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Kasich to be featured speaker at the Republican convention

No speaking role yet for Ohio's Sen. Rob Portman

STEPHEN KOFF
Plain Dealer Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON — Reputations are made, and second-guessed, on the strength of speeches before major political audiences.

Lest there be any question of John Kasich's rising star, the Republican

Party announced Monday that Ohio's governor will be among the headliners at the Republican National Convention in Tampa Aug. 27-30.

Other headliners include former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Arizona U.S. Sen. (and 2008 presidential candidate) John McCain, South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee, Florida Gov. Rick Scott and New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez.

Time slots were not announced. Kasich's presence at the convention is not a surprise. But as a featured

speaker, he has a chance to hoist his star higher nationally. The Ohio Republican Party already announced that Kasich and Lt. Gov. Mary Taylor will tentatively speak at a post-session reception on Aug. 29 aboard a cruise around Tampa Bay.

More speakers will be announced in the weeks before the convention. They presumably include individuals who for now are in the mix as potential running mates for nominee Mitt Romney.

Last week, The Plain Dealer asked Ohio's Rob Portman, a U.S. senator

widely considered a potential running mate, whether he had discussed a speaking spot at the convention.

"No, I haven't," he said. "And look, I think I've been to, gosh, the last five or six conventions and plan to go again, and I look forward to hosting the Ohio delegation as I've done, probably at the last four conventions."

"I look forward to helping to provide the clear contrast that I see between where President Obama is taking the country and where the country ought to go."

SEE KASICH | B2

Commentary

MARK NAYMIK



Tax vote in Shaker worth watching

The most interesting election results today will come out of Shaker Heights.

Nonresidents will enjoy them far more than residents, who face repercussions regardless of how they vote on the proposed half-percentage-point increase in the city income tax.

The election is about so much more than a tax. On one extreme, the election represents a battle for the city's soul — the Van Sweringen brothers' utopian vision of a leafy bedroom community that would be immune to the problems of poorly planned inner-ring suburbs.

On the other extreme, the election is a simple debate on how to better sharpen City Hall's budget pencil.

The actual meaning falls somewhere in the middle, tugging on both the city's past vision as well as practical realities of city finances.

I don't live in Shaker and never have, but I've always envied its curvy streets, wide tree lawns and picturesque English, French and Colonial houses. I've admired it for rejecting its WASPy covenants that once limited the number of blacks, Catholic and Jewish families. The city of about 28,000 is a progressive and integrated community.

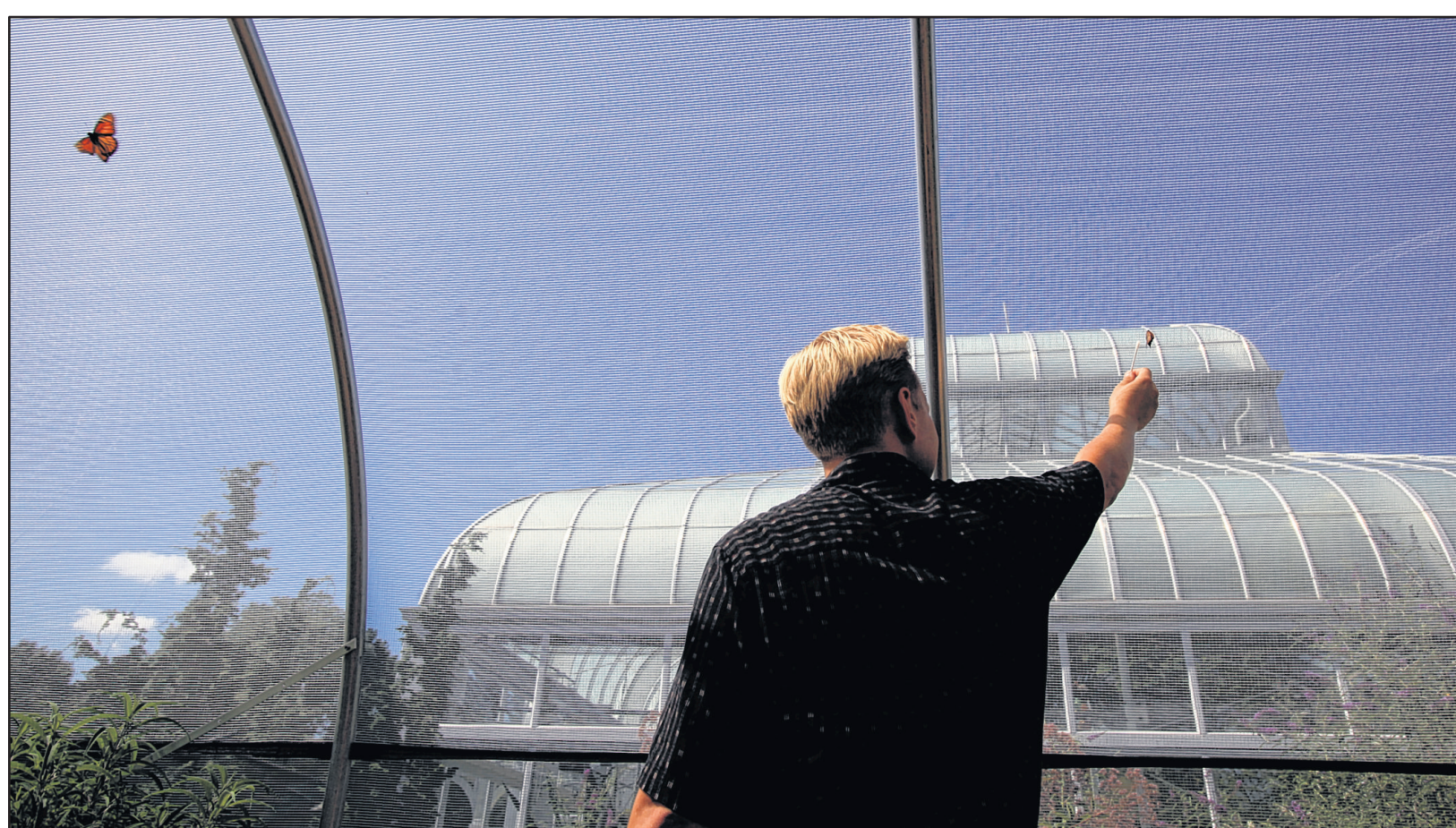
I've also been fascinated with the willingness of Shaker Heights residents to time and time again boost their taxes in the name of schools and backyard trash pickup.

The proposed income tax change — a nearly 30 percent increase — is a test of the residents' mettle.

Without the increase, city leaders say, residents will have to give up many things they love, including hours at the ice rink and community center, crossing guards and the promptness of its police.

SEE NAYMIK | B3

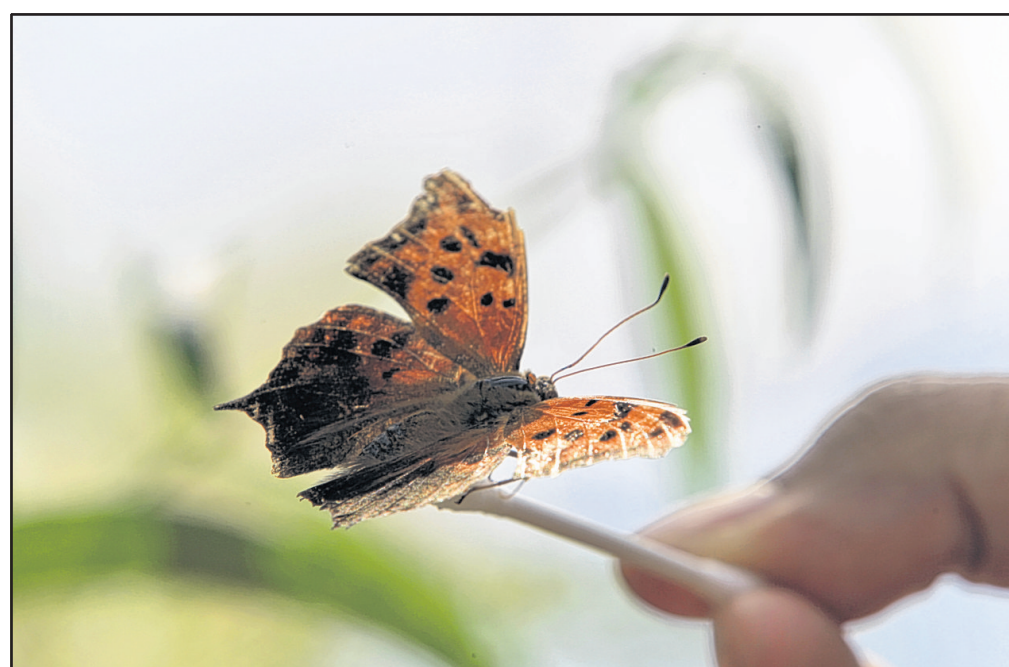
Winged beauties



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GUSCHAN | THE PLAIN DEALER

Toivo Motter, director of education, uses a cotton swab dipped in sugar water to attract butterflies at the Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens in Akron.

Getting close to one of the most beautiful and delicate creatures on earth can be as easy as dipping a swab into nectar. Toivo Motter, director of education, attracts butterflies in an interactive exhibit at Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens in Akron. The exhibit — "Beauty in Flight: Butterflies of North America" — has domestic *lepidoptera* (butterflies) including the buckeye, sulphur, painted lady, monarch, red admiral and more. It is open through early September.



A meadow fritillary takes the bait and lands on the sugar water-dipped swab.

GREATER CLEVELAND INNOVATIONS

Stronger than steel, carbon fiber created in Parma lab in 1958

KAREN FARKAS
Plain Dealer Reporter

You can't see carbon fibers but they're integral parts of everything from lightweight aircraft and spacecraft parts to race car bodies and golf club shafts.

Thinner than a human hair, carbon fiber is five times as strong as steel, twice as stiff and weighs two-thirds less. Twist several thousand carbon fibers together and you have a yarn, which may be used by itself or woven into a fabric. Carbon fiber-reinforced composite materials are used to make numerous products including tennis rackets, sailboat masts, fishing rods and skis.

Carbon fiber was created in 1958 by a physicist at Union Carbide's Parma Technical Center, now part of GrafTech International.

SEE CARBON | B2

Homeowners get first chance to object to 2012 reappraisals

County commences meetings at Tri-C campuses

HARLAN SPECTOR
Plain Dealer Reporter

Cuyahoga County homeowners had their first opportunity Monday to make the case in person that the county got their 2012 home values wrong.

A steady stream of residents marched into the recreation center of Cuyahoga Community College's Metro campus to contest new property values the county mailed out in July.

The county used to hold such meetings in individual communities. But the county fiscal office, created under the new charter government, believed the road show was inefficient. This year, the informal meetings are being held at the Tri-C Metro, Eastern and Western campuses over the next three weeks. Homeowners can also challenge values by mail or phone.

Fiscal office employees set up

with laptops on folding tables heard some residents say their homes are valued too low, but most who dispute values say they are too high. Overall, residential property values dropped 9 percent in the reappraisal this year.

Fiscal Officer Wade Steen said if people have information the county missed or got wrong — conditions, home improvements or incorrect square footage, for example — he wants to hear about it. Steen said he hopes to restore public confidence, after scandal tainted the property valuation process under disgraced former Auditor Frank Russo.

"Our job is to get the value right," he said. Vince Tinnirello showed up at the county meeting with a list of 39 recent home sales in his West Park neighborhood, which he said shows the \$161,300 value of his colonial is too high.

SEE OBJECT | B3

Komen walk's participation down from last year

CASEY CAPACHI
Plain Dealer Reporter

A procession of pink consisting of about 650 walkers — down from 1,000 participants last year — finished their 60-mile trek on Sunday in the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Cleveland 3-Day.

The number of participants this year dropped by about a third, according to organizers. This echoed participation in Boston's 3-Day, the first of 14 such events to be held nationwide. Boston attracted a little more than 1,000 walkers — down from 1,700 last year.

The 3-Day events raise money for breast cancer research and community programming promoting breast health.

"We did have a drop in participation numbers, which affected money raised for this year, which is unfortunate," said Sheri Phillips, national spokeswoman for the Susan G. Komen for the Cure 3-Day.

SEE KOMEN | B2

Road Rant

JOHN HORTON



Avon street plan invites accidents

Diane Drew braked just in time. The driver behind her didn't.

An approaching car smashed into Drew's Ford Taurus two weeks ago as she stopped behind a driver turning left from Avon's Colorado Avenue (Ohio 611) onto Recreation Lane near Interstate 90. The crash stunned Drew but didn't exactly surprise her. "If you drive there every day," she said, "you know it's an accident waiting to happen."

She's hardly alone with that opinion. Multiple column correspondents — including a retired traffic cop — contacted Road Rant to share worries about the awkward intersection that opened last year.

Here's the situation. One end of Recreation Lane connects to Colorado a few hundred feet from I-90 and the traffic signal at Chester Road. The horseshoe-shaped access road — which leads to the French Creek Family YMCA and All Pro Freight Stadium — also meets Colorado a half-mile west at Miller Road.

The intersection at Miller provides a left-turn lane and a traffic signal with a turning arrow to safely get visitors to the attractions. Going that extra distance, however, appears to be too much for some people heading west on Colorado. Instead, they opt to try a riskier turn onto Recreation closer to the highway. That creates two dangers.

First, those stopping-to-turn cars abruptly clog one of Colorado's two westbound lanes at an extremely busy location. Drivers zipping along at 50 mph often end up slamming on the brakes to avoid crunching their trunk. (One emailer said she has "lost count" of how many times she has seen and heard skidding cars.)

SEE RANT | B3