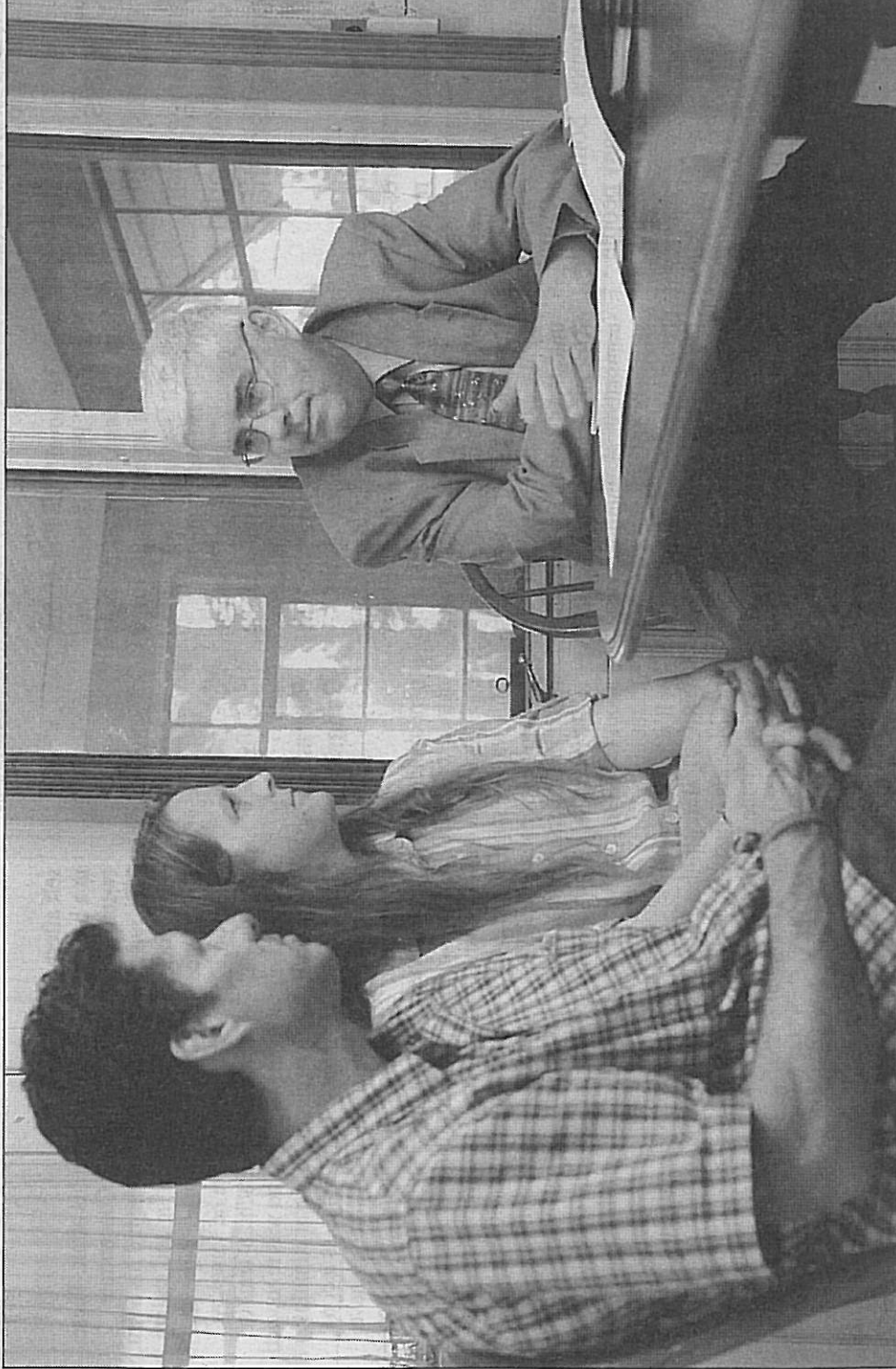


...being mistreated by White and Lynch. "It's therapeutic. It's a way for me to release a lot of the tension and negativity I'd

conform to Markley's work schedule. "He's been really putting it out there the last couple of months," she said. "He whined

"deceitful," and some others that I think are inappropriate for a public official to be using."



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Legal Aid attorney Robert J. Van Der Velde, right, talks with John and Jeaneen about their foreclosure case Tuesday at their home in Cleveland Heights.

Kirtland fence proposal sent to committee

Betsy Scott

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Kirtland City Council's concerns about amendments to the city's fence ordinance have landed it back on the drawing board.

At a Monday work session, council tabled the ordinance and sent it to a subcommittee to revise the recommended changes from the planning and zoning commission.

"We are pretty much all on the same page," Council Vice President Tim Powell said of council, adding the main issues involve electrified and agricultural fencing.

The commission's recommendations include allowing solid privacy fences, requiring commission approval of front-yard agricultural fences and prohibiting electrified fences.

Agricultural fencing is defined in the draft law as a wood fence used to contain livestock raised and kept as an agricultural pursuit. Some members of the agricultural community attended the meeting but didn't speak after learning that the issue would be tabled.

Planning and Zoning Commission Chairman Ted Wiese said this week he spoke with a resident who owns agricultural animals and the man explained the benefits of electrified fencing.

"With cows and horses, you need an extremely strong fence... so it's very logical they would want electrified fences," Wiese said. "Our concern was for safety in the urban portions of the city, not the rural portions."

In other business, council heard the second reading of a new Dominion East Ohio proposal to build a gas compressor station along Route 6.

The company now is proposing building the station on private residential property west of Lake Metroparks Farmpark. The property, at 8720 Euclid-Chardon Road, is owned by Julius and Doris Straka.

After concerns arose from neighbors about other potential locations — including the Planning and Zoning Commission-recommended Mr. Excavator property — the Strakas expressed interest in offering their land.

Also at Monday's meeting, council appointed Kevin D. Ellerman to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

e flu derails European tour for local youth musician

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lebach.com

le, 15-year-old as loved the as she lifts her and begins to sionate about e's all about ills, and last ed Blue Lake western Michi- 1 2,000 other for the 2009 nal Exchange

letter, which and home last th Symphony



Caroline

The orchestra performed a send-off concert in Findlay on June 20. Three members showed/24-hour-flu-like symptoms, so physicians tested them for anything worse.

With a flight to Paris slated for June 22, the 92-piece orchestra would perform 18 concerts in seven overseas communities, including France, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Italy, under the direction of camp President and founder Fritz Stan-sell. Members from across the

country and France would stay with nine or 10 host families during three or four weeks in June and July.

At least that was the plan. On June 21, Blue Lake canceled a barbecue to prevent the flu from spreading. The next day, musicians took surveys about whether they'd also felt ill.

They stopped at McDonald's for lunch after a four-hour bus ride toward Detroit, and two hours later they were asked to sit on the lawn and listen.

"They told us the tour wasn't going to happen this year," Caroline said, "and a long chain of phone calls had been made until the Centers for Disease Control

was notified, and the Michigan Health Department, and Air France (a government-owned airline) said that if we boarded the plane in Detroit we would be quarantined in Paris and sent straight home."

Bill McFarlin, Blue Lake's vice president for development and public relations, said three musicians ultimately tested positive for H1N1 flu, better known as swine flu.

Caroline said she'd experienced symptoms herself, but everyone's fevers had passed by departure day. "It seems unfair that things could be taken this far, but I understand their concern for health," she said. The orchestra reunites for pro-

grams at the University of Michigan July 28 and 29 and in Jackson, Mich., July 30. Caroline enters 10th grade at Kirtland High in August.

Blue Lake has offered automatic acceptance on next year's tour, or to return 50 percent of the cost, and Stansell, the conductor, e-mailed his musicians June 24 encouraging them all to return: "We have unfinished business in Europe."

Some musicians won't be able to return because of college. Caroline is not sure what she'll do.

"I'm going to continue playing for probably the rest of my life. The swine flu is not going to take that away from me," she said.

Lending a helping hand

Legal Aid volunteer attorneys help handle foreclosure cases in Northeast Ohio

John Arthur Hutchison
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Robert J. Van Der Velde is a Mentor attorney who's semi-retired, but he is still working on one of the nation's growing problems — foreclosures.

Van Der Velde spends a lot of his time working for Legal Aid Society of Cleveland to help Lake and Cuyahoga County residents who have the legal action pending against them. He is part of a group of a few hundred lawyers in the state doing such volunteer work.

"I wanted to make a difference," Van Der Velde said. "As lawyers, we can provide the legal assistance to help address a critically important problem in our communities so that our neighbors get a fair,

independent evaluation of what they are facing — at a time when it may seem to them they have nobody on their side."

Legal Aid of Cleveland is part of a statewide initiative called "Save the Dream" that began in April 2008, said Melanie A. Shakarian, director of development.

A nonprofit organization, Legal Aid of Cleveland provides free legal services to low-income residents in Cuyahoga, Lake, Lorain, Ashtabula and Geauga counties.

More than 13,000 Ohio residents have received counseling and legal assistance through the Save the Dream program, according to the Ohio State Bar Association.

Many people are uncertain what to do when they are served notice that their lender intends to foreclose.

Sometimes they ignore the legal action or perhaps they don't have the finances to hire an attorney to help them.

"We are focused on making

sure those facing homelessness due to foreclosure are represented in the process," she said. "It's not a fair process if both sides aren't represented."

Van Der Velde said he often tries to work something out between the homeowner and the lender.

"Sometimes, we engage in deal brokering and will work with the lender to refinance a loan and do what we can to do loan modification," he said. "In other cases, we may go to court on behalf of the client."

In many cases, there are legal items that were not handled properly by the entity initiating the action, Van Der Velde said.

"There are cases where loans have been made in improper circumstances," he said. "Ohio law and federal law requires they be done correctly. If not done correctly (the homeowner) may not know about it unless they know the ins and outs of foreclosure law."

During a recent case, he

appeared in court to ask for the foreclosure case to be dismissed and it allowed the homeowner more time to find a solution.

"Ohio law asks for dotted i's and crossed t's, and it gave the clients the opportunity to work something out of court," Van Der Velde said.

Shakarian said volunteer lawyers are greatly appreciated, and they help the agency supplement the work of their 55 staff attorneys.

"We have 1,400 volunteers who work for us and about 300 volunteers who do work for us on foreclosures," Shakarian said.

"The work they do is invaluable for us to be able to serve so many more clients."

Ohio residents seeking assistance with the Save the Dream program can call 888-404-4674. Attorneys interested in becoming a volunteer for Legal Aid of Cleveland can call 216-687-1900 or visit www.lasclev.org.