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Downhill run

Kat Stevens, Max Burns, Mike Oxloug and Steven Dobbs head down a Bay Village hill Saturday as they and many other people enjoy the abundance of snow that has blanketed the area in recent days. For more photos showing people enjoying the winter weather, see page 18. (West Life photo by Larry Benet)

Bond issue goes to ballot

By Kevin Kelley

WESTLAKE

As expected, the Westlake Board of Education decided in a split vote Monday evening to place an \$84 million bond issue on the May ballot to fund the renovation and construction of new school buildings.

Saying the district's 26-month, data-driven study of the district's facility needs supported the expenditure, board members Carol Winter, Andrea Rocco and Thomas Mays voted in favor of the bond issue.

Tim Sullivan and Nate Cross voted against, saying the economy was still too weak to ask voters to raise their taxes. They also said they favored less expensive alternatives to the \$84 million plan.

A 3.21-mill bond issue would finance the construction plan, which would be paid for over 34 years. The measure would cost homeowners \$8.19 per month for every \$100,000 in home value.

The plan, which was recommended by a 68-member community committee known as the 20/20 Vision Committee, recommended a two-phase plan to address the district's facility needs.

Under the first phase of the plan, the current Lee Burneson Middle

Tax increase would fund school renovations

By Danielle Toth

ROCKY RIVER

The Rocky River City School district sought public input for a possible bond issue on the May ballot at two community input forums last week.

The proposed issue would be a tax increase of 1.35 mills, \$4 each month for every \$100,000 of property value, Superintendent Michael Shoaf said.

This cost pertains to a less than \$45 million project, which due to a 400-person phone survey in November and December is what Triad Research, the firm that conducted the survey, determined Rocky River voters would be comfortable paying.

However, there is also a \$55 million dollar plan, which would require a tax increase of 2.8 mills. The \$55 million plan includes things such as relocating the high school bus garage away from the school, adding additional softball fields, significant renovations to Beach Education Center and significant technology upgrades, Shoaf said.

The bond issue would pay for much-needed renovations to Goldwood Primary School, Kensington Intermediate School and Rocky River High School, Milano said. Rocky River Middle School will receive money to upgrade new hardware for technology but has no structural or mechanical needs, Shoaf said. It was constructed in 2000.

"Many parents worry about the transition of children from the younger schools to the middle school or the middle school to the high school," Shoaf said. "But I worry about our students' transition from the high school to the real world. We want to make our schools modern and globally competitive."

The district determined in 2007, following a study by PCS, Project and Construction Services, that the schools needed \$15 million in repairs to vital infrastructure such as roofs and boilers, Milano said. While the district is taking care of these repairs, it would also like

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Former mayor aiding new chief exec

By Jeff Gallatin

NORTH OLMSTED

What does a former two-term mayor do when she wants to stay involved in municipal activities, but not have to deal with as many of the meetings and other responsibilities?

In the case of Jane Leaver, the former two-term mayor of Medina, she goes from being the chief executive of that city through 2009 to being the new executive assistant to recently-elected North Olmsted Mayor Kevin Kennedy. The previous assistant, Annie Kilbane, has moved to the law department.

"There really wasn't much down time in this for me," she said. "I went from my last day in Medina last Thursday (Dec. 31) to coming right in here this week."

Leaver said she had wanted to stay active but hadn't sought another municipal position like the assistant's post specifically.

"This intrigued me when Kevin called me about it," she said. "It sounded interesting, and he's a pretty good guy I'm finding, so when he called back



Jane Leaver

the day after Christmas I was interested because it would involve a lot of the same activities I was involved with previously, but without a lot of the final responsibility for making a decision."

Leaver said her reasons for wanting to remain active but not having the same set of responsibilities focus on family and time.

"I've got kids in school and I'd like to be able to see them in activities or to

go see them at school and not have to worry about being at different city meetings or activities," she said. "I loved serving as mayor and working in my other jobs but I also love my family and want to be able to spend some more time with them before they're completely gone and out of the house."

In addition to being mayor, Leaver also served as safety director. Prior to holding those posts, she was a social worker and probation officer for Medina County. She also worked as an emergency dispatcher for the Medina County Sheriff's Department.

"All of those positions gave me valuable experience which will help out when I'm working with different parts of the city," she said.

Kennedy also is pleased to add Leaver to the city staff.

"This is not the type of person you find available every day," Kennedy said. "I saw she was available and really wanted to bring her in here because she can help out in so many ways."

Kennedy noted that Medina and

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