

Highlighting local 'Newsmakers' of 2014



As we begin 2015, the *Stow Sentry* takes a look back at some of the people who made 2014 an exciting and memorable year in Summit County.

Showcasing these individuals is one of the best parts of our job as a community newspaper. There are well-known names and faces that you

see on our pages and on our website often, like the mayor, the school superintendent and your City Council members. But they are far from the only newsmakers in our community, and we'd like to shine a light on some of the others.

Inside, you'll find a page dedicated to some

of the people who have contributed to the vibrancy of the area through their contributions or accomplishments over the past year. While these folks are well worth spotlighting, it's far from an inclusive list.

Just walk down the street (when it's warmer) and you'll likely run

into two or three people who could also be the subject of a story in the paper.

But this is a good start, and we hope you enjoy reading about just a few of the many interesting and dynamic individuals.

Turn to Page 15 to read about some Newsmak-

ers who impacted their communities in 2014, and Page 35 in Go! for some entertainment Newsmakers.



Rob Risman, Stow-Kent Shopping Center

by JEFF SAUNDERS | REPORTER

Stow — After years of decline, 2014 was a year for the beginning of a planned turnaround of the Stow-Kent Shopping Center.

"It's really very exciting and it's very gratifying to be part of something that's going to be transformational for the city," Rob Risman, a partner in shopping center owner Stow-Kent Associates LLC told the *Stow Sentry* Jan. 13.

City Council approved a site plan and conditional zoning certificate Nov. 20 for a 193,000-square-foot Meijer grocery and department store at the rear of the plaza and a Meijer gas station and convenience store at the front, off Route 59, west of Fishcreek Road.

The plan calls for the demolition of 55,000 square feet of existing retail space, including the Big Lots store, as well as a Wendy's



restaurant. Nearly 50,000 square feet of retail space, with plans for extensive exterior remodeling, as well as the 84,000-square-foot Macy's store will remain.

Risman said some details are still being worked out and demolition and construction schedules have not yet been set.

"It's nothing that's all that problematic. It just takes time," he said.

Meijer Real Estate Manager Cris Jones told Coun-

cil in November that it is a \$20-million project and he expected the main store would provide about 270 jobs. The Stow store would be Meijer's first foray into Northeast Ohio, he said.

The plan was a huge change from what was previously proposed: a mix-use development, including a 152-unit apartment and townhouse development. Demolition began in late spring for that project.

Risman, however, told Council's planning committee in November that plans began to change when a real estate broker Stow-Kent Associates works with broached the idea of bringing a Meijer store to the shopping center. Risman said it seemed a more natural fit for the plaza.

"This is the best and highest and most complementary use for the plaza," said Risman.