



'IRON MAN': NOT YOUR AVERAGE SUPERHERO MOVIE

PLUS: COUNTRY LEGEND WILLIE NELSON



Indians beat Yankees, 4-3, win 5th straight

Excerpts from Pluto's new book on the Tribe

COUPONS OVER \$212 IN SAVINGS

SUNDAY PLAIN DEALER

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APRIL 27, 2008

NEWS MINUTE

SPORTS Cavs try to rebound from Game 3 loss

After losing by 36 on Thursday, the Cavs will try to take a 3-1 series lead when they play the Wizards in Washington at 1 p.m. today. The game at the Verizon Center will be broadcast on WEWS Channel 5 and WTAM AM/1100. Details, C1

Browns eager to make their picks

The Browns will make their first pick in the NFL draft today, and several players they believe can help the team are still available after rounds 1 and 2 on Saturday. Details, Section C

CONNIE SCHULTZ Girls are waxing, self-esteem waning

It's amazing what pubescent girls are subjecting themselves to these days. Details, A2

METRO Grounded in history, famous in flight

It took Bill Woodall 18 years to build the Sopwith Triplane, and only minutes for the World War I replica to start coming apart on its first flight. Details, B1

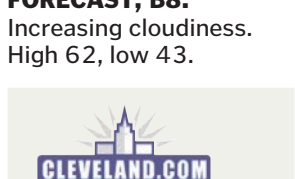
TRAVEL History's calling

The affluent Washington suburb of Alexandria is an ideal launching site for exploration of the nation's capital. Details, F1

PHILLIP MORRIS Putting the fix on Cleveland

Readers give their thoughts on fixing our city. Details, G1

FORECAST, B8: Increasing cloudiness. High 62, low 43.



BREAKING NEWS ALL DAY

NFL DRAFT
Get pick-by-pick coverage and read Tony Grossi and Mary Kay Cabot's live blog.
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PLAIN DEALER EXCLUSIVE | PAYROLLS AND POLITICS

AN OFFICE RUN ON PATRONAGE



Politicians and their relatives fill dozens of well-paying jobs thanks to the county recorder

JOSEPH L. WAGNER
PLAIN DEALER REPORTER

Even if you have never been to the Cuyahoga County recorder's office, you will no doubt be familiar with the names of the workers behind the counters.

That's because some have appeared on your election ballots for mayor and City Council. With others, their spouses or relatives have sent you campaign fliers for congressional races, judge-ships or school board seats.

Recorder Patrick O'Malley's staff directory, you might say, is a Who's Who of the politically connected, with surnames of Mottl, Russo and Sustarsic.

A Plain Dealer review of the recorder's 2007 payroll found that O'Malley has given nearly three dozen patronage jobs, with combined salaries of \$1.4 million, to politicians and their kin — former mayors, the son and daughter of a judge, the wife of a councilman.

A review of applications also found people whose previous job skills don't match the work they do for O'Malley.

A \$16,000-a-year teaching assistant became a \$46,000-a-year department head.

A \$10-an-hour construction worker is now a \$40,000-a-year clerk.

O'Malley declined to talk at length about his hiring practices, but he acknowledged that he has a well-connected payroll: "What am I going to do, pretend it doesn't exist?"

SEE O'MALLEY | A12

Who are these people?

They are among the politically connected folks who have spent time on the payroll of Cuyahoga County Recorder Patrick O'Malley. For more background on them, go to Page A12



INSIDE

A deal for a job?

After filing to run for Cuyahoga County recorder, Cathy Luks says incumbent Patrick O'Malley offered her a job in his office if she would drop out of the race. Details, A13

Prosecuting patronage

A federal court has ruled that discriminating against job candidates on the basis of politics is as serious as excluding them for race, religion, gender and physical ability. Details, A13



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Editor's note:

This is the first story in an occasional series examining government payrolls and hiring practices in Northeast Ohio.

Hard work isn't over for bank

National City must keep cutting, work on public standing, experts say

TERESA DIXON MURRAY AND PETER KROUSE
Plain Dealer Reporters

A week after being saved by a \$7 billion investor windfall, National City Corp. is faced with one big question: Now what?

The difficult work of turning around Ohio's largest bank is just beginning, says Graeme Deans, a banking expert and partner in the financial-services consulting practice of A.T. Kearney in Toronto.

"They're going to have to be very aggressive," he said. "They're still fighting for survival. The capital was a lifeline, not something that's enduring."

National City's board of directors last Sunday agreed to a \$7 billion infusion from Corsair Capital LLC of New York and more than a dozen other investors in exchange

for a 70 percent stake in the Cleveland bank. National City this year has been smothered by \$22 billion in risky loans that it fears could default.

The bank lost nearly \$1 billion in the first three months of this year and \$333 million in the last three months of last year because it was too deep into the mortgage market when it went bad.

Scott Fine, finance professor at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University, said it's pretty straightforward what National City needs to do — get back to basics. "It's a terrific bank," he said, that unfortunately placed some bad real estate bets.

National City has about 18 months to show marked improvement, said Raj Aggarwal. SEE BANK | A15

National City

To do list

Now that National City has its cash infusion, here's what analysts think National City needs to do now:

- A) Restore confidence to consumers and employees
- B) Cut costs
- C) Tighten lending/get a handle on the rotting portfolios
- D) Have a more active board of directors
- E) Do some hiring and firing

Foreclosed homes used to stash guns, drugs

JOHN CANIGLIA
Plain Dealer Reporter

The leaders of a robbery team that terrorized Tremont businesses last fall made sure they never lacked access to firepower.

They simply stashed a shotgun in the foundation of an abandoned home several miles away, near East 105th Street and St. Clair Avenue. The gun was there if anyone in the crew needed it. "It was the 'community gun,'" said Cleveland police Lt. Thomas Stacho. "They said it was there for when someone had to 'hit a lick,' or commit a robbery."

As workers board up abandoned properties across the county, police, neighborhood activists and advocates for the homeless are seeing another ugly trend emerge in the foreclosure crisis: Gang members and criminals are using the homes as stash

houses for their weapons and drugs.

For gang members and street criminals, pitching a weapon or drugs in boarded-up houses is an easy way to avoid being caught with them. For the neighborhood, it's a hazard.

The danger comes when neighborhood children use the houses as playgrounds or squatters make dangerous discoveries.

On April 11, a 14-year-old Cleveland boy told police he found a .22-caliber revolver and a .22-caliber rifle behind an abandoned home. He took the weapons home, only to have his 10-year-old brother find the revolver and shoot his 11-year-old sister in the head, killing her.

SEE HOUSES | A7

24 Mega Used Car Sale. 300 Cars priced well below book price. Many at 1/2 price or less. Marshall Superstore 6200 Mayfield Rd. Adv't



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