

West LIFE

February 27, 2008 - Vol. 68, No. 15

The Award-Winning Westshore Weekly 75¢

Rec Center partners?

By Jeff Gallatin

NORTH OLMSTED

For city officials and two regional health and wellness powers, three heads could be better than one when it comes to the North Olmsted Recreation Center.

City administration officials said they are continuing "strong" negotiations with the YMCA of Greater Cleveland as well as Fairview Hospital and the Cleveland Clinic to take a major role in operating the Recreation Center.

North Olmsted Mayor Thomas O'Grady said if the city is ultimately successful in bringing the YMCA and hospital into the Recreation Center, everybody involved would benefit.

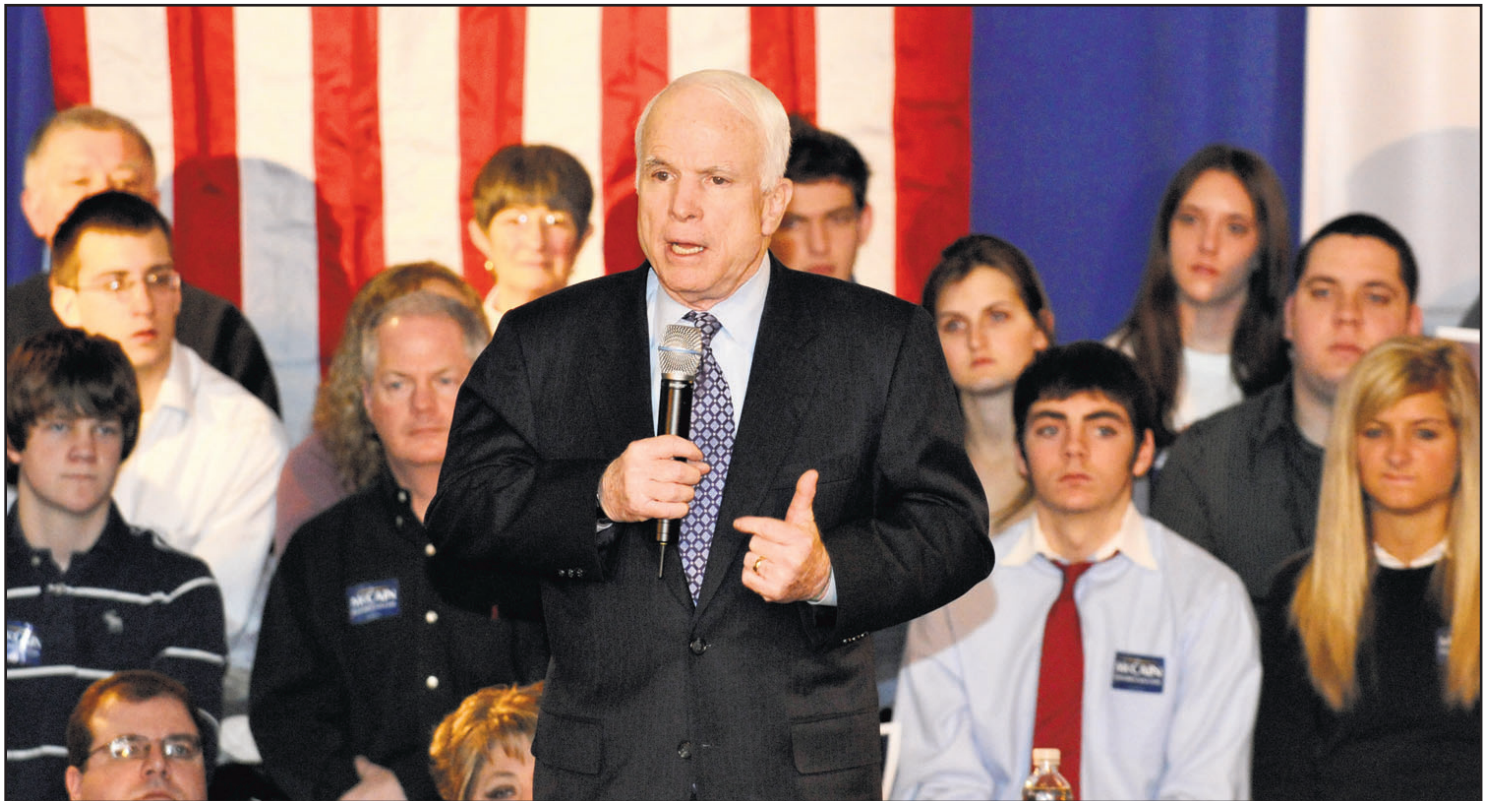
"We've been talking with the YMCA longer, but Fairview Hospital is also showing strong interest in making this work for all of us," O'Grady said. "This is a proposal which could meet the needs of the community and other people who use the facility."

O'Grady said the YMCA could utilize its experience and management skills to operate the facility while the hospital would provide equipment and expertise in exercise, rehabilitation and related areas.

"It would be a great partnership for all of us," O'Grady said. "The Center would remain a city facility, but it would be run by the YMCA, and Fairview Hospital would have a pres-

See **REC CENTER**, p. 19

MCCAIN SPEAKS IN RIVER



Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) speaks to an enthusiastic crowd Monday at the Don Umerley Civic Center in Rocky River. McCain later took questions from the crowd and held a short press conference. (West Life photo by Larry Bennet)

Senator conducts town hall meeting at Civic Center

By Ben Saylor

ROCKY RIVER

Republican presidential hopeful John McCain visited Rocky River Monday, holding a town hall meeting at the Don Umerley Civic Center.

Former Rocky River City Councilman and current Cuyahoga

County Board of Elections member Rob Frost, Mayor Pamela Bobst and former Sen. Mike DeWine made introductory remarks before McCain spoke. McCain was without his wife, Cindy.

"Cindy's gone home today to check on the whereabouts of our 16-year-old daughter Bridget," McCain remarked to the laughter from the crowd. McCain's daughter Meghan was in attendance at the event.

"It's wonderful to be back in the heartland of America," McCain told the crowd, referring to Ohio as "one of the most important states in America." He also pointed out that since 1964, every presidential candidate that has won in Ohio has triumphed in the general election.

See **MCCAIN**, p. 19

Parent tips helped break heroin case

By Kevin Kelley

WESTLAKE

New details were revealed about what led to the recent drug-related arrests of three Westlake High School students at a community meeting in which parents and school leaders considered how to tackle the problem of illegal drugs use by adolescents.

The meeting, held in the Westlake Schools Performing Arts Center Feb. 19, was organized by the district and the Westlake Parent Connection in response to the recent arrests of three Westlake High School students on drug charges.

Dani Altieri Marinucci, president of the WPC, said while the heroin-related arrests came as a shock to many, it was not unexpected to others.

Westlake High School Principal Tim Freeman said the high school has had strategies for combating drug abuse in place for some time and was not "just waking up" to the problem as a result of the heroin headlines.

"I take the safety of our kids very, very seriously," he said. The school will continue to be aggressive in

addressing the issue, he said, but added that the community has to address the issue as well.

Until late night managers at fast food restaurants call the police to report teen customers who are drunk "rather than say 'I wish they'd get their food and get out of here,'" the problem will not be resolved, Freeman said.

Freeman reported that in recent months, several Westlake parents discovered their kids were using drugs and got their kids treatment.

"As part of getting the kids help, it came out that they were using heroin," Freeman said. The parents shared this information with school officials, he said.

On the morning of Jan. 30, Freeman said the school received a call from a Westlake community member who was friends with a Bay Village community member.

"The Bay Village parent was concerned about a young lady that came to her house that she believed was involved with heroin," Freeman told the audience. "Her son was involved and under supervision at home, and she was afraid that there was a delivery taking place. She called her friend in

Westlake who subsequently called the schools."

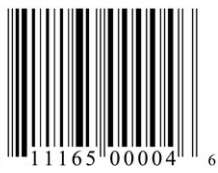
When the girl arrived for school, she was detained. Freeman said heroin residue was subsequently found on a small piece of magazine paper. Westlake Officer Scott Fortkamp, the high school's resource officer, determined she was under the influence of some substance, Freeman said.

Further searches were made of the student's locker, vehicle and person, Freeman said.

"Working with Westlake Police, we were able to get a policewoman who did a more invasive search. The heroin was discovered — three doses, in addition to the one she was on before coming to school that morning," Freeman said.

Based on other information, Westlake Police began investigating two 17-year-old students, Freeman said.

According to Westlake Police, search warrants were obtained for the residences of the two students Feb. 6. While the searches were taking place, police arrested the two at the high

See **HEROIN**, p. 9

8 11165 00004 6