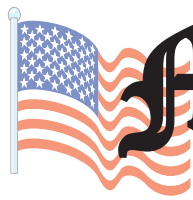


See Tuesday's Journal-Tribune for a story from tonight's Jon Alder School Board meeting



Post 79 on winning streak (See page 4)

Today: Mostly sunny, pleasant. High 75
 Tuesday: Mostly sunny. High 80
 Wednesday: Partly cloudy, breezy, thunderstorms at night. High 86
 Thursday: Mostly cloudy, scattered showers. High 82



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North Union transformed for movie

School being used as setting for film

By VIRG RANKIN

Residents of northern Union County might be wondering if they have fallen asleep at the wheel while driving past North Union High School.

The cause of their confusion is the fact the home dugout on the NU baseball diamond no longer sports the familiar Wildcat logo on its south wall. Instead, letters large and bold spell out Gibsonburg.

What's going on here?

Answer number one is that to facilitate a small interlude into show business, Richwood and North Union High School have assumed dual identities for a few weeks. Rest assured it will not be permanent.

Answer number two is that the temporary paint job is part of preparing the setting for a film which is currently in the making.

According to information supplied by North Union Treasurer Scott Maruniak, the subject of the film is the improbable Division IV Ohio state baseball championship won by Gibsonburg in 2005.

The film is an independent production, which writer/director/producer Bob Mahaffey plans to have completed in time to be submitted for inclusion in this year's Sundance Film Festival. The entry deadline is Sept. 1.

The Sundance Film Festival is a project of the Sundance Institute, which was founded in 1981 by actor/director Robert Redford. Since 1985, the Sun-



After a quick paint job, the North Union High School home baseball dugout became the home of the Gibsonburg Goldens, who pulled off an improbable state championship in 2005. Part of the filming for a movie based on the team's title run is being done on the NU diamond. The photo above pictures the Columbus area college students who are cast as Gibsonburg players for the movie. Front row right is head coach Kyle Rase, who will play the assistant coach in the movie.

(Journal-Tribune photo by Virg Rankin)

dance Film Festival has been held annually in Park City, Utah, and the Sundance Channel joined the world of cable TV in 1996.

The connecting name of Sundance comes from Redford's title role in the 1969 hit movie "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid."

Gibsonburg is a real town in Ohio and its state baseball championship is also real. Gibsonburg is located in Sandusky

County, approximately 10 miles west of Fremont.

In 2005, the Golden Bears struggled through a 6-17 regular season before everything fell into place in May. The Bears won six consecutive tournament games to earn sectional, district and regional titles.

In the final four at Cooper Stadium, Gibsonburg edged Jackson Center 2-1 in the semi-finals, then scored the winning

run in the top of the seventh in a 6-5 victory over Lancaster Fisher Catholic in the title game. Despite their final losing record of 14-17, the Bears' impressive trophy haul made it the most memorable season in the school's history.

So why shoot a feature about a Sandusky County School in Union County?

Maruniak said it was largely about travel time and costs. Xcelerate Media Inc. is han-

dling the logistics and that company is located in Dublin.

"Most of the actors are college students or residents from Columbus," Mahaffey said. "We chose Richwood because it is similar in size and demographics to Gibsonburg and it is less than an hour's drive away. And the school colors are orange, black and white, so that part of the background is already correct."

NU head coach Chad Russell

has a part in the movie as a de facto stage hand and casting director.

"My job is to get the field ready for when they are going to film game action," Russell said. "I also have to provide nine players from our North Union team to play Gibsonburg's opponents in the tournament. The film company will provide us with the uniforms."

Mahaffey is obviously excited about the movie, which will be titled "Gibsonburg."

"We're using 50 college students from the Columbus area as actors and in technical and marketing positions," he said. "It is great experience for them and it allows us to do more with our \$200,000 budget."

Mahaffey pointed out that experienced professionals working behind the cameras include an Emmy winning cinematographer, a Hollywood director and an award winning musical composer. He also noted that the cast will be anchored by a handful of seasoned professional actors, including comedienne Judy Tenuta.

"There are two main objectives for this movie and neither of them are about making money," he said. "Number one is to make it an incredible educational experience for the college kids and number two is to make a work of art that everybody involved can be proud of."

Mahaffey said that some filming has already been done at the NU sports complex. Sessions are also planned for July 14, 15 and 24. He said that only 16 films are accepted for the Sundance Festival and the list (Please see Movie on page 2)

NATO at the crossroads after Gates speech

PARIS (AP) — Created as a bulwark against Soviet expansion, NATO is facing an identity crisis as its members grapple with just how much its long and often-unpopular mission in Afghanistan and its new air campaign in Libya size up as national interests — or not — when many countries' budgets are under strain.

In an unusually blunt parting speech Friday, outgoing U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates called on the Atlantic allies of the U.S. to pay and do more to overcome the alliance's military shortcomings — raising the question: What is NATO today, and what does it need to be?

The allies will be doing some soul-searching in the coming months, with Osama bin Laden dead, many European state coffers squeezed by high debt and slow economic growth, the U.S. draw-down in Afghanistan about to start and tough questions about how long its air campaign over Libya could last.

The alliance has grappled with diverging internal views over whether NATO should be an instrument of "hard" combat missions — generally the U.S. view — or the preference among some in Europe for "soft" power, like "humanitarian, development, peacekeeping, and talking tasks," as Gates put it.

Ever since the Berlin Wall fell, NATO's raison d'être (Please see NATO on page 2)

Seniors face Medicare cost barrier for cancer meds

WASHINGTON (AP) — Facing a life-and-death struggle with kidney cancer, Rita Moore took her prescription for a new kind of chemotherapy pill to her local drugstore.

She was stunned when the pharmacist told her the cost for a month's supply would be \$2,400, well beyond her income.

Medicare drug plans that cover seniors like Moore are allowed to charge steep copayments for the latest cancer medications, whose

cost can run to tens of thousands of dollars a year. About 1 in 6 beneficiaries aren't filling their prescriptions, according to recent research that has put numbers on a worrisome trend.

Officials at Medicare say they're not sure what happens to those patients — whether they get less expensive older drugs that sometimes work as well, or they just give up. Traditionally, chemotherapy has been administered intravenously at a clinic or

doctor's office. Pills, a relatively new option, are thought to represent the future of cancer care.

Moore, 65, was operated on in February for an advanced form of kidney cancer. She said both her cancer and kidney specialists agreed that a drug called Sutent probably offered the only chance to keep the disease in check. It's a capsule taken at home.

But she was unprepared for what happened when she went to fill her prescription.

"I cried," said Moore, who lives in a small town in central California. "What can you do when the only thing out there that can maybe give you some quality of life is unaffordable? I was devastated. I didn't know what to do."

Private insurance companies that deliver the Medicare prescription benefit say the problem is that drug makers charge too much for the medications, some of which were developed from

taxpayer-funded research. The pharmaceutical industry faults insurers, saying copayments on drugs are higher than cost-sharing for other medical services, such as hospital care.

Others blame the design of the Medicare prescription benefit itself, because it allows insurers to put expensive drugs on a so-called "specialty tier" with copayments equivalent to 25 per- (Please see Barrier on page 2)



Steady as she goes

Eva Zwiezinski, 5, gets a little help riding her bike from mom, Amy, this morning on Bay Laurel Drive in Mill Valley. She was also getting encouragement from older brother Jack, 7.

(Journal-Tribune photo by Lindsay Castle)

U.S. troops leaving Saddam palaces

BAGHDAD (AP) — Available soon: nine palaces in lakeside complex frequented by visiting kings and dictators, beautiful molded ceilings and light fixtures, many bidets, Saddam Hussein mural and former prison cell. As is, with Tomahawk missile damage. Contact: U.S. Army.

Thus might read a real estate ad for the Victory Base Complex, one of the many properties the U.S. military is vacating as the Dec. 31 deadline for its withdrawal from Iraq approaches. It will leave behind probably some of the most elaborate, some would say tacky, office spaces ever used by American soldiers, sailors or Marines.

The U.S. military has been headquartered in the complex near Baghdad International Airport almost since GIs reached Baghdad in 2003. Countless U.S. dignitaries have passed through.

It is an odd place to work, surrounded by so much Saddam history and grandiosity.

By the time the dictator was toppled, he had built about 75 palaces and VIP complexes

nationwide. That is according to the then U.S. military historian's report on the Victory Base Complex written last year.

Touring the complex is a bit like touring Saddam's mind. There is the Victory over Iran palace, commemorating the 1980-1988 war he started that ended in stalemate and half a million dead. And the Victory over America palace commemorating the 1991 Gulf War in which a U.S.-led coalition drove Saddam's invading forces out of Kuwait.

"Any war that Saddam survived was a victory," said Col. Les Melnyk, the current U.S. military historian in Iraq.

Now the Iraqi government must figure out what to do with all this square footage.

It already is turning a palace complex in the southern city of Basra into a museum. A palace near the ruins of Babylon may become a hotel. Bahaa Mayah heads an Iraqi committee that decides (Please see Palaces on page 2)

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