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Are your child's toys safe?



Marty Kreider plays with his new James Engine, part of the Thomas the Tank Engine set, Monday at his West Chester Twp. home near his mom, Amy. His old engine was part of lead paint recall. Staff photos by Gary Stelzer

Recent manufacturer recall has helped make local parents aware of the dangers of lead poisoning

By Lindsey Hilty
Staff Writer

WEST CHESTER TWP. — "This is Percy," said 3-year-old Marty Kreider, pointing to a wooden train. "This is Henry."

His Thomas the Tank Engine trains, which take up a good part of his West Chester Twp. family room, are quite important to Marty. So when his favorite James train disappeared, it didn't take him long to notice.

"We told Marty we sent James to get a new paint job," Amy Kreider said. "He was very interested in when James was coming back."

Kreider heard about the manufacturer's lead recall of all Thomas wooden train set pieces painted red or yellow. She sent the



A Thomas the Tank Engine toy was recalled because of lead paint.

James train and its accessories back for a replacement.

In the meantime, Marty asked a lot of questions and worried so much, his parents finally helped him dictate an e-mail to the manufacturing company to ask when he could expect James home.

The corporation RC2 sent them a free train car to ease the wait, but there was a collective family sigh of relief when the replacement James arrived in the mail.

Now, Kreider said she will think twice when purchasing new toys that her son might love.

"There's so many things to be paranoid about when you have kids," she said. "I have to be careful I don't make myself crazy."

»» **Local experts explain lead dangers** Article on A7

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Suspect in rape recaptured

Man escaped from Cincinnati mental health facility and was found in Hamilton apartment with woman, three children.

By Joshua Rinaldi
Staff Writer

HAMILTON — Hamilton police's SWAT team nabbed a suspected rapist Wednesday night who escaped from the Summit Behavioral Center in Cincinnati on Tuesday.

Juan Romero Barahora, 26, was found inside a Curtis Drive apartment with a woman and three children and was taken into custody without incident, said Hamilton police Lt. John Nethers.

Earlier in the day, Romero had contacted his alleged rape victim and threatened suicide, he said.

"He had told her that he had a gun and he was not going to be taken alive," Nethers said.

Romero originally was incarcerated in the Warren County Jail on a felony rape charge when he allegedly attempted suicide Aug. 21. He was being evaluated at the mental health facility, where he scaled a wall and escaped at 11:45 p.m. Tuesday, according to officials.

The Ohio Highway Patrol contacted Hamilton police to check a local address for Romero. He was not there, but a woman led police to the suspect, Nethers said.

SWAT teams were called about 9 p.m. to the 200 block of Curtis Drive in the West Side of Hamilton, where Romero was found inside the apartment with the woman and children. His relationship to them was not known Wednesday evening.

Nethers said extra precaution was taken because of the children and Romero's comments to his alleged victim.

The woman in the apartment was cooperative with police, Nethers said, and talked to them on the phone without Romero's knowledge as surveillance teams spotted him in the apartment.

"They saw an opportunity to go in and get him into custody, so they did without incident," he said.

Nethers said the officers took Romero by surprise and he put up no defense.

He was in custody shortly after 10 p.m.

A few residents had been evacuated from their apartments during the incident.

He was returned to the Warren County Jail, Nethers said.

Contact this reporter at (513) 820-2190 or jrinaldi@coxohio.com.



Juan Romero Barahora

Council clarifies purpose of parks levy on ballot

By Cameron Fullam
Staff Writer

HAMILTON — Don't be confused. The parks and recreation levy on the ballot in November would finance a new family aquatic center in Hamilton, even if it doesn't say so.

The council voted 5-0 at a special meeting Wednesday to pass a resolution that will clarify the 0.5-mill levy's ballot language.

When the council voted last month to put the issue on the ballot, the language indicated the money would be used for "general municipal operating expenses," Hamilton Law Director Hillary Stevenson said.

The resolution passed Wednesday changes the purpose to "parks and recreation."

"It will be clear," Stevenson said. "It will earmark (the money) for the parks and recreation department. It will not go into the general fund and be divvied out to other departments."

The city's law department had previous-

ly interpreted a section of the Ohio Revised Code to mean townships may be specific on ballot language for parks and recreation, but cities may not.

After consulting with the Butler County prosecutor's office and the Ohio Secretary of State, Stevenson said she was told the city can clarify the general purpose of the levy but still cannot put "swimming pool" or "aquatic center" on the ballot.

The proposed permanent parks levy would raise \$459,000 a year. The cost to homeowners would be about \$15.31 a year — \$1.28 a month — for each \$100,000 of property value.

City council voted last week to approve a plan if the levy passes to build a \$3 million family aquatic center and park downtown on the northeast corner of High Street and Martin Luther King Boulevard.

»» **Read our view about the levy** Article on A10

Job fair gets pupils ready for future

By Joshua Rinaldi
Staff Writer

OXFORD — Hundreds of students visited Wednesday with almost 200 employers including representatives from AT&T, Chrysler and General Electric at the 22nd annual career fair in Millett Hall at Miami University.

Some students had already scouted out the companies they wanted to visit. Others were just browsing.

"I'm looking to stop by five or six companies, but there's probably more out there for me," said junior finance student Kevin McGowan, who was looking for an internship.

However, the business focus of the career fair limits the options for some students, said Christy Presnar, a senior mass communications student. She said that only about two companies at the event catered to her major, but it was good practice.

"It's kind of like a casual interview," she said.

Career fair guides available at the entrances told students what majors each company was looking for to minimize walking around. Booths, including those with national job



Michael Kassouf, a senior finance major, researches some of the booths Wednesday in his packet during the Miami University Career Fair. Staff photo by Nick Graham

opportunities, were spread across the arena of Millett Hall and the entire lobby.

For Presnar, who is graduating in December, the career fair is a reminder of the future right around the corner. Others, such as strategic communications student Shannon Berner, who graduates in May, say the career fair is just the beginning of the job search.

»» **Find questions to ask employers while job hunting at journal-news.com**



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