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The Award-Winning Westshore Weekly 75¢

Bradley/ Naigle solution proposed

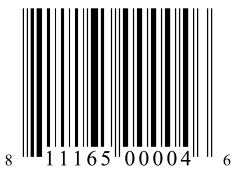
By Jeff Gallatin

BAY VILLAGE

City officials are teaming up with their Westlake and Cuyahoga County counterparts to craft a \$2 million proposed solution for traffic concerns at the Bradley and Naigle roads intersection.

Mayor Debbie Sutherland introduced a proposal at Monday's city council meeting which would add a turn lane northbound on Bradley Road south of the railroad tracks, raising the grade to eliminate line of sight problems and install traffic signals. Sutherland said the city of Westlake will partner with Bay Village on the project, with the communities seeking 70 percent funding from state of Ohio Issue 1 funds. After Sutherland and study officials explained the proposal during a committee of the whole session, council later passed legislation to formally seek the Issue 1 funds.

See **BRADLEY-NAIGLE**, p. 18



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Safety forces honored on Sept. 11 anniversary

Members of the safety forces from Fairview Park, Westlake and Cleveland are recognized during a Blue Mass Friday at St. Angela Merici Catholic Church in Fairview Park. The Blue Mass, named after the uniform color of police officers, firefighters and paramedics, also included prayers for the victims of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. At the right are the Revs. Michael Lanning and Greg Schaut of St. Angela Parish. For more on the Blue Mass, see the article on page 8A. (West Life photo by Larry Bennet)

Jury awards teachers nearly \$1M

By Kevin Kelley

WESTLAKE

A Cuyahoga County Common Pleas jury has awarded three former St. Bernadette teachers nearly \$1 million in damages in their defamation lawsuit against the Westlake Catholic parish and its pastor, the Rev. Thomas Weber.

On Friday, the jury awarded each teacher \$225,000 in damages. Following a Monday hearing on punitive damages, the jury awarded another \$100,000 to each teacher. The jury also awarded the plaintiffs attorney fees.

The former teachers — Judy Hudak, Diane Nameth and Mary Jo Keane — alleged their reputations were harmed by comments Weber made at a parish meeting and in letters regarding why

their contracts to teach at the parish school were not renewed for the fall of 2006.

After angry parents organized an impromptu meeting in the parking lot of Westlake High School the same day the popular teachers learned they were not being retained, the parish scheduled a town-hall meeting to address discontent among parishioners. Some parishioners had discussed withholding financial support from the church to protest the decision.

At the June 2006 parish meeting, Weber repeatedly said he could not comment on why the teachers' contracts had not been renewed. However, he also said that diocesan officials had investigated the matter. He read a letter from Margaret Lyons, the diocesan superintendent of schools, whom

Weber said understood and supported the decision.

Lyons testified that it was not her office's job to review personnel matters at each parish. However, the diocese began receiving calls and e-mails from angry St. Bernadette parishioners once the teachers had been let go. Lyons said that her office, in an effort to facilitate communication among the parties, began gathering information about the issue and conducted a two-hour interview with Helen Bykowski, the principal of St. Bernadette.

Bykowski was initially named a defendant in the lawsuit, but the case against her was dismissed midway through the trial by Judge Michael Donnelly.

See **VERDICT**, p. 18

North Olmsted: Don't text while driving

By Jeff Gallatin

NORTH OLMSTED

City officials are preparing to send a message to drivers who text on the road — don't do it.

Council's safety committee Sept. 8 unanimously recommended making texting while driving a primary offense, meaning the fine will be more than \$100. In initial discussions, the fine could have been \$3, meaning it would be considered a secondary offense. The city already has a law on the books making using your cell phone on the road a secondary offense, meaning an officer can't stop a driver solely for that

offense, but can cite the driver for that in addition to more serious traffic violations.

However, in contrast to the existing cell phone law for North Olmsted, committee members and council members attending the session felt the texting problem merited strong action now. The full council was scheduled to consider the proposal again at its regular meeting last night.

"Clearly it's a problem on the road and something we need to be dealing with as a city," said Councilman-at-large Mark Mahoney, who worked on bringing the proposal forward with Ward 1 Councilman Lou Brossard. Mahoney and others supported making

the fine stronger as well as posting signage at city limits warning people of traffic offenses like this.

Several council members supported making texting a primary offense because of the problems involved.

"It's just not good driving," said Councilman-at-large Michael Gareau Jr. "Anybody who has tried to do it can attest to it. It makes for unsafe driving conditions for not only the driver but the other vehicles around them as well."

Ward 2 Councilman Paul Barker also warned of the problems.

"It's dangerous to be doing that out

See **TEXTING**, p. 18