



The Voice of the Flats!
 www.clevelandflats.org
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Happy Groundhog's Day!

Cuyahoga Chuck Harbinger of Spring

On Wednesday, February 2, 2005, Cuyahoga Chuck will prognosticate the coming of spring when he pokes his head out from the cement stairway just east of the Flats Oxbow building. Groundhog Day is celebrated in the U.S. each year on February 2nd. On this day in mid-winter, the groundhog awakens from a long winter's nap, and goes outside of his den to see if he sees his shadow. This tradition is big on an otherwise cold and dreary mid-winter's day.

According to legend, if the groundhog sees his shadow (a sunny morning), there will be six more weeks of winter. He then returns to his den and goes back to sleep. If however, he does not see his shadow (cloudy days), he plays around outside of his hole for a while. If he does not see his shadow, spring is just around the corner. The Groundhog's Day tradition traveled long ways. It comes from German roots. German immigrants brought the tradition with them from Germany. As they settled in various cities in the US they began the tradition of using the Groundhog to predict the arrival of Spring. The tradition is based upon Candlemas, the day that is the midpoint between Winter and Spring. A famous Candlemas poems goes:

If Candlemas be fair and bright,
 Winter has another flight.
 If Candlemas brings clouds and rain,
 Winter will not come again.

Stay tuned for this year's results!

Design Review. . .by Mark Yager

Design Review met on Tuesday, December 21, 2004 with the following recommendations:

- 1) That the color of the shark be deep blue/gray as defined by their brochure;
- 2) That all wiring/supports and spacers be hidden and located to hide the previous signage with nothing exposed;
- 3) That the raceway for the club letters extend no further from the brick than the raceway for Howl at the Moon;
- 4) That the shark be "Halo" style letters with 4 inch returns colored per the front face;
- 5) That the proportion of the shark match that which is shown on the proposal for the 14' face and be reduced to miss the stone banding, rowlock brick trim and building edges along the 9' sign façade; and
- 6) That the tubing color is white for the shark and blue for the CLUB letters.

Flats Oxbow Meetings and Dates:

Flats Oxbow General Membership Meeting
Thursday, February 24, 2005
Tour of The Western Reserve Fire Museum &
Roast of James Whitney Pressler
 ~ Sponsored by National City Bank ~

The Flats Oxbow General Membership Meeting will be held on **Thursday, February 24, 2005 @ 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM at The Western Reserve Fire Museum**, 310 Carnegie Avenue, at the top of Commercial hill across from the Gillola Marathon station. The program will include a tour of the 1926 fire station and Cleveland Fire Alarm Office and Dispatch Center which is virtually unchanged as a telegraph system which connected to all of the fire alarm boxes in the City. Additionally, the program will include a roast of Flats Oxbow departing Executive Director James Whitney Pressler. Invitations included in this mailing and on the FOA website.

Flats Oxbow wants to thank National City Bank for underwriting this event. The sponsoring of events like this helps underwrite the operations of Flats Oxbow.

Board of Trustees

FOA Board to meet Wed., 2/16/05 @ 11:30 AM @ FOA's office.

FOA Design Review Advisory Committee

The committee will meet at 5:00 PM on **Tuesdays, 2/15 & 3/1, 2005**. The Flats Oxbow Design Review Committee meets every first and third Tuesdays of the month when there are items for review. For the next two upcoming meetings, **complete plans must be submitted to the City's Building Permits Desk by Noon on 2/9 & 2/23/05, respectively.**

This information is brought to you by The Flats Oxbow Association, "The Voice of the Flats", the non-profit membership driven Development Corporation for the Flats. Flats Oxbow offices are at 1283 Riverbed St., Cleveland, OH 44113. Phone (216) 566-1046, Fax (216) 566-0222, e-mail: flatsoxbow@ameritech.net

River Traffic

by Paula Lewis & Jim Cox

The Norfolk/Southern Railroad Bridge will be down for electrical repairs from January 24th through February 14th.

The Executive Director's Last Report to the Troops . . . by James Whitney Pressler

Yes, if you haven't heard by now, I am leaving Flats Oxbow and accepted the position of Physical Director with the Greater Cleveland Partnership. Having had the honor to serve as Oxbow's Executive Director for nearly seven and one-half years, it is very hard for me to express my exact feelings about my tenure here. To some extent Charles Dickens in his Tale of Two Cities touches on them...

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

Charles Dickens certainly summed up my feelings of what it has been like working in the Flats over these years. Many successes have occurred and many challenges remain before Oxbow, the Flats and Cleveland. Above all else, I am truly grateful for the many friends and relationships that I have made. I expect to keep them alive and foster them further in my new capacity. Many thanks to the Board and Oxbow members, supporters, and friends. A special thanks to Charley Bredt, Tom Newman, Laura Furjanic and my wife and children for your support and putting up with me. I know that I am leaving Flats Oxbow in great hands. That's how I was received years ago. Again, a hearty thank you and best of luck to all in 2005. Don't worry, as Arnold says, "I'll be back!"

From the Desk of the Chairman
 by Charles Bredt

Often times the articles we see in the media bear little resemblance to the information we have provided. In fact, sometimes we don't even recognize it as our information. Below is the press release provided by Flats Oxbow.

January 20, 2005
Press Release

The Flats Oxbow Association today announces with sadness the resignation of it's Executive Director, James W. Pressler who is moving onward and upward as Director of Physical Development of Greater Cleveland Partnership.

The Flats Oxbow Board of Trustees is pleased to announce the appointment of Tom L. Newman, former Executive Assistant, as it's new Director. Ms. Laura Furjanic will be replacing Mr. Newman. Ms. Furjanic previously served as Special Events Coordinator for Flats Oxbow overseeing its annual Auction and the July 4th Weekend Waterfront Festival, which she will continue to manage.

A farewell roast of Mr. Pressler will be fired up at The Flats Oxbow Association's February 24, 2005, membership meeting being held at the new Western Reserve Fire Museum, 310 Carnegie Avenue along with a tour of the facility. We expect this meeting to be "too hot to handle". That's why it's at the Fire Station! For reservations contact Laura at the Flats Oxbow Association, 216-566-1046. \$15.00 per person. The luncheon is being sponsored by National City Bank.

New Flats Oxbow Members. . .by Laura Furjanic

As the newest member of the Flats Oxbow staff, I would like to welcome new Flats Oxbow voting members **Mitchell Schneider** of First Interstate Properties, property owner of Steelyard Commons and **Louie Saino**, owner/operator of The Pizza & Calzone Company located at 1664 Center Street, 216-241-6162. Try the Carmen Pizza named after its baker and Louie's wife.

Flats Oxbow would like to send its deepest sympathy to the family of Mary Zone. Mary recently passed away and we are all deeply saddened. Wife, mother, friend, Councilwoman, politico and community leader, Mary cleared a path that others follow. Outspoken and no nonsense, she did it "HER WAY". Condolences to Ward 17 Councilman Mathew Zone and family.

Oxbow Action 370
28 January, 2005

The steel span of the West 3rd St. Bridge, 217 feet in length and weighing 1,000 tons, will be lowered by cranes onto a barge and then towed to Dock 32 at the Port of Cleveland, where the span will be dismantled. The W. 3rd Street Bridge will be closed to vehicular traffic from January 2005 through January 2006. The City of Cleveland, which last year ended the Port Authority's lease of Dock 32 after 36 years, has agreed to permit a limited use of Dock 32, at the eastern edge of the Port, only through mid-April because "the City has plans for the dock," according to the Coast Guard. So, the barge will have to be moved again to another dock site, perhaps next to Great Lakes Towing's operations on the Old River Channel. A new steel span will be constructed on the barge, then towed back to the bridge towers next February to be installed. The Ohio Department of Transportation's contractor on the replacement of the 64-year-old bridge is Walsh Construction, of LaPorte, Indiana.

All other vessel traffic is finished until the Spring, when ISG begins their winter ore movement from Osborne Dock (up river) around February 28th and then commencing from Cleveland Bulk Terminal around March 7th.

Views from Old Salt

by Wayne Bratton

**With information contributed to Wayne by
The Great Lakes Towing Company**

While a beam of sunshine brightly illuminates the City of Cleveland water intake crib 3.5 miles offshore like an orange floating in a bowl of ice, the Cuyahoga River remains ice covered to Superior Bend. No ships are transiting the River; however, their presence is very visible with seven ships here in winter lay-up. This is the largest number of ships laid-up in the Port of Cleveland in a long number of years. This provides more work for many vessel support businesses. Four ships, *AMERICAN REPUBLIC*, *DAVID Z. NORTON*, tug *INVINCIBLE* with barge *MCKEES SONS*, & *CALUMET* are in the old river bed, *THE ALPENA* is at the Lafarge dock, *THE WOLVERINE* is snuggled up to the old G & W dock, while the tug *CLEVELAND* and her barge, *CLEVELAND ROCKS* brave the cold at the old Ford/Palladino dock. Across the river several "live aboards" enjoy the winter aboard their boats. The four tour boats are laid-up at their respective berths. The N & S #1 "Iron Curtain" bridge is scheduled to remain closed to vessel traffic until February 13th. The barge scheduled to float out the West Third Street Bridge has arrived at Lamont, Illinois. However, its arrival at Cleveland is conditional upon ice constraints in the straits of Mackinaw and the Detroit/St. Clair River systems.

RESIDENTS

by Laurel Warnke-Taylor

I would like to introduce myself as your newly elected member to the Flats Oxbow Board of Trustees and Residents Committee Chair, Laurel Warnke-Taylor. Looking forward to our March Majestic Cruise meeting to inform residents of all that is going on in our community. I have served the last seven years as Ward 13, Precinct P Committeewoman, which encompasses most of the Flats. We are planning an exciting year filled with events I know you will want to attend. Joining Flats Oxbow as a \$20 special resident membership covers the mailings and lots of treats. See you soon to network and enjoy the fellowship.

RETAIL/SERVICE

by Bob Kress

Bob Kress agreed to serve as the Retail/Service point person for the Flats Oxbow Association and report at the monthly Board of Trustees Meetings. Expect to see his happy smiling face at your establishment to find out how we can better serve your needs. (tom)

The Flats Shall Rise Again

by Tom L. Newman

As a young man out of college I went to work in my family's foundry at 901 Addison Road, north of St. Clair (E. 65th St.) – down at the dead end by the railroad tracks. After work I would often find myself drawn down to that strange mystical land known as "The Flats". I spent many an hour watching

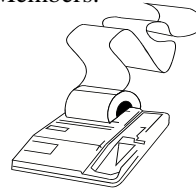
afternoon deteriorate into night out on the beer porch of the long gone Cleveland Crate and Trucking Company. I viewed the river freighters, the trains, the pleasure boats, the bridges going up and down and round and round, the rough-and-tumble homeless setting up camp at the then undeveloped Settler's Landing as the sun slowly set over Lake Erie. Later I invested with Joe Scully in acquiring the Left Bank Building. In those days the Flats were somewhat "no mans land" except with the emerging vision of Herb Strawbridge and the Higbee Development Corporation.

Well, here I am 30 years later looking out my window at Flats Oxbow still in awe of this magnificent area. On my way to work this morning, as I passed countless trucks making their way past St. Malachi's, I thought, it's really unfortunate that The Flats often receives such a bad rap. While Legacy Village, Avon Commons and Crocker Park are wonderful shopping areas – I go to them myself – they just don't have the magic and excitement of a working river running through them. I've yet to see a river freighter maneuvering Cedar and Richmond. The angry drivers honking at one another because the light changed can't compare to the conversation of bells and whistles between river traffic and bridges.

It can not be denied that we have had some difficult years in the Flats. I often think of that old movie, Chicago or San Francisco – I really can't remember which one, after the fire or the earthquake (take your pick), where the citizenry returned to the city through the rubble of destruction with picks and shovels to rebuild. I always felt that WE were put here in Cleveland because we were a hardier – a tougher breed. A few bad years and we don't just put our tail between our legs and run! We roll up our sleeves, grit our teeth, clench our fists and push our selves into it – rebuilding "Them Thar Flats!," Cleveland's last and greatest frontier. This is our charge at Flats Oxbow, to be the conduit for that rebuilding. WE, together! Flats Oxbow is at your service 24/7/365!

FLATS CLASSIFIEDS

Accounting, Bookkeeping, Financial Statements, Analyses, Taxes. \$25.00 discount on Tax Preparation for fellow Oxbow Members.



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FLATS CATS

by Schvitzy and Blinky

Flats Cats, Schvitzy and Blinky in the FOA basement report that if you're looking for some mousers, call Mary Wawrytko @ Hearts & Paws, 696-4258. Immediate adoptions available for qualified facilities. Nary a mouse to be found at 1283 Riverbed Street.



OXBOW ACTION ARTICLES

by You

Get out your ink and quill pen and send in an article for the next Oxbow Action. Investigate your literary talent. Send in a letter to the editor. You too can be published.

