

# WestLife

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## Suspicious briefcase at gas station results in evacuation

By Kevin Kelley

WESTLAKE

Whoever left a briefcase with wires sticking out next to a gas pump at the BP station at Detroit and Bradley roads Monday morning may have thought it was a prank. But Westlake Police didn't find it amusing.

A bomb robot moved the suspicious briefcase to a wooded area behind the gas station and safely detonated it. The black briefcase was empty but had wires sticking out.

Authorities believe the briefcase was deliberately left at the gas station to disrupt business and traffic in the area.

Police say the person responsible faces charges of inducing panic and possibly using a hoax weapon of mass destruction.

A BP employee notified police that the briefcase was left at the set of pumps at the west end of the gas station at 6:45 Monday morning. One of two officers who first arrived at the scene happened to be a bomb technician. He determined that assistance from the hazardous devices unit of the Westshore Enforcement Bureau was needed.

Later, a bomb robot belonging to the Southwest Enforcement Bureau kept in Berea was brought in to move the briefcase.

See BRIEFCASE, p. 16



The remains of the suspicious briefcase after it was safely detonated by police Monday morning. (Photo by Kevin Kelley)

## Former bailiff could face weapons charges after raid

By Jeff Gallatin

NORTH OLMS TED

A former Cleveland bailiff, whom friends and acquaintances praise as a good person, could be facing weapons charges after police found a wide range of guns and explosives when they raided his Mastick Road home Jan. 17.

When police came to arrest James Payne, 54, on a felony domestic abuse warrant, they sent the Cuyahoga County Sheriff's Department SWAT team in with North Olmsted officers also present since they had received information he might have weapons.

When the SWAT team entered the home, they arrested Payne on the domestic abuse charge and got his permission to search his home. The items they found prompted law enforcement officials to call out the WEB (Westshore Enforcement Bureau) bomb squad and block off the area that afternoon.

Officers confiscated from the home

a homemade Gatling repeating gun made of two Ruger rifles, a Russian AK 47 assault rifle, shotguns, hand guns, old fireworks, dynamite and grenades. Officers at the scene said Payne offered no resistance when arrested. Police officials are awaiting a report on the nature of the hand grenades and some of the other weapons to determine if local or federal weapons charges should be filed against Payne. Federal bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms officers are now investigating along with the local officers.

Officers said the potentially explosive contents of the home came as somewhat of a surprise.

"He's a blip on the radar for us," said North Olmsted Police Sgt. Mike Kilbane, who was one of the officers at the home during the incident. "We've never had any major problems with him in the city."

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## Cool art

"Momentum," an ice sculpture carved by Broadview Heights resident Aaron Costic, on display at Crocker Park this weekend. Costic and three other ice sculptors who will be competing at the Winter Olympics next month in Italy practiced their craft this weekend at the retail development. Story on page 2. (Photo by Larry Bennet)

## NASA to close two Fairview Park buildings

By Kevin Kelley

FAIRVIEW PARK

City officials are moving quickly to recoup income tax which will be lost after NASA's Glenn Research Center closes two buildings within Fairview Park's boundaries.

"This is a serious issue for us," Jim Kennedy, Fairview Park's director of development, told West Life. "It's our intent to do everything we can to replace that income....We're going to be very aggressive about it as a tiny city."

Representatives of a potential developer and tenant, who officials would not name, toured the buildings Thursday. However, at the Jan. 17 council meeting, Kennedy described the interested parties as "a known developer in Cleveland and a president of a large company looking for additional office space."

"Their current needs are approximate to the space that will be available as are their current leasing arrangements," Kennedy said. "So this could be a nice fit depending on a number of other issues."

Building 500 and Building 501, as they are known at NASA, are located



Fairview Park officials are moving quickly to recoup income tax that will be lost when the two NASA Glenn buildings on Brookpark Road, including the one above, are closed. (Photo by Larry Bennet)

on the north side of Brookpark Road across from the main entrance to Glenn.

Hundreds of civil servants have taken buyouts and hundreds of contractors have been laid off in recent months. But Dallas Lauderdale, facilities division chief at Glenn, said the decision to close the 42-year-old buildings was made in order to save operating and maintenance costs. The closures are part of Glenn's efforts to man-

age the center in the most efficient way, Lauderdale said in an interview.

"The jobs issue is really a separate issue," he told West Life.

While the two buildings occupied only five acres of Glenn's campus, they housed Fairview Park's largest group of employees.

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