

## SARAH



Sarah Crump

## Good marriage is key to Mrs. Ohio

Imagine a 50-year-old competing against a 26-year-old in a swimsuit competition. No contest, you say? Well, don't be too sure. When that scenario unfolds in the Mrs. Ohio Pageant, the 24-year-old event that will be

held in Cleveland for the first time Saturday, the odds are pretty even regardless of the number of candles on the birthday cake. This is according to Cynthia Pensiero of Highland Heights, Mrs. America 1996, and director of the state pageant. "Age is just a number when it comes to fitness and how you feel about yourself," she says.

The 18 candidates, five of whom are from the Cleveland area, will be equally judged on their appearance in evening gowns and swimwear, beauty of face and figure and a personal interview on stage at Eastlake's Radisson Hotel. The winner will receive \$7,000 in cash and prizes, an expense-paid trip to Honolulu to compete in the Mrs. America pageant, and a year-long schedule full of supermarket and mall openings and autograph events.

A happy marriage is the No. 1 requirement for contestants, said Pensiero. "They have to be in a good marriage—it's a 'Mrs.' pageant."

**FATHER F-STOP . . .** The Rev. James Flood is gearing up for another Cleveland Grand Prix. For 15 years, the associate pastor of Holy Family Catholic Church in Stow has been one of the official photographers of the June 25-27 Burke Lakefront Airport race. A priest first and photographer second, Flood also offers a prayer for drivers' safety in a gathering of Indy car competitors and their families just before the race.

A photographer of car races and other sports for 35 years, and a priest for 37, Flood, 64, will leave Holy Family Church for a new post Sept. 1. He will be the chaplain of Village of St. Ed-

ward, a Fairlawn nursing care and assisted living community.

Over the years, he has made friends with drivers who might think he has an inside track with the Lord. Flood said he met Mario Andretti when he asked the racing icon to autograph a photo he'd taken. "I said, 'Mario, you're going to win the race today'—and he did."

**A GOOD READ . . .** The best children's books usually aren't the coffee-table types crammed with beautiful illustrations. They're the ones that are plain enough to allow a child room to use his imagination, says Barbara Barstow, Children's Services manager for Cuyahoga County Public Library. She is the chairwoman of the prestigious 1999 Caldecott Medal Committee, which annually chooses the most distinguished

picture book for children written by an American author.

"A fine book makes a connection," said Barstow, who served on the New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Books Committee in 1997. "It doesn't patronize. It speaks to where the child is."

Her favorite children's book? The "Frog and Toad" series by Arnold Lobel that pops up on many an elementary school's reading list. Last week, Joan Kafer, president of the library system's board of trustees, presented a resolution from the Ohio House of Representatives commending Barstow's work.

**GIVERS . . .** Jerry and Paul Conway, father-and-son owners of FFR Inc., a Highland Heights fastener manufacturer, joined with St. Adalbert Elementary School on Cleveland's East Side

in a school-business program sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland. Eighth-grade teacher Beatrice Cunningham discovered that Paul Conway is fluent in French. Since then, he has regularly taught her students French and Spanish.

Not only do FFR Inc. employees tutor at the school, when science students were studying rockets, the Conways sent in their pilot to help. And when they heard that Principal Kathryn Harris needed a computer for her office, the Conways provided one. Their company also donated two \$2,500 scholarships to eighth-graders Matthew Peterson and Daray Broadus, who will use the money to attend Cleveland Central Catholic High School.

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## Boaters: Fake SOS may mean trip to jail

By CHANDRA HARRIS  
PLAIN DEALER REPORTER

The Coast Guard has hoisted a warning flag for all boaters: Don't joke with distress calls. You can go to jail.

Over the holiday weekend, 13 out of 32 distress calls across the five Great Lakes were false, said Capt. John Currier, chief of Search and Rescue for the Coast Guard's Ninth District Headquarters in Cleveland. The fake calls cost \$50,000, he said.

"Every time our people go out on a rescue mission, their lives are at risk," Currier said. "This is not a joke. A lot of manpower and taxpayers' dollars go into rescue and search efforts because every call is taken seriously, whether a hoax or not." In addition, the hoax could delay rescuers in getting to real distress calls, he said.

Most hoax calls are from intoxicated adults and children playing with the radio and are picked up by the Coast Guard on Marine Band Channel 16, the equivalent of calling 9-1-1 on land.

Currier said it was a federal felony to send false distress calls, and people who are caught will be prosecuted.

The 81 hoax calls last year on the Great Lakes cost taxpayers \$1.2 million, the Coast Guard said. The cost for an aircraft is \$3,000 per hour and a rescue mission can cost from \$300 to \$1,500 per hour, depending on the size of the boat and the number of men involved, he said.

Maximum penalty for making a false distress call is six years in jail, a \$250,000 fine and total restitution of expenses.

In 1997, Gary W. Goodmanson

of Mentor was sentenced to 15 months in prison and ordered to pay the Coast Guard nearly \$140,000 for money lost during the searches prompted by 10 false distress calls.

Within the last two months, two teens, one from Sandusky, and the other from the Chicago area, were caught placing hoax calls, Currier said. The cases are pending.

The Coast Guard is not trying to discourage the legitimate use of Channel 16, said Susan Riley, boatswain's mate 2nd class at the Lorain Coast Guard station.

"Any case of crisis should be reported whether you are out of gas or if something is severely wrong with the boat," she said.

Chief Petty Officer Adam Wine of the Cleveland Coast Guard sta-

tion said hoax calls were a problem along Lake Erie from Fairport Harbor to Lorain because the 60-mile stretch of Greater Cleveland attracts many recreational boaters.

"Anytime you have a lot of boats in one area, problems do arise," he said.

In order to reduce hoax calls, the Coast Guard suggested:

- ✓ Removing or locking boat radios when not in use.
- ✓ Teaching children that a hoax call can endanger lives.
- ✓ Reporting suspected hoaxers to the Coast Guard Tipline at 1-800-264-5980.

The Coast Guard hopes that a boating education course, which will be required beginning next year, will help to solve the problem.

## Mentor firm's owner says he may move out of state

TAX FROM 1-B

The county commissioners, who make the final decisions on abatements, are revisiting their guidelines for the requests. The commissioners are concerned about corporations using tax breaks to move within the county, Commissioners President Robert E. Aufuldish said.

The state enterprise zone program is to expire June 30, though Gov. Bob Taft has proposed a five-year extension. With the end in sight, Mentor City Council President Richard A. Hennig tried to spur action Tuesday on an abatement request for Cyberex Inc.

Cyberex Inc., now on Industrial

Park Blvd., has told Mentor that it may move its 115 employees to an existing building in Solon if it is not given abatement to build a new plant on Tyler Blvd. The company makes uninterrupted-power systems and static switches that transfer from primary to alternate power sources.

Hennig said he had the five votes required for approval but needed a sixth for an immediate decision. Councilman Ronald L. Micchia, who has soured on abatements, was absent. Councilman B.J. Kresnye refused, saying the public should have time to comment.

Hennig said he would call special meetings, if needed, to beat a June 30 deadline.

## Fixing the cracks



MIKE LEVY/PLAIN DEALER PHOTOGRAPHER

For the second time since it was rebuilt in 1992, the Main Avenue Bridge needs work to repair crumbling concrete on the median wall and guardrails. Cuyahoga County is spending about \$450,000 for the work.

## Police urged to document racial bias in traffic stops

By APRIL MCCLELLAN-COPELAND  
PLAIN DEALER REPORTER

Pressure is mounting in Ohio and nationwide against the alleged police tactic of using a driver's race as a basis for traffic stops.

Despite anecdotal evidence of racial profiling—the practice is so common that minorities have given it the nickname "driving while black or brown"—some police deny the practice exists.

That is why politicians, civil rights lawyers and a law professor are pushing for the following measures:

- ✓ State Rep. Peter Lawson Jones, a Shaker Heights Democrat, is sponsoring a bill that would require law enforcement agencies to collect data in all traffic stops that would include race, gender, age and whether a citation or arrest was made. "We need to have a sense of where it's happening and where it isn't," said Jones, who introduced the legislation last week.

✓ The American Civil Liberties Union released a report yesterday titled "Driving While Black: Racial Profiling On Our Nation's Highways," which said the war on drugs had significantly increased the number of traffic stops nationwide based on race. The report, co-authored by University of Toledo law Professor David Harris, is largely a collection of case studies from 23 states rather than a statistical analysis.

Earlier this year, Harris conducted a study that found black motorists in Akron, Toledo, Dayton and the Columbus area were roughly twice as likely to be given traffic tickets as whites, Hispanics, Asians and other ethnic groups in those cities.

✓ A bill is pending in Congress, sponsored by Rep. John Conyers, a Michigan Democrat, that would require law enforcement agencies nationwide to collect data on traffic stops, including the race of the driver. The attorney general would analyze the data.

In the Ohio study, Harris compared the number of blacks of driving age in Akron, Toledo, Dayton and Franklin County, which includes Columbus, with the number of all tickets given to blacks by police departments in

those municipalities.

The study of the four cities included data from 1996, 1997 and the first four months of 1998. He gathered the information from the court systems that handle traffic tickets in those areas.

Harris said he wanted to include Cleveland in the study, but the computer system at the Cleveland Municipal Court did not provide data that Harris could use.

The Cleveland Police Department does not break down the tickets it issues by race, said Nancy Lesic, press secretary for Mayor Michael R. White.

Lt. Harold Craig of the Akron Police Department said he had taken many complaints on the issue of minorities being stopped indiscriminately by police.

He said many of the complaints come from the Madison, Wildwood and Copley sections of Akron, which are predominantly black.

"We're trying to determine how to study what's going on," said Craig, a former aide to Chief Edward Irvine who is now in the detective bureau. "I get a lot of young black guys who say they are stopped just for not making a turn signal. I know that it's not being taught at our academy, but I don't know that it's not being done by individual officers on our force. I get enough complaints that I have to believe it is happening."

The ACLU report written by Harris recommends that Congress, states and municipalities pass laws requiring police to record a driver's race on each traffic stop and whether a search was performed; that police no longer use traffic stops as a pretext for searching for drugs; and that the Justice Department ensure that racial profiling is not used in federal programs to stop drug trafficking.

Harris said racial profiling threatens the rights of all people.

"This is not a black or Hispanic or minority issue," he said. "This is an issue about fairness and equal justice. Equal justice under the law is the thread that binds us together as a country."

Plain Dealer reporter Stuart Warner and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

## Heights team wins Power of Pen contest

By RONALD RUTTI  
PLAIN DEALER REPORTER

**CLEVELAND HEIGHTS** — The team came into the media center yesterday to have their picture taken. When the 20 or so kids studying at tables spotted the squad lugging their championship trophy, they applauded. Not a common occurrence in a middle school.

What the Roxboro Middle School students were saluting was not a high profile athletic team. It was an academic group. The Power of the Pen champions of Ohio.

And it was a team effort. Seven of the squad's 12 members served district and regional competition to qualify for the championship held last Friday at Denison University in Granville. It was that high number that brought Roxboro the victory.

"When we group, we won it as a team," said eighth-grader Lydia Martin.

Roxboro outpointed Brecksville-Broadview Heights Middle School for the crown. Brecksville-Broadview Heights had beaten out Roxboro in the district and regional, and sent nine people to Denison. But only one was able to advance to the final round, while Roxboro sent seventh-graders Delia Springstubb, Emily Dworkin and Keanna Cleveland as well as eighth-grader Rosemary Gibson to the final.

When they heard their school's name announced at the award ceremony, "We all screamed so loud," said eighth-grader Kate Herrmann.

Power of the Pen was created in 1986 by then Nardon Middle School teacher Lorraine B. Mer-

rill as a way to offer competition for kids not necessarily gifted in athletics. Merrill now lives in Richfield.

This year, more than 6,000 seventh- and eighth-graders competed from 500 schools statewide. Some 625 contestants made it to Denison.

**LAKE COUNTY**  
Divorces granted  
Marian J. O'Brien and John A. O'Brien, both of Willowby Hills.  
Anthony J. Spena of Willowby and Bernadette Spena of Concord Township.  
Donna S. Locker of Mentor and Norman R. Locker of Willowby.  
Kristina M. Nicholson and Robert Gene Nicholson, both of Mentor.  
Laura L. Morek of Lakewood and Steven M. Morek of Eastlake.  
Michael P. Maloney of Concord Township and Kelley M. Maloney of Twinsburg.

Power of the Pens, where students are given a specific amount of time to write about a subject they do not know in advance.

The Roxboro team was fifth last year, the highest placer among Greater Cleveland schools.

## News of Record

Traci Lorenca of Perry and James A. Lorenca of Mayfield Heights.  
James English of Painesville and Melissa English of Madison.

Maria Still of Painesville Township and Robert L. Still of Sealy, Texas.

Julia C. Cianfaglione of Chardon and John M. Harris of Madison.

Theresa A. Goldhardt of Perry and Scott A. Goldhardt of Fairport Harbor.

Cynthia Stanco of Willowby Hills and David M. Stanco of Carbondale, Pa.

Susan A. Jirousek of Willowby and John F. Jirousek of Thompson Township.

## Driver, passenger hurt when truck flips

**PERRY TOWNSHIP** — Two Perry Township teenagers were hospitalized with multiple injuries after they were thrown from a pickup truck in which they were riding, authorities said yesterday.

The 16-year-old driver lost control of the 1989 Chevy 1500 as he attempted to pass another vehicle on Davis Rd. about 7:15 p.m. Tuesday, said Sheriff Daniel Dunlap.

The boy was driving in excess of the 40-mph speed limit, Dunlap said. As he tried to pass, the truck

went off the road and traveled 200 feet before sideswiping a utility pole.

The truck rolled over several times before coming to rest upside down, Dunlap said. The driver and his 15-year-old passenger, who were not wearing seat belts, were found conscious. They were taken to Lake East Hospital in Painesville, and flown by emergency helicopter to MetroHealth Medical Center in Cleveland.