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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2010

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DEAL of the WEEK

DISCOUNT DRUG MARY BRAND BUY ONE GET ONE FREE OFFER SEE INSIDE

SUN NEWS

BEST OF THE BLOTTER



A property manager got a scare Dec. 2 when he received a report of men carrying rifles. Read what happened in **THE BLOTTER, A2.**

SUN SPORTS



EAGLES WIN STATE TITLE

Page B1

GO SEEK



CAN YOU GUESS WHERE THIS SPOT IS?

Page B3



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A PRIVATE AUDIENCE



CHRISTINA TESAR/SPECIAL TO SUN NEWS

Jonah Coleman, 4, has a heart-to-heart discussion with Santa Claus at the recent Christmas Festival in Fairview Park. Jonah was requesting a gift for his younger sister. "He's a good big brother," said Jonah's mom. "He takes care of his sister."

Radio upgrade
Federal grant aids fire departments

By Joe Noga
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NORTH OLMSTED — Legislation introduced this week by City Council will clear the way for the city's fire department to accept a donation of more than \$120,000 in radio equipment upgrades that the city of Westlake received through a \$900,000 federal grant.

Fire Chief Thomas Klecar said about 15 portable radios and some mobile data terminals are among the equipment acquired by Westlake officials as part of a 2009 Federal Emergency Management Agency grant.

North Olmsted is one of seven communities in two counties that will benefit from this grant.

Departments in Lakewood, Rocky River, Fairview Park, Bay Village, and North Ridgeville will receive similar donations.

Klecar said the radios operate on a 800 megahertz. See **RADIO, A9**

Northwesterly getting big face-lift
Lakewood assisted living facility receiving \$1 million in improvements

By Kate Spilgen
kspilgen@sunnews.com

Northwesterly Assisted Living Community in Lakewood is undergoing a transformation from the inside out. The large brick building at 1341 Marlowe Ave. has the same exterior, but a new operating philosophy, new suites and new facilities after a nearly \$1 million renovation.

Owners Scott and Tony Kantor and their cousin, Bradley Dubin, bought the Northwesterly as the first of several acquisitions under their new Michigan-

based company, Bloomfield Senior Living. The trio recently quit their jobs as an attorney, investment banker and real estate broker to join the family business of senior care when they were faced with the dilemma of finding an assisted living facility for their 89-year-old grandmother.

"It's definitely affected how we decided to run our property," Dubin said. "We thought this was the future of healthcare: getting out of the nursing home business and looking at the assisted living business. We've gone through the process of not only owning

them, but looking out for family members."

His family has been in the nursing home business for more than 40 years, through three generations, Dubin said. He and his cousins saw a change in the field from a focus on retirement homes to assisted living facilities. When Salem-based Sunwest Management went bankrupt earlier in the year, they began buying properties as Kandu Capital and its operating company, Bloomfield Senior Living.

Dubin said he got involved early in the See **FACELIFT, A9**

Hard work, imagination bring her children's book to fruition

by John Dalke
Correspondent

Perhaps the greatest lesson Mary Jo Brown can teach her students is that hard work.

After many years in the making, Brown debuted and signed copies of "Bailey's New Home," her first children's book that will be widely published and distributed to major retailers like Barnes & Noble and Borders.

The Cleveland resident, who teaches second grade at St. Vincent De Paul School in West Park, found her story when she bought a golden retriever named "Bailey" nine years ago.

With charity in mind, Brown took her new pup to a therapy dog school where it was trained to See **WORK, A13**

Levy is approved; refunds are coming

By Joe Noga
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NORTH OLMSTED — A mandatory recount conducted on Dec. 1 by Cuyahoga County Board of Elections officials

confirmed that voters in North Olmsted approved a 7.9-mill school operating levy on Nov. 2.

That means school officials can focus on the future, fami-

lies can expect refunds of pay-to-play fees assessed this fall, and busing will be returned for students living a mile from their assigned schools.

The recount took place at the board's downtown Cleveland warehouse facility and was witnessed by several individuals, including North Olmsted Superintendent Cheryl

See **LEVY A14**

SUN POST-HERALD PERSON OF THE WEEK



Michael Cooper

This executive assistant manager of InterContinental Hotels Cleveland was named the Ohio Hotel & Lodging Association's Manager of the Year. He received the award at the organization's "Stars of the Industry" gala dinner in Columbus Nov. 22.

Cooper, of Lakewood, manages the day-to-day operations of the InterContinental See **PERSON, A5**

'Greatest fire chief' says goodbye to city

By Kate Spilgen
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After more than 37 years with the Lakewood Fire Department, Fire Chief Lawrence Mroz is saying goodbye.

Lakewood City Council members, Mayor Ed Fitzgerald and Mroz's family gathered Tuesday night to show their appreciation for his years of dedicated service, and to send him off with their best wishes.

"Mroz is the greatest fire chief Lakewood has ever had," Fitzgerald said. "He's what you think of when you think of a firefighter and a public servant... It's impossible to calculate the number of lives he's saved because he

did it as leader of one of the best fire departments in the country."

Mroz led Lakewood's 88-member team, including firefighters, paramedics and emergency medical technicians, through several administrations, sharing his wealth of knowledge and experience with mayors, council members, department members and residents.

"As an administrator, he's extremely skilled, and he's someone I've learned a lot from," Fitzgerald said. "He did (his job) with class and dedication and we'll never be able to repay him for that."

"I remember the many evenings you took explaining the See **CHIEF, A13**

TIME TO CELEBRATE!



KYLE LANZER/SUN NEWS

St. Edward High School's Mike Dinunzio's facial expression says it all as he hugs teammate Chad Bushley following the Eagles' Division I state football championship win over Huber Heights Wayne, 35-20. For the game story, see page B1.

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RADIO

From A1

frequency and increase local departments' abilities to communicate across borders.

"The real area that we'll see improvement in is coordination with our first responders," Klecan said.

Westlake Fire Chief Dale Kraus, who spearheaded the drive to acquire the grant funding, said the new system will benefit all the communities involved.

"We've come up with a system that will work for all of us," he said. "It's been a long time coming and it will come to fruition sometime early next year."

Kraus said he hopes to have the new radios installed and in use by May 1. Technicians with the WestCom regional dispatch system and the city of Westlake information technology department will assist with the installations.

Meanwhile, Klecan said North Olmsted will continue to operate its current 154mhz system until all of the kinks are worked out of the new radios.

"The current system still works and can be useful in a lot of ways," he said.

Kraus said that in addition to the benefits of the new 800mhz system, the Ohio Department of Transportation is erecting two new radio towers to augment emergency signals.

One tower will be located at Interstate 90 and Columbia Road, with another at Interstate 480 and Stearus Road.

"This should help us a great deal," Kraus said. "It will give us much better coverage and much better reception."

See more North Olmsted news at cleveland.com/north-olmsted.

Contact Noga at (216) 986-6072.



The 91-suite Northwesterly Assisted Living Community in Lakewood is under new ownership that has invested \$1 million in renovations over the last few months.

FACELIFT

From A1

bankruptcy and worked for more than two years to acquire Northwesterly, the company's first purchase.

"We pinpointed that property for a variety of reasons," he said. "We were focused on wanting to do the first new facility in the Midwest. We looked at other deals in Ohio in the past and the demographics were very strong. Economically, it made sense."

Kandu Capital paid cash for the property and the owners plan to operate with no debt to ensure stability for residents and their families.

The group also acquired two properties in South Carolina and two in Indiana from Sunwest Management, but Dubin said they are not trying to grow too quickly or too large.

"It's not the norm, but we have a totally different philosophy. We don't take on investors and we don't operate with debt," he said. "We could own 200-300 properties. Instead we've chosen to own 10 with no debt and no partners. It provides a lot of stability to residents that we have money to reinvest; we'll be here now

and we'll be here in the future. We're really focused on every property."

Staff at the Northwesterly agreed that management is on the upswing. Community Relations Coordinator Annette Kelly said residents are excited about the renovations, including a new private dining room, a bistro-bar, renovated chapel and improved activities room. Even the salon is getting a facelift.

"We just can't wait for (the renovations) to be completed," she said. "The residents don't even mind the construction because they're so excited. I've never worked for a company that's so involved and really cares for their residents."



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