

THE PASCO TRIBUNE

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Cynthia Clancy and husband Joe, background, are accused of defrauding an elderly woman.

"I always believed Cindy. Everything she told me."

ELOISE MUDWAY
Testifying against defendants in trial on charges of exploitation and grand theft

Woman Testifies Against Pair

HOUSING SCAM TRIAL BEGINS FOR CLANCYS

By TODD LESKANIC
The Tampa Tribune

NEW PORT RICHEY — In May 2004, Cynthia Clancy told Eloise Mudway her house was on the verge of foreclosure.

Cynthia Clancy took her to a bank. Sign this paper, Clancy told her, so we can save the house, Mudway testified.

Mudway had no reason to distrust Clancy. She and her husband, Joe, had lived with her at her Hilltop Drive home since 2001. Mudway paid all the bills in exchange for their company and care.

Mudway, then 86 years old, signed the document.

"I always believed Cindy," Mudway testified Wednesday. "Everything she told me."

Mudway's attitude toward the Clancys changed shortly after signing what she later

learned was a quit-claim deed to her \$370,000 house. What Mudway didn't know was that her signature transferred ownership of her house to the Clancys.

More than a year later, the Pasco County Sheriff's Office charged the Clancys with exploitation of the elderly and grand theft. Their trial began Wednesday. Both have pleaded not guilty.

The trial is expected to last through Friday. Circuit Judge Jack Day will decide the case in lieu of a jury.

Mudway, now 91 and in a wheelchair, was the first witness called by Assistant State Attorney Mary Handsel. Her testimony retraced the entire ordeal, from the time she allowed the Clancys to move in with her in 2001 until they dropped her off at another family's home in early 2005.

See **CLANCYS' TRIAL, Page 3** ►
Mudway has memory lapses.



Tribune photos by ANDY JONES

Eloise Mudway, 91, testifies against the Clancys in a trial that began Wednesday.

Movies Ready To Roll



Tribune photos by CHRISTINE DeLESSIO

Harry Urdaz of Porter Paints works on trim for the new Cobb Theatres in Wesley Chapel, which is slated to open Sept. 19.

Central Pasco's First Cinema Will Have Restaurant, 16 Screens

By KEVIN WIATROWSKI
The Tampa Tribune

WESLEY CHAPEL — The count-down has begun toward opening day for central Pasco County's first movie house, although the exact date remains a moving target.

Cobb Theatres hopes to have its newest multiplex cinema open Sept. 19, but company officials are keeping that date tentative because they still have a lot of work to do.

The 16-screen theater is nearing completion at the northern end of The Grove at Wesley Chapel shopping center just north of County Road 54 and Oakley Boulevard.



Cobb
His great-grandfather opened a theater in the silent film era.

Outside, the theater's vertical marquee and neon detailing evoke Art Deco-style movie houses of yore. But inside, the Alabama-based theater chain reveals what President Bobby Cobb said could be the future for his entire industry: an in-house restaurant.

See **MOVIE THEATER, Page 5** ►
Snack bar will be self-service.



The theater's marquee and neon detailing evoke Art Deco-style movie houses. It's at the northern end of The Grove at Wesley Chapel.

Reward Offered In Fatal Home Invasion

AUTHORITIES SEARCH FOR 82-YEAR-OLD MAN'S KILLER

The Tampa Tribune

PORT RICHEY — Crime Stoppers of Tampa Bay is offering a reward of \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest of the person responsible for breaking in to a Port Richey home and killing an 82-year-old resident.

About 2 a.m. on Aug. 28, a masked man entered the home of Joseph Wido and his wife, Roberta, 79, on Quimby Drive in Timber Oaks.

Pasco County sheriff's officials say Joseph Wido tried to protect his wife and home, telling the intruder he could take him. Moments later, he was killed. His wife was bound and waited for nearly 10 hours until neighbors heard her cries. She was unharmed.

The killer has been described as 20 to 40 years old, about 5 feet 9 inches tall and 170 pounds, with dark hair and eyebrows and dark eyes. He was wearing a bandanna or rag around his nose and mouth, a white T-shirt, blue jeans, a white baseball cap with the number 20 in black lettering, and red cloth gloves.

Authorities are asking for the public's help in capturing this person. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous and be eligible for a cash reward is asked to call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-873-TIPS (8477). Anonymously report online at www.crimestopperstb.com or send an anonymous text message to C-R-I-M-E-S (274637), Keyword: TIP155.

Port Richey To Pour Money Into Redevelopment Grants

FIXING UP BUSINESSES, HOMES IS AGENCY'S AIM

By CHRISTIAN M. WADE
The Tampa Tribune

PORT RICHEY — For several years, city leaders have banked hundreds of thousands of dollars of property taxes to use for redevelopment projects.

The funding is made available

through the city's designation as a blighted community, also known as a community redevelopment district, allowing the city to keep more than half of the city and county taxes its residents pay every year until 2032.

Unlike Pasco County's other redevelopment districts, Port Richey has been conservative in spending the pool of money, using the lion's share of what has been spent for salaries and consulting fees, with plans to

fund big-ticket projects such as dredging and waterfront revitalization.

County officials have criticized the city's use of redevelopment money to plug shortfalls in the budget — a move that, although legal, has done little to remove the blighted conditions.

But the city is now planning to spend big bucks on redevelopment.

The city's Community Redevelopment Agency board, composed of

five city council members, on Aug. 26 approved a series of new residential and commercial improvement grant programs.

To date, city officials have earmarked \$150,000 to fund the grants, which were modeled after New Port

See **GRANT PROGRAMS, Page 2** ►
New facades and signs are priorities.

RELATED STORY, Page 2
Port Richey adopts four-day workweek.



Mitchell Girls Among Top Teams As Golf Season Opens

DETAILS, Pasco Sports, Page 10



Tribune photo by CHRISTINE DeLESSIO

The new theater's second-floor 120-seat Cinebistro will be the first of its kind for Cobb Theatres. It will offer patrons a sit-down restaurant where they can eat before their movie.

MOVIE THEATER

Continued From Page 1

"This is beyond anything that we've ever done," Cobb said Wednesday while construction workers worked around him.

Cobb Theatres carries on a family legacy that began when Bobby Cobb's great-grandfather opened a theater in the silent film era. In the decades that followed, the family stayed on top of the industry's trends, from drive-ins to stadium seating, Bobby Cobb said.

Cobb sold his company — and two cinemas in west Pasco to Regal Entertainment in 1997. After three years, he got back into the business with a new company.

The new theater's second-floor 120-seat Cinebistro will be the first of its kind for Cobb Theatres. It will offer visitors a fully functioning sit-down restaurant where they can eat before their movie or order food and drinks to eat in leather-covered seats in adults-only balconies.

"We want this to be a seamless, fully integrated experience," said Jeremy Welman,

the company's chief operating officer.

Company officials hope to draw visitors from as far as Hernando and Hillsborough counties. When they began work on their new theater, Wesley Chapel was sprouting house by the hundreds and offered the promise of thousands of new movie patrons.

The housing collapse and tight economic times have undone some of that, but Welman remains optimistic.

"For the most part, we're still one of the least expensive out-of-home experiences," he said.

Tickets for the balconies will run \$14.50 on weekends and a couple of dollars less during the week. Admission to the main floor will be \$9.50 for adults, company officials said.

Downstairs, at the heart of the wide-open lobby, the theater's snack bar is self-service and offers everything from popcorn to pizza — no waiting in line for someone to hand over a drink or box of candy, Welman said.

For now, however, the snack bar is empty. From beneath the counter Wednesday afternoon came the wail of a power tool and the faint whiff of something smoking. There's still some work to do before opening day.

"We want this to be a seamless, fully integrated experience."

JEREMY WELMAN

Cobb chief operating officer

Aside from the remaining construction work, theater officials still have to finalize the roster of films they will offer visitors on the first day. They have 16 screens to fill at a time when Hollywood's summer blockbuster season has ebbed.

That means some of those screens could sport independent films and unusual offerings, such as 3-D versions of recent movies, said Guy Austin, the company's operations director.

"September is not the best time to open a theater," Welman said. "It'll be a little quieter than we hoped it would be, but Nov. 1 is right around the corner, and there are some great holiday films."

Reporter Kevin Wiatrowski can be reached at (813) 948-4201 or kwiattrowski@tampatrib.com.

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