and more glass overall to increase the amount of natural light. Green materials include tiles made from recycled glass bottle content, carpet tiles containing about 50% recycled content, and bamboo flooring, which is a rapidly renewable natural resource. Additionally, exterior and interior roller shades have been added to cut down on glare and heat gain.

"I was amazed at the transformation on the inside of the building," Deiwert says, noting that there was a perceived lifting of interior spaces by raising ceilings heights in some areas and adding windows where possible.

The children's area is a particular favorite for Deiwert, he says. Conveying a "pond life" theme to its whimsical design, the area includes linoleum, rubber sheet form, welded seam flooring composed of pieces cut by laser into shapes of lily pads, pools of water, stones

"It's pretty amazing how different each of the libraries are from each other."

Mike Deiwert The Ruhlin Company

and sea life. Taking the theme further, the checkout counter incorporates large Eco-Resin panels, which is a type of product made by sandwiching a natural product (reeds, grass, flowers, etc.) within a resin material.

Elsewhere, a new Fireplace Reading Room contrasts light-colored, contemporary interior detailing with a wooded view outside through walls of glass, creating a bright and uplifting reading area for studying and pleasure reading. Influenced by Art Deco, the 32-foot stone fireplace includes a headpiece that can be interpreted as an abstract version of the

Medina County District Library's sun-

The library also includes a quiet study room, a tutoring room, a teen area and a community room with an upgraded audio/visual system.

> Librarian Debra Tsoufiou says the community is enjoying the revived

> "It's a phenomenal difference," Tsoufiou says, noting that students from neighboring Brunswick High School are frequent patrons, as are visitors from the community center next door.

Seville Library

Construction cost: \$525,000 Start: April 2007 Finish: August 2007

At roughly 3,000 square feet, Seville Library is the smallest of the counties six libraries, but that didn't prevent the design and construction team from transforming the space, says Library Manager Lynn Wiandt.

"We were the last of the projects to be started and our budget was the smallest, but I never felt we were

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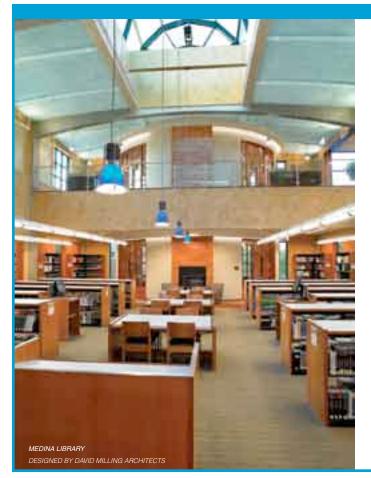
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an afterthought," Wiandt says. "[David Milling Architects and Ruhlin] put as much attention to detail here as all of the other libraries."

Financed and constructed in the early 1960s by volunteers as a result of a community grassroots effort, the Seville library had established itself as an institution and landmark at 45 Center St. in Seville's downtown over the years. When the Medina County Library District construction project kicked off and there was talk of building a new facility for the library, the community was vocal about wanting to keep it in the original building. So stay it did.

Working within constraints of the site – the building is surrounded on all four sides, by a creek, roads on two sides and a local business -Milling Architects sought to reprogram the L-shaped facility. This was accom-

plished by adding a quarter circle-shaped entryway ("I really wanted something that would be a visible difference from the outside," Wiandt says) and removing various interior walls that were not load-bearing, and then adding two glassy bump-outs to "complete the building," as Wiandt explains.

"We basically took the existing brick building down to the shell and rebuilt it from the inside out," she says.

One of the bump-outs is a small garden room in the children's activity area, located at the end of one wing of the library. Providing space for storytelling and quiet reading and play, the stylized, garden-themed area includes cubbies for toys and book storage beneath window seats. Wiandt notes that a small village park is situated just south of the building. ("By opening up our garden room, it brings that green space into the library," she says.)

The other bump-out is a garden window that adds visual interest in a conference room, which is situated at the end of the library's other wing.

As another objective of the project, natural light has been maximized in the space with the addition of a skylight and three new windows.

"It takes someone who really knows what they're doing to take a boring brick box and make it really something special," Wiandt says. "It's so much brighter



BREAKING DOWN DESIGN Adding a receded third story and using a mix of materials and colors were techniques employed to decrease the size and mass of the Medina Library addition, according to Architect David Milling.

in here. And the patron response has been incredible."

Medina Library

Construction cost: \$12.8 million Start: October 2005 Finish: January 2008

One of the last projects to be completed was the Medina Library, which has more than tripled its square footage at 210 S. Broadway St. in downtown Medina. The project included renovation of the original Franklin Sylvester library, a 6,000-square-foot, Western Reservestyle building constructed in 1907, as well as a 12,000-square-foot addition built in the 1970s. It also included a major, new 60,000-square-foot addition that is designed to respect the architecture of the existing buildings, while adding its own stripped down contemporary touch.

The project was the largest of the group. It also presented the most hurdles, Milling says.

"The challenge was to add all of this extra space without overwhelming the scale of the two previous buildings or [those] on the city square nearby," Milling says. One key aspect of the firm's solution was the use of two massive cylinders that serve as an entry link to the major addition to the east. Additionally, the third-story of the three-story building recedes from the building's perimeter and utilizes a lighter stone façade instead of the red brick facing of the first two levels.

"The intention was to break the addition into several pieces to bring the size and mass down," Milling says. "It was of enormous concern by the citizens that it would overwhelm the square, but I think we succeeded. We always hope to create fresh-looking architecture that's ostensibly built in our time, but I think that by keeping it simple we showed respect to the existing buildings."

Inside, Medina Library is a completely new environment for patrons, with dramatic, open spaces carved out of the three-story space and a massive arched skylight stretching from one side of the building to the other.

"We had a clear objective inside the library to have a variety of spaces with different feels to them, to create a range of environments where [visitors] can spend their time," Milling says. These include a fanciful bug-themed children's area, the quiet, cozy Franklin Sylvester Genealogy & Local History Room, a comfortable reading nook by a fireplace, a self-service, coffee shop-style refreshment area and a variety of reading spaces, meeting areas and study rooms.

Deiwert notes that one constant throughout the entire Medina Library system is the use of high-end lighting.

"The types and number of fixtures utilized in these projects are far more varied and plentiful than in other types of buildings," he says. "Many of the lighting fixtures are unique and much more high-end than those found in a typical library."

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While the project allowed for the design of spacious, spread-out areas in the new addition, existing ceiling heights did put some constraints on work in the original portions of the building. Those areas have still been updated significantly, Deiwert says. In the original library building, the second-floor 1907 Room, which serves as one of several community meeting rooms, includes a fully restored tin ceiling and wainscot. Adjacent to the 1907 Room is the Young Adult (YA) area, which is a sharp contrast in its use of modern finishings.

Although original art is a recurring theme throughout all of the libraries, Medina Library boasts a particularly dramatic piece: an eight-foot by 15-foot glass mosaic mural. Commissioned by the library and funded by donations, the colorful mosaic mural was created specifically for the library by internationally acclaimed artist Yulia Hanansen.

"Because it is the main branch, Medina Library was approached as the jewel of our system," Cowell says. "It fulfills that with its soaring three-story openness, the color scheme and lighting – it almost feels like an art museum. It really feels like something special when you walk through."

Highland Library

Construction cost: \$3.0 million Start: December 2006 Finish: January 2008

The last of the Medina County library projects to start, and the last to be completed, is the new Highland Library at



NATURAL CHOICE Situated near cattail-filled wetlands, the new Highland Library provides patrons with an environment that evokes that of a nature center.

4160 Ridge Rd. in Medina. Like Buckeye Library and Brunswick Library, the new Highland Library serves as a neighbor to a local high school: the newly built Highland High School.

"Early on in the project, [former Medina County District Library Director] Mike Harris became a huge proponent of situating the libraries next to schools," Deiwert says. "He always liked the idea of students dropping by the library after school let out. Since the libraries have opened, that is just what has happened at each one."

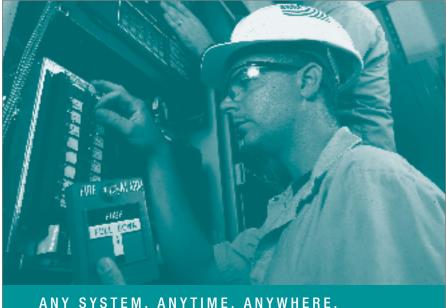
In fact, Highland Library is set on a five-acre plot of land on the corner of property originally purchased by the high school, and which was sold to the library at cost. The library takes its name from the school as well.

A 12,650-square-foot, one-story structure, the new building replaces the Hinckley Library, which resided in a converted, 1,500-square-foot house in Hinckley and is now closed. Diane Dermody, branch manager of the library, says that leaving Hinckley was the hardest aspect of the project from the district's perspective, as many in the community did not want it to leave. The new library now serves three counties, however: Hinckley, Granger and Sharon townships.

"Since we opened, the response has been great," she says. "Our collection has doubled. We offer a lot, even though it's not a huge library, and we've had a lot of remarks from the people who have come here and really enjoy the atmosphere."







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Ohio (Akron, Cleveland, Columbus, Fremont, Marion, and Youngstown); Pennsylvania (Johnstown, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Reading); New Jersey (Atlantic City and Newark); Detroit, Washington, DC, and West Virginia. Situated near cattail-filled wetlands, the architectural design and tranquil setting create an environment that evokes that of a nature center. Milling's design plays off of the surroundings with Eco-Resin panels, wood flooring and many windows.

A stone fireplace in the Hinckley Reading Room adds a rustic flair with a local touch. Its mantel and hearth were made from a truss that was originally part of a Bath Township covered bridge built in 1836.

Like the other libraries, Highland includes an imaginatively designed children's area with an activities room, a teen area and a public meeting space.

"Highland was the smoothest project of all of them," Deiwert says. "There was certainly an advantage in that this was the last of the libraries. By the time we got to Highland, the team of [David Milling Associates, Ruhlin Construction and the Medina County District Library] was pretty efficient. There was good communication and fast responses, which always helps."

Now that the entire Medina County District Library construction project is completed, county residents are enjoying their new library spaces, according to Deiwert.

"It's pretty amazing how different each of the libraries are from each other," he says. "The feedback we have received has been very positive and the communities are truly using their new libraries, which is great. It is always nice to put together buildings that have such a positive effect on the people who use them."

As Deiwert explains, the original vision for the overall project came from two individuals within the leadership of Medina County District Library: Mike Harris, who served as director until retiring last December, and Business Manager Mike Dolansky, who died shortly after the project began in 2003. So helping to see that vision through to completion was an honor as well, Deiwert says.

"[Mike Dolansky] was the one who really imagined and understood how this could be done financially and he was so enthusiastic about the whole process," Deiwert says. "I bet he would be thrilled to see the results."

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Mid-Terms

ard as it may be to believe, 2008 is half over. Time certainly does fly, with seemingly little regard for that old adage about fun. This month, we will take a look at some trends that occurred over the first half of the year and discuss just who was having fun. And who was not.

Who turned down the volume?

An over-riding theme in the investment world was the dramatic decrease in deal volume – \$385 million through the first six months of 2008 as compared to \$800 million for the same period last year. The easy target for blame is the debt markets. It's not that lenders aren't willing to lend, as there are plenty of life companies and banks with good appetites (notice I did not mention the

conduit market, which continues to be shut down). It's also not that interest rates are sky-high, as they are in fact fairly low. The primary difference between the first half of 2007 and the first half of 2008 is the stark change in lender's disposition toward risk. If their proverbial glass was half full last year, it is most certainly half empty this year. Underwriting criteria has become more conservative, growth assumptions more moderate and, here is the kicker, equity requirements much greater. If you are still thinking down-payments of 5% to 10%, think again. Lenders are currently requiring between 25% to 30%. What this has effectively done is sideline an entire segment of buyers, that being private high-leveraged investors. And this just so happens to be the very segment



that fueled a goodly share of investment activity over the past five years.

Rising up

The fundamentals associated with the broader commercial and industrial real estate markets have been surprisingly solid. The average vacancy rates across almost all of the segments are down, with some approaching 10-year lows. Absorption of vacant space has been steady, rents have been stable and, in some instances, even increasing. Construction activity is solid, with the very real prospect of a new Class A office building being built in downtown Cleveland, the first in nearly 20 years. And, although the single-family residential market continues to make national headlines for all the wrong reasons, the multi-family market is enjoying improved occupancy rates, declining vacancies and increasing rents.

Falling down

While investment activity levels across all the sectors are down, the retail segment has slid the hardest. One of the primary reasons is the broader economic









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4408 St. Clair Ave. Cleveland, Ohio 44103 picture. Eroding consumer confidence, higher energy costs, inflationary fears and the general economic uncertainty associated with an election year have all conspired to dampen retail sales and ultimately cause retailers to pull back. The spillover effect on retail investments has been dramatic. Through the first six months of 2007, there were 20 retail properties that changed hands, totaling \$368 million. This year, there have been five totaling \$40 million.

TIC-tock, has the clock struck midnight?

A few years ago, it seemed that everyone wanted to talk about Tenant-In-Common (TIC) investments. And for good reason. They offered a way for small investors to not only own high-quality properties, but also do it via a 1031 tax-deferred exchange. So as the overall investment sales volume increased, the popularity of TICs skyrocketed and they quickly became a force in the investment world, nationally and locally. But after just a few short years, their popularity, at least locally, seems to have waned. Some TICs, such as the owners of One Cleveland Center, have re-sold their local hold-



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ings. Others, such as the owners of the former Ceres building in Strongsville, have taken a "one and done" approach. But after seeing an influx of TIC investments back in 2005 and 2006, there has been no recent local acquisition activity. So why have the brakes been put on? There are actually several reasons. First, the constraints in the debt markets have certainly made an impact. Second. the overall slowing in sales volume has resulted in less investors with "hot" trade money in the pocket from fresh sales. Third, faced with the possibilities of an increase in the capital gains taxing rate, some investors think that the best time to pay Uncle Sam and get out of the game may be right now. And fourth, those aforementioned headlines related to Cleveland's residential foreclosure woes certainly haven't helped to endear us to the TIC market.

Cheaper by the dozen?

The last few years have been characterized by some trademark portfolio sales, including the Duke suburban office portfolio in the eastern suburbs, the Dellagnese suburban office portfolio in Fairlawn and the Geis industrial portfolio throughout the region. I don't think I'm going out on a limb by saying that it's doubtful there will be a flurry of portfolio sales this year. Over the first six months, we have seen a couple portfolios actually pulled from the market after being met with less-than-desired results. Many of the private buyers aren't willing to commit the high level of equity required and many of the public buyers have turned conservative in their overall pricing. So what's the portfolio seller to do? In a word – breakup. Although the process of selling 10 properties to a single buyer is the easiest, finding that single buyer in the current environment is highly challenging. So if sellers are truly interesting in moving properties, they may well be compelled to break up the portfolios into smaller offerings. This reduces the "bite size," increases the pool of potential buyers and ultimately increases the chances of a successful disposition. **P**

Alec Pacella, CCIM is senior vice president at NAI Daus. He can be reached by email at apacella@naidaus.com or by phone at 216.831.3310, ext. 125.

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Economic Slowdown Easing Commercial Real Estate

The most recent Commercial Real Estate Outlook, published by the National Association of Realtors, reports that commercial real estate vacancies are trending up modestly, while investment has dropped sharply in the wake of the credit crunch.

According to NAR, supply-demand fundamentals are broadly favorable in most commercial real estate markets, but vacancy rates are rising modestly and rent gains are slowing. Slow economic growth is lowering demand for commercial space, mostly in the office and industrial sectors. NAR Notes that despite the slowdown, the commercial real estate market is in much better shape compared to conditions during the 2001 recession.

Investment in commercial real estate during the first four months of 2008 was

\$48.2 billion, down 69.5% from \$157.8 billion during the same period in 2007 when the credit markets were functioning normally; those totals do not include transactions valued at less than \$5 million or investments in the hospitality sector.

The following is NAR's forecast in four major commercial sectors.

Office market

With a growth in inventory, office vacancy rates are projected to increase to 13.7% in the fourth quarter of this

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year from 12.5% in the fourth quarter of 2007. As a result, annual rent growth in the office sector is expected to be 3.0% this year, following an 8.0% jump in 2007.

Estimates for the second quarter show vacancies rising sharply in Phoenix and West Palm Beach, Florida, to nearly 20%, double the levels of a year ago. Other central business districts in Florida have shown notable increases. The housing market downturn is having a spillover effect on commercial real estate in some local areas.

Net absorption of office space in 57 markets tracked, which includes the leasing of new space coming on the market as well as space in existing properties, is likely to total 31.3 million square feet this year, about half of the 60.0 million absorbed in 2007.

Office building transaction volume has dropped significantly. In the first four months of 2008, a total of only \$18.5 billion in office buildings traded hands, compared with \$95.0 billion during the same timeframe in 2007. The greatest decline was in suburban markets.

Industrial market

Warehouse demand has fallen because of the economic slowdown, although the demand for light manufacturing space has risen slightly.

Even so, overall vacancy rates in the industrial sector are forecast to rise to 9.9% in the fourth quarter of this year, up from 9.4% in the same period of 2007. Annual rent growth should be 1.2% by the end of the year, down from 3.6% in the fourth quarter of 2007.

Markets in the West and Florida have been most impacted by the economic slowdown. Industrial markets with rising availability include Orlando, Florida; Phoenix; Tampa, Florida; and West Palm Beach, Florida.

Net absorption of industrial space in 58 markets tracked is estimated at 68.8 million square feet this year, down from 158.3 million in 2007. Most of the new industrial completions have been built-to-suit, leaving many obsolete or nearly obsolete structures on the market.

Secondary markets have become most attractive to institutional investors and users. Industrial transaction volume during the first four months of 2008 was \$8.5 billion, down from \$11.9 billion in same period of 2007. The biggest

slowdown is in the mid-Atlantic and the Midwest.

Retail market

Retail spending has been hurt by high oil prices with consumers throttling back on their spending habits, even in the retailing hotbed of Southern California

Vacancy rates in the retail sector will probably edge up to 9.3% in the fourth quarter from 9.2% in the fourth quarter of 2007. Average retail rent is expected to rise 1.3% in 2008, compared with a 2.9% gain last year.

Net absorption of retail space in 53 tracked markets is projected to grow to 18.2 million square feet in 2008 from 12.9 million last year.

Retail transaction volume during the first four months of 2008 totaled \$7.5 billion, significantly below the \$27.7 billion in the same period last year. Markets like Cincinnati and Detroit have seen a 100% decline in investment activity so far this year. Only Sacramento, California, is showing a gain, up 47%.

Foreign buyers are focused on retail strip centers in Southern California, Chicago, the Northeast and the Southeast. Even so, strip center transaction volume is down 77% from a year ago.

Multifamily market

The apartment rental market – multifamily housing – could see less demand during the second half of the year as some first-time home buyers jump off the fence and into the market.

Multifamily vacancy rates are likely to rise to 5.7% in the fourth quarter from 4.8% in the fourth quarter of 2007. Average rent is forecast to rise 4.0% in 2008, up from a 3.1% increase last year.

Multifamily net absorption is seen at 219,900 units in 59 tracked metro areas this year, up from 230,900 in 2007.

Transaction volume in the multifamily market so far this year is only \$13.7 billion, compared with \$23.2 billion in the first four months of 2007. Even so, some markets have seen increasing sales including San Francisco; San Jose, California; Tampa; Portland, Oregon; and Raleigh, North Carolina.

Howard Lightig, SIOR, is the 2008 chairman of the board for Cleveland Area Board of Realtors (CABOR).



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News about people, products, places & plans

University Hospitals Break Ground on Concord Health Center

University Hospitals (UH) officials, Concord Trustees and Senator Tim Grendell celebrated the groundbreaking of the future UH Concord Health Center recently. The 60,000-square-foot ambulatory medical center will be located on Auburn Road off Route 44 in Concord Township.

The UH Concord Health Center, which is scheduled to be completed in 2009, will offer an urgent care center, primary care services for adults and children, as well as physician specialty services, such as orthopedics



UH Concord Health Center

and cardiology. The Health Center will house advanced diagnostics including a laboratory, radiology, cardiac testing and a surgery center. The project team includes architectural firm Moody-Nolan and construction manager The Albert M. Higley Co.

UH's other significant Vision 2010 building projects (for more information, visit page 58) include the UH Ahuja Medical Center, a 600-bed inpatient hospital and outpatient medical office building in Beachwood at Chagrin Highlands. At the University Hospitals Case Medical Center, new construction includes a free-standing Cancer Hospital, Center for Emergency Medicine and Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit that will be completely renovated and expanded.

TDA Welcomes Project Manager

ThenDesign Architecture (TDA) recently announced that Ryan P. Schmit, a registered architect, has been hired as a project manager.

Schmit is currently managing the Geneva-area Recreation, Education,

Athletic Trust (GaREAT) campus project, which will include two 150,000-square-foot athletic complexes and an outdoor stadium. Schmit will play an integral role in building TDA's sports/recreation and educational portfolio.

"We wanted to bring on some experienced talent to meet the needs of our expanding client-base," states Robert A. Fiala, Managing Partner of TDA. "His expertise involving complex planning and design issues will be of great value to our firm."

Prior to joining TDA, he was a project manager with another local firm. Schmit is a graduate of Montana State University where he earned a Master of Architecture and a Bachelor of Arts and Environmental Design degree.

The Blue Book Announces Fall GC Showcase Schedule

The Blue Book is continuing to bring general contractors and local subcontractors and suppliers together with The Blue Book GC Showcase and has officially published the dates and locations for the Fall 2008 program.

This year, the closest show-case to Northeast Ohio is an event at Makoy Center in Columbus on September 17, from 3 to 7 pm.

The Blue Book's free networking events provide a unique forum for general contractors to exhibit their companies and find subcontractors and suppliers for their current and upcoming projects. The local companies who attend have the opportunity to meet with buyers and decision-makers responsible





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News about people, products, places & plans

for hiring subcontractors and buying supplies for construction projects in their area. There is no cost to exhibit or attend and an exhibit space and table are provided for participating GCs.

ITEM North America to Expand in Akron

ITEM North America, a provider of structural aluminum and modular components for the automation, manufacturing and material handling industries, recently broke ground on a 20,000 square foot addition to its facility located on Glaser Parkway near the Akron Municipal Airport.

ITEM North America, a family-owned business, has



ITEM North America

been in North American operation since 1996.

The project is being designed and constructed by Campbell Construction Inc., of Wooster and Wadsworth.

Eveline Nordhauss, the company owner/president, says the addition will allow Item to expand production, warehouse and office space to meet increasing demand for its product.

The ITEM machine building system is used in many

applications including medical, pharmaceutical, aviation, automotive, computers, and electronics and more. A broad spectrum of installations – from equipment for individual work stations to automated handling systems – can be built economically utilizing item's extruded aluminum kit systems.

R.E. Warner VP Named CES President

Ted Beltavski, vice president and secretary/treasurer of R.E. Warner & Associates, Inc., has been elected president of the Cleveland Engineering Society (CES).

In April of 2007, Beltavski was appointed to his position at R.E. Warner where

he is responsible for leading the manufacturing, chemical process and power markets along with his duties as operations manager.

CRESCO Closes Deals at Canal-Towpath Business Center

CRESCO Real Estate brokers George J. Pofok, CCIM and Kevin M. Kelly closed three deals totaling 9,300 square feet in 30 days and achieved 100% occupancy at the Canal-Towpath Business Center. The 51,868 -square-foot business park is highly visible and centrally located in Valley View, with access to Interstates 77 and 480. Built in 1978 and maintained by Grayton Road Properties, the Canal-Towpath Business

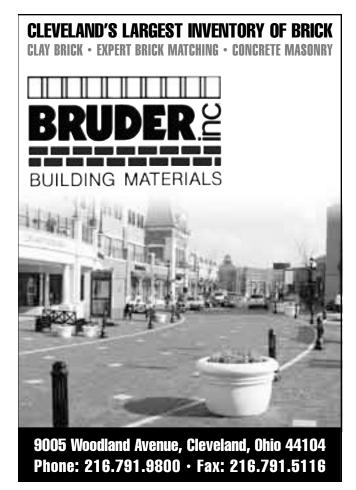
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Lounge Seating



Center is now home to three new tenants - Pirtek. a provider of fluid transfer solutions and on-site repair of hydraulic hoses, Crucible Materials, a world leader in materials technology and Herwell Press, a local printing company.

Twinsburg Distribution Center Breaks Ground

CBRichardEllisGroup,Inc. (CBRE) has been retained by Keystone Realty Investments to lease a 100,000-squarefoot speculative distribution center at 8400 Darrow Road in Twinsburg.

Fred Herrera leads the leasing team together with Abram Schwarz in marketing this property.

"This is a great win for us," Herrera says. "This is one of only three speculative projects under construction in the Northeast Ohio market. This will be a state-of-theart facility built by Ray Fogg Building Methods, Inc. with 28 docks, five drive-ins, and an ESFR Sprinkler System, 24- to 28-foot clear height."

Kevin Callahan, principal with Keystone Realty Investments, was able to successfully obtain financing for the entire project despite a difficult capital market environment.

Array Names Core Team Leader, Midwest Region

Array Healthcare Facilities Solutions, a leading national

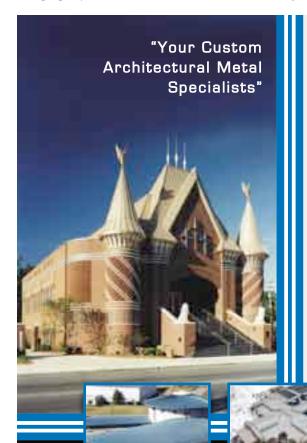
healthcare architecture, interior design, planning and advisory services firm, recently announced the promotion of Raymond Corby, AIA, to Core Team Leader, Midwest Region. Corby brings more than 30 years of experience in the management, technical design, and coordination of many complex both new and renovated facilities.

Since joining Array in 2006 as a senior project manager/operations director, Corby has managed projects for Ohio medical facilities, including University Hospitals of Cleveland and The Ohio State University Medical Center. Array is a planning, architecture and interior design firm

dedicated exclusively to healthcare design.

Thorson Baker & Associates Announces Partner

Guy Hicks, PE, has joined Thorson Baker & Associates as a principal. Owner of Keyser/Hicks Engineering since 1991, Hicks brings more than 25 years of experience to TBA's mechanical engineering department. Thorson Baker & Associates, Inc. is a 120-person Ohio firm with offices in Richfield and Cincinnati. The firm provides structural, mechanical, and electrical engineering services nationwide as well as civil engineering and landscape architecture services throughout the Midwest.



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Developing Design

New Twinsburg HQ showcases Gateway Hospitality Group's creative concepts

By John Elliott | Photos by Steve Zorc

Inn and Conference Center in Twinsburg in 1999. The chef-turned-developer/hotel operator brought so many creative concepts to the hotel that he became the first Hilton Garden Inn franchisee granted the right to use his own design ideas in Hilton Garden franchises.

A lot has happened since then, not just for Voelker's company, Gateway Hospitality Group (GHG), but for the 65-acre parcel along Route 82 near I-480 in Twinsburg, which now boasts five restaurants (Cracker Barrel, Wendy's, Damon's, Donato's and Blue Canyon Kitchen and Tavern), three office buildings (Windstream, Kaiser Permanente and Shelly Co.) and numerous interconnecting roads. The park is nestled in a nature preserve, offering a quiet, parklike setting.

Voelker has been as much a visionary for his native Twinsburg as he is for the hospitality industry. His integrated office park has transformed Twinsburg from a tradition-bound bedroom community to a development hub.

Canyon Falls Corporate Center is located near the northwest corner of State Route 82 and Interstate 480 in Twinsburg. The center paved the way with Canyon Falls Boulevard leading to its first building, at 42,000 square feet, which was completed in the fall of 1999 and occupied in the summer of 2000. The second building, at 32,000 square feet, was completed in the spring of 2001 and fully occupied by the end

of 2003. The third building, located on Canyon Falls Boulevard, is 23,000 square feet and was completed in 2008. In that building, GHG's headquarters totals 6,800 square feet.

While the single-story, steel-frame brick building is not the largest edifice on Canyon Falls Boulevard, it is the first designed to house Voelker's growing development company, which now has operations in four states. The corporate headquarters is an exciting place to visit, as it showcases his team's progressive ideas, making it a destination for hotel developers nationwide.

Thinking inside...



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MODERN MEETING SPACE The primary conference room is outfitted with a custom designed table and Herman Miller chairs, which complement the frosted glass panels, zebra wood shelving and earth-tone carpeting that give the space a clean, contemporary look.

GHG will occupy about one third of the space in the \$3.5 million building.

Voelker, an early supporter of the Hilton Garden Inn product, conceptualized the use of expanding the focused-service property with large meeting and banquet space. Meeting and banquet space allows for large functions serviced by in-house chefs, and Voelker views the food and beverage as the cornerstone of his success.

Some of these concepts are evident in the new headquarters building, which shares a parking lot with one of the other Canyon Falls Corporate Center office buildings. But Voelker, always thinking to the future, believes that his own company's headquarters needed to be conducive to teamwork and creativity. A visit to this building needed to be a memorable experience for visitors and create as much for the team who work there.

The building is designed to be an environment and experience of creativity, where all hospitality discipline work is done.

"We're in the hospitality business," Voelker says. "We greet our visitors as we would our guests with the spirit of hospitality. We design our interiors for our hotels, and we reflect what we do for our clients.

"It's like going to a store and getting a glass of wine and cheese," he says. "We want to represent what we do. Our corporate team greets visitors with the same VIP level of service we offer to our guests in our hotels."

Voelker wanted a headquarters that would also carry the innovative spirit which has characterizes his work. His most recent project was the Blue

Canyon Kitchen and Tavern in the adjacent "Wilcox Place," the most upscale of the four restaurants there, in 2004. Unable to attract an upscale restaurant due to market demographics, Voelker took a non-producing piece of property and turned it into an income-producing property. He built a unique structure.

The rustic, lodge-style Blue Canyon Kitchen and Tavern restaurant has two



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40-foot log handcrafted trusses, cathedral ceilings, handcrafted log rafters, purlin systems and structural insulated panels. The myriad of systems allowed Voelker to create a series of rooms, each with a unique atmosphere.

Design team taps partners

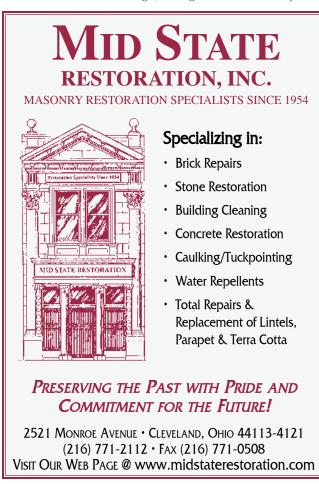
The design team for the new headquarters included Voelker, Tari Dewille, director of interior design, Margaret Hill, director of procurement, and Kevin Oliver, a project architect at Cleveland-based Kaczmar Architects Inc., a longtime Voelker partner.

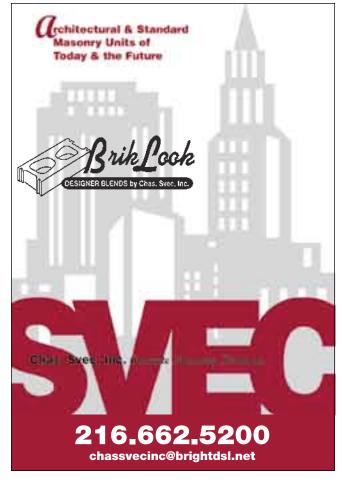
"It's a standard interior build up, but the design was [intended] to make it a very unique space," says Dave Gutfranski, senior project manager for Snavely Building Co., the Chagrin Falls-based builder that installed the shell for the new facility. "It's a real nice space that **SPECIAL SPACES** The new Gateway Hospitality Group headquarters is designed with unique details, such as a sit-down bar and a built-in aquarium in the lobby.

isn't just plain white walls; it's actually got some character, with a state-of-theart lobby, which includes a wine bar and barista station to a complete design studio and gallery to ceiling glass tile bathrooms. The entire corporate space is unique with plenty of progressive flair."

From the moment you enter the GHG corporate office, the lobby immediately sets the visitor at ease with dark colors, contemporary chandelier, recycled laminate wood composite floor, wall wine rack, built-in marine aquarium and curved, granite reception desk beneath a large, oval-shaped ceiling canopy with imbedded Swarorvki crystal rings. The hanging oval in the ceiling is one of several elements that GHG custom designed for the project. The hanging oval is made of metal, studs, drywall and unistrut, a threesided fixture with holes that can be threaded and hung from a ceiling.

Much of the lobby is naturally illuminated by wall-length windows, allowing full views of the parking area and park-





like outdoors. A subdued green wall and soft-cushioned, blue chairs enhance the sense of comfort. Track lights hang from a suspended, curved ceiling panel.

A sit-down bar with blue bar stools runs right beneath the marine aquarium and hanging pendant lamps.

The loft-like ceiling is outlined at one corner angle by a duct pipe.

Fluid interior design

The design was inspired to enable the staff to work and move things around, while still offering comfort.

"Once the environment was functioning properly, the question was, what can we do to improve the aesthetic?" says Ken Wieder, principal at North Randall-based Basic Cases, which constructed many of the wood design elements. "Bob (Voelker) wanted it to be aesthetically pleasing as well as utilitarian. He wanted a place that was comfortable."

"We felt we needed to move your eyes slightly to this tall wall that's behind [the reception desk]," says Wieder. The multiple level elevations in the reception desk created a fluid, soft break.

"When Bob brings you in, he's very detail oriented," says Dewille, a longtime Voelker associate.

Being a developer, GHG managed much of the project. Bruce Childs, who has since moved to Davis Development in Solon, acted as project manager for GHG. Childs notes that GHG managed about half of the subcontractors in the project.

GHG was able to purchase many of the custom built materials, such as the light fixtures.

"The design construction was just outstanding," Childs says.

Kitchen takes center stage

What's not visible immediately is a combination kitchen/office area right behind the reception desk, where staffers and visitors can prepare food, attend to work, and socialize. This area houses office equipment, from copy machines to postage scales.

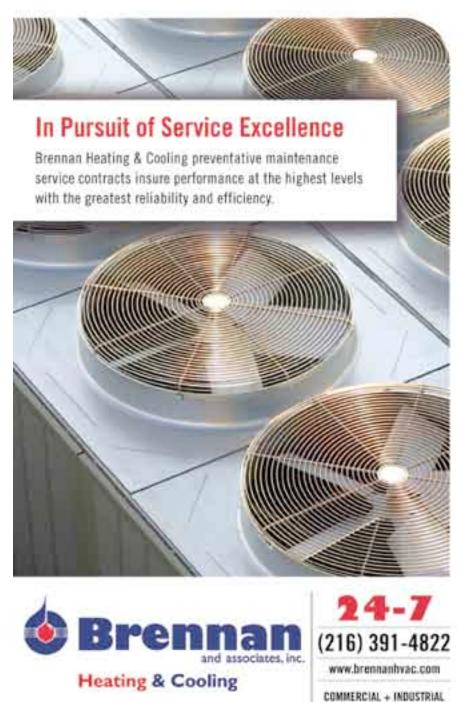
"In a house, you always congregate in the kitchen," Voelker says. "We designed this to be where the activity is."

"Everybody has their lunch in the lobby," adds Dewille. "We don't eat in offices any more.



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The lobby, in other words, lends itself to multiple functions, a concept that Voelker has adapted from his hotels.

Unlike many corporate headquarters, the kitchen is incorporated into the lobby.

"We want the team that works for us to be up front," Voelker says. "It's all right there. That's the experience a guest wants today."

The lower level of the kitchenette is painted with a blue glossy finish that matches the bar stools near the fish tank.

Connected space

What's most apparent once you're inside the building is the sense of openness. Most of the rooms are not completely separated from adjacent spaces; most of the walls don't reach the ceiling, allowing each work area to have a sense of connectedness under the loft-like ceiling.

"The best way for people to learn is from other people while they're communicating," Voelker says. "It's that total experience that makes the environment more comfortable for people. That open work environment to me is very conducive to learning.



Hotels today are being built with the loft feel. It doesn't give you a confining space."

"It makes a statement for who we are, from the design studio to the fish tank in the lobby," Voelker says. "They can see how we use technology and for all of our resources to get the job done in a creative and progressive environment for our team members. It reflects our design style today."

In hotels today, the lobby is more for social interaction, not just for checking guests in and out. "The experience today is in the lobby," Voelker says. "Hotels are being designed with less dollars in the guest room." He uses the term "lifestyle hotels" to describe what's popular today.

water wall from within a secondary conference room, the lobby can be viewed through an aquarium that is built into a wall of cabinets.

"People can eat, work, relax and watch fish [in the aquarium]."

"We wanted people to walk in the door and say, 'Wow, these people are in the hospitality industry," says Dewille, who, as an interior designer by training, had input on the millwork, lighting, colors and furniture.

Most of the design elements communicate a

sense of quality, such as the tiger wood effect in the floor and the glass surfaces of the bathroom sinks. "It becomes a showcase for us to our partners," Voelker says. "We wanted our office to accommodate that aspect of our business."

Two conference rooms, outfitted with blue Herman Miller chairs and black custom designed tables from Basic Cases, are adjacent to the lobby and are partially sealed off by frosted glass panels. In the main conference room, a digital flat screen is mounted on one wall, and a zebra wood shelf runs along the length of another wall. The secondary conference room can be viewed through the lobby aquarium encased in one of the black cabinet walls.

A brown, square-patterned carpet covers most of the rooms beyond the lobby. Walls in some of the work areas feature grass cloth, supporting the natural theme.

A ledge along one hallway will display gifts and artwork, in keeping with the art galleries that GHG's hotels have.

Function influences design

Dewille worked with Ken Wieder, principal at Basic Cases, on the design. She says the function of the furniture influenced its design.

"If I design it, I make sure I know how it is installed," she says. "You've got to know where the HVAC is going. You have to know every aspect of it. What's beneath the floor, what's behind the walls."

Wieder, who worked with GHG on Blue Canyon and some of its hotels,





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BUILDING INFLUENCE The new, 23,000-square-foot facility showcases Gateway Hospitality Group's progressive ideas, making it a destination for hotel developers nationwide.

brought plenty of expertise in pre-fabricated structures and creative finishes.

"The GHG team was way too crowded in the space they were in," Wieder says, noting that the new building triples the work area.

He says because of his relationship with GHG, he was able to understand what the developer wanted without having to see prints. He understood the classic contemporary style they wanted.

Wieder developed the horizontal zebra wood in the registration area. Zebra wood is usually striated to create vertical stripes. By experimenting, he came up with a horizontal effect that supports the fluidity of the interior space. "We play with shape, wood, color, dimension until we get the feeling that people are looking for," Wieder says. "This work is fun."

"[Voelker] wanted an open warehouse effect," Wieder says. "He wanted more of an open industrial feel. He wanted people to see the labels on the bottles. It works. It's different. It's sort of like a wine sculpture."

Wieder noted that the bathroom vanities look like a horizontal slice of a tree trunk.

"It took me a long time to figure that out," he says. "It is wild and gorgeous at the same time. It's fantastic."

The bathroom sink is made of glass bowl vessels.

"[Dewille] asked me if I could recess the bowl to fit into a log," Wieder says. "She just gave me challenge after challenge after challenge. There's a familiarity with what we've done, but it's special since it's never been done quite like this."

Natural elements

Dewille characterizes the design as "urban chic," but also incorporating natural elements.

"I wanted to do some things that were combining modern technology, natural wood beams and natural stone," she says.



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A 1,500-square-foot design study in the center of the building will have a seven- by 14-foot table with a stainless steel surface for holding design boards beneath track spotlights, both fluorescent and incandescent.

"That's a big part of the office, the design center," Voelker notes.

The central hallway has wood paneled walls featuring photos of the company's works in process. Suspended from the hallway ceiling runs a long, bendable metal wire holding clip-on lamps.

Voelker's office faces the south and sports a pine tree view of the Route 82 entrance to Canyon Falls Corporate Center.

Oliver, the project manager for the architect, says working with GHG on the project was similar to working on one of the company's hotels. He focused on the design of the built in sections and allowed GGH to determine colors, finishes, wall coverings, decorative lighting and millwork.

"They knew what they were going to do," Oliver says.

Open work area

Oliver says the open work area sought was similar to a studio atmosphere, and not unlike the one at his own company. He says it was important for the client to understand that the open work area changes the way people work; there is less privacy.

The work areas were tailored to the functions, such as conferencing and designing.

"Each office was spaced out according to the way they work," he says.

Oliver says it was fun to see the final result of his design concepts. "We could walk in and recognize what we had designed, but we saw the colors and finishes they selected," he says.

"He has a very nicely integrated development area with very compatible architectural styles, with visible signage at the entry," says Larry Finch, Twinsburg's director of community planning and economic development. "He's given it high level curb appeal. He's been first rate. We're happy that he's here."

Canyon Falls Corporate Center will continue to grow. The next phase will be a two-story, 100,000-square-foot building for Class A office space.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO INTERIOR DESIGN

By Amy Todd, IIDA

Q ften people think that the work of an interior designer is simply to create a beautiful interior. But a beautiful interior is without value unless it is a functional environment. The relationship between space planning and productivity has been proven. Good design means good business, as well as personal comfort and wellbeing.

Interior design is a multi-faceted profession in which creative and technical solutions are applied within a structure to achieve a built interior environment. These solutions are functional, enhance the quality of life and culture of the occupants, and are aesthetically attractive. Designs are created in response to and coordinated with the building shell, and acknowledge the physical location

and social context of the project. Designs must adhere to code and regulatory requirements, and encourage the principles of environmental sustainability. The interior design process follows a systematic and coordinated methodology, including research, analysis and integration of knowledge into the creative process, whereby the needs and resources of the client are satisfied to produce an interior space that fulfills the project goals.

Interior design includes a scope of services performed by a professional design practitioner, qualified by means of education, experience, and examination, to protect and enhance the life, health, safety and welfare of the public.

Interior design is a discipline that demands research, development and analytical skills, a command of technology, and knowledge of codes. With these tools, the designer shapes three-dimensional interiors.

From space planning to lighting to construction documents, a professional interior designer will help determine which design services are right for your project. Also, the designer will assemble the necessary team of professionals from a variety of disciplines to take the project to completion.

Before selecting any interior designer, interview several. Ask for references

and study portfolios. Rely upon your respect for a firm's work and the rapport that you develop with its designers.

Why hire a professional interior designer?

Whether renovating, relocating or establishing a new site, you cannot afford expensive mistakes, complications or downtime. That's why working with a professional is essential. Engaging

Interior designers decide how a space will look its best, but also make sure it satisfies accessibility requirements, applicable codes and that it's safe and functional.

an interior designer is among the best investments an individual or a business can make.

Thirty years ago, most interiors were planned by their occupants. But once technology began its rapid evolution, designing an interior has become increasingly complicated. Automation, new construction technologies, environmental consciousness and ergonomic progress have conspired to make good design more complex to achieve and, as a result, more valuable.

When designing a space in a hospital, a qualified designer understands the relevant safety code and practices necessary to design a safe, effective space. A qualified interior designer will know which type of products and finishes are flame retardant, antibacterial and anti-microbial; which products will withstand harsh cleansers and strict

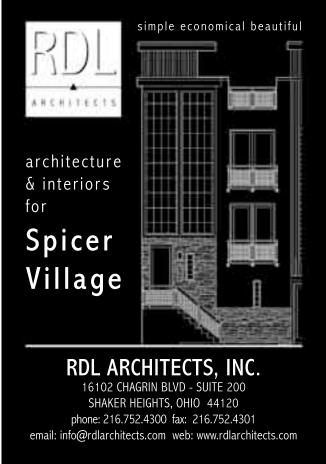
sanitary protocols; and which colors and types of lighting will aid recovery, enhance healing, or help a surgeon focus while operating. When designing a residential or commercial space, a qualified interior designer would address similar issues, such as product maintenance, air quality, environmental sustainability, and aging in place.

Professional interior designers are qualified by education, experience and examination to enhance the safety, function and quality of interior spaces. They're trained to choose products that meet the functional needs of the user while understanding how those materials and systems behave in a fire, how they affect air quality, ergonomic issues and other factors. Interior designers decide how a space will look its best, but also make sure it satisfies accessibility requirements, applicable codes and that it's safe and functional.

Today's designer is mindful of the ways in which science can enhance an interior. Relying on education and experience, the designer is well prepared to create an environment that will meet your functional needs as well as aesthetic expectations.

The International Interior Design Association (IIDA) is a professional nonprofit networking association that represents all specialties within the profession of interior design. With over 13,000 members worldwide, IIDA works to enhance quality of life through excellence in interior design and to advance interior design through knowledge, value and community. To find out more about the IIDA Ohio/Kentucky Chapter or the local Cleveland/Akron City Center, please visit www. iida-ohky.org. You can contact Amy Todd, director, at 216.767.2004 or Erica Shiever, co-director, at 216.588.0800.







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PROJECT PROFILE: SPICER VILLAGE

esigned by RDL Architects, Spicer Village is a contemporary townhouse community situated in the up-and-coming Akron neighborhood surrounding Akron University. Each of the four buildings is composed of simple, orthogonal forms and clean sophisticated materials with a total of 25 units. The combination of form and materials create a light industrial aesthetic, sympathetic with the surrounding environment while maintaining the warmth desired in

a residential feel. The exterior composition includes Trespa, a revolutionary rain screen system from Europe, which is making a debut in a big way in the States. Cultured stone, which is used at the lower level, grounds the buildings and corrugated metal and glass block above that speak to the industrial aesthetic of the project.

The blending of the exterior with the interior composition begins at the entrance of each unit, where a street-level outdoor patio creates a connection





TAKING SHAPE Spicer Village's simple yet strong exterior style and form (left) translate further throughout the interior spaces (right).

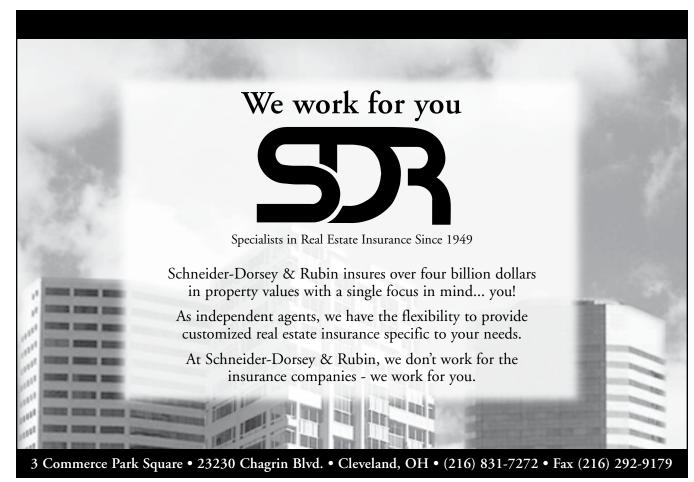
between the community and the living space within the townhomes. The private entry consists of a framed glass door to maximize the light transmission through the stairway and entire home.

The simple yet strong exterior style and form translates further throughout the interior design and finishes of each unit. The living space is open to maximize natural light throughout. Large sliding doors, some with balconies, others with Juliet balconies, maintain the concept of bringing the outdoors in. At the top of the stairs is an open space consisting of the living room, dining room

and kitchen. Stainless steel appliances, solid wood cabinets and granite counters are used in the spacious kitchen. On the next level are two bedrooms, one bath and a laundry center. A light-filled stair tower leads to a private roof deck with views of the surrounding city.

The desire to capture and maximize natural light lead the design of Spicer Village from inception and through many generations of elevation redesign. The final rendering achieves the goal of incorporating the maximum amount of

natural light while keeping the residents' privacy in mind. A defining element in achieving the final elevation is the illuminated stair tower. This element floods the interior space with natural light without glare or hot spots, even on a cloudy day. The stair tower also provides a focal point in the evening hours, acting as a soft lantern identifying the project. A conscious decision was made to extend the landing between flights of stairs to create a usable space, which could be utilized as a home office or library for the homeowner.





DOCTORS' ORDER

TRANSLATING UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL'S HEALING MISSION INTO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

By Christopher P. Trotta, AIA, and Patricia D. Malick, AAHID, IIDA | Art courtesy of Array Healthcare Facilities Solutions

Hospital's (UH) blueprint for a \$1.2 billion initiative that promotes and improves the health and economic welfare of individuals throughout Northeastern Ohio. The plan is comprehensive in scope and touches all aspects of the hospital's operations.

Perhaps the most visible aspect of the Vision 2010 program is the transformation of the physical plant and facilities within the system. Approximately 2.5 million square feet of UH facilities will be built, renovated or demolished

by the end of 2010. This monumental endeavor, the most significant in UH's 142-year history, modernizes the facilities where talented and dedicated physicians and employees work and improves UH's ability to administer care in patient-centered, family-friendly environments.

These building and department improvements — both interior and exterior — will contribute to UH's ability to



SPECIAL TREATMENT Array's work for University Hospitals includes design for a new Cancer Hospital as part of the medical system's \$1.2 billion Vision 2010 initiative.

attract and retain quality staff, improve patient safety, and decrease patients' lengths of stay. Creating this modern envelope and interior setting will also accommodate perpetually evolving technology, medical equipment and information systems.

Since 2004, Array Healthcare Facilities Solutions (Array) has been a trusted resource to University Hospitals and has supported the Vision 2010 pro-

gram by providing a diverse range of services including strategic and master planning, programming, architecture and interior design.

Throughout development for the various projects included in the system-wide facilities master plan, patient, family and caregiver support was a primary design tenet embodying UH's mission: "To Heal. To Teach. To Discover." As a result of this mandate, UH viewed interior design as a creative means with which to translate a hospital's healing mission and reinforce a brand identity.

A critical element in reinforcing UH's brand identity was Array's development of interior finish and furniture standards program that helped set the stage for the implementation of precursor and Vision 2010 projects within a formalized design framework. Guided by the healing experience environment, these selections and methodologies serve an important role in developing first impressions and a positive outlook on patient recovery and staff satisfaction. Positive first impressions bolster the patients' and







MAKING SENSE Array's designs are meant to engage sounds, smells and textures to create a sense of space in medical facilities, such as UH's Ahuja Medical Center (above).

families' confidence in the quality of care being delivered and set the tone for all subsequent visits. Research from the Healthcare Advisory Board Company (HABC), a national healthcare benchmarking resource, indicates that facility improvements such as furniture, lighting, color, waiting areas and artwork top the list of consumer concerns that impact patient experience and satisfaction scores.

In the past three years, Array has participated in designing more than one million square feet of UH's interiors spaces ranging from neonatal patient rooms, cancer treatment spaces, cardiac centers, and cafeterias to board rooms. All of these spaces serve different functions; however all must reflect the UH brand and mission. How was this accomplished?

Most projects begin with a visioning session that establishes the principles unique to the project and defines requirements of all key stakeholders. Array often requests to meet with patient and survivorship groups in order to gain full knowledge of the complete experience through first-hand accounts. The perspective and insight that a patient or family member can provide to a design team is amazing; it reflects the very smallest of details that ultimately impact their perceived experience and level of satisfaction, which is becoming increasingly important as the new federal guidelines for hospital quality are instituted across the county.

UH project interior design solutions feature references to nature in the form

of stone, wood, water and organic images. These natural elements are detailed in entrance transoms and side light art glass, nurse and greeter station panels, lobby and patient room floors, and corridor walls. Array utilizes sense-sensitive design, which engages sounds, smell and textures to create a sense of place and healing for patients and staff. The use of artwork and views to nature will compliment finish materials and will help create a positive distraction for patients and visitors. In fact, evidence-based design validates that the use of these methods can reduce stress and anxiety levels, lessen perceived pain, and increase patient and staff satisfaction.

Spaces are intentionally designed with light finish materials to brighten the visitor's experience and mood while maximizing the impact of natural light on the character of the space. Quality and creativity is further enhanced through carefully placed colored accent walls, specialty lighting and natural material selections with deeper saturations of colors and use of texture. A sophisticated balance of hospitality and healing has guided designs to make them relevant to today's discretionary consumer.

Current benchmarks illustrate that Vision 2010 is already contributing to success at UH: increasing numbers of patients are choosing UH hospitals; advances in clinical care and research have received increased publicity, significant awards and recognition across the country; recruitment and advancement of key staff has improved; and UH's financial strength has never been more



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positive. UH's commitment to providing state-of-the-art care for all patients, including the smallest and most fragile, has guided decision making that has extended beyond the realm of traditional architecture and interior design.

"Array has been instrumental in managing our master plan strategies, supporting UH's fundamental mission, and has been a true partner and resource for leading our major building campaign — Vision 2010," says Steven D. Standley, senior vice president of System Services at UH. "With important capital investment projects affecting our 20,000-plus employees across nearly one dozen acute-care hospitals and numerous community-based outpatient care facilities, Array's expertise in prioritizing our redevelopment needs and a workable implementation plan has been invaluable."

Certainly, however, nothing surpasses the clinical advancements, the high quality of patient care, and a committed workforce that University Hospitals delivers. However, interior design can play a strong and underlying role to the health and well being of the patient, significantly contributing to making UH's facilities destination places of quality care and safety. Interior design touches patients and their families throughout every facet of treatment and recovery experience and will help UH realize its bold vision for the future.

Array is collaborating with Parkin Architects on a NICU at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, Cannon Design on a new Cancer Hospital, HKS for the new UH Ahuja Medical Center campus, and OWPP for the Center for Emergency Medicine at UH Case Medical Center. These architects serve as the Architect of Record and Design Architects, with Array providing programming, planning, architecture, and interior design services as the Associate Architect. Christopher P. Trotta, AIA, is a principal and vice president of the Midwest region for Array. He can be reached at 216.292.7950 or ctrotta@arrayhfs. com. Patricia D. Malick, AAHID, IIDA, is a founding principal of the firm and is vice president of interior design for Array. She can be reached at 610.270.0599 or pmalick@arrayhfs.com.

ROCK SOLID FOR 50 YEARS

MASON STRUCTURAL STEEL HIGHLIGHTS INTERIOR DESIGN PRODUCTS FOR ANNIVERSARY

By Jessica Nelson | Photos courtesy of Mason Structural Steel, Inc.

xcellent service and quality products are at the core of what we offer our wonderful customers," says Keith Polster, president of Mason Structural Steel, Inc. in Walton Hills.

Apart from the structural steel they have furnished to the national building community for 50 years, Mason specializes in commercial and residential interior design products including Owens Corning Cultured Stone veneer, Majestic Fireplaces, mantles, Windsor windows, residential and commercial doors, Velux skylights, and Unilock and Belgard pavers.

Stone accents

"When we first added stone to our offerings, it was very much a niche



product, but now you see it routinely on home exteriors, fireplaces, shopping centers, hotels, churches, offices, and restaurants. It really has caught on in a huge way," Polster says. **LIGHT ROCK** Mason Structural Steel's Cultured Stone products are lightweight, and therefore less expensive than natural stone.

"The advantage of Cultured Stone over real stone is that it is lightweight, and so it is less expensive to install than natural stone," he says "In addition to offering more than 100 selections, we also have more consistent color and availability as well as a 50-year warranty. Using our product eliminates the difficulty of matching additions or expansions.

Mason has sold the same line of Cultured Stone for 32 years, since 1976. It is a man-made mixture of Portland cement, lightweight aggregates and iron oxide pigments, poured into one-and-





a-half-inch to two-inch thick molds designed to simulate the look of real stone. It is lightweight, and shaped for quick installation and a consistent look. Unlike most man-made stone veneer, it is AC-51 code-compliant. Mason offers training sessions, installation seminars, and architectural presentations on it, as well. Dealers in Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York and Michigan purchase Cultured Stone from Mason.

Down to details

"The out-of-state deals we do are because of our clients' confidence in our ability to consistently perform in a timely and professional manner," Polster says. "We receive jobs all the time because of our service. On the residential side we give next-day delivery. That's easy to say, but we really do it. We live up to our commitments. The speed at which we deliver and the way we take care of our customers sets us apart."

Also unique is Mason's full-time window service department. Instead of waiting for factory representatives to help, Mason employees themselves address any issue immediately.

Mason has carried Windsor windows and doors for more than 30 years. Windsor manufactures a full line of windows and patio doors from aluminum-clad wood products to cellular PVC to all vinyl. Its vinyl single-hung window is different from most in that it has a side-load feature instead of a tilt. The side-load contributes to better air infiltration ratings and more flexibility to handle installation uncertainties. It also has the ability to keep the sash from being removed.

Mason's showroom displays a range of more than 40 fireplaces, including gas, wood-burning, vent-free, direct vent, electric, and fireplace glass-burning interior and exterior products. The company offers several lines of wooden and faux stone mantels, as well as granite and marble surrounds and accessories like tool kits and fireplace glass doors.

Unilock and Belgard Pavers are Mason's latest product offering.

"Pavers hit the ground running," Polster says.

Mason is in the process of building an outdoor display of their pavers to demonstrate how they enhance several types of lounge areas, patios, walkways, and driveways.

Pillar of the community

Polster's father began selling steel beams to masons in 1958. In the 1970s, as more builders began to buy steel directly, the company saw an opportunity to offer more building and interior design products. Mason specializes in fabrication and erection and provides value engineering, and commercial design-build.

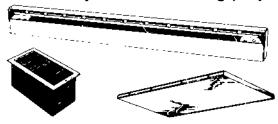
The company has furnished the structural steel for buildings in California, Utah, Arizona, Illinois, Indiana,

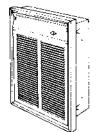




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Even with the challenge of constantly increasing gas and transportation costs, Mason remains committed to its standards and work ethic.

"Over the last year, steel and fuel prices have skyrocketed," Polster says. "These are definitely challenging times. It is a big burden on our market and our

"My father's philosophy of how to treat a customer and how to run a business is part of me and is ingrained in the business."

> Keith Polster Mason Structural Steel

customers. As much as fuel costs, out-ofstate businesses are still requesting our services. We are certainly loyal to and supportive of the hometown market and very proud to be a Cleveland company."

At the core of the family business are vice presidents Scott Polster, Harry Tepper and Bob Deszcz, as well as Daryl Rothenfeld (building products director), Basil Messina (commercial department supervisor), and a community of office and union employees who have been working for Mason for over 20 years on average.

"My father's philosophy of how to treat a customer and how to run a business is part of me and is ingrained in the business," says Polster.

Mason's upcoming projects include an Apple Store and a DSW in Crocker Park in Westlake, a BMW dealership in Willoughby, the Senior Outreach project building in Cleveland, a Citizen's Bank in Solon, Moreland Hills Town Center, the Clunk office building in Stow, and a restaurant, bowling, bocce and conference facility in Chicago, Illinois.

"We are very much a part of the fabric of this building community," Polster says. "I feel very fortunate that Mason has exceptionally loyal customers and a knowledgeable, talented staff. It's a wonderful thing." P

For more info, visit the Mason Structural Steel, Inc. website at www.masonsteel.com.



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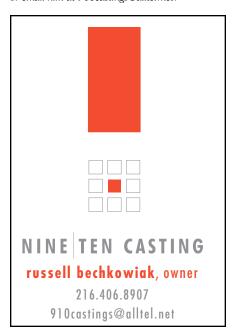
CAST CONCRETE CREATIONS

By Dave Larkin

Russell Bechkowiak, of Chardon-based company Nine | Ten Casting, has perfected the use of cast concrete to create a wide variety of unique products such as furniture for both indoor and outdoor use. With more than 30 years of experience in commercial concrete technology, he has worked together with Northeast Ohio designers and architects to create a wide range of architectural elements and artifacts.

As Bechkowiak explains, his products offer several distinct advantages versus natural materials, including offering more control over the color and finish. For example, his products can be made in just about any color by referencing the Benjamin Moore color library and cast concrete will take on the finish of any medium it is cast against – wallpaper, tree bark, etc. Another key advantage is that the products replicate the look of stone without the expense and, in some instances, the weight since cast concrete can include portions that are hollow.

For more info on Nine | Ten Casting and its array of products, contact Bechkowiak at 216.406.8907 or email him at 910castings@alltel.net.



SAFETY IN STYLE

INTERIOR DESIGNERS PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE WITH INFORMED CHOICES

Reprinted with permission from ASID

An interior designer identifies, researches and solves problems related to the function and quality of interior environments to ensure that occupant health, safety and welfare is enhanced and protected. In addition to aesthetics, an interior designer creates spaces that are functional, efficient and safe, and enhance the quality of life.

Protecting health, safety and welfare is the professional responsibility of every interior designer. Every decision an interior designer makes in one way or another has an effect on the health, safety and welfare of the public. Those decisions include specifying furniture, fabrics and carpeting that meet or exceed fire codes and space planning that provides proper means of egress. Additionally, designers deal with accessibility issues, ergonomics, lighting, acoustics and design solutions for those with special needs.

Interior materials play a major part in supporting flames or toxicity. Statistics prove that more people die in fires from inhaling fumes and smoke than the flames themselves. Interior designers are specially trained in interior materials and properties, including flammability and toxicity, and are uniquely qualified to select interior finishes that meet or exceed local, state and national fire codes.

In space planning, interior detailing and interior specifications, the implementation of accessibility codes and guidelines is essential. Qualified interior designers also design workplaces that are ergonomic and functional. An environment that provides the occupant with the ability to adjust his/her space to meet his/her own needs can prevent problems such as repetitive motion strain.

According to the National Safety Council, the leading cause of death in the home is falls – and the highest majority of people who die in this manner are 65 years or older. Understanding environmental needs for the aged has become a special design imperative for this century. Interior designers are creating environ-

ments that focus on the special needs of seniors to prevent possibly fatal injuries by selecting safe furniture, adding railings and grab bars where necessary, specifying non-skid surfaces and analyzing lighting levels, while ensuring excellent quality of life.

The issue of public welfare, within the realm of professional interior design, includes the responsibility of considering the greater whole, which involves, among other things, employing "environmentally friendly" materials and practices to ensure a sustainable environment for future generations. ${\bf P}$

ASID (American Society of Interior Designers) is the largest professional association of interior designers, with a membership of more than 38,000 members comprised of 19,000 practicing interior designers, 7,000 industry partner representatives in 2,700 companies and 12,000 student members in more than 300 student chapters (including some independent student members). More information on the local Ohio North Chapter of ASID can be found at www.asidohio.org or by contacting administrator Susan Kiel at (330) 598-1861.



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LIGHT TOUCH

MOTORIZED WINDOW TREATMENTS PROVIDE FLEXIBLE ILLUMINATION CONTROL

By Jim Langdon | Photos courtesy of Timan Window Treatments

otorization has become an affordable and practical solution for windows that are hard to reach with pull cords and other traditional manual controls. For windows in children's rooms at home or in high, out-of-reach places at the office, motorized control is now typically the most practical option.

In fact, advancements in technology of motors, hardware and control systems have made motorized window treatments a consideration for nearly any room. For example, it is now easier than ever to control popular window covering products with infrared or radio control or even to network them with automated systems that control lights, theater systems and more. Long-life battery systems allow motors to go in almost any window treatment in any window without needing to run additional wires. While there are many sophisticated and expensive options in motorization, there are also motorized options that are available for budget-conscious property owners.

One obvious benefit is convenience. With motorized control, blinds or shades



MADE TO SHADE In office buildings and homes alike, motorized blinds can help cut energy costs significantly by providing automated control over hard-to-reach window treatments.

can be operated from any point in the building or even automated.

Another benefit is long-term cost savings. In today's energy-conscious world, it is important to have control of out-

of-reach windows like skylights that, without control, can create year-round energy problems. When you have control of these windows you can prevent heat loss in the winter and heat gain



in the summer. Making all window treatments in a building easier to control can help cut energy costs significantly.

Getting wired

Motorized shades use motors that are concealed within the headrail of a blind or shade or the rolling tube that controls roller shades. Drapery treatments use special tracks with a motor attached that is hidden by the drapery fabric.

It is wise to plan for motorized window treatments as early as possible in the construction of a building and wire for them before the walls are finished. This may mean taking a look at what type of window covering will be used a little earlier in the building process so that the right type of wiring can be specified. Colors and other details can be chosen later, but narrowing down to a specific type of window covering should be done as early as possible. Some systems run on high-voltage, which is a home's line wiring. Other systems are low voltage and require different wiring techniques. If the walls are closed, battery controlled solutions may be best.

Many control options

There are a variety of ways to control motorized window treatments. For some, wall switches are practical. Others will prefer a remote control using either infrared (IR), which requires a line of site point and shoot operation, or radio frequency (RF), which can control without a line of sight - even from a different room. An innovative system called Platinum Technology that combines both infrared and radio control was introduced last year by window covering manufacturer, Hunter Douglas.

Most window covering systems can be integrated into the major lighting and building control manufacturers' systems, providing control from many different methods including computers, touchpads, on-screen





OPEN WIDE URS Corp. provided a dental implant manufacturer's Cleveland offices with a clean, crisp and modern environment that utilizes natural light and a sense of spaciousness.

PROJECT PROFILE: THOMMEN

hommen Medical, an international manufacturer of dental implant systems, contracted URS Corporation for the interior design of its recent office relocation project. The project started with approximately 8,000 square feet of raw demolished space within the Idea Center building in Cleveland's Historic Playhouse Square District. Ten weeks later, on time and on budget, Thommen Medical staff moved into a clean, crisp, new work environment that clearly reflects the corporate image requested by the company's international headquarters in Switzerland.

The space was designed so clients are welcomed by a receptionist and hostess center immediately upon entrance. The customer training and executive conference rooms flank either side of the hostess center to create breakout space and accommodate food and drink service for clients as well as staff. The customer service staff is located in the area that offers the best daylight and views towards Cleveland's Lake Erie. The shipping and receiving area is near the entrance for easy access in and out of the space. Private offices and semi-private work areas that line the west window wall are detailed with translucent panels and large openings to transfer daylight from the offices into the corridor.

Plain translucent corrugated plastic panels applied to walls not only allow for the transfer of light but also expose the structure of the walls, hinting at the nature of Thommen's business.

commands and more. When integrating with a central control system, preset "scenes" can be programmed by the system integrator that installs the control system. These "scenes" may include the window covering to be opened to a determined point along with adjustments to predetermined interior light settings — all at the touch of a button.

Getting started

It may be difficult to find good answers about motorized window treatments. Many decorators will be very helpful in choosing colors and fabrics, but they won't be able to answer your motorization questions. On the other hand, automation experts may be able to tell you how they will control a motor, but they have little or no working knowledge of window treatments. Be sure to seek out a window treatments provider that is able to help put it all together by helping you select the right window treatment and coordinating wiring, installation and integration. P

For more information, contact Timan Window Treatments at 216.674.0185 or visit www. timanwindowtreatments.com. Timan Window Treatments is located at 5425 Warner Rd. #6, Valley View, Ohio 44125.



INDUSTRY PROFILE: DESIGNER ACCENTS INTERIOR FURNISHINGS COMPANY PROMISES TIMELY, PERSONALIZED SERVICE

t Designer Accents, company officials are fond of saying that they not only know their customers' business – they specialize in it. As a leading supplier of window treatments, closet shelving, custom storage systems, and accessories for apartments, commercial buildings and health care/senior living facilities, the company has built a loyal base of customers throughout Northeast Ohio and beyond who turn to the company for quality products, competitive pricing, timely delivery and highly personalized service.

In 2006, John Marcus, a native Clevelander and veteran owner and manager of commercial properties throughout Northeast Ohio, acquired controlling ownership of the Beachwood, Ohio-based company, ensuring that it would remain locally owned and operated. Since then, he has implemented strategic growth initiatives in each channel the company serves. The results have boosted revenues, reinvigorated its workforce and broadened its product and service offerings.

"Designer Accents represented the perfect business opportunity at the perfect time," Marcus says. "Having owned



DRAWN TO DESIGN Window treatments have remained one of the most popular product categories for Designer Accents, a locally owned business in Beachwood.

and managed property in the area, I know the company's customers and its products, and I know first-hand what property managers and general contractors really need in order to get the job done. I even did business with Designer Accents for several years, so I was familiar with the company itself."

Back in 2006, Marcus sensed an opportunity to take the success that was built through more than two decades of service and grow it within each of the company's market channels. Marcus set out to accomplish this by broadening Designer Accents' product and service

offerings, implementing updated internal systems and processes, pursuing strategic marketing initiatives and rededicating staff to the notion of superior customer service.

Since then, Marcus has increased the staff size by a third and introduced new lines within the company's core product areas. But he insists that a rededication to personalized customer service will likely drive the majority of future growth in each channel.

As proof, he instituted monthly meetings soon after assuming ownership in order to train employees on updated customer service protocols. He also regularly solicits employee feedback on the company's strengths, challenges and opportunities. As a result, Marcus believes that orders are placed and tracked with greater accuracy than ever before, while customers are afforded a consistent, standardized level of care at each stage of the order process.

"This company has always been successful in forging strong and lasting customer relationships with general contractors, developers, architects, real estate management companies, apartment property owners, residential developers and health care and senior

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living executives," he says. "Yet many of our competitors are national in scope, and their focus extends well beyond the market segments we serve. Given their sheer size, they simply can't offer the degree of personalized customer service that we do, and we plan to leverage that strength in each market we serve."

Custom solutions for apartments, homes

Today's property owners and managers are challenged like never before to retain current tenants and attract new ones. Designer Accents understands this challenge and offers a full range of products designed to strengthen bottom lines by allowing owners and managers to improve retention, attract new tenants and increase rents.

The company boasts a wide assortment of apartment products that include custom storage systems, bath accessories, shower doors, mirrors, fabric toppers, mailboxes and medicine cabinets.

Since the company's founding, window treatments have remained one of Designer Accents' most popular product categories. Today, as always, the company delivers and installs window treatment products that include manual and motorized roller shades, heavy-duty vertical blinds, vinyl and aluminum mini blinds, pleated shades and special-order window treatments. Marcus emphasizes that Designer Accents can design window treatment solutions to meet the exact specifications of its customers.

Closet shelving is another growing product category for the company. Like window treatments, Designer Accents can provide closet shelving and custom storage systems to meet a customer's exact specifications. They can also design custom shelving solutions to fit unique storage requirements. Products include wire and Melamine shelving for linen closets, pantry closets, utility closets and office closets - available in a wide selection of sizes, colors and depths. Many of Designer Accents' systems allow hangers to slide without interruptions - even around corners. An attractive alternative to standard fixed-shelf applications,

Marcus says they're ideal for walk-in or reach-in closet spaces.

Commercial resources like no other

Architects, developers, general contracting companies, and owners and managers of commercial buildings and health care facilities turn to Designer Accents for high-quality commercial interior accessories at competitive prices. Why? According to Marcus, they appreciate the personalized, professional and friendly service that the company offers. Marcus also savs that customers have come to trust Designer Accents as a uniquely centralized and accountable local source. The company's commercial accessories include bathroom products, projection screens, cubicle curtains, draperies, interior signage systems, mailboxes, shower doors, medicine cabinets and mirrors.

Moving forward, Marcus says that a key driver in Designer Accents' growth will be a strong focus on serving the expanding needs of today's health care and senior living sectors. According to Marcus, the company already has built a strong client base throughout selected U.S. markets, and it seeks to grow that base in the years to come.

"We see tremendous opportunity in this arena," he says.

Beyond apartment, commercial and health care/senior living channels, Designer Accents also offers homeowners throughout Northeast Ohio custom shelving systems for a variety of organizational needs. From closets and mud rooms to media centers and systems for bedrooms, garages and home offices, Designer Accents helps homeowners organize space to best suit their needs with high-end solutions available in a variety of styles and colors. Systems can be also customized to meet unique vertical and horizontal dimensional requirements. P

For more info, visit www.designeraccentsinc.com or call 216.360.9255.

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CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS REPORT

Updated info on important projects in the region

PN-T0617066

GOODYEAR SERVICE CENTER Brunswick, OH (Medina Co.)

CONTRACTING METHOD: To Be Determined

STATUS: Owner is seeking approvals; planning is

preliminary.

OWNER: Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co.

1144 E. Market St. Akron, OH 44316 (330) 796-2121

ARCHITECT: Richard A. Beck & Associates

38500 Chardon Road Willoughby Hills, OH 44094

(440) 942-4025 FAX (440) 942-2043

DETAILS: SF to be determined; sitework; fencing;

electrical; lighting; wood and plastics; toilet and bathroom accessories; HVAC; floor coverings; painting; plumbing; drywall; insulation; doors and hardware; glass and glazing; fire protection; masonry; fin-

ishes.

PN-S0827073

CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Cleveland, OH (Cuyahoga Co.) E. 34th Street and

Croton Ave

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$10,800,000 CONTRACTING METHOD: Public Bids

UPDATE: Architectural/Engineering Services

RFQs have been received; award to be

announced.

OWNER: Cuyahoga County Commissioners

Office of Procurement & Diversity
112 Hamilton Avenue, Annex Bldg.

Cleveland, OH 44114 www.cuyahogacounty.us

(216) 443-7200 FAX (216) 443-7206

DETAILS: SF to be determined; 150-180 bed facility;

sitework; thermal and moisture protection; finishes; specialties; windows and doors; metals; HVAC; electrical; plumbing; foundations; concrete; masonry; addi-

tional details to be determined.

PN-S0129010

STUDENT HOUSING

Oberlin, OH (Lorain Co.) North Pleasant Street **CONTRACTING METHOD:** To Be Announced

UPDATE: Planning is very preliminary; owner is performing a feasibility study in regards

to developing area.

OWNER: Oberlin College

173 W. Lorain Street Oberlin, OH 44074 www.oberlin.edu (440) 775-8121

DETAILS: Phase two housing is being considered

on property owned by the college along North Pleasant Street behind the Oberlin Inn; SF to be determined; sitework; site utilities; concrete; framing; shingle roof; plumbing; electrical; HVAC; interior finishes; painting; carpet; bathroom fixtures;

fire suppression equipment; drywall.

PN-T0616033

MULTIPLEX STUDENT HOUSING

Akron, OH (Summit Co.)

ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$32,500,000 **CONTRACTING METHOD:** Public Bids

STATUS: Planning is very preliminary; bid schedule

to be determined.

OWNER: University of Akron

100 Lincoln St., Room 209

Akron, OH 44325

www.uakron.edu/bids/legalnotices.htm (330) 972-7340 FAX (330) 972-5564

ARCHITECT: DesignGroup

515 East Main Street Columbus, OH 43215 www.dgcolumbus.com

(614) 255-0515 FAX (614) 255-1515

C.M.: Kenmore Construction

100 Home Avenue Akron, OH 44310

(330) 762-9373 FAX (330) 762-2135

DETAILS: Project No. 080008

The project will provide approx. 500 beds and will reflect the architectural character of the recently completed Residence Halls. The facade will include masonry, glass and aluminum elements to match other University buildings. Structural systems will include pre-cast concrete floors on masonry bearing walls, structure on spread footings. Site development will include site utilities, landscaping, ameni-

ties and surface parking.

PN-T0218054

COURTHOUSE RENOVATIONS/EXPANSION

Medina, OH (Medina Co.)
ESTIMATED AMOUNT: \$255,000
CONTRACTING METHOD: Public Bids

UPDATE: Architectural/Engineering Services RFQs

have been received; award to be made

shortly.

OWNER: Medina County Commissioners

144 N. Broadway Medina, OH 44256 www.co.medina.oh.us

(330) 722-9208 FAX (330) 722-9206

OWNER: City of Medina





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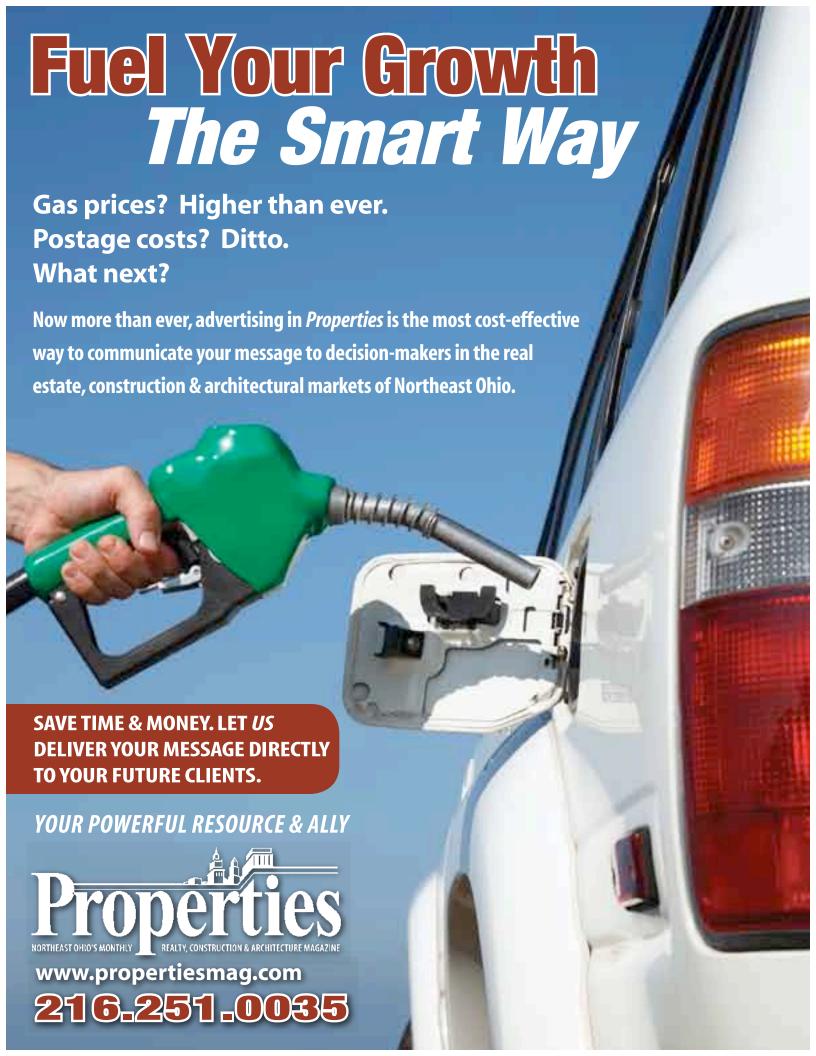
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132 N. Elmwood Avenue Medina, 0H 44256 www.medinaoh.org (330) 725-8861

DETAILS: Combine city municipal courts and county

courts; need additional 60,000 - 70,000 SF and as many as 625 parking spaces.

PN-S1227037

NEW HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

Akron, OH (Summit Co.) Martha Avenue **ESTIMATED AMOUNT:** \$165,000,000 **CONTRACTING METHOD:** C.M. Subcontracts

UPDATE: Announcing architects and C.M.

OWNER: Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. 1144 E. Market St.

Akron, OH 44316 (330) 796-2121

DEVELOPER: Industrial Realty Group

12214 Lakewood Boulevard Downey, CA 90242

(562) 803-4761 FAX (562) 803-4796

ARCHITECT: Gensler Architecture - Chicago

30 West Monroe Street Chicago, IL 60603 (312) 456-0123

ARCHITECT: Vocon Design, Inc.

3142 Prospect Avenue Cleveland, OH 44115 www.vocon.com

(216) 588-0800 FAX (216) 588-0801

C.M.: Gilbane Building - Cleveland 1621 Euclid Avenue #1830 Cleveland, OH 44115-1303



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(216) 771-6100 FAX (216) 771-6491

DETAILS: SF to be determined; concrete; masonry; mechanical; plumbing; electrical; HVAC; doors & windows; roofing; flooring; landscaping; metals; steel.

PN-T0215050

SPLASH ZONE WATER PARK ADDITION

Oberlin, OH (Lorain Co.) 95 West Hamilton **CONTRACTING METHOD: Public Bids**

UPDATE: Design/Build Services RFQs due July 1,

2008 at 4:00 PM (To Owner)

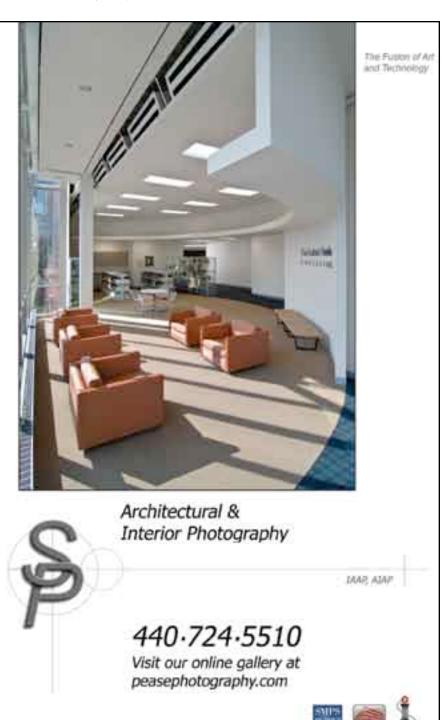
OWNER: Lorain County Metropolitan Park District

12882 Diagonal Road LaGrange, OH 44050 www.loraincountymetroparks.com (440) 458-5121 FAX (440) 458-8924 Dan Martin Director/Secretary

DETAILS: Indoor pool and play area; sitework; concrete; plumbing; electrical; specific details

to be determined.

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