



West LIFE

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The Award-Winning Westshore Weekly 75¢



Turkey bowl

A group of area residents held their traditional Thanksgiving Day flag football game at Huntington Beach Park. The young guys beat the old guys, 45-6, in the 10th annual Turkey Bowl. Above: Jonathan Rosen lets fly with a pass as Chris Messina and Ben Lesh rush. Right: Messina attempts to elude his pursuers. (West Life photos by Larry Bennet)



Gathering Place helps patients facing cancer battle

By Kevin Kelley

WESTLAKE

Most people seem to be dealing with increasing levels of stress these days due to work, family issues or the economy.

But few problems in life can match the stress of being diagnosed with cancer.

Kathy Hopkins knows that. The Fairview Park resident has been dealing with an inoperable brain tumor for a year and a half.

While she was receiving chemotherapy treatments last summer at the Cleveland Clinic, she heard about an organization that offers ways to lessen the stress of living with the disease.

The Gathering Place, a nonprofit organization based in Beachwood, had

been providing support programs to individuals with cancer and their families since 2000.

Hopkins, 62, began attending support programs there last summer. But, like many Westshore residents, she found traveling to the East Side an inconvenience.

Fortunately for Hopkins and other Westshore cancer patients, The Gathering Place opened a 5,000-square-

foot facility in Westlake in October. Like the Beachwood location, the facility at 800 Sharon Drive will offer yoga classes, support groups, art and music therapy classes, and special lectures.

The new Westlake location is rented from Youth Challenge, a nonprofit that provides recreational activities to children with physical disabilities.

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City sends layoff notices to 15 workers

By Jeff Gallatin

NORTH OLMSTED

Administration officials have sent letters to 15 city employees telling them they will be laid off effective midnight Dec. 31.

Mayor Thomas O'Grady said the letters were sent out last Friday to five firefighters, five police officers and five

AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) workers in the city.

"This is a heartrending decision we're having to make," said O'Grady when contacted about the letters. "These are being done in terrible economic times and essentially because we don't have any other options that we can use at this point."

City administration officials have

been saying for close to a year that the projected revenue for the city's 2009 budget was between \$1 to \$1.5 million short of anticipated expenses.

"It hasn't gotten any better," said O'Grady. "Nobody has seen financial conditions like this for decades not just in our city, but all across the country. It's why we're having to make these

See **LAYOFFS**, p. 8

Councilman Scott to seek mayor's office

By Jeff Gallatin

BAY VILLAGE

Two-term Councilman-at-large Jim Scott said there's a need for change in Bay Village and that he can help bring that about as mayor.

Scott, who was unopposed when he was re-elected to his council-at-large last year, announced last week he will challenge incumbent Debbie Sutherland for the mayor's post in 2009.

"People have been asking me about

this for some time," Scott said. "It's been for several years now. At first it was about three years ago and I didn't necessarily think much of it at first because every person has their supporters and detractors. But I've been hearing fairly steadily now from some people for about a year that there's a need for change in the city and that they'd like me to run for mayor. I have



Jim Scott

concerns about the budget and several other areas."

He cited the city budget, restoring good relations and eliminating safety issues with the fire department, reducing basement flooding, improving the working relationship between council and the mayor and improving communication with residents.

See **SCOTT**, p. 8

