



Grassroots American Values

A Firelands Area Conservative Action Group

<http://www.plan2succeed.org/grassroots>

WARNING: THIS NEWSLETTER MAY CONTAIN GRAPHIC MATERIAL

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DISCLAIMER: This is not a Politically Correct organization. We do not exist to make people feel comfortable. So, feel free to feel uncomfortable!

About this Newsletter

National news often distracts us from local events. This Newsletter is intended for Conservatives in the Firelands area that want to be informed and involved. **You have our permission to send it to your Conservative friends, either by snail mail or E-mail.**

5.7% of your State Income Taxes fund all Ohio Public Libraries

Learn how: <http://www.olc.org/budget03/WhatisLLGSF.pdf>

Strickland, the "unknown"

As the Libs of the Toledo Blade struggle to make Ted Strickland look good, they unintentionally exposed the real man behind their propaganda. The following article was published Sunday, July 30, 2006. All emphasis has been added –and will reveal to the reader the true character of Mr. Strickland: an unknown, unimpressive, tax and spend Democrat who lacks personal substance, administrative management experience, and a plan for Ohio, yet the Blade believes he is a *man of substance* and one heck of a lucky politician!

EDITORIALS - Strickland's challenge

Sixteen years of one-party domination of state government, capped off by scandal, would seem to cry out for new leadership not linked to Columbus or the Ohio Republican Party. U.S. Rep. Ted Strickland, the Democratic candidate for governor, certainly qualifies on both counts. But as the failed presidency of Jimmy Carter demonstrated so dramatically in the late 1970s, outsider status only counts for so much if a newcomer is sworn into office one day and the establishment begins eating him for lunch the next.

It's still early in the gubernatorial campaign, of course. As of today, it has exactly a hundred days to run, and most Ohioans won't really begin to pay attention - and take it seriously –until after Labor Day. But it is certainly not too early for Mr. Strickland to ponder the tenuous nature of his big lead in the polls.

A Columbus Dispatch mail-in poll confirmed last weekend what has generally been the case since the May primary –that the veteran congressman from southern Ohio is comfortably ahead of his Republican opponent, Secretary of State Ken Blackwell.

His lead, in fact, was substantial, 47 percent to Mr. Blackwell's 27

percent. But the poll yields potentially bad news as well: A full 24 percent, one in four respondents, remain undecided in the governor's race.

There's a simple reason for that: Most **Ohioans** know Mr. Blackwell, but they **have no idea who Mr. Strickland is**. If he doesn't begin to define himself fairly soon, he can be sure Mr. Blackwell will do it for him, and the undecideds could begin drifting away.

Certainly Mr. Strickland's opponent will be abundantly funded. Presidential adviser Karl Rove will bring President Bush to Columbus this week, hoping to raise \$2 million for Mr. Blackwell's campaign.

That means Mr. Strickland can take nothing for granted. **He needs to put a little more meat on the bones of his Turn Around Ohio plan. He will need to show that he offers more than the Jimmy Carter formula of good looks [yuck!] and a bit of a southern accent. The traditional Democratic mantra of tax and spend won't impress many Ohioans; neither will blinding allegiance to state employee unions and organized labor.**

He is not helped by the fact that his congressional district, Ohio's 6th, is a long, skinny arc that stretches 325 miles, starting at the Mahoning Valley on the north and following the Ohio River all the way down to Scioto County and Lucasville, the town of his birth. There are no major population centers and no strong television presence, so he has virtually no statewide identity. **There's a cliché that goes like this: It's better to be lucky than good. Mr. Strickland needs to be both. So far the good fortune part is holding. He was in the race, then got out, then got back in, without relinquishing his spot as the front runner for his party's nomination.** Should he prevail in November, he also will have to come to terms with one of the toughest challenges any politician faces: accepting his own limits. There will be no room for the hubris and sense of royal entitlement that has infected the Republicans who've controlled state government for so long.

Mr. Strickland's lack of administrative experience does not have to doom his service as governor. **As an outsider, he'll need a chief of staff who is savvy in the ways that Columbus operates**, somebody several cuts above Bob Taft's miscast Brian Hicks – somebody like, say, his running mate for lieutenant governor, Lee Fisher.

Jimmy Carter failed because he couldn't manage the Washington power structure; he allowed it to manage him, which is why we failed to endorse him a second time in 1980 against Ronald Reagan. Ted Strickland needs to explain to Ohioans, over the next 100 days, how he will avoid a similar fate.

He is an ordained minister, a former consulting psychologist, and a veteran of five terms on Capitol Hill. In our view, he is clearly a man of substance. Ohioans are ready to embrace him, but first they must come to the same conclusion.

Link to this article from the Toledo Blade's article of Sunday, July 30, 2006:

<http://www.toledoblade.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060730/OPINION02/607300309/-1/OPINION>

G.A.V. PICKS

- *Victory at Entebbe*, directed by Marvin J. Chomsky (available through CLEVNET). On June 27, 1976 Palestinian and Bader Mein Hof terrorists hijacked Air France Flight 139 with 256 passengers from which 106 were Jewish. Oldie but goodie!

- *Entebbe: the Jonathan Netanyahu story, a defining moment in the war on terrorism*, by Iddo

Netanyahu (only one available through CLEVNET). Story of the only military casualty in the Entebbe bold and successful rescue of the hijacked Jewish passengers in 1976.

'1001 Cleveland Nights' & Age Inappropriate Books for Children

On October 7, 2006 the "Friends of the CPL" will meet in the "*grandeur of Cleveland's landmark Main Library*" for the "*Champagne White Glove event Treasures III*" (<http://www.cpl.org/events-calendar-detail.asp?id=%7bE7E022D9-F99E-4100-A2A4-809144CCCBEB%7d>). With tickets that range from \$100 to \$1,200, one of the goals of this *très élégante* evening is to raise money for "*funding for children's literacy programming including the Summer and Winter Book Clubs.*" One of these Friends is Anne Marie Warren. We sent her an E-mail (with a short list of age inappropriate books available for minor children in Ohio Public Libraries) telling her of "*the kinds of books available for minor children in the Children and Young Adult Departments of the Cleveland Public Library (as well as most Public Libraries in Ohio). [...]*." We offered to "*print specific information and mail*" to her and suggested she should check what "*our librarians are making available to minor children (specific in the Children area of Libraries) apparently without parental knowledge.*"

Her response was surprising;

"[...] Key [Bank] is not a sponsor of the Treasures event. Further, the Friends of the CPL are not responsible [sic] for accession [sic] decisions. Our support is directed to fostering a life long love of reading by challenging children to meet goals established by the summer and winter reading clubs.

While some children may be reading material that I, myself, wouldn't enjoy, CPL provides access to knowledge. With that knowledge, people can gain the wisdom to make thoughtful, informed decisions about their own lives. Your list shows that you have undergone this process...read, consider, reject. I am sure that as I have, you have found hundreds more books that are precious and entertaining and wonderful for children, than those that you may not feel to be appropriate.

[...] Sincerely, Anne Marie

Anne Marie seems to mistake adults for children—a problem that affects the judgment of many librarians—when she deems adult qualities (*wisdom; thoughtful, informed decisions*) to minor children—another problem afflicting the judgment of our librarians. We suggested that she should pay a visit to the Children or Young Adult areas of a Public Library. There she would likely find books such as *Fade*, by Robert Cormier. One of the scenes in this book has a graphic description of an adult man who paid a girl his daughter's age to allow him to perform oral sex on her. We are sure that is not what she believes will help 12 year-old girls to "*gain the wisdom to make thoughtful, informed decisions about their own lives.*" We are hopeful she will share our information with the people invited to this event who certainly have no idea of what really happens behind the family-friendly façade of Ohio Public Libraries.

OHIO'S PROPERTY TAXES

By Carolyn J. Blow (Adapted from *Ohio's Replacement Levy* by the same author)

This is the second of a four-part series on Ohio's Property Taxes. The series addresses the following topics:

Part 1: **Basic Property Taxation (*)**

Part 2: **Why Property Taxes Continue to Grow - Kinds of Levies and Government Manipulation**

Part 3: **The Deceptive Replacement Levy - Explanation**

Part 4: **The Deceptive Replacement Levy - Solution to the Problem**

PART 2: WHY PROPERTY TAXES CONTINUE TO GROW – KINDS OF LEVIES AND GOVERNMENT MANIPULATION

The reader might be wondering why his property tax bill continues to rise despite the reduction factor provided by Ohio House Bill 920 (1976) and the rollbacks. Some reasons are addressed here.

The most obvious reason for ever-increasing taxes is that citizens continually vote for new taxes. Even though countywide levies are sometimes small compared to school levies and some township levies, they add up to a substantial sum.

Another reason for ever-increasing property taxes is that the reduction factor of H.B. 920 does not apply to all levies. For example, according to the Ohio Revised Code, Section 319.301(A)(2), the reduction does not apply to taxes within the “one per cent limitation,” or the “ten-mill limitation” (ORC, 5705.02). That is to say, the ten mills of tax authorized by the law are not voted, and they grow as property values grow. These ten mills, which are called “inside” mills, are divided among several of the government subdivisions in a manner specified by ORC, 5705.31(D). Within the 10-mill limitation, each taxing authority is authorized to divide its share of taxes into separate levies for current expenses (operation), debt charges, and special levies (ORC, 5705.04). (Further comment on the “ten-mill limitation” and “one per cent limitation” appears later in Part 2.)

Levies that are permitted beyond the 10-mill limitation are said to have “outside,” or voted, mills (even though some are not voted by the electorate). While most levies with outside mills benefit from the reduction factor of H.B. 920, some rise with property values. The reduction factor does not apply to taxes authorized by the charter of a municipal corporation (ORC, 5705.18; 319.301[A][3]). Nor does it apply to “fixed-sum levies,” that is, taxes levied to produce a specified amount of money, namely, “emergency levies” (discussed below) and taxes necessary to pay debt charges (ORC, 319.301[A][1]).

Government debt can make other tax reductions on real property disappear, too. The 10-percent non-business rollback and 2.5-percent homestead-elderly-disability rollbacks on real property are reduced or eliminated altogether when there would be insufficient funds for payment of debt charges (ORC, 319.302[B]; 323.152[D]). (With H.B. 66 in 2005, businesses lost their 10-percent real property rollback, but they received gradual reductions on tangible personal property taxes.)

Besides the loss of those reductions, government debt can also cause an outside-mill tax increase when an entirely new levy is applied – without a vote – as are levies authorized by ORC, 5705.51(E). This law states that when funds that are for the purpose of paying debt charges, along with inside mills that have been changed from their designated use for current operating expenses, are insufficient for paying on “exempt obligations” and “any other outstanding unvoted general obligations of the subdivision,” a non-voted tax is to be levied “in excess of the ten-mill limit, but within the one per cent limit as to any property.” (The ORC has

conflicting meanings for the “ten-mill limit” and the “one per cent limit.” Ten mills *is* one percent, and in ORC, 5705.02, the two terms are defined as identical in meaning. However, elsewhere in the Code, as here in Section 5705.51, the former seems to refer to the assessed, or taxable, value of property, whereas the latter refers to the true value, as in the Ohio Constitution, Article XII, Section 2.)

In addition to those ways that make property taxes grow, local government officials and the legislature (prodded by local officials) have devised more methods to increase revenue from real property taxes. Some of these are discussed here.

The simplest method is *timing* by local officials. The various government entities collaborate to put their many different levies on the ballot at different times because taxpayers would rebel were they to be presented with the many taxes all at once. Also, officials try to get new taxes passed right after the sexennial property reappraisals and triennial updates so as to get the most dollars for the millage. Other methods are more involved and are generally aimed at eating away at the benefit of H.B. 920.

Ohio law states that school districts may not have less than 20 *effective* mills of tax for current operating expenses for either class of property (ORC, 319.301[E]). (This requirement is often called the “20-mill floor.”) A school district might have, for example, 21 mills of *voted* taxes for current operating expenses along with 3 *inside* mills that are also used for operation. While the 3 inside mills could not decrease in effective millage, the 21 voted mills could decrease over the years to perhaps, for example, 16.6 effective mills because of the aggregate increase in property values in the district and the reduction factor of H.B. 920. Total effective mills for operation would then be only 19.6 mills (3 inside mills + 16.6 outside mills). If that happens, taxes are adjusted upward by 0.4 mill, without a vote of the people, till the 20 effective mills are met ($3 + 16.6 + 0.4 = 20$). A similar non-voted increase continues year after year as long as the combined value of properties in the district increase and/or other current expense levies are not passed.

Schools that are close to the 20-mill floor often put what are called “emergency levies” on the ballot. Aside from a favorable vote that might be generated by the emotional term “emergency,” another reason school districts put emergency levies on the ballot in preference to regular levies is that emergency levies are not counted in the 20-mill floor. Therefore, the district benefits from the emergency levy while also benefiting from non-voted tax increases from other operating levies that *do* count in the floor that are forced onto the taxpayers, year after year, when their effective millage falls below 20 mills and is then restored again to 20 effective mills.

By law, emergency levies may be proposed to provide for an emergency or to prevent an operating deficit (ORC, 5705.194). However, that is often said to be the purpose of other kinds of levies, as well. School personnel argue that emergency levies are for fixed dollar amounts and not for mills and therefore should not or could not be counted in the 20-mill floor. However, emergency levies are figured in mills for the ballot and for each year they are in effect, and at one time they *were* counted in the 20-mill floor by law. Their use is a strategy to get more tax money.

Schools also use the “permanent improvement” property tax because that tax, like the emergency levy, does not count toward the 20-mill requirement for current operating expenses. The use of the permanent improvement tax is limited to assets and improvements that have at least a five-year life expectancy, but it frees up other taxes for current operations.

When a school district's operating millage is at the 20-mill floor, another way the district can manipulate levies that might be advantageous to it and produce more revenue is to reallocate its inside millage (a public hearing by the board is necessary for any such change [ORC, 5705.314]). With this action, current expense millage that had been inside millage would be changed to outside millage, and permanent improvement millage would be changed from outside millage to inside millage. The purpose of the swap is to get more of the millage for operations into outside millage where the reduction factor would work on it. Then there would be more current expense mills that would have their effective millage increased each year to the required 20 effective mills. Meanwhile, the permanent improvement mills that had become inside millage would grow with property values (when they were *outside* mills, the reduction factor applied).

Yet another means to grow property taxes for schools came about with H.B. 530 in 2006. The law (ORC, 5705.211) authorizes an additional property tax for current operating expenses to be approved by the electors at such a rate that the total taxes charged by the levy each year are sufficient to offset any reduction in basic state funding caused by increases in real estate values. The rate of the tax could be set to cause revenue generated from the levy to increase by up to 4 percent each year, but it could be set at a lesser rate. The tax increase would occur each year for a minimum of five years, and may be continuing – year after year after year.

The legislature has also passed laws for real property tax increases that are not just for schools. When the state began to reduce taxes on the tangible personal property of electric companies (1999) and natural gas companies (2000), all fixed-sum levies were automatically – and quietly – increased by $\frac{1}{4}$ mill to help compensate school districts and other local government entities for their “fixed-sum levy loss,” that is, the gradual loss of tangible personal property taxes for emergency levies and levies for paying debts. With a provision of H.B. 66 in 2005, revised with H.B. 530 in 2006, the state is phasing out tangible personal property taxes on other businesses, and the property tax on every one of the fixed-sum levies that a property owner pays is automatically increased by $\frac{1}{2}$ mill. The state reimburses local bodies for the difference in loss that is not covered by the $\frac{1}{2}$ -mill tax through 2017, as needed. Since calculations for the fixed-sum levy loss end with 2017, according to ORC, 5751.20(E), the $\frac{1}{2}$ -mill tax should end by then, too.

The last tax to be addressed is the “replacement levy,” which the legislature authorized in 1990 with ORC, 5705.192. It is the most deceptive of all taxes because it is *always* used to increase taxes, but the ballot never indicates that. In fact, in certain situations, the ballot even refers to the levy as a tax *decrease*.

➦ **NEXT: Part 3 of this Property Tax series explains how the replacement levy works.**

(*) Refer to our July newsletter: www.plan2succeed.org/grassroots/ournewsletters.html

G.A.V. RECOMMENDED EVENTS

➦ **NRA MIX N'MINGLE** Dublin, Saturday, October 14, 10:00am—1:00pm. Mingle with NRA-ILA Headquarters staff, fellow area NRA members, and pro-Second Amendment candidates and their staffs. Learn what you can do locally to elect pro-freedom lawmakers to office –and earn NRA items like hats, pocket knives, buttons, etc.: <http://www.nraila.org/workshops/>.

G.A.V. RECOMMENDS

☞ **FAMILY FRIENDLY** On July 1st Bill and Robin Malin (*Red Clay on the River*, Vermillion) opened *Old Plat on the River Brew & Steak House* in Huron (132 N. Main Street). It is great to have another family-friendly business in town! Good luck to *Red Clay*. Meanwhile other new businesses seem interested in attracting people who love booze and noisy bikes... ☹



The Cleveland Public Library (www.cpl.org) is considering the acquisition of *Kiss of Fire*, by Youka Nitta for their Young Adult area (Young Adult=kids under 18). They already have *Yellow Volume 2* by Makoto Tateno available to minors. The Library should put this and the other books in their Adult area. Check the pictures of **Yaoi Manga** (too graphic to be printed) and understand why these books should not be available to minors (*yaoi* = male to male sex in Japanese): http://www.guidemag.com/temp/yaoi/a/mcharry_yaoi.html. CPL Youth Services: ChildLit@cpl.org. CPL Administration: <http://www.cpl.org/library-administration.asp>

Purchase Suggestions (to Send your Library)

Librarians always consider purchase suggestions from patrons, so here is a good one you can send to your local Library:

- *I've Always Been a Yankees Fan: Hillary Clinton in Her Own Words*, Tom Kuiper (Cleveland Main Library has only one on order so far)

Deep Thoughts and Other Idiocies

- "[Iran is] a great country, a great people and a great civilization which is respected and which plays a stabilizing role in the region." Philippe Douste-Blazy, French foreign minister at a news conference in Beirut on June 31, 2006.

Keeping Age-inappropriate Literature Away from Minors

Alert Congressmen and Senators to what is available in Ohio Public Libraries for minors:

☞ Ohio House of Representatives: <http://www.house.state.oh.us/index.html>

☞ Ohio Senate: <http://www.senate.state.oh.us/index.html>

When they get a Library card, parents sign the most benign and vague disclaimer of their responsibility for what their children borrow (*); they don't even get a copy of this contract. Schools have flashing lights, speed limit signs, special cross walks and crossing guards – because children do not exercise good judgment. Why are they treated different in Libraries? To help parents Libraries should offer a card that will limit the kind of books minors can check out and keep age-inappropriate materials restricted to the Adult department.

(*) <http://www.plan2succeed.org/grassroots/letters.html>

☞ Sandusky Public Library, 114 W. Adams St., Sandusky OH, 44870

Phone: 419- 625-3834, Fax: 419-625-4574 E-mail: comments@sandusky.lib.oh.us

☞ Huron Public Library, 333 Williams St., Huron OH 44839

Phone: 419-433-50009, Fax: 419-433-7228 E-mail: huron@oplin.org

- Library Board members: <http://www.sandusky.lib.oh.us/public/aboutthelibrary.asp> (Sandusky) and <http://www.huron.lib.oh.us/Library%20Events/About.htm> (Huron)
- Other Libraries: <http://www.publiclibraries.com/ohio.htm>

How You Can Help

- Visit your local Library and learn what they have available to children and teens.
- Ask your Librarian about their policies.
- Make your position known to your Library.
- Write, call, fax, and email your local Library with suggestions of family friendly books for children and teens.
- If your Librarian does not act upon your concerns, contact the Library Board of Directors.
- Write, call, fax, and email your Congressman.
- Support Grassroots American Values in our efforts.

Cool Blogs & Links

- <http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=ZDBhMzg5Mzk4NjQ5MjM5OTJhZjRjMWQ4OWMzNDhmMzk> *The Brink of Madness*, a must read by Victor Davis Hanson
- http://www.safelibraries.org/toxic_public_library.htm ALA: A CLEAR & PRESENT DANGER
- <http://www.missionamerica.com/agenda.php?articlenum=61> *Amerika the 'Gay'*
- <http://www.edwatch.org/updates06/070306-IB.htm> *IB Feeling the Heat*, EdWatch
- <http://www.breitbart.com/news/2006/07/31/D8J74L1O0.html> Will this upset Dick Derbin?
- http://www.townhall.com/columnists/RebeccaHagelin/2006/05/30/porn,_pedophiles,_our_kids_and_myspace *Porn, pedophiles, our kids and MySpace*, Rebecca Hagelin
- <http://edit.indystar.gannettonline.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050616/COLUMNISTS02/506160429/1035/COLUMNISTS02> Teenscreen: labeling teens
- <http://www.psychsearch.net/teenscreen.html> Teenscreen: what lies behind the concept
- <http://www.teenscreentruth.com/> Teenscreen Truth
- <http://www.teenscreen-locations.com/index.htm> Teenscreen: locations across the USA
- <http://headlines.agapepress.org/archive/7/172006c.asp> Against NEA affiliation
- <http://www.narth.com/docs/bogaert.html> Gay brothers: not real
- http://www.worldnetdaily.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=51105 'Gay' troops?
- <http://tks.nationalreview.com/post/?q=ZTE3NmNIMzZINzA0MDIxNTYxMjIzNTNjMmJmNjcwYjg=> Same old news...
- <http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/ap060807.html> What is REALLY causing global warming
- <http://www.letsaythanks.com/> We never thank them enough!
- <http://www.talkingproud.us/EditorChoice052505.html> A Romanian for America
- <http://www.tencommandmentsoncapitolhill.blogspot.com/> Ten Commandments blog
- <http://www.thehuronhistoricalsociety.org/> The history of Huron
- <http://www.ccn-usa.net/> Citizen USA, news with integrity
- <http://www.ifcj.org> They need support
- <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,205560,00.html> Kept apart by Big Brother
- <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,208026,00.html> Deranged rodent's reign of terror! ☺

Reporters & Writers Needed

We are looking for volunteers to write 500 word editorial comments on local governmental activities. Writers can use a pen name if they do not want their real names disclosed. If interested, please respond to grassroots@bex.net.