

FREE - TAKE ONE

4 Corners News & Views for Ohio's Cradle of Education
Common Sense Where Main Meets Wooster Bowling Green, Ohio Vol. 1, No. 5 Sept. 1, 2005

BG School Board Wants \$300

A Year From You To Eliminate:

Milton and Ridge Elementary Schools

Neighborhood Schools

5th and 6th Grades in Nearby Schools

**Junior High, Junior High Auditorium, and All Downtown
Schools**

Central Administration Building

**(Historic South Elementary Is Already Gone, Turned Into
Wacky Arts Center)**

It Needs Your Money So It Can Build:

Middle School for 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th Grades

Performing Arts Center

New Offices for Superintendent, Staff, Buses

Athletic Building

Addition To Crim Elementary

(Watch Out For Sneaky School Realignment)

Bowling Green School Board President Paul Windisch said at the meeting Aug. 16 that the board had "exhausted its input" and joined three other board members in voting to ask the taxpayers to vote for a \$43.2 million bond issue on Nov. 8.

The loan apparently will be paid off over 28 years at 5.25 percent interest. A quick calculation shows that the monthly payments for such a loan would be \$245,666.35 or nearly \$3 million a year. This will require additional 5.43 mills of taxation of school district property owners. **If you own a \$200,000 home, you will pay more than \$300 in additional taxes in**

2006 if the bond issue passes. This will be on top of the 4.2 mills that citizens voted in the May primary election for school operating expenses. **Be ready to take in laundry to pay your taxes!**

Voters are being asked to tax themselves to the tune of nearly 10 mills this election year, perhaps the biggest increase in BG history (even without counting the park board levy).

Can school realignment and closing Ridge and Milton schools be far behind? So much for the listening sessions held last year. More like soft-soaping the public sessions.

The BG school board has a lot of nerve. The district is losing students, the board and superintendent have no plan for reversing the losses, and they want lots more of us taxpayers' money so it can build monuments to its poor judgment.

-- John K. Hartman, publisher, *4 Corners News & Views*, John.Hartman@dacor.net

(Turn to page 2 for the latest on the *Sentinel Saga*.)

Battle of the Downtown Titans Looms: Layden vs. Maurer

Many of us remember fondly the Boomtown Preservation Society's noble work in preserving the neighborhood around the Postal Service offices on South Main Street in 2002.

Led by Kim Layden, a resident of South Church Street, the Boomtown group exploded onto the local scene to oppose the inside deal to level the houses around the post office that was devised by realtor Dick Newlove, who has offices near the post office, and Mike Marsh, the city law director, BGSU trustee, board of elections member and local attorney, who has offices near the post office. The duo had acquired the houses around the post office and was ready to sell them to the city to be demolished for a parking lot. City Council and the Mayor signed off on the deal but forgot to factor in the determination and savvy of Layden and her Boomtown crew.

What followed was a massive initiative petition drive to force the issue onto the November 2002 ballot. The Boomtowners got more than 1,600 signatures and forced the issue back in front of an unappreciative City Council, Mayor, Newlove and Marsh. Faced with a thunderous rejection of their plans, the demolition was scotched and the neighborhood preserved.

Fast-forward to 2005. After seeing how rudely that City Council, the Mayor, Newlove and Marsh were treated by the citizens in 2002, the Library Board, developer Bob Maurer and city officials apparently used a different tack in dealing with the public: Demolish the houses and bulldoze the land before anybody finds out so that nothing can be done to stop it.

On Monday Aug. 8, residents of North Grove Street a block west of the Wood County District Public Library awoke to the sound of the demolition of the home on the northwest corner of Church and Court streets. Later in that week, they were treated to the sound of bulldozers leveling the land where the house had stood and land to the north of it to a level many feet lower than before. Now the neighbors on North Grove face a sizable drop off abutting their properties not to mention the absence of trees and vegetation, replaced by dirt.

Only after the work was started and only after it was too late to stop it, were the neighbors consulted. Of course the neighbors were outraged. They and most everybody I know cannot believe the library that we know and love would undermine its neighbors all in the name of parking spots. Fortunately, *The Blade's* Jennifer Feehan has covered the controversy fully. The *Sentinel Tribune*, whose editor David Miller was a longtime library board member, as usual can't seem to bring itself to properly criticize and cover its favorites. Why? The Haswells, owners of the *Sentinel Tribune*, are noted as big donors on the library's walls. So is Maurer.

Since the remodeled and expanded library re-opened in 2003, I have visited the library at least one a week, sometimes twice. Only on one occasion was I unable to park in the big lot west of the library. And on that occasion, I found a parking spot nearby.

If the library truly needed additional parking – and I do *not* believe it does – it should have made a deal with City Hall to free up the 9 spaces in the library lot that are

marked reserved for city employees. The city just bought the old gas station across from the junior high for employee parking, so it could easily have given up the 9 spaces. Problem solved.

But that would be too easy for the behind-the-scenes dealmakers who run Bowling Green. They rule the city except when Kim Layden and the Boomtowners get their dander up.

So it's Kim Layden versus Bob Maurer in a 15-round championship fight. **I bet on Kim!**

4 Corners News & Views You Read It Here First Tip Of The Month: Columbus Mayor Michael Coleman will drop out of the Democratic gubernatorial primary and run for the U.S. Senate against "Opie" Dewine.

4 Corners News & Views of Bowling Green was founded June 1, 2005 by John K. Hartman, its publisher. Its purpose is to provide additional news and points-of-view to citizens of Bowling Green in the belief that thorough awareness of and discussion of issues makes for a better community. It will be available free at various drop-off points in Bowling Green or by email by sending your email address and request to John.Hartman@dacor.net. Patrons may support 4 Corners BG for \$10 per issue. Ads may be purchased for \$20 per issue. Comments and submissions are welcome.

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