

LOCAL BRIEFS

Park National executes merger with First-Knox

NEWARK — Park National Corp., which announced in 2007 it would consolidate the banking operations of its eight subsidiary banks in Ohio, has merged The First-Knox National Bank of Mount Vernon with Park National Bank.

First-Knox National Bank became a subsidiary of Park National Bank, according to a Monday filing by Park National Corp. The merger occurred at the close of business Friday.

As a result of the merger, Park succeeded First Knox as the transfer agent for Park common shares.

Century National Bank, of Zanesville, and Second National Bank, of Greenville, merged with Park National Bank on Aug. 15. The Richland Trust Co., an Ohio state-chartered bank based in Mansfield, and United Bank, National Association, of Bucyrus, merged with Park on Aug. 29.

Six more banks will merge by Sept. 30, according to Park National Corp. Customers should notice no difference, as each bank retains local leadership, decision-making and identity, the corporation stated in a press release.

Park anticipates that the mergers of The Security National Bank and Trust Co., of Springfield, and The Citizens National Bank of Urbana will be completed by Sept. 30.

Newark council panel approves job shift

NEWARK — The Newark City Council Personnel Committee approved the elimination Monday of an Engineering Technician 2 position in order to replace it with a GIS Technician.

The new position will provide constant updates to the GIS system used to provide electronic maps of the water, stormwater, roads and property throughout the city.

The new position will receive the same salary as the old one and will be funded in thirds from the water and wastewater department, the stormwater department and the engineering department.

Having a fully functional system is expected to save employees time in all involved departments.

The Finance Committee also approved transferring \$16,000 obtained from the sale of timber at Horns Hill Park to replace a roof, add trash cans and perform general maintenance at the park.

Woman hospitalized after motorcycle crash

NEWARK — One person remains in a Columbus hospital after a Saturday motorcycle crash, while her husband was treated and released from Licking Memorial Hospital, a hospital spokeswoman said.

In a separate incident, a 5-year-old girl was discharged after being kicked in the stomach by a horse Saturday.

Ronald and Donna Shepherd were riding with seven other motorcycles on a return trip from Akron when a deer walked out in front of Donna Shepherd on Rain Rock Road about 7 p.m., Mary Ann Township Fire Capt. Randy Miner said. Donna Shepherd hit the deer and her husband laid his motorcycle down, trying to miss both his wife and the deer.

Ronald Shepherd was taken by Mary Ann to LMH while Newton Township transported Donna Shepherd to LMH before she was taken to Grant Medical Center, where she is in serious condition, a hospital spokesman said.

The horse accident occurred at Infirmary Mound Park at about 2:15 p.m. The girl was taken by emergency medical helicopter to Children's Hospital, where she was discharged Sunday, a hospital spokeswoman said.

Prayer breakfast set Thursday in Newark

NEWARK — The Licking County Prayer Partners will meet Thursday at Adena Hall on the Newark campus of Ohio State University and Central Ohio Technical College for the group's 18th annual prayer breakfast.

The keynote speaker will be Elsa Kok Colopy, the associate editor at Focus on the Family Magazine. She has written four books.

The doors open at 6 a.m. and the program begins at 6:30 a.m. Cost is \$15, and reservations are required. Tables are available for \$100 by calling (740) 522-7407 or going to www.lcprayerpartners.org.

From Advocate staff reports.

Pataskala council fills vacant seat

McKinstry's experience lands her job

By CHAD KLIMACK
Advocate Reporter

PATASKALA — The Pataskala Administrative Offices resembled the set of "American Idol" on Monday, with several residents vying for an open city council seat.

The council spent close to two hours questioning seven of the eight residents who applied for the opening; resident Ben Parker could not attend the special meeting. Afterward the council selected Merissa McKinstry, of 133 Harold Stewart Parkway, to fill the unexpired term of Grover "Chip" Fraley III, who

died in July.

The council voted via secret ballots, but afterward Councilman Brian Raybourne said he voted for McKinstry.

Raybourne pointed to her familiarity with city issues. McKinstry served three years on the city's Board of Zoning Appeals before her resignation Monday night. She also is a member of the Licking County Republican Party Central Committee.

"We don't agree on everything, but she's got a level head," Raybourne said.

McKinstry, who has lived in the city for six years, brings a

wealth of political experience to her new duties. She previously served as a legislative liaison with the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. She also served as a legislative assistant to former Ohio State Rep. Amy Salerno and former Ohio Secretary of State Ken Blackwell. McKinstry serves as an independent consultant for the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation.

Licking County Judge Craig Baldwin swore in McKinstry on Monday. Afterward, she said she intends to "strive to be a consensus builder" while

on the council.

McKinstry provided further insight during a question-and-answer period with the council.

Council members asked each of the candidates to answer, on paper or via e-mail, several questions before Monday's meeting. Council President Barbara Triplett touted the idea as a way to level the playing field among the candidates.

On Monday, each candidate had five minutes to talk about his or her beliefs and reasons for applying for the opening.

McKinstry said she and her husband, Bruce, moved to Pataskala to raise their children. They have one daughter and are expecting another.

For that reason, McKinstry said she wants to work to make the city "safe and prosperous."

She also touted her previous experience with the state. The experience provided her with insight into budgets, budget cuts and constituent services, among other items, she said.

Fraley's open seat does not expire until the end of 2009, so McKinstry will have more than a year to serve.

After McKinstry was sworn in, the council voted to appoint Sagar as vice president. Fraley previously held that position.

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Dr. Shahin Shahinfar performs eye surgery Monday at Bloomberg Eye Center in Newark. Bloomberg is offering its cataract surgery patients new lenses that greatly reduce the need for glasses after surgery. (Eric George, The Advocate)

Unobstructed view

New lenses helping area cataract patients

By TIFFANY AUMANN
Advocate Reporter

NEWARK — As an athletic official, Bill Mason, of Granville, counts on sharp eyesight to make split-second decisions.

But over the years, the 73-year-old suffered typical age-related vision loss and developed cataracts, a clouding of the eye's lens.

"It was like I was wearing sunglasses," he said.

In June, he had cataract surgery at Bloomberg Eye Center, 1651 W. Main St. The Crystalens implants not only have restored his vision but practically have freed him from wearing glasses, something not possible until recent advances in lens design.

"I'm excited about basketball and lacrosse and not having to wear glasses," he said, "particularly with running and having to push them back on your nose."

Traditionally, monofocal lenses have been used in cataract surgeries. The lenses improved formerly foggy vision but still left patients chained to their glasses.

"The reading vision was never addressed," said Judy Mackey, Bloomberg's director of corporate services.

Today, a series of premium lenses allow patients more freedom. Two multifocal lenses — ReZoom and ReStor — have concentric circles with different focusing zones. The Crystalens is a homogenous lens that has special arms that allow eye muscles to focus naturally by moving the lens back and

forth within the eye.

During surgery, doctors remove the natural lens of the eye and replace it with a new one. The procedure takes about 10 minutes and afterward, patients must wear sunglasses to protect their light-sensitive eyes for a few months until they recover.

Sue Simpson, of Newark, said her vision is better now than it was before she discovered she had cataracts. As a child, she wore thick glasses and couldn't distinguish leaves on trees.

"My whole life I've had glasses, since third grade," she said. "When I found out I had cataracts, I was upset for about three minutes."

That was about how long it took her doctor to tell her about the new lenses. She underwent surgery at Bloomberg in October 2007, having the Crystalens implants. Bloomberg has been implanting Crystalens for about two years.

Center for Sight, 1371 W. Main St., also uses premium lenses in its cataract surgeries. Ophthalmologist James Silone said between 10 to 25 percent of the center's cataract patients choose premium lenses. They began offering ReStor lenses about three years ago.

Each lens has its advantages and drawbacks.

The drawback of ReStor and ReZoom lenses is that because of the rings in their design, patients might experience a halo effect or glare, which should diminish with time.

"A few of these patients notice

a lot of glare. Crystalens, because it's a single lens, has less glare," Bloomberg's medical director Shahin Shahinfar said. "About 25 percent of our patients are choosing Crystalens."

ReStor is best for close-up vision; ReZoom and Crystalens are stronger for intermediate and distance vision.

"If you wanted to read the small print on a prescription bottle, you'll probably still need reading glasses," Shahinfar said of Crystalens.

A new version of Crystalens, released in the past few months, is supposed to improve reading vision over its previous design.

Mason and Simpson, who both have Crystalens, said they grab their reading glasses in some situations: Mason, when reading a newspaper, and Simpson, when reading small type on a menu.

Silone said he foresees continued fine tuning of the premium lenses, with new combinations of different lens characteristics.

"Even after all this," he said, "we still don't have the perfect lens that will make you see like when you were 25."

Premium lenses are often not covered by insurance. Bloomberg said cost is about \$1,295 per eye, on average.

Patients, however, say the investment is worth not having to constantly reach for their glasses.

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Pataskala districts to negotiate terms for Job Ready Site

School officials say they still should receive up-front compensation

By JOE WILLIAMS
Advocate Reporter

ETNA — Officials from the Southwest Licking and Licking Heights school districts plan to meet in special session soon to negotiate terms of payments to the districts tied to developing a corporate park between Broad Street and Refugee Road and Mink Street and Columbia Road.

The Southwest Licking Board of Education met in special session Monday to discuss community-reinvestment-area and tax-increment financing agreements for developing the proposed Pataskala Corporate Park.

In 2007, officials from several governmental entities had worked out a deal with warehousing firm ProLogis financial incentives that included granting tax abatements, creating a special taxing island and providing for \$500,000 payments from ProLogis to both school districts.

ProLogis eventually dropped out of that project, citing the poor economy.

City and county officials are trying to pursue developing the core of that project — about 305 acres deemed by the state a Job Ready Site — to keep a \$3.4 million state grant to help build a road through the tract. They now are proposing a 100 percent abatement for 15 years.

Southwest Licking board members Dave Engel, Don Huber and Brad Williams agreed their district still should receive some compensation up front. Those three

were the only SWL panel members who attended Monday's special session.

Huber said school officials must negotiate the best deal they can because they still plan to ask voters to approve a bond issue in November and operating money later.

"We're willing to do what's necessary to move things forward," Huber said, "but we want to do things right."

Licking Heights board member Mary Hite said her panel will work with the SWL district "to come to a joint conclusion on how it is going to work."

Heights plans its own special session tonight. Hite said her board "definitely" needs to sit down with the Southwest Licking panel and both districts' superintendents and treasurers to work out the details.

Southwest Licking District Treasurer Richard Jones said he hopes to schedule the next special meeting of the SWL board "late this week or early next week at the latest."

Pataskala City Council is expected to consider approving Tax Increment Finance legislation for the development when it meets at 7 p.m. Monday.

City and county officials have partnered with property owners Howard and Rosemary Emswiler to develop the road by the end of 2009 to keep the state grant.

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Ohio soldiers ready to help those affected by hurricane

By KARINA DONICA
The (Louisiana) Town Talk

ALEXANDRIA, La. — If there is a silver lining to any storm, it might be in unity.

People from across the nation have driven thousands of miles to Louisiana to reach out and help in the aftermath of Hurricane Gustav. Among them are about 1,100 National Guard soldiers from Ohio.

"Katrina and Rita taught us that our fellow citizens include more than Buckeyes ... so I am proud of our team, I am proud that we have the capacity to do this, I am proud that we have the competent leaders," said Brig. Gen. Matthew L. Kambic, Ohio's assistant adjutant general.

Kambic and Ohio's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, along with other officials, toured barracks at England Airpark on Sunday to shake hands and say thanks for their work. They also came to inspect troop conditions.

Ohio is one of about 16 states lending a hand to Louisianans in the aftermath of Gustav, a storm that knocked down trees, destroyed electric infrastructure and left 24 people dead.

The Ohio National Guard has 656 troops in Louisiana and about 300 more are expected to come, said Lt. Col. Jane Lengel, the personnel liaison for Ohio.

Having the top leadership come to check on the troops boosts morale and is appreciated, said William Tennant, a 22-year-old soldier from Newark, who arrived Saturday night with the 211th Maintenance Co.

"We got in late, we got trucks parked and filled," Tennant said. "It hasn't been going too bad so far, so hopefully we are out of here before we know it

"It hasn't been going too bad so far, so hopefully we are out of here before we know it and get down south and get to work."

— William Tennant, of Newark

and get down south and get to work."

Kambic said he still has fresh memories from their trip to Louisiana three years ago — first after Hurricane Katrina, then after Hurricane Rita.

"It was our infantry battalion who cleared the Superdome, so I am very proud of that," Kambic said. "We have a bond with the citizens of Louisiana."

Louisiana Brig. Gen. Huntington Blair "Hunt" Downer Jr. said he was grateful for the spirit of help ingrained in the National Guard's tradition.

It always has been about helping your neighbor, Downer said, since the time it was called a militia in 1936.

"(If) they experience a national disaster, we are ready to go help them. We are having one; they are here to help us," Downer said.

Other states contributing to the relief efforts are Nebraska, Washington, Iowa, Tennessee and Kentucky. Some National Guard units also are adjusting their missions to prepare for Hurricane Ike, which is approaching the Gulf of Mexico.