

County hires expert to fight tax appeals

By Alan D. Crockett
Dispatch County Offices Reporter

Franklin County has added some heavy artillery for its fight against 488 pending appeals on real estate tax valuations.

Jim Gorry, formerly an attorney for the state tax equalization division dealing with tax appeals from all 88 Ohio counties, will focus his efforts solely on Franklin County appeals.

Gorry was appointed last week to a \$32,000-a-year job as special consultant to county Prosecutor Michael Miller on tax matters.

County Auditor Roger W. Tracy said the county is losing too many appeals cases, and he hopes Gorry will turn that around.

FIGURES SHOW that for tax year 1981, the county must defend against 488 appeals, 26 in Common Pleas Court and 462 before the state Board of Tax Appeals.

The figure is that high due to protests of values set during the last six-year reappraisal conducted in 1980. Taxes for 1981 were collected in 1982.

This year, 67 appeals were filed for tax year 1982, when no

reappraisal was conducted. Property values are used in determining the amount of real estate taxes owed.

All tax-valuation appeal cases are first filed with the county Board of Revision. Its decision can be appealed to the state Board of Tax Appeals or to common pleas courts.

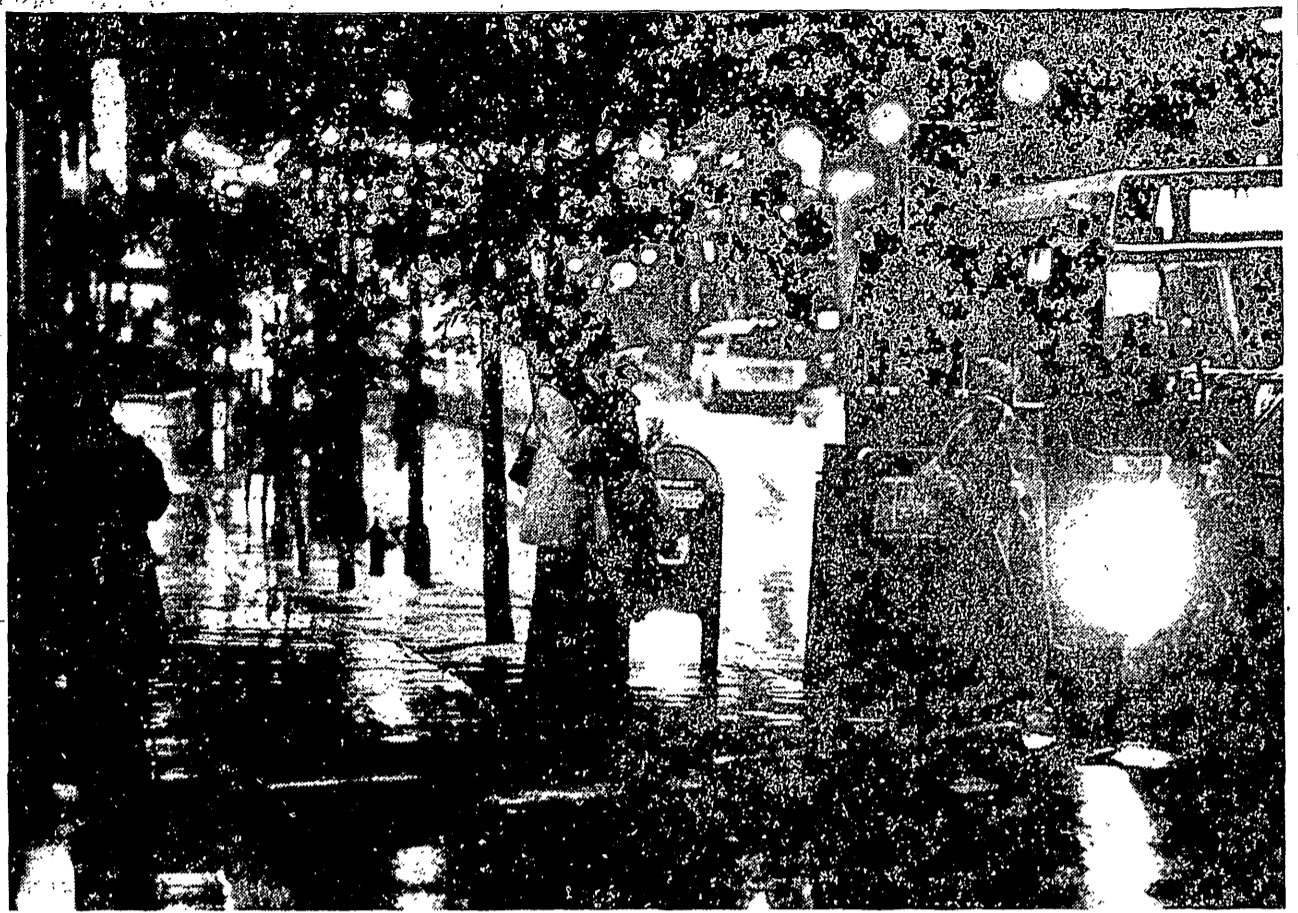
SO FAR this year, property owners have won 14 court cases, and 17 cases have been dismissed or settled out of court.

Of the 57 court cases filed on 1981 tax values, 26 are still pending. The state has just begun hearings on its 462 cases.

Gorry said because of limited staff and the multitude of cases to defend, the county has not been able to spend as much time as needed to prepare a strong defense.

He said many lawyers bank on this and have used it to acquire reductions in appraised values from either out-of-court settlements or court rulings.

"It has become big business to file a complaint seeking to invalidate the county's appraisal," Gorry said. "The number of lost cases and settlements will be what we'll try to put a stop to."



Dispatch photo by Tom Sines

Enjoy it while you can?

Workers sash through the hour-long rain at Nationwide Blvd. and N. High St. early today, perhaps unaware that

conditions could and probably will worsen overnight. Weather forecasters believe the rain will change to

snow before daybreak Wednesday as colder Canadian air pours over Columbus. Weather on Page A10.

State highway funding tilts toward Cleveland

By James Bradshaw
Dispatch State Offices Reporter

State highway figures show the Cleveland area has received a disproportionate share of road contracts for at least three years compared with the Columbus area, despite claims of state highway officials, central Ohio's chief planner said Monday.

William C. Habig, executive director of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, said an analysis of highway contract awards shows the Cleveland area has received large shares of

state and federal highway money since at least 1980.

Ohio Transportation Director Warren J. Smith has defended awarding about one-fourth of all highway contracts this year to Cuyahoga County partly on grounds that legal disputes caused the area to be slighted in past years.

"Perhaps their needs are greater than the population distribution would indicate," Habig said.

He said staff engineer Jerry N. Brinton prepared an analysis

of highway funds awarded by the state from June 30, 1980, through last June 30, based on computer printouts provided by Smith's department.

Habig said the analysis shows that in the past three state fiscal years, Cuyahoga County received \$114 million in federal funds, which is more than six times Franklin County's share of \$18 million.

In the 1980 census, Cuyahoga County's population was 1,498,400, compared with 869,132 in

Franklin County for a ratio of 1.7 to 1, Habig pointed out.

The total of state and federal funds expended in Cuyahoga County was \$129 million compared with \$24.9 million in Franklin County, including 2½ years during former Gov. James A. Rhodes' administration, he said.

The figures dispute claims that this year's awards include make-up funds for the Cleveland area, Habig said. "We've seen here three years of the

past do not have to be made up," he said.

Gov. Richard F. Celeste's administration delayed spring highway contract awards this year for an internal review, meaning the bulk of funds expended this year have not shown up on the department's semi-annual reports, Habig said.

He said news accounts of contracts awarded since July make it appear the skewing in Cleveland's favor will increase considerably.

The analysis shows that if

Franklin County received past favoritism in highway projects it dates at least to the 1970s, Habig said.

Habig said Brinton also compared totals for the five-county northeastern Ohio regional planning area that includes Cleveland and the seven-county central Ohio area.

Those totals showed northeastern Ohio received \$180 million in state and federal highway aid compared with central Ohio's \$76.4 million, he said.

Wright may seek high court seat

Franklin County Common Pleas Judge Craig Wright is expected to be the Republican candidate to run against Ohio Supreme Court Justice James P. Celebrezze next year.

Wright is expected to be joined on the statewide ticket by Andy Douglas, an appeals court judge from Toledo, who would run against a Democrat not on the court now.

A screening committee is expected to recommend that the Republican State Central Committee on Wednesday endorse Wright and Douglas, who were among eight prospective candidates the committee interviewed.

Celebrezze, a Democrat and

brother of Chief Justice Frank D. Celebrezze, was elected to an unexpired term last year. A fellow Democrat, Justice William B. Brown, cannot seek re-election to a full six-year term next year because judges are barred from election after they become 70 years old.

It is expected that John E. Corrigan, a Cuyahoga County Common Pleas judge, will be the Democratic candidate to succeed Brown.

Supreme Court candidates run in partisan primaries but run without party designation in the general election. Both parties want to avoid serious primary election battles for their nominees.



File photo

Judge Craig Wright

Transplant drug used here gets final FDA approval

By Kevin Kehres
Dispatch Medical Reporter

Cyclosporin, called the best anti-rejection drug available for organ transplant patients, has been approved for general use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

University Hospital was one of six medical centers in the United States testing the drug for the FDA.

Now, all hospitals performing transplants can use the drug. The FDA approved the label for the drug, the final step in a long approval process, on Monday.

Jan Tremaine, University Hospital spokesman, said 83 kidney transplant patients of Dr. Ronald Ferguson are taking cyclosporin.

"We did 159 kidney transplants here over the past year," she said. "And we now have a second surgeon on board, so we should do even more in the next year."

She said cyclosporin probably will be given to almost all of those patients.

"Of the first 50 patients we had, only one had to stop taking cyclosporin because of side effects," Tremaine noted.

Side effects include increased hair growth and slight hand tremors. Also, the dosage must be monitored because it can be

mildly toxic to the kidneys, the organs it protects.

Cyclosporin is derived from a soil fungus. It has been used for several years in England and Europe to prevent kidney and bone marrow transplant rejections.

The first U.S. experiments with cyclosporin began in 1979. While its widest use will be for kidney transplants, it has been approved for all transplant operations.

Like other anti-rejection drugs, cyclosporin works by suppressing the body's immune system. In that way, a donated organ is not seen as an invader and rejected by the body's natural defenses.

However, Tremaine noted, cyclosporin is more specific than other anti-rejection drugs.

"Other drugs make the body prone to infections and diseases, because they suppress the entire immune system," she said.

"Cyclosporin allows the production of white blood cells that fight bacteria and infection."

People who undergo transplant surgery must take some kind of anti-rejection medicine for the rest of their lives.

Cyclosporin is a liquid, often mixed with chocolate milk to mask the taste.

Police squad arrests 29 at rock concert

Columbus police arrested 25 adults and four juveniles on drug and alcohol-related charges during Monday's rock concert at the Ohio Center featuring Loverboy and Joan Jett and the Blackhearts.

Sgt. James Cottrill, who coordinated a squad of 32 undercover officers in the Ohio Center parking lot from 6 to 11 p.m., said there was no violence before or after the show. He said most of the arrests were for possession of drugs or for drinking alcohol in a motor vehicle.

Police made one felony arrest. Daci Nobel, 20, of Zanesville, Ohio, was charged with felony and misdemeanor counts of drug abuse and one count of consuming alcohol in a motor vehicle.

Cottrill said police confiscated more than 100 pills, believed to be Valium and methaqualone, from Nobel. He said police also took marijuana and a substance believed to be cocaine from the woman.

Nobel was being held in the Columbus Women's Correctional Institution, he said.

Hole in skull bullet-size

A bullet-size hole has been found in the left temple of a skull found Sunday at Battelle-Darby Creek Metro Park.

A spokesman for Franklin County Coroner William R. Ad-

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tion said the hole, slightly larger than a .22-caliber bullet, may have been caused by a fatal bullet wound.

The spokesman said officials will know more about the hole after forensic experts and an Ohio State University anthropologist examine the skull. The spokesman said the opening could be a birth defect or a hole gnawed by an animal.

Hikers found the skeletal remains of a small-framed body scattered in a ravine near the park's picnic area Sunday. Authorities say they have no clues as to the age, sex or race of the body.

Sheriff's deputies again searched the ravine Monday and found several other bones, including arm bones.

There were small bits of tissue on parts of the bones, leading officials to believe the body had been exposed for three to six months.

Battelle sets up center

The Battelle Memorial Institute, 505 King Ave., is establishing a Center for Metals Fabrication to investigate new electric-based technologies for basic industries.

Battelle said the center is

being supported by a three-year, \$1.6 million contract with the California-based Electric Power Research Institute.

Thomas Byrer, center manager, said the use of new electric technologies promises to increase productivity while improving energy-use efficiencies by 30 to 50 percent, he said.

School unit may move

Columbus schools will get a new home for their data processing department if the school board approves the move today.

The Columbus Board of Education will be asked to spend \$59,669 to put movable partitions and electrical outlets in the old Kingswood Elementary School, 1091 King Ave., to accommodate 42 employees and electronic equipment now at 52 S. Starling St., near Central High School.

In other action today, the board is expected to approve:

- Naming Lois Chipperfield, a data entry teacher at Ft. Hayes Career Center, Columbus teacher of the year.
- New medical insurance rates for school district employees that are 27 percent higher than last year. The district now picks up all costs. Beginning Jan. 1, school employees will pay 10 percent.

Under the new rates, classified employees will pay about

\$5.84 a month for medical coverage for a single person and about \$15.78 a month for family coverage. Teachers and administrators will pay about \$4.91 a month for single coverage and about \$13.23 a month for family coverage.

- The leasing of Northgate Elementary School, 6655 Sharon Woods Blvd., to the Ohio School of Career Technology for two years. The school, which will operate a technical training program there, is to pay \$6,000 the first year.

- The sale of three properties — Bellows Elementary, 867 W. Town St., to unsuccessful school board candidate Dr. Edward A. Cutler for \$60,000; Felton Elementary, 920 Leonard Ave., to Software Results Corp., owned by board member-elect James R. Ebright, for \$60,000; and seven acres of land on McNaughten Rd. south of Whitman Rd. to developer Bernard R. Ruben for \$125,000.

Beer group chief resigns

Phillip H. Wayt, executive director of the Wholesale Beer Association of Ohio, resigned effective today.

Wayt, who began the successful campaign to defeat State Issue 1, which proposed increasing Ohio's beer drinking age to 21, has been on a leave of absence since early October.

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