

# Blimp

Great care taken to find, prevent holes in fabric

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This particular airship will succeed the Stars & Stripes, which crashed in June in a severe storm in Florida; federal investigators blamed pilot error.

There's a good reason the staff has named one part of the hangar workspace "The Resurrection Section." Parts of the Stars & Stripes will fly again in coming years - its gondola rests in one area, covered in protective shrink-wrap - just as parts of other retired Goodyear blimps will live on in this new airship.

It's all part of a process refined in 80 years of blimp-building expertise and passed on from generation to generation.

## Replacement schedules

The Stars & Stripes was due to retire at the end of this year anyway.

Work on its successor can be traced back two years, when the gondola from the retired blimp Eagle was stripped to bare metal, inspected and then rebuilt to new specifications. Even the envelope is recycled - it comes from another Goodyear blimp that was damaged in California.

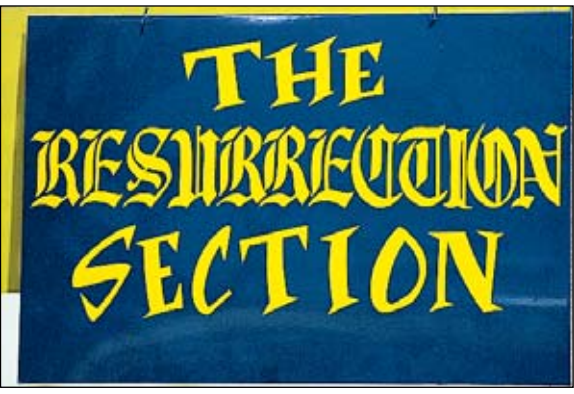
The untimely demise of the Stars & Stripes pushed up the building plans by about six months, Dunay and others said.

Although prep work began in September, it wasn't until early October that Goodyear executives gave the official go-ahead to replace the Stars & Stripes.

Goodyear's airships are built to last 10 to 15 years, Dunay said. Crashes notwithstanding, that usually gives plenty of time to plan for replacements and to build or refurbish spare parts. "We usually have a three- or four-year time frame to play with," Dunay said.

The two blimps now flying aren't scheduled to retire for at least eight years. But the staff at Blimp Garage is already looking that far ahead.

"They're all the same, but



Above is airship construction supervisor Jared Haren with the envelope. At right, chief mechanic Tim Hopkins eyes the gondola.



Photos by Paul Tople Akron Beacon Journal

they're all a little bit different," said Jared Haren, airship construction supervisor. For instance, the staff redesigned the cockpit of this new blimp and updated its instrumentation. The cockpit also is a different color - black instead of the gray found on the other two blimps still flying.

## Caution in beast's belly

"Everything has been deliberately, methodically planned," Haren said.

Take, for example, the trips into the inside of the envelope. The intent is to look for any tiny holes in the fabric, which is both strong and yet easily punctured.

Before the envelope is taken out of a large wood crate, the hangar floor is covered with cloth as part of the preparations, to prevent punctures or tears.

With the envelope safely spread across the floor and puffed up with air, workers shine bright lights onto the exterior of the envelope. Any light entering the dark interior indicates a hole or thin spot.

Staffers empty their pockets before entering via a special hatch - even a penny dropped inside could give the blimp a problem if the coin bounces around while the airship is in flight. The workers check to make sure that whatever

tools they bring in also are brought out.

Staffers aren't supposed to carry sharp objects that could be dropped. They try to wear coveralls that are made without zippers, which could cause a hole if someone brushed up against the envelope.

"We watch each other real close," Haren said.

And then they repeat the process.

"We go over it inch by inch. Not just once - a couple of times," Haren said. They want not only to find and fix holes, but also to learn how the holes got there.

The inspectors even go inside

the envelope's two large "balloons" - essentially massive balloons, one forward and the other aft - that hold air instead of helium and are used to regulate interior pressure.

Although the work is methodical, they keep to a pretty accurate schedule, Haren said.

"We take great pains to make sure it's right," Haren said. "We try to make it as perfect as possible."

In this case, the perfectionists patched 63 pinholes in the belly of their whale.

Jim Mackinnon can be reached at 330-996-3544 or jmackinnon@thebeaconjournal.com

## Blimp Garage timeline

- **June 16:** Goodyear's Stars & Stripes blimp crashes in Florida, just months before its scheduled retirement. The crash speeds up plans to build a successor.
- **September:** Work begins in earnest on a successor.
- **Oct. 4:** Goodyear officially announces it will build another blimp.
- **November:** The 192-foot-long envelope, which is stretched out on the floor of the Wingfoot Lake hangar, is half-inflated with air so crews can climb inside to inspect it.
- **Monday:** The blimp work crew is to weigh the gondola, which is being rebuilt after previously being used in the Eagle airship. It is to be attached to the inflated envelope later this week.
- **Wednesday:** Starting early in the morning, helium is to be pumped into the envelope. The process should take about 3½ hours.
- **Thursday:** The gondola is to be attached.
- **Dec. 12:** The blimp is to be moved from its position in "Slot 2" deep inside the hangar to "Slot 1" nearest the hangar doors, where additional work will start to get the blimp ready for its first flight in the spring.

# COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

An Advertising Feature

## Guest Viewpoint

### A Look at the Weather Map for Industrial Real Estate



By Jack Juron, Vice President, Albrecht Inc.

As I don my meteorological glasses to predict the industrial real estate weather in 2006, I first want to look back over the weather pattern of the last five years for trends. Those patterns included Katrina-like devastation followed by skies with Lake Erie-type changeable weather, then a clearing horizon and warm winds bringing sunny days.

Looking back to 2001, I remember a dead calm and then the chilling effects of 9/11. The Northeast Ohio industrial and flex building market absorbed a negative 1.6 million square

feet that year, meaning that there was greater vacancy by year-end than at the beginning of the year. A good comparison is to view the vacant space like a football field without end zones at the beginning of the year and with end zones at the end, as business owners and corporate planners either scuttled plans or cut back significantly in manufacturing and inventory levels.

The slowdown continued in 2002 and even into 2003. In 2002, the negative absorption of industrial space in our market increased to about 2.4 million square feet. The storm began to subside in 2003, and the market began absorbing vacant industrial space. By year's end, there was positive direction.

Summer winds picked up in earnest in 2004

when the market absorbed 3.4 million square feet of vacant space. The economy picked up and interest rates decreased. The prime rate dropped from 9.5 percent in January 2001 and 4.25 percent in January 2003 to 4 percent in early 2004. Ground was broken on some significant construction projects including large buildings for Cisco (490,000 square feet.), Laich Industries (400,000 square feet.), Heidtman Steel (250,000 square feet.) and House of LaRose (380,000 square feet.).

Skies remained clear in 2005 with more than 5.3 million additional square feet being absorbed. Overall vacancy rates have fallen from almost 13 percent in early 2003 to about 9 percent today.

Looking out the window today, I see fair weather, and my industrial real estate forecast for 2006 is that the prevailing high-level winds will bring a steady and calm pattern with at least partly sunny skies.

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20 yr. successful business & real estate on Triplett Blvd. across from airport, Rubber Bowl & Derby Downs.				
<b>INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY</b>				
363 Stanton Ave.	\$375,000	Al Spalding	Spalding Associates Inc.	330-376-0007
2 bldgs., 15,000 s.f. and 2,600 s.f. on nearly 5 acres. Property could be split. Near I-77 & Grant St.				
44 N. Summit St.	\$375,000	Al Spalding	Spalding Associates Inc.	330-376-0007
Special financing, 6/10 of an acre, 9,900 s.f. bldg. Good access to Rt. 8. Visit <a href="http://www.spalding.cc">www.spalding.cc</a> for listings.				
<b>INVESTMENT PROPERTY</b>				
1176 Brittain Rd.	-----	Justine M. Fiehn	Spalding Associates Inc.	330-376-0007
6-unit retail center + 2 bdrm. suites (3000 s.f. each). Adjacent tenant-occupied nite club for sale. Call for details.				
<b>OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE</b>				
1558 Front St.	Negotiable	Justine M. Fiehn	Spalding Associates Inc.	330-376-0007
Cuy. Falls. 3 suites avail., 550 s.f., 1120 s.f. or 3000 s.f. Attractive brick bldg. w/1-car att. gar.				
119 Ghent Rd.	\$8/sf + CAM	Al Spalding	Spalding Associates Inc.	330-376-0007
Merchants Square, Fairlawn, attractive office space on 2nd flr. across from Summit Mall. 5 offices + open area.				
2101 Front St.	\$325-\$625	-----	Commonwealth Properties	330-666-7773
3 offices available now, 2 offices available in Feb. '06. Cuyahoga Falls.				
111 Portage Trail	\$1195	-----	Commonwealth Properties	330-666-7773
1800 sq. ft. located in Cuyahoga Falls.				
127-129 Portage Trail	Up to \$164 sq. ft.	-----	Commonwealth Properties	330-666-7773
will divide. \$6.75 to \$8.00 per sq. ft. Cuyahoga Falls.				
151 Portage Trail	\$695	-----	Commonwealth Properties	330-666-7773
952 sq. ft. available in Cuyahoga Falls.				
1720-F Merriman Rd.	-----	-----	Commonwealth Properties	330-666-7773
4 private offices. 122-221 sq. ft., \$160-\$285; 3000 sq. ft., \$1700. <a href="http://cwproperties.com">cwproperties.com</a>				
<b>RETAIL SPACE FOR LEASE</b>				
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**Transfers from 11-27-05**

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**Akron City**  
2141 17th St, SW, Turner T & R E Trust to Joseph R. Veto, \$128,500  
1500 Sara Ave, Oil Marathon to May Entis LLC, \$265,000

**Copley Township**  
4076 Medina Road, Burkhardt Dev Group Inc to Rothrock Group Ltd, (1)

**Hudson City**  
55 Atterbury Blvd, Center Ridge Coal Corp to Hudson Anglican Fellowship, (1)

**Twinsburg City**  
9263 Ravenna Road, Executive Homes Ltd to Piumno Family Properties, \$27,723  
9241 Ravenna Road, Executive Homes Ltd to Piumno Family Properties, \$25,580

**Twinsburg Township**  
7996 Darrow Road, Artcraft National to Geis Brothers-TT LLC, \$2,850,000

**MEDINA COUNTY**

**Medina City**  
5071 Washington St, E, Terrence G Tulisiak to RJ Castele Properties, (1)

**Westfield Township**  
Kennard Road, Michael J Gunner to Mark & Valerie Oakley, \$21,000

**PORTAGE COUNTY**

**Brimfield Township**  
5071 State Route 43, Jencor Home Corp to Brimfield Crossings Ltd, \$380,000

**Streetsboro City**  
9094 State Route 14, Swartz to DVM Properties Of Streets, \$375,000  
1260 State Route 303, Streetsboro Crossing Props L to Target Corp, \$1,990,000  
1298 State Route 43, Homes Ryan to Mark & Emily Barker, \$205,300

**STARK COUNTY**

**Canton City**  
1914 6th St, SW, Morgan Chase Bank JP to Carcione Properties LLC, \$44,800  
Clark Ave, SW, Michael Dobrick to Timken Co, \$11,500

**Hartsville Village**  
127 Washington St, Delwin L & Judith A Stertza to Tiray LLC, \$80,000

**Lexington Township**  
1469 Main St, W, Properties JCMT to WMMT Properties, \$1,600,000

**Massillon City**  
24 Erie St, S, M & W Yellig Inc to Towne Plaza Ltd, \$62,500

**Perry Township**  
3711 Lincoln Way E, Linda S Preusser to Richard & Kimberli Himmel, \$252,500

**WAYNE COUNTY**

**Wooster City**  
428 Beall Ave, Franchise Loan Receivables to CNL Net Lease, 2003 Funding, (1)

1077 Exchange St, W, Johnson Robert J Trust to Paxos & Morgan Entis Inc, \$185,000  
1046 Marcy St, Sheriff Of Summit County to Guys Modern Tool Co, \$90,000  
290 Millcreek Dr, Curtis R Noel to John M. Gardner, \$100,000

**Cuyahoga Falls City**  
1796 25th St, C P Venture Properties Ltd to John & Debra Kinzel, \$255,000  
1796 25th St, John K & Debra J Kinzel to John & Debra Kinzel, \$170,000  
1489 2nd St, Herman A Burgess to Thomas & Vicky Gray, \$163,000  
2408 State Road, PKC Investment Corp to MGJ Properties LLC, \$220,000

**Macedonia City**  
223 Highland Road, E, Joseph B & B M Tenebria to Department Of Transportation, \$44,200

**Norton City**  
3375 Barber Road, Rebrab Investments Inc to Michael & Mindy Zimmerman, \$70,000

**Tallmadge City**  
65 Carmen Road, Charles L Sklare to Carmen Dev Co, \$50,000

**Twinsburg City**  
8840 Commons Blvd, Commons Business Group Ltd to Durrall Properties LLC, \$750,000

**MEDINA COUNTY**

**Lafayette Township**  
5714 Chippewa Road, William J Musiak TRST to Kenneth P. & Dawnetta L. Demichiel, \$195,000

**Medina Township**  
5041 Victor Dr, WMBD Inc to Rajstree Properties, \$635,000

**Sharon Township**  
Medina Road, Spencer Estates LLC to Ruhlin Co, \$322,111

**PORTAGE COUNTY**

**Aurora City**  
311 Garfield Road, E, Patricia A Korner to Aurora Center LLC, \$250,000

**Kent City**  
1339 Main St, W, Margaret J Sisson to Bruce & Nancy Hansford, \$100,000

**STARK COUNTY**

**Alliance City**  
1495 Freshley Ave, N, Leslie R Crowe to R Kuntzman Inc, \$252,500

**Canton City**  
505 9th St, SW, Doris J Bolender to Morris Rentals, \$55,500  
2019 Harrisburg Road, NE, Otho J & Ruth H Moretta to Millmach LLC, (1)  
3055 Mahoning Road, NE, Holiday Bowl Inc to Stark County Cmnty Ent Co, \$350,000

**Jackson Township**  
5075 Dressler Road, NW, Chi-Chis Inc to BV Dev Gilbert LLC, \$1,000,000

**Perry Township**  
4911 Navarre Road, SW, Larry Dirfrango to Ronald & Lisa Vega, \$170,000

**WAYNE COUNTY**

**Doylestown Village**  
40 College St, Shirley J Crandall to Michael K. Crandall, \$52,571  
108 Portage St, James M Durbin to Gary & Kelly Durbin, \$200,000