

# The Oakwood Register

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## Jewish community dedicates mikvah at Sugar Camp

More than one hundred people attended the ribbon cutting and dedication on Sunday, for the newest building just completed on the grounds of Sugar Camp. This new stone building houses a mikvah, a ritual bath that is an integral part of Jewish religious life. Its waters reflect **the world's natural bodies of water – its oceans, rivers, wells, and spring-fed lakes – which are mikvahs in their most primal form. It is constructed in accordance with complex specifications** as outlined in *Halaka* Jewish Law.

Briefly, a mikvah must be built into the ground or built as an essential part of a building, never as a portable receptacle such as a bathtub, whirlpool or Jacuzzi. It must contain a minimum of 200 gallons of rainwater that was gathered and siphoned into the mikvah pool in accordance with a highly specific set of regulations. In extreme cases where the acquisition of rainwater is impossible, ice or snow originating from a natural source may be used to fill the mikvah. As with the rainwa-

ter, an intricate set of laws surrounds its transport and handling.

Modern-day mikvah pools are equipped with filtration and water-purification systems, their waters are commonly chest high and kept at a comfortable temperature. Access to the pool is made via stairs. (Mikvahs that are accessible to the handicapped are equipped with lifts.) The mikvah is used by those of the Jewish faith only.

The Sugar Camp mikvah was made possible by gifts from Allan and Brenda Rinzler, Lee and Patti Schear and Dr. Martin and Susan Shear. Rabbi Nochum Mangel of the Chabad Center in Oakwood presented the formal dedication. Rabbi Sofian of Temple Israel was also present at the ceremony. Sofian's wife Simone gave a speech "A History of Mikvah," which offered an explanation of the meaning of a mikvah and how and why its used, relating it back to biblical times and the commandments.

Oakwood dignitaries in attendance included Mayor Judy Cook and several Oakwood City Council members.



Cutting the ribbon at The Miami Valley Mikvah (L to R): Allan and Brenda Rinzler, Oakwood Mayor Judy Cook, Susan and Dr. Martin Schear. The Rinzlers and the Schears were the lead donors for the project. Photo courtesy Marshall Weiss/The Dayton Jewish Observer

## 2 recreation/athletic facilities meetings slated

The City of Oakwood will conduct two community meetings on Tuesday, Sept. 22 and Tuesday, Oct. 6, addressing the athletic/recreational facilities master plan the city is undertaking. The meetings will take place at the Oakwood High School Auditorium and will begin at 6:30 p.m. The Master Plan will address Oakwood public athletic and recreation facilities and will provide a guide for operations, maintenance and capital improvements. It will also include a vision for the future, taking into consideration the existing facilities, as well

as unmet athletic and recreational needs as identified by our citizens and city leaders. These meetings will focus on obtaining community input on wants and needs. Residents are encouraged to attend as citizen input and involvement is an essential part of the master plan process.

The consulting firm of Michael Schuster Associates (MSA) will be assisting the city with the development of this facilities master plan. MSA has extensive experience in planning and designing athletic and recreation facilities.

## School Board

### Research shows music works entire brain

By Dawn Beigel

Music students have a lot more to be proud of than the ability to play an instrument. According to Oakwood music teacher/band director Ron Nelson, music education is a proven "brain booster" that has sociological and anthropological benefits as well.

Nelson, who presented the curricular showcase at last night's meeting of the Oakwood Board of Education, drew his information from a college research project he recently completed. He raised the question of why music education is important. Among his findings were that music actually raises math scores, and develops discipline and focus.

He highlighted three fundamental bases for music education: biological, sociological and

anthropological.

Biologically, it exercises the entire brain, (not just the right-hand side as once believed) and can increase the grey matter, he said.

Sociologically, it connects students to their culture in ways they may not understand, said Nelson. Music students also find a greater flexibility in designing undergraduate double-major programs in college.

Anthropologically, it develops an awareness and appreciation for the unique creativity of music among humanity, he said. Music students learn that some instruments are traced far back into pre-history.

Nelson also presented some points on music as a philosophy. Among these were that it provides cross-curricular music arts experiences, it gives general

and advanced music opportunities for all grade levels, and it permeates the school setting through passive and active listening across the curriculum and at school assemblies.

In other information at the meeting, Superintendent Dr. Mary Jo Scalzo discussed the unofficial district enrollment count for this school year. She said the recent count (taken this month) was 2,128, compared to 2,183 (taken in February) and the projected count of 2,162. The biggest changes were in kindergarten and first grades, although statistically the largest grade levels are seventh and fourth grades. She said the official count will be taken in October.

Oakwood Board of Education will hold its next regular meeting Oct. 12, 7:30 p.m. at the central office.