



Circleville Herald

FRIDAY
May 18, 2007

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'Major theft ring' under investigation

By DAVID AMEY
HERALD STAFF WRITER

Pickaway County Sheriff's Office detectives currently are investigating what is being described as a major theft ring operating in the southern counties of Ohio. The PCSO is working with the Pike, Fayette, Ross and Highland sheriff's offices.

Pickaway County Sheriff's Detective Rex Emrick is credited with uncovering what is expected to be a five-county theft ring.

Thus far, three people have been arrested and more arrests are expected. In addition, a cache of suspected stolen merchandise including trailers and four-wheel vehicles has been recovered.

The investigation began when Gary L. Fellure reported a 2004 Monarch motor home valued at \$104,516 was taken from his business on U.S. Route 62 in Darby Township.

The unlocked vehicle was taken from the driveway, possibly using a spare set of keys stowed in its interior.

Emrick was notified when Pike County Forestry Ranger David Adkins discovered the motor home abandoned in the Pike state forest near Lathem.

He reported to Sheriff Dwight Radcliff the vehicle appeared to have been involved in a traffic accident based on an assessment of body damage. The passenger side sustained scrapes, and there is damage to the back.

In addition, the windshield was broken and a tree limb was protruding from the breakage.

Emrick processed the crime scene, sending the evidence to BCI in London for DNA testing.

He also questioned the Pike County sheriff's office about hit-and-run accidents.

On his drive back to Circleville, Sgt. Geraldine Travis of Pike County telephoned to inform him of a

See THEFT A2



Judy Palm shows some photos from the collection of Ned Harden which will be on display at this weekend's PCHS Spring Open House at the Clarke-May Museum.

Waylon Strickland/Herald

Historical Society plans open house

By WAYLON STRICKLAND
HERALD STAFF WRITER

The Pickaway County Historical Society (PCHS) Spring Open House is scheduled to be held from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the Clarke-May Museum.

"This is our traditional spring open house event," said Judy Palm, PCHS executive secretary. A seminar on genealogical research will be given, led by PCHS member Darlene Weaver, with help from additional volunteers.

"The seminar is an explanation of how people can start their own genealogical research," Palm said.

A 2-foot-by-3-foot handmade glass etching of Mount Oval by Circleville artist Shannon Rigsby will be on display at the event. Mount Oval was recently deeded to PCHS.

There will also be a display of photographs from the collection of Circleville resident Ned Harden.

"Ned has several photos of old Circleville in his collection," said Palm.

Light refreshments will be available and handicapped parking is available.

The Clarke-May House, located at 162 W. Union St., was built in two sections in the mid 1800s by Connecticut dentist, Dr. Edward Clarke and his wife, Margareta.

See HISTORICAL A2

Parts of former Smurfit plant being demolished

By MATTHEW FORTE
HERALD STAFF WRITER

The former Jefferson Smurfit plant is gradually being torn down on the city's west side.

Beginning in early March, workers from Premier Demolition Inc. started tearing down parts of the plant, mainly on its south end.

In November, Green Investment Group Inc., an investment group based in Alton, Ill., purchased the property. The subsidiary Circle Green LLC is managing the land. The two have signed a memorandum of understanding with Firm Green Energy Inc. (FGE), which is a company whose focus is renewable and alternative fuels.

FGE officials plan to make the plant a biodiesel facility.

Premier Demolition has been in business seven years, Project Manager Joe Ramon said. The company is based near St. Louis.

The demo crew for the Circleville project is six workers strong — "a small confined, safe crew," he said.

Before anything is knocked down, an EPA survey looks for hazardous materials such as lead and asbestos. That is removed before the demolishing starts.

Also removed are any recyclables — wiring, electric motors, large valves, transformers and other electrical components.

The remains of a building recently torn down looks like rubble left after an aerial bombing. But there is a method to the mess.

"You don't just go in there cutting structural support," Ramon said. "You dissect it."

After reducing a building to a pile of building material, everything is "segregated" — aluminum, steel and brick are sorted into separate piles, ready to be recycled.

See PLANT A2



Matthew Forte/Herald

A worker lays a cutting torch to one of the former Jefferson Smurfit plant's pulp hoppers.

Governor: Gay marriage ban hinders private worker protections

COLUMBUS (AP) — A gay marriage ban placed in Ohio's Constitution during the 2004 presidential election would make it difficult for the state to outlaw discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation or gender identity, the governor and his top lawyer said Thursday.

Strickland, a Democrat, made his comments after signing an executive order that bans such discrimination against employees of the state government agencies, boards and commissions he controls. He said any bill that would extend similar protections to the private sector runs the risk of being unconstitutional.

While saying he would support private-sector protections for gays, lesbians and transgendered workers in concept, Strickland said he is skeptical Ohio can follow the other states that have passed such laws.

"It's no secret that I was not supportive of the change to our state's constitution, but it is in fact a part of our state's constitution," he said. "My obligation as governor would be to make sure that any legislation that was proposed or introduced could only have my support if it was constitutional."

Currently, 20 states have laws protecting against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity or both,

according to the Human Rights Campaign.

Kent Markus, the governor's chief legal counsel, said the 2004 ban — attributed with helping deliver the bellwether state to President Bush that year — places broadly restrictive wording in the constitution that other states with anti-discrimination laws don't face.

"You'd have to see whether there is some argument that someone can craft that the (anti-discrimination) proposal 'approximates marriage' — that's one of the terms within the constitutional provision — and whether something that you're doing conflicts with the provision that precludes that," he said.

In another example of how the gay marriage ban could affect other regulations, the Ohio Supreme Court is considering whether the state's definition of marriage prevents domestic violence charges against unmarried people.

Lynne Bowman, executive director of the gay rights group Equality Ohio, said marriage and employment are in no way linked in the Ohio Constitution. She said a bill is being prepared that would extend anti-discrimination to the private sector and wants the governor to support it.

"The governor certainly took a step forward today in protecting over 60,000 state workers," she said. "Now we have

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QUICK INDEX

Deaths

Sandy L. Foster, 48

Home Delivery

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News tips

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Key

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Volume 121, No. 119

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Good Day,
Jerry Trego
Thank you
for subscribing
to The Herald



submitted

Radcliff receives Rotary certificate

Pickaway County Sheriff Dwight Radcliff is presented the Noon Rotary Club's certificate of appreciation for service above self by Charles Hedges. Radcliff is a member of the service club.

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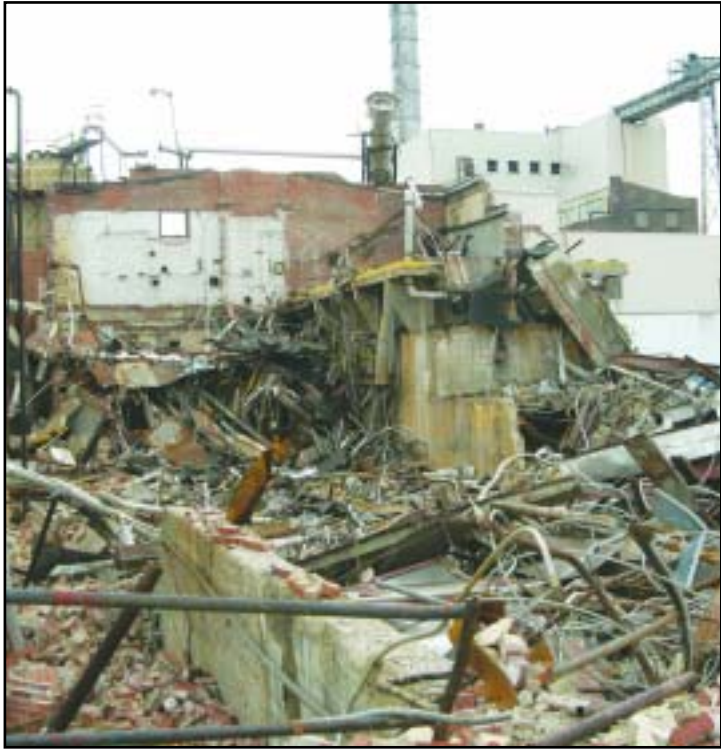
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Matthew Forte/Herald

Remains of the reactor room at the former Smurfit-Stone plant on Circleville's west side. Parts of the facility are being knocked down to create room for a biodiesel plant.

Plant

Continued from A1

How much material from a building is actually recyclable?

"We have pulled half a million pounds out of this one," Ramon. Is there more?

Inside another building, workers using cutting torches are removing piping and anything

non-structural in the steel rafters. Demolition of the site is about 60 percent finished, Ramon said.

"In the demolition business, there is no typical project, but this is as typical as they come," he said.

Changing weather doesn't affect the work, in fact, rain helps keep down the dust.

Demo work should be finished by the end of June.

Marriage

Continued from A1

11 million other people in Ohio who deserve the same protections."

Strickland's executive order prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in all state hirings, firings, transfers, pay adjustments and training opportunities.

The measure expands on similar anti-discrimination orders that had been in place under former governors Richard Celeste, a Democrat, and George Voinovich, a Republican, before being rescinded by Strickland's predecessor, Republican Bob Taft.

To bolster the need for the order, Strickland cited a review by the Ohio Civil Rights Commission that found more than 60 charges alleging discrimination due to gender

stereotyping or sexual orientation bias had been filed in the state over the past three years.

The commission's chief legal counsel, Matthew Miko, told Strickland's office in a May 15 memo that he was confident the figure underreported the depth of the problem in the state, since sexual orientation is not a protected class under either state or federal law.

Strickland said he hopes the order will send a signal to the country about Ohio's diversity.

"A lot of people think that because we are a Midwestern state, we are very heterogeneous in our makeup," he said. "Whether you're thinking of the arts, research institutions or just the demographics of our population, we are an incredibly diverse tapestry of all the elements that make up America. We ought to be proud of that, and celebrate it, and use it to our benefit."

Theft

Continued from A1

hit-skip report.

In returning to investigate, he discovered evidence the motor home had apparently struck a parked camper while it was being parked in a rural area.

Emrick could see a variety of items on the property, and requested a search warrant which uncovered the cache of merchandise, all of which was recovered by Pike County.

Charged with receiving stolen property were John Ralston and Eva Speakman. Questioned was Quinton Binegar, 31, of Greenfield, who was being detained in the Fayette County jail on a charge

of trespassing.

In recent months numerous Fayette County residences, including many under construction, have been burglarized with various items stolen from the sites.

Sheriff's detectives have linked many of the items to Fayette County victims, who have assisted in further identifying their property.

Fayette County Sheriff Vernon Stanforth said these and other thefts remain under investigation. Attempts to connect other victims to the property seized are ongoing and other counties are actively participating in the Pike County investigation of the crime spree.

As lead investigators, the Pike County Sheriff's Office and prosecutor will present criminal cases to a Pike County grand jury since the property was found in that county.

Historical

Continued from A1

In the eastern wing, constructed in 1845, Dr. Clarke reportedly practiced dentistry where the present Historical Society office is now located. The west wing, consisting of double parlors downstairs with unusual floor-to-ceiling windows opening as doors, and two bedrooms upstairs, was added in 1854.

Clarke's son, Hartley, also a dentist, was born in the house in 1849. He married Clara Barrere in 1857 and built the large Victorian frame house four doors east of his parents in 1887. After the death of Edward Clarke in 1896, Hartley's daughter, Abbe, occupied her grandparent's house.

Abbe Mills Clarke was an accomplished musician, and organist for the Presbyterian Church. Many Circleville children studied piano in her parlor. From the early 1940s until her death in 1947, Miss Clarke shared her home with her friend, Alice Ada May. Heir to the house and its contents, Miss May, in turn, bequeathed it to the Pickaway County Historical Society upon her death in 1965.

Many items belonging to the Clarke family and to Miss May are displayed throughout the home. Much of the dining room furnishings are Clarke family heirlooms. The upstairs room furnished as an early dental office contains the dental cabinet used by the younger Dr. Clarke.

A large two-story frame addition constructed by the Society on the north side of the building to house a meeting room and display area incorporates the old family kitchen. The museum was officially opened to the public June 18, 1972.

Immigration deal may legalize millions

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a striking reach across party lines, the White House and key lawmakers agreed Thursday to reshape the nation's immigration laws and give millions of illegal immigrants legal status. At the same time, borders would be tightened.

The compromise brought liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans together with top members of President Bush's team on an issue that carries heavy potential risks and rewards for all involved.

The Senate will wade into an emotional and wide-ranging debate on the issue next week that promises to test the unlikely coalition that produced the deal. Almost instantly, the plan brought vehement criticism from both sides of the immigration issue, including liberals who called it unfair and unworkable and conservatives who branded it an overly permissive "amnesty."

The proposal constitutes a far-reaching change in the immigration system that would admit future arrivals seeking to put down roots in the U.S. based on their skills, education levels and job experience, limiting the importance of family ties. A new class of guest workers would be allowed in temporarily, but only after borders were fortified and measures were in place to ensure the rules were followed.

Bush said the proposal would "help enforce our borders but equally importantly, it'll treat people with respect."

Dems seek no-confidence vote

WASHINGTON (AP) — Support for Attorney General Alberto Gonzales sank further Thursday as Democrats proposed a no-confidence vote, a fifth GOP senator called for his resignation and yet another Republican predicted he won't survive a congressional investigation.

The White House shrugged off the no-confidence idea as merely symbolic, and President Bush continued to stand by his embattled friend.

By any measure, the news was not good for Gonzales. Democrats proposed two versions of a nonbinding resolution expressing what senators of both parties have said for weeks: that Gonzales has become too weakened to run the Justice Department.

One version lumps Gonzales in with another scandal-tarred ally, World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz.

"Be it the World Bank or the Department of Justice, the way to maintain the integrity of an institution is to have leaders of integrity at the top," said Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn. "The time has come to move beyond these leaders in the best interests of these two institutions."

Bush, Blair salute each other

WASHINGTON (AP) — To the last, neither George Bush nor Tony Blair wavered.

The British prime minister allowed not a single regret about the war alliance that cost him his popularity and perhaps his job. The U.S. president, losing his best friend on the world stage, bristled at suggestions Blair should already be out the door.

"Trying to do a tap dance on his political grave, aren't you?" Bush said Thursday at Blair's side in the White House Rose Garden, admonishing British reporters looking beyond Blair's tenure six weeks before he leaves office. "You don't understand how effective Blair is, I guess."

Bush's reluctance to see the British leader go is understandable. For Bush, Blair has been a steadfast friend for over six years, an articulate and impassioned defender of the U.S.-led war in Iraq.

The British prime minister has been a presence in Bush's presidency like no other leader.

Senators negotiate deal on war funding

WASHINGTON (AP) — Senate leaders met with President Bush's chief of staff in the Capitol on Thursday in search of a compromise bill to fund the Iraq war, eager to avoid a second veto showdown.

"We'll work through something we can all live with," the president told reporters at the White House.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said that was his goal, adding that Democrats would not give the White House "a blank check." Bush "has to deal with us," he said.

Bush vetoed an earlier measure, objecting to a proposed timetable for a troop withdrawal as well as several billion dollars Democrats inserted for their favored domestic programs.

House Democrats failed to override his veto, then countered with a replacement bill to finance the war in two 60-day installments. Bush vowed to veto that bill, as well.

Missing 4-year-old girl in Portugal

PRAIA DA LUZ, Portugal (AP) — The disappearance of 4-year-old Madeleine McCann, the British girl who vanished from her hotel room in Portugal while her parents dined 50 yards away, has captivated hearts and triggered debate around the world.

Were her parents negligent to leave Madeleine and her 2-year-old twin siblings alone, even for a brief time? Or should they have been able to expect a certain level of safety in this family-friendly southern resort town?

The questions cut to the heart of a universal vulnerability that terrifies parents everywhere. Yet answers differ widely — revealing cultural differences within Europe and across the Atlantic.

In Portugal and much of the rest of southern Europe, where parents often take their young children along with them to smoky bars, many have accused the McCanns of neglect, despite the fact that they were at a pool-side restaurant just seconds away from the room and say they checked on their sleeping children every half hour. The resort offers baby-sitting services, but the McCanns apparently chose not to use them that evening.

"You shouldn't leave (young children) alone," said Francisco Vieira, a 77-year-old father of two grown children who works as a parking lot attendant near the beach in Praia da Luz.

Use humpback recordings as lure

WEST SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — Biologists tried Thursday to use recorded siren songs of humpback whales to lure an injured female and her wounded calf from a shipping channel and back toward the Pacific Ocean 90 miles away.

When the researchers played the underwater recordings from an 87-foot Coast Guard cutter, the whales swam away from the sound rather than toward it.

Hours later, the whales were still swimming at the Port of Sacramento, where they have been since Tuesday. Scientists then decided to move the sound equipment to a 25-foot Coast Guard vessel, believing the noise from the larger ship's generator may have interfered with the whale sounds.

It could take weeks to get the whales back where they belong, scientists said. Still, hundreds of people lined the river banks to watch the progress Thursday.

Pickaway Co. Master Gardeners

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NOTICE OF PIPELINE APPLICATION

Take notice that on April 30, 2007 at Docket No. CP07-208-000 Rockies Express Pipeline LLC (REX) with its business address located at P.O. Box 281304, Lakewood, Colorado 80228-8304, filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ("FERC") for a certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing the construction and operation of certain facilities comprising its proposed ("REX-East Project"). A map depicting the general location of the REX pipeline facilities that are proposed, under construction, or currently existing are attached with this notice.

REX has requested the issuance of a final order from the FERC granting the authorization for construction of the expansion facilities by February 1, 2008. This approval schedule will enable REX to commence service through the expansion facilities by December 30, 2008.

The REX-East Project, upon approval by the FERC, will authorize the next planned segment extension of the REX Pipeline extending from the terminus of the FERC authorized REX-West Project located at an interconnect with Panhandle Eastern Pipe Line located in Audrain County, Missouri to a terminus near the Town of Clarington in Monroe County, Ohio. The REX-East Project will comprise approximately 638 miles of 42-inch pipeline and is proposed to transport 1,800,000 Dth/day of natural gas across the following four states: Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio. In addition to compression proposed to be constructed in the prior mentioned states, the Project also will include the construction and operation of one compressor station proposed to be located in the State of Wyoming and one compressor station proposed to be located in the State of Nebraska.

A representative of REX will contact all landowners that are directly impacted to discuss the purchase of easements and other rights necessary with the proposed construction of the expansion facilities. Representatives will also discuss, with all landowners directly impacted by the proposed Project, payment for damages, construction and restoration methods that will be utilized on the property, as well as specific concerns you may have. If at any time you have questions or concerns about the project you may contact Mr. Kerry Malone, Right of Way Project Manager, by telephone at 1-866-566-0066

The FERC has published a pamphlet entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility on My Land? What Do I Need to Know?" This pamphlet, which can be viewed at the FERC's web site at <http://www.ferc.gov>, contains information about the FERC's regulatory process and includes information on how you can participate in the regulatory review process. The FERC's Federal Register Notice of the application has been/will be mailed to affected landowners and governmental entities. The notice, together with the pamphlet mentioned above, contains information on how to intervene or comment in the FERC's proceedings. For additional information you may also contact FERC's Office of External Affairs by telephone toll free at 1-866-208-3372.

A copy of REX's application filed with the FERC at Docket No. CP07-208-000 is available at the FERC's website indicated above under the "eLibrary" link and an electronic copy is available for review at a public library located in each county the Project traverses. For a list of these libraries please contact Mr. Malone at the number provided above.

