

Old Brooklyn News

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Brooklyn YMCA to close; building to be sold

by Sheila Long
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After a half century of service to Brooklyn Centre, Old Brooklyn and surrounding neighborhoods, the Brooklyn YMCA on Pearl Road will be closing its doors and put on the market for sale. Glenn Haley, the president and CEO of the YMCA of Greater Cleveland made the public announcement on Tuesday, May 30.

The Downtown YMCA also will be placed up for private sale but will continue as a membership branch in a contingency of sale lessee relationship with the buyer.

In a May 30 letter to the Brooklyn Y's membership (the first notice that members received of any potential closure), Haley wrote:

"The Brooklyn YMCA will be placed up for private sale and we will transition its operation to either a program branch or non-facility branch. As such we will no longer be providing housing and the residence will be closed by Sept. 1..."

"In the Brooklyn community, it is not feasible for this branch to continue as a membership branch..."

"At this time, we would like to offer you the opportunity to transfer your membership to another YMCA of Greater Cleveland membership branch at your current rate..."



Photo by Sandy Worona

In 1919, Karl Kist founded the Brooklyn branch of the YMCA; its first home was a second-floor office (with one phone) at 4145 Pearl Road shared with the YWCA and the editor of the *Brooklyn News*. In 1935, the "why" leased club rooms and recreational space from the Pearl Road Methodist Church, and in 1955, it moved into its present location in the newly constructed Claud Foster building on Pearl Road.

"To help facilitate the change, we have included a postage paid postcard and ask that you return the card by June 30, 2006."

Though discussions regarding the financial difficulties at the Brooklyn Y had been underway for over a year, the briskness and finality of the announcement and the letter to members came as a shock to staff, board members, city council representatives and community leaders.

"I was informed of this on Thursday of last week (May 18) and, up to that point, we were convinced that we had more time to deal with the issues facing the facility," said Brooklyn YMCA Board President Dr. Charles Boester. "It was a shock at first. I just can't believe that they are going through with this. We sat at the table with Glenn (Haley) and Willie (Dean) and said: Can we discuss it? Can we have some dialogue?"

No. It's a done deal. We have long-time employees — Debbie Natal at the desk; she's been here for ten years. She sat at the table and said, 'This isn't a job; this is part of my family.' What do you say to her? I have been a member for 34 years."

Despite Boester's obvious shock and concern, he acknowledged that Haley's assessments of the financial forecast for the Brooklyn Y were grim and somewhat compelling.

"In terms of a membership," Haley said. "You have a 60,600 square-foot facility that has 519 membership units. To maintain the organization and the operations, the Brooklyn Y would need 2200-2500 membership units just to sustain it. Over the last two years, we've got it up by barely 100 and that is not sufficient."

Fiscal woes have plagued the YMCA of Greater Cleveland for quite some time. Struggling with deficits over \$2.4 million, in 2004, the West Side YMCA on Franklin Boulevard in Ohio City closed, followed by closings at the Miles and Glenville YMCAs.

The recent announcements of the Brooklyn closing and the Downtown sale are what Haley termed the "final phase of a three-year financial stability plan." The plan calls for the organization to "prepare and manage a positive cash flow budget without the use of endowment funds in 2007."

See *Brooklyn YMCA* page 2

2006-2007 Business Directory available in expanded territory

by Susan Nieves
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The 2006-07 *Business Directory and Service Guide* is being distributed to Old Brooklyn, Brooklyn Centre and City of Brooklyn households and businesses with this month's issue of the *Old Brooklyn News*. For the past sixteen years the directory, a publication of Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation (OBCDC), has been delivered free-of-charge to households and businesses in Old Brooklyn and Brooklyn Centre. This year the circulation has been expanded to include City of Brooklyn residents and businesses.

The decision to expand into the City of Brooklyn was made by OBCDC Executive Director Jay Gardner as part of a broader effort to extend the circulation of the *Old Brooklyn News* to every household in the City of Brooklyn. Regarding the expansion Jay explained, "Old Brooklyn, Brooklyn Centre and the City of Brooklyn are a unified market. By expanding into the City of Brooklyn we will be better able to serve that market."

In March of this year the *Old Brooklyn News* began distribution to a limited number of businesses in the City of Brooklyn. For this month only, City of Brooklyn households and businesses will receive free door-to-door delivery of the *Old Brooklyn News* and the *Business Directory and Service Guide*.

Brooklyn residents will be able to pick up future issues of the *Old Brooklyn News* at local drop-off locations including Brooklyn City Hall, Brooklyn Recreation Center, the Brooklyn Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library, Geppetto's Pizza & Ribs, National City Bank, Marco's Pizza, Dairy Mart and the Memphis Avenue Shell Gas Station.

The *Old Brooklyn News* and the Service Directory are also available at various locations in the Tremont neighborhood. All of



The cover of the 2006-2007 *Old Brooklyn, City of Brooklyn & Brooklyn Centre Business Directory and Service Guide* features nine distinctive homes showcasing the varied styles of housing stock in the region.

the usual sites in Old Brooklyn and Brooklyn Centre will also receive drop-offs of the Directory.

The new business directory lists hundreds of commercial, civic and religious organizations within the geographic areas described above. It serves as a useful tool for easy access to local contact information and assists in the promotion of "buying local."

For more information on where to obtain the *Old Brooklyn News* in your area or for additional copies of the 2006-07 *Business Directory and Service Guide*, contact Sandy at 216-459-1000 or visit the OBCDC office, 3344 Broadview Road, during regular business hours (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Monday through Friday.

Old Brooklyn News receives twelve awards at annual NCPA presentation

by Lynette Filips
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The Neighborhood and Community Press Association (NCPA) conducted its annual meeting and awards presentation on Saturday, April 29, in the Music & Communication Building at Cleveland State University (CSU). Lynette Filips, Jay Gardner, Sheila Long, Susan Nieves and George Shuba represented the *Old Brooklyn News* (OBN) at the gathering.

Ward 15 councilman Brian Cummins also attended the seminar, but he was there as one of the presenters. As former editor of the OBN and outgoing NCPA president, he had been asked by Professor Leo Jeffries, the organization's moderator, to discuss his insights regarding the relationship between Cleveland City Council and neighborhood newspapers.

Bill Barrow, CSU's Special Collections Librarian, was the morning's second speaker. He talked about the *Cleveland Memory Project* which CSU has put online.

The presentation of the awards took

place after a deli-style lunch and short business meeting. There were eleven categories, and each newspaper had been allowed up to three entries in each of them. The *Old Brooklyn News* submitted a total of twenty-six entries in ten categories, and received twelve awards (in nine categories). Four were first-place awards.

Sandra Worona received two of the first-place awards. One was for an *original ad* she designed for Golden Harvest Produce which ran in the February 2005 issue, and the other was for the *layout* of page 1 of the May 2005 issue. The layout featured photos and articles related to the death of the pope, upcoming spring cleanups, and the departures of Ward 15 Councilman Brian Cummins and Ward 16 Councilman Michael O'Malley, and the arrival of Ward 16 Councilman Kevin Kelley.

Concerning Sandy's first-place *ad*, the judges wrote, "Nice integration of art, text and products"; concerning the *page layout*, they said, "Generally a clean, uncluttered

See *awards* page 2

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Man's best friend gets better with age

By Sheila Long
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Did you ever think that maybe old dogs find new tricks boring and that's pretty much why they won't let you teach them? It is quite possible that they may find you and your silly bag of new tricks just a *little* over-the-top.



Coco, a nine-year-old Shih Tzu, is available for adoption.

Senior dogs, like their human counterparts, age to a point of mellowness that make them great companions. A new non-profit in Old Brooklyn hopes to drive that point home.

The Sanctuary for Senior Dogs is a rescue, adoption, training and foster care facility for dogs aged seven and up, which recently opened its doors on Broadview Road.

Founder and Executive Director Deborah Workman, along with co-founders Barb Prociak and Barb Besuner (affectionately referred to as the "Two Barbs"), are all Old Brooklyn residents. The three women, along with several volunteers, founded the sanctuary in 2000 and, until recently, operated the rescue mission out of their homes.

In November of 2005, after five years of dogged determination, the organization had grown enough to open the adoption and education center at 4456 Broadview Road. The Sanctuary is dedicated to the placement and care of senior dogs who have been abandoned to shelters; they do not, at this point, take direct referrals from dog owners.

According to the United States Humane Society, of the six-to-eight million animals that enter the sheltering system each year, only half leave alive. This means that three-to-four million animals in the United States are killed each year. Senior dogs, according to Deborah, are a very high percentage of those euthanized.

"Older dogs don't get adopted," Deborah said. "People rush out with pups. Old dogs sit there day after day until they die."

Though senior dogs may come with existing or anticipated medical complications, they are ideal pets for dog lovers who

have little time or patience for puppies.

"Senior dogs won't chew your slippers and then act like they have no idea what happened, said Deborah. "They're mellow and generally happy with almost anything. Senior dogs offer the most unconditional love than any other animal. They're like: 'Hot-diggity. I have a place to live.' They seem to know that you saved them."

The Senior Dogs Project, a national advocacy and adoption agency for senior dogs, lists its top ten reasons for adopting an older dog: (1) Older dogs are housetrained; (2) older dogs are not teething puppies; (3) they focus well; (4) they have learned what "no" means; (5) older dogs settle in easily; (6) they love well; (7) they are mellow; (8) they are instant companions; (9) they leave you time for yourself; and (10) they let you get a good night's sleep.

Which brings us to the human obsession with aging (as if dogs care how old they are): Exactly when does a dog become a senior? After all, it's not like they're receiving the dreaded AARP card in the mail the moment they turn fifty. It turns out, that just like humans, dogs are not all alike when it comes to aging. Certain breeds, mixed breeds and smaller dogs, in general, tend to



Burt, a nine-year-old Golden Retriever/Saint Bernard mix, serves as one of the Sanctuary's resident therapy dogs.

live longer. The average life-span of a dog is twelve years. With the right care, dogs may live up to fourteen or fifteen years.

According to guidelines published by Tufts University, "Veterinarians generally consider small dogs to be senior citizens at about twelve years of age, while large dogs reach the senior stage at six-to-eight years of age. This roughly corresponds to the 55-plus category in people."

The Sanctuary for Senior Dogs has taken in 260 dogs since its founding. Of these, 65 percent have been placed in permanent homes. The remaining dogs have been placed in foster homes or have been trained



(Left) Before Sanctuary intervention; (Right) after rehabilitation. When Joey was found, his ears were matted to the ground. Sanctuary volunteers removed nineteen pounds of burred, matted fur. Cleaned up, he is one lovable pooch.

as therapy dogs, which are utilized by the Sanctuary as ambassadors of "canine affection" at nursing homes, senior daycare centers and other rehabilitation facilities. Two dogs in the organization's six-year history were put to sleep.

"We don't put any dog down unless there are serious aggression issues or unless they are seriously suffering and there is nothing to relieve that suffering. That is the hardest decision to make. That's where a good vet comes in. In six years, we have only put two dogs down," Deborah said.

The Sanctuary's veterinarian is Dr. Bob Litkovitz at Gateway Animal Clinic, a geriatric dog specialist, assists the organization as a friend and medical consultant.

As a new non-profit facility in the neighborhood, saddled for the first time with rent, utilities and other overhead, the Sanctuary is in great need of donations and volunteers. Medical costs alone for foster

and hospice dogs hover around \$2600 per month. The fifth annual Senior Dog Bowl, a fundraiser for the organization, will be held on Saturday, June 10, at Meszar's Lanes in the Memphis Fulton Plaza from 7-11 p.m. For \$20, an advanced ticket may be purchased that includes an entire night of open bowling, shoe rental, pizza, salad and dessert. Tickets at the door will cost \$25.

Dog lovers interested in adoption may attend an *Adoption Sunday* to meet prospective adoptees. Adoption Sundays are held at the Sanctuary on the fourth Sunday of each month from 2-4 p.m. For additional information regarding becoming a foster or adoptive parent to a senior dog or volunteering time to transport dogs, medicine or food, contact Deborah Workman at 216-485-9233. The Sanctuary's website, www.sanctuaryforseniordogs.org, also offers useful and interesting information about senior dogs and the organizations services.

Cool Canine Quotes

Dogs have given us their absolute all. We are the center of their universe. We are the focus of their love and faith and trust. They serve us in return for scraps. It is without a doubt the best deal man has ever made.
— Roger Caras

Any member introducing a dog into the Society's premises shall be liable to a fine of one pound. Any animal leading a blind person shall be deemed to be a cat.
— Oxford Union Society, London, Rule 46

Dogs feel very strongly that they should always go with you in the car; in case the need should arise for them to bark violently at nothing right in your ear.
— Dave Berry

To sit with a dog on a hillside on a glorious afternoon is to be back in Eden, where doing nothing was not boring – It was peace.
— Milan Kundera

I named my dog Stay so I can say, "Come here, Stay. Come here, Stay."
— Steven Wright

I wonder if dogs think poodles are members of a weird religious cult.
— Rita Rudner

If a dog will not come to you after having looked you in the face, you should go home and examine your conscience.
— Woodrow Wilson

I loathe people who keep dogs. They are cowards who haven't got the guts to bite people themselves. — Author Unknown

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FAMILY FUN!

by Susan Nieves
susann@oldbrooklyn.com

The *Old Brooklyn News* is requesting submissions that highlight local activities and events that are appropriate for families and individuals of all ages. If you have information regarding upcoming events/activities, please submit your listing, "Attention Susan Nieves," c/o The *Old Brooklyn News*, 3344 Broadview Rd., Cleveland, OH 44109; Fax: 216-459-1741; E-Mail: susann@oldbrooklyn.com.

Art House

3119 Denison Ave., 216-398-8556

Family Open Art Studio & Art Classes - Now 1st & 3rd Sat's. of every month, 1:30 - 3:30 pm, \$5 per person; children under 2, free; family of 4, \$18. All materials included. No registration required. For more info on other classes & activities for age preschool thru adult call or visit www.arthouseinc.org.

Cleveland Botanical Garden, Little Yellow House, 1945 E. 66th St.
Learning Garden Festival - Sat., Jun. 3, 1-4 pm. Tours, garden tips, garden gifts, lemonade. Free.

Cleveland Botanical Garden, Esperanza Garden, 2922 W. 25th St.
Open House - Thurs., Jun. 15, 4-6 pm. View the urban garden. Gardening tips, gifts. Free.

Cleveland Metroparks Canal Way Center Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation - E. 49th St., 216-206-1000
Art Display - thru Jun. 30, 9 am - 5 pm. Enjoy a photo exhibit by Al Fuchs highlighting Cleveland architecture, workers & landmarks.

Canalway Cart Tours - Fri., Jun. 2, & Fri., Jun. 9, 10:30 am or noon. Free one-hour tour of Ohio & Erie Canal Reservation in a seven-passenger golf cart. Call to register.

Train Day - Sat., Jun. 24, 10 am - 4 pm. Activities include train exhibits, trestle hikes, crafts, exhibits & more. Live music & toy train appraisals. Free.

Cleveland Metroparks Garfield Park Nature Center Garfield Park Reservation - off Broadway & Mill Creek Lane 216-341-3152

"BugFest" Bug Recycled Art Contest - Use recyclable materials — empty egg cartons, soft drink cans, bottles & paper — to create bug art. Entries accepted Jul. 13 - Aug. 2, 9:30 am - 5 pm. Adult & child (18 & younger) categories. All entries will be displayed at "BugFest" on Sat., Aug. 12th at Garfield Park Nature Center. Call for more info.

Cleveland Metroparks Zoo Wildlife Way, 216-661-6500

"Animals in Art: Clay Creatures" - thru Aug. 13, 10 am - 5 pm in the Zoo's Exhibit Hall. Features seven ceramic sculptures from Cleveland Museum of Art & eight Zoo-owned ceramic tiles. Free with regular Zoo admission.

Father's Day - Sun., Jun. 18, 10 am - 6 pm. Dads receive free admission to the Zoo.

Dr. ZooLittle's Wild Animal Show - thru Labor Day. Shows performed daily at 11:30 am, 1:30 & 3:30 pm at the Amphitheater. Interactive show includes human actors, birds, mammals & reptiles. Free with regular Zoo admission.

Butterfly Magic - thru Labor Day. Featuring tropical butterflies that flutter freely amid the plants & flowers in the Zoo's Public Greenhouse. Free with regular Zoo admission.

New Exhibit - TOUCH - Amazing Rays & Sharks - thru Labor Day, 10 am - 5 pm. Located at Savanna Ridge, TOUCH! offers an opportunity for visitors to reach in & feel the smooth skin of stingrays. Get closer than ever to small sharks. Learn about the marine life found around the world & how to conserve these animals' habitats. Zoo members, free; otherwise, \$1 additional admission per person.

Cleveland Museum of Natural History 1 Wade Oval Drive, University Circle 216-231-4600

Museum - Mon. - Sat., 10 am - 5 pm; Wed. to 10 pm; Sun., noon - 5 pm. Admission, age 2 & under, free; age 3-6, \$4.50; age 7-adult, \$7.50; seniors & students, \$5.50.

Cleveland Public Library - Brooklyn, South Brooklyn & Fulton Branches Summer Trek through Africa - READ! - Mon., Jun. 12, - Sat., Aug. 19. Fun weekly summer reading program. Special events & prizes. Free. Call South Brooklyn, 216-623-7067; Fulton, 216-623-6969; or Brooklyn, 216-623-6920, for more info.

Estabrook Recreation Center 4125 Fulton Road, 216-664-4149
Recreational Activities - Family Swim - Family Gym - Ceramics -Weight Room Call for schedule. Times vary. All above activities free. Call for more info.

International Women's Air & Space Museum Burke Lakefront Airport, 1501 N. Marginal Rd., Room 165 216-623-1111

Museum - Mon. - Fri., 10 am - 4 pm. Free admission. The museum is a repository of information about women in aviation & space. Visit the website at www.iwasm.org.

Lake Erie Nature & Science Center 28728 Wolf Rd. 440-871-2900

Planetarium Family Programs - Programs, dates, times & fees vary. Call or visit lencs.org for more info.

University Circle, Inc. 10831 Magnolia Dr., 216-791-3900
Parade the Circle Cultural Celebration Sat., Jun. 10, 11 am - 4 pm. Parade - noon. Free arts event for the entire family featuring music, dance & hands-on activities from more than 20 cultural institutions. Call or visit www.universitycircle.org for details.

Western Reserve Historical Society Museum 10825 East Blvd., 216-721-5722
Three Museums - The History Museum, Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum, and Library. Mon. - Sat., 10 am - 5 pm; Sun., noon - 5 pm. Hay-McKinney Mansion tours daily, noon - 5 pm. Admission, \$8.50 adults, \$7.50 seniors, \$5 students. Parking, \$5. For more info call or visit www.wrhs.org.

Hale Farm & Village 2686 Oak Hill Rd., Bath, OH 330-666-3711
Outdoor living history museum featuring life & crafts from the mid-1800s. Includes farm animals, pastures & historic houses with historical interpreters dressed in period costume. Admission — \$14.50, adults; \$12.50, seniors; \$6.00, children ages 3-12; under 3, free.

CSU Urban Planning & Design students examine options for Lower Big Creek

by Jay Gardner
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On May 4, fourteen students from the 2006 Master of Urban Planning and Development Capstone Class publicly presented four alternative plans for a railway system that will eventually link the MetroParks Zoo with the Towpath Trail in the Cuyahoga Valley. The Urban Affairs class, led by course instructors James Kastellic and Professor Robert Simmons, is the final course in the students' Master of Science curriculum. The class allows students to use their newly acquired skills and insights on a real world urban planning problem. The Lower Big Creek Valley Greenway Initiative was chosen for their class project last January.

Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation has been involved in the Lower Big Creek Valley Greenway Initiative for over four years. The goal of this initiative is to come up with plans that will deal with some of the more noxious uses in the Valley and even-

tually restore all or parts of it to accessible recreational uses. Developing a cost-effective connecting trail is the first step in the process.

The students split up into four groups to study the problem and came up with distinctly different solutions. The first scenario proposes to run the trail along the existing rail lines. The second scenario sites the trail along the rim of the Valley, winding it through portions of Old Brooklyn and Brooklyn Centre. Scenario three, the most expensive, would create an "Extreme Sports Park" and mountain biking trail running through some of the landfill sites. The fourth scenario proposes the construction of an urban campground along the trail, as well as a nature park and concession area. All four options were judged by a panel of planning professionals.

Although none of the plans for the Valley are intended for immediate implementation, each gives provocative insights into what could be in store in the future, and underscores the great potential of the Old Brooklyn neighborhood.



Photo by George Shuba

The lighting of the candle signifies the induction of the officers and members of the National Honor Society at Brooklyn and James Ford Rhodes High Schools. The students were honored at the Kiwanis Club of Old Brooklyn's annual luncheon at Ridge Park Manor on May 16. Two students will receive Kiwanis scholarships in June. Pictured from left to right are Ward 15 Councilman Brian Cummins, Len Signer, Madelyn Hruska, Melissa Akanacio, Samantha Komenic, Chris Hardulak, Eric Swader and Dr. Patricia Campbell Rowell.

Metrohealth Request for Deaconess Artifacts

In its desire to continue the legacy of Deaconess Hospital in Old Brooklyn, Metrohealth Medical Center would like to fill a display cabinet with items relevant to Deaconess Hospital. Metrohealth has contacted the Historical Society of Old Brooklyn for such memorabilia. While the historical society does have a few relevant items, it now turns to the community to make this idea a reality. If you have any such items which you would be willing to donate for this display, please bring them to the:

Old Brooklyn CDC 3344 Broadview Road
during regular business hours.
Call 459-1000 to be certain that someone will be there to receive them.

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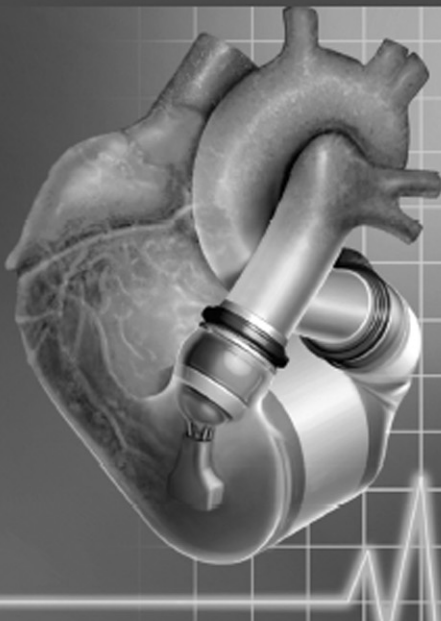
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