

Letters to the Editor

Undervalued or overtaxed?

In the Jan. 13 letter to the editor, Mr. Garner failed to mention that when he purchased the Oakwood Avenue property in 2004 for \$745,000, the county value (on which his property taxes were based) was only \$413,720. For the following tax years 2005, 2006, 2007 the county value (on which his property taxes were based) was only \$478,200. I would feel comfortable in stating that the property in question has been "undervalued" for quite some time.

Additionally, Mr. Garner's final 2008 reappraisal value is \$708,080. Still less than his purchase price nearly five (5) years ago.

The objective in appraising real property for taxing purposes is to determine a "fair market value". According to the International Association of Assessing Officer's, fair market value is defined as: the price a property would realistically bring on the open market in an unencumbered transaction between a willing seller and a willing buyer. Traditionally, a realtor receives a commission and the home is listed for a reasonable amount of time.

Regarding Oakwood's tax increase for 2008, the only levy that passed affecting Oakwood, was the county-wide (i.e. affecting every parcel in the county) Sinclair Community College levy. For clarity, no Oakwood school levy was even on the ballot.

Mr. Garner's attorney might be mindful that TAXES are not subject

to appeal. The Ohio Revised Code only affords homeowners the opportunity to appeal their PROPERTY VALUE.

Anyone who is interested in appealing their property value may do so with the Montgomery County Board of Revision. It is not necessary to enlist an attorney to appeal one's property value.

The appropriate forms may be obtained on the Auditor's website at: www.mcrealestate.org under FORMS, Complaint Against the Valuation of Real Property. The form must be filed in triplicate, signed, notarized and arrive in the County Auditor's office by March 31, 2009.

The best and most compelling evidence of true market value is a recent purchase contract or recent appraisal. I would recommend attaching any supportive documentation to the form when filing. If the property is commercial or a rental, the inclusion of income and expense data as well as rent rolls would be in order. If the basis for appeal is due to damage or a significant change/alteration in the property, I would recommend including pictures for documentation.

If I may be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me via e-mail or call me directly at 937-225-6105.

Respectfully,
Nedra Smolka
Montgomery County Auditor's
Real Estate Ombudsman

Lincoln birthday party at Engineers Club

The year 2009 is important as it relates to Abraham Lincoln. First, Feb. 12 marks the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. Cities and states over our entire country will be celebrating this bicentennial year. This year also marks the sesquicentennial year of Lincoln's trip to Dayton. On Sept. 17, 1859 Lincoln spoke at the Old Court House. He made an anti-slavery speech.

To celebrate these events, The Lincoln Society of Dayton and The Engineers' Club are sponsoring a birthday party for our 16th president. It will take place on Thursday, Feb. 12 at the Engineers' Club, 110 East Monument Ave. A reception and dinner will start at 6 p.m. and the program entitled "Lincoln and Friends" will commence at 7:30 p.m.

The program will include impersonators who had some connection with Lincoln. These are Betty Darst as Lucy Webb Hayes; Larry Marple as Theodore Roosevelt and Dr. Herbert W. Martin as Paul Laurence Dunbar. Also present from the Dayton area will be Lincoln imper-

sonator Jim Crabtree who visits schools, churches, retirement homes, etc. to present our 16th President.

Dessert for the dinner will be Lincoln log birthday cake together with coffee and tea.

The program and dinner are \$50 per person. If you wish to participate mail a check payable to Dayton History at P.O. Box 658, Dayton, Ohio 45409. Please reply by Feb. 6.

Why Lincoln?

This man that humbly signed his name as "A. Lincoln" was a giant among men. He was the first of our log cabin presidents. Further, he was self-educated. We picture him sprawled out on the floor in front of the fireplace doing his sums on a coal shovel with a piece of flint.

Lincoln was a wordsmith. Who else could have said, "It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all of the time; but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." Or "Four score and seven years ago...that government of the

people, by the people and for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Also, Lincoln is a good example for our young people. At New Salem he ran a general store. At the end of the day he found that he had overcharged a customer a small amount. He walked several miles to return the money to her.

Why is our Civil War president relevant? He preserved the union and freed the slaves.

In the history of this nation going back to our beginnings, no one has made the same impact as Abraham Lincoln. Cities, high schools, colleges, hospitals, highways, parks, cars and even toys are named for him. Every month one or more Lincoln books are published. School children enthusiastically recite the Gettysburg address which has been recognized world wide as one of the finest speeches ever made.

I look forward to seeing you on Feb. 12.

Tom Cecil
Oakwood

Support your friendly Oakwood retailer

Attn: Oakwood citizen/shoppers: All hands on deck.

About a month ago, the E.J. Nutter Center hosted an ice skating extravaganza featuring numerous Olympic and professional ice skaters from around the world. Apparently, the skaters got to tour around the

Dayton area in their free time and do a little sight-seeing – and shopping. During the show, one of the skaters mentioned over the PA system that his biggest impression of this place was that "Dayton has a lot of malls."

That is true, starting back in the late 60's with the Salem Mall, followed by the Dayton Mall in the 70's, then the Fairfield Commons Mall in the 80's and finally, the newest addition, the retail small town that calls itself The Greene. With the exception of the recently defunct Salem Mall, these malls are all - in modern-day parlance - 'hopping.'

There were positive results with the first two malls. The Salem Mall catered to the northwest sector of Dayton and drew people from all over the area just on novelty alone. The Dayton Mall pulled development southward and created a huge suburban footprint that has been growing ever since its inception. Good so far.

The Fairfield Commons Mall was built in response to the growth of Wright-Patterson AFB during the Reagan Administration's military buildup and the city of Beavercreek being the chief "bedroom community" for the base. I-675 was also completed, giving a more streamlined accessway from both north and south. These two developments had a horrible financial backlash on the city of Fairborn, which had a long-established retail strip of car dealerships, service stations, restaurants and other modestly thriving businesses.

"When the Fairfield Mall came in, it really hurt Fairborn. When I-675 was completed, it killed us," said one embittered Fairborn retailer. The mall pulled virtually everyone living in the

area to the newly-built stores there.

Secondly, the I-675 highway was quite literally a "bypass" for Fairborn as thousands of autos a day bypassed the town's main drag. A "sign-of-the-times" was when the stalwart Fairborn Theatre closed its doors due to competition from the newly-built Beavercreek Cinema.

The Greene has opened to great fanfare this past year and appears to be a retail and social juggernaut. It is a Mecca for teenagers everywhere to hang out, especially on weekends. Countless clothing emporiums dot the streetscape, while restaurants and bars beckon to the throngs walking around the place.

Free market capitalism being what it is, and the next new best thing being the biggest lure for market share, local shopping centers (including the aforementioned malls), shops and restaurants that happen to be located within a 10-mile radius of the Greene are experiencing a serious decline in patronage. This includes The Shops of Oakwood and Town & Country Shopping Center.

Both of these locales have clothing stores, furniture and furnishings, and a healthy smattering of restaurants and bars in their won collective right.

So, in short, shop as close to home as possible for the next few months. Our local stores need your support during these coming difficult times and your patronage will be most appreciated. Oh, by the way, Oakwood Register advertisers appreciate your business too.

Lance Winkler, Editor
The Oakwood Register

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