

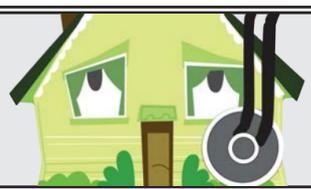
PAY UP

Or face jail, judge tells convicted thief. **B1**



HEALTHY HOMES

Program helps owners maintain their old homes. **ACCENT, D1**



THE CHRONICLE

T E L E G R A M

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50¢

City's plans need money

Elyria 2015 group floats tax to fund improvements

Adam Wright
The Chronicle-Telegram

ELYRIA — The Steering Committee for the Elyria 2015 plan has talked about a 0.25 percentage point income tax increase to fund proposals such as pumping up the police department and making downtown improvements.

The tax increase idea was battled around — along with several others, including bringing more businesses to town to generate revenue — at a recent Steering Committee meeting. The group is made up of residents charged with coming up with a direction for the city's future.

Members plan to release a final report of their ideas to City Council in December.

Such a tax increase would bring in about \$3 million, which could go a long way toward improving the city, members of the group said Wednesday.

Mayor Bill Grace, who brought up the increase at the steering committee meeting, said that while the proposal was just being tossed around as a possible idea, the fact remains that the city will have to come up with funding soon.

"The 2015 planning process has many items that were identified as needs by residents, including stronger police, recreational facilities, park improvements, downtown improvements and mall improvements. All of which cost money, and some of which cost considerable money," he said.

One area that money likely won't go to is the Fire Department, which has seen staffing cuts from a minimum of 17 per shift to 14 to try to curb overtime within the department.

Grace said the Fire Department was not one of the areas that residents chose for improvements when public meetings were held last year to decide the direction Elyria ought to go. Hundreds of residents attended the meetings, where they plugged their city spending preferences into computers.

See **TAX, A2**

NEWS OF NOTE

It's time for flu shots

This fall will have the largest supply ever produced, so the government is urging that everyone — not just people who are at risk — get a shot. **A3**



And we have a winner

Kanye West easily beats 50 Cent in album sale challenge, but will 50 follow through on his promise and quit rap? **D5**

SWEEPING WIN OVER DETROIT



BRUCE BISHOP / CHRONICLE PHOTOS

The classic Tribe signs are back as the Indians are three wins away from the playoffs.

Division crown in grasp

Chris Assenheimer
The Chronicle-Telegram

They came, they cheered, they saw a sweep.

Sign-wielding Indians fans dressed in red packed Jacobs Field for a pivotal three-game series against Central Division rival Detroit in hopes of seeing the Tribe close in on the team's first playoff appearance since 2001.

They got more than they bargained for. Wednesday's crowd of 32,511 fans watched the Indians beat the Tigers 4-2 to complete a three-



Outfielder Jason Michaels smiles after getting hit with a pie.

game sweep — their first over Detroit since that 2001 season.

"The fans were great,"

said Cleveland closer Joe Borowski. "They showed up for all three games."

They have a chance to show up for three more — the final games of the regular season — with the Indians hosting Oakland in a three-game set that begins Friday night.

And if they're lucky, they may just get to see the Tribe clinch the division title at home.

The Indians, who own a 7½-game lead in the division, have their magic number down to three, and have the potential to wrap up the Central title this weekend.

FOR MORE ON THE GAME, SEE PAGE

School board hires contractor for new EHS

Shawn Foucher
The Chronicle-Telegram

ELYRIA — State education officials honored the Elyria school district's request to hire Regency Construction Services, a Lakewood-based firm the district has worked with for years, to oversee construction of the new Elyria High School.

Regency's appointment as construc-

tion manager of the EHS project was announced by Ohio Schools Facilities Commission on Wednesday, and the firm will be working closely with the Architectural Vision Group, the project's architect.

At Wednesday's school board meeting, representatives from the two companies unveiled the most comprehensive list to date of what the new high school will feature, offering a glimpse

at just how they plan to divvy up the approximately 300,000 square feet allotted for the new high school.

The list, a 16-page document, is a raw summary of what project planners call the Program of Requirements (POR) phase, a months-long project that has nearly reached its end.

The POR phase is the first part of the planning that etches a basic idea of what the new school will feature,

divvying up square footage into 14 different areas for the new school. It offers no physical renderings or drawings that hint at the possible look of a new high school, but it does hammer out the raw numbers.

School officials will vote on the final POR results at the Oct. 3 board meeting.

See **EHS, A2**

ALL-DAY KINDERGARTEN PRICES

AVON: \$2,000 per year
AVON LAKE: \$2,400 per year
BROOKSIDE: \$200 per month
FIRELANDS: \$275 per month
WELLINGTON: \$200 per month



Kindergarten must be free, state decrees

Attorney general says schools can't charge for all-day classes

Jason Hawk
The Chronicle-Telegram

ELYRIA — Kindergarten at public schools has to be free, says Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann, which could mean five of Lorain County's 15 school districts may have to stop taking tuition money for their full-day classes.

An opinion filed by Dann earlier this month argues that even though the state only funds half-day classes, schools can't charge parents for longer class times, even to cover the cost of extra teachers.

That could have a big impact on the Avon, Avon Lake, Brookside, Firelands and Wellington schools, which each charge

\$200 per month and up to run all-day kindergarten.

Losing that income could mean taking a \$500,000 blow over the next five years, or even cutting other services to compensate, Avon Lake Superintendent Bob Scott said.

"That's scary for us to even have to think about because that money would have to come right out of the general fund," he said. "We don't really have that money."

Worse, if Dann's opinion forces the district to refund parents for tuition already paid this year, he said it would amount to losing the salaries of two kindergarten teachers.

See **FREE, A2**



JASON MILLER / CHRONICLE

Crocs, a popular shoe that has been implicated in several children's injuries on escalators, are seen at Pettiti Garden Center in Avon Lake.

Fans of Crocs shoes loyal, regardless of escalating issues

Lisa Roberson
The Chronicle-Telegram

Even at the young age of 2, Kaila Ann Kocsis is a quite the fashionista.

She knows what she wants and isn't afraid to say it. And what she normally wants are her Crocs. The soft-soled shoes have grown in popularity from foot attire for the gardener or boater to must-haves for the whole family since their debut several years ago.

Kaila Ann has two pairs: one yellow and one pink. At least one pair is always on her little feet, as was the case Wednes-

day, when she put on her pink pair for a romp at the playground in Cascade Park.

This was despite reports that the shoes pose a danger to little feet. Recently, it has been reported that little toes swathed in Crocs (and the plethora of knock-offs out there) can become entrapped in escalators — a boy recently suffered an injured toe when it happened to him.

But word of the injuries wasn't common knowledge to those interviewed Wednesday by The Chronicle.

See **CROCS, A2**



PATCHY CLOUDS High of 80. Low of 59. Forecast on A8

INDE

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