



# The Painesville Pride

Lake Community News  
Mentor Monitor  
Willoughby Times  
Eastlake Gazette  
Willowick Courier  
Painesville Pride

Serving Your Community Since 1987!

Volume 34 Issue 2

August 2020

8 Pages

Painesville Pride

## COUNCIL'S CORNER



### Painesville City Council

Front Row: Lori DiNallo, Paul Hach, Tom Fitzgerald  
Back Row: Nick Augustine, Christine Shoop, Katie Jenkins and Jim Fodor

City Council has moved forward with the demolition of 459 Storrs Street, a worn down building that was once used to store several items for the Public Works Department. The building sits on a city property with several other Public Works garages and Utilities buildings. After some research, it was found that the earliest buildings on the lot were built in 1918! While in the past 459 Storrs Street was used for offices and storage, the building became unsafe for workers and has sat mostly empty over the past two years.

Council voted for its approval of demolition because the building was beyond its usefulness and an eye sore on the north side of town. After the building is completely demolished, the City will be able to use the land for additional parking for employees, visitors and utility vehicles, like our snow plows. A fence will also be built to secure the parking area.

Paul Hach  
Ward 4, President of Council  
phach@painesville.com

### Sign up for Painesville Emergency Alerts

Get alerted about emergencies and other important news by signing up for Painesville's Emergency Alert Program. This system enables the City to provide you with critical information quickly in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, boil notices, missing persons and evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods.

You will receive time-sensitive messages wherever you specify, such as your home, mobile or business phones, email address, text messages and more. You pick the device and you pick how.

Go to [www.painesville.com](http://www.painesville.com) and look for the icons on the home page in the top left corner. The first icon is "Citizen Alert." From there you will be able to sign up for the program.

Recently the city receive a lot of positive feedback from residents for using the alert system during the Bank Street water leak issue the weekend of July 11. Sign up today!

## Smart Meters Coming Soon

Starting this September, Painesville Electric we will begin upgrading the electric meters in your neighborhood. More information will be announced regarding the contractor who will be installing the new meters throughout the city, however, they will be required to visibly display

their ID badges. If you ever have any concerns or are unsure if someone is working for Painesville Electric, call the non-emergency police line at 440-354-3535 and they will confirm for you.

It is estimated to take approximately 5 minutes to replace the typical electric meter.

In order to do the work safely, your electric will be turned off briefly while the work is being done. As long as the meter technician can access your meter, you do not need to be present. We will leave a door hanger notifying you that the work was completed. If we are unable to access the meter, we will leave a door hanger providing you information to reschedule.

## Don't Dump Grease Down the Drain

It can be easy to just wash out your pan after cooking and let the grease go down the drain, but you could be doing some real damage to your pipes and the city's public sewer system when you do. Grease isn't just bad for your health, it's bad for your pipes!

Once grease goes down the drain, it can build up in your pipes. While you might not see an immediate result, grease can clog the pipes and be very difficult and costly to remove.

As bad as grease is on your property, it's worse for the city's sewer system where it combines with everyone else's fats and greases. Overtime the fats in grease break down and become fatty acids and glycerol. The

fatty acids bind with calcium in the sewers creating a soap-like compound.

These fat globs can cling to high-rising sewers and are sometimes called "fatbergs." Fatberg clogs can get really big and very costly. The clogs block the entire sewer system, causing backups, and can only be removed by power washing the sewers which can take weeks to months.

So, help yourself and your community by not dumping grease down the drain. Let it solidify in a cup or bowl and then throw it in the trash. Soak up what's left in the pan with a paper towel and throw away. If you accidentally do get grease down the drain, there is a quick and easy fix. Pour down a

mixture of boiling water, vinegar and baking soda to break down the clog. For more information, check out: <https://bit.ly/2WmPs21>

## Phosphorus Awareness: Save our Waterways!

Too much nitrogen and phosphorus in the water causes algae to grow faster than ecosystems can handle. This leads to algal blooms, tainted fish and contaminated drinking water!

1. Use no-phosphorus fertilizer on lawns and gardens. Be sure to check the bags when you buy fertilizer. Look for the package formula of nitrate-phosphorus-potassium, such as 22-0-15. The middle number, representing phosphorus, should be 0.

2. Keep grass clippings in the yard. When mowing the grass, avoid blowing grass clippings into the street, where they wash into storm sewers that drain to the river and lake.

3. Keep leaves and other organic matter out of the street. Just like grass clippings, everything blown into the street ends up in the river and lake! Sweep up any grass, leaves or fertilizer spills.

4. Leave a wide strip of deep-rooted plants along shoreland. Instead of planting and mowing grass here, plant wildflowers, ornamental grasses, shrubs or trees. These plants absorb and filter runoff, as well as provide habitat for wildlife.

## Farmers Market Every Thursday

Painesville Farmers Market is in full swing! Shop amazing local produce, organic options, beautiful flowers, soaps and more. The farmers market is held every Thursday from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. in beautiful, tree-lined Painesville Square.

Please be aware there are new Covid-19 regulations to follow when visiting and the Gazebo Kids Corner is not available.

For more info call 440-392-5795 or visit the market's Facebook page @PainesvilleFM

## Friday Night Car Cruises in the Square

Browse an array of vehicles from old classics to new hotrods for a perfect summer evening in the Square.

Cruise is every Friday, 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and are hosted by the Downtown Painesville Organization (DPO). Covid-19 regulations apply.

## Summer Gazebo Concert Series

Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy the sounds of summer in beautiful Painesville Square. Concerts in the Park are every

Wednesday, July 8 through August 26, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The event is free and features live music from a different local band each week.

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# Covid-19 Hasn't Slowed Down American Home & Energy Products

Have recent events have left you feeling stressed out and anxious?

Looking for a place to relax and escape?

"Why not have your most relaxing destination be your own backyard?" says Chris Bedrick, owner of American Home and Energy Products in Painesville.

Covid-19 has many residents searching for ways to stay connected while staying safe and socially distancing. Many customers have chosen not to go on vacation this year and are staying close to home. American

Home and Energy Products is a destination spot for indoor & outdoor living inspiration, "we want your outdoor areas to be a place to enjoy with family and friends," says Chris.

Additions like outdoor cooking areas, fire pits, water gardens, pondless water features, decorative stones and lighting can take your backyard to whole new level. If you are looking for inspiration, stop by the store to see over 2000 square feet of displays and ten different departments of product. "We have indoor and outdoor fireplaces,

patios, fire pits and retaining walls and outdoor kitchens including the best grills, smokers and kitchen accessories. We also have structures to create outdoor rooms and the very best outdoor furniture. All of these project ideas can be installed by most homeowners or we can assist you with the installation," adds Chris.

Several unique and elegant outdoor displays showcase some of the exciting home improvements that can be made to increase the value of your home and upgrade living spaces for your family. We encourage you to come out to the store, take a stroll around the grounds and discover for yourself what you can do with your home

and how we can help.

American Home and Energy Products is located at 1270 Mentor Avenue in Painesville. Hours are Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; closed on Sunday.

For more information, call 440-358-5858, or visit American-Home.com.



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# Laketran Means Back to School Savings for College Students

**Lakeland Community College students ride free on Local Routes 1-6**

when you decide to say home and start your college education. Aside from the safety of remaining close to home this year, there is

also the savings to consider when going to Lakeland. Laketran and Lakeland Community College have a longstanding partnership that offers college students enrolled at Lakeland Community College and Holden University Center free transportation Monday-Saturday on Laketran Local Routes 1-6. Laketran offers regularly scheduled bus service throughout Lake County with service to Lakeland's main campus on Routes 1, 2, 3, & 6.

to get to class. College students receive a reduced fare of \$1.50 on Laketran Park-n-Ride Routes 10-13. Park-n-Ride operates Monday-Friday with 18 daily departures from nine different Lake County locations. Students are required to show a current student ID card when boarding the bus. Students interested in trying Park-n-Ride for the first time can get a free ride pass by visiting [laketran.com/park-n-ride/freeride](http://laketran.com/park-n-ride/freeride).

and Laketran Headquarters in Painesville Township, operating hourly on weekdays and every two-hours on Saturdays. Service will operate from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Route 9 will provide peak service connecting downtown Painesville and Tyler Boulevard with service to Diamond Centre. Service will operate weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Route 9 service will operate with a smaller Dial-a-Ride style bus equipped with amenities of a traditional fixed route bus including bike racks, stop cords, a destination sign and fare box.

The new routes, made possible by the passage of Laketran's quarter of one percent sales tax levy last November, will provide access for nearly 58,000 residents and to 33,000 jobs.

## *New routes offer more connections to schools and jobs*

This fall, Laketran is launching its first new routes in 20 years. The two new routes will improve transit service to Mentor's Tyler Boulevard manufacturing hub as well as bring service to Mentor-on-the-Lake and Mentor Headlands, two areas that currently lack access to public transportation.

Laketran's new Route 8 will connect Tyler Boulevard to major destinations including Lakeland Community College, Great Lakes Mall, Mentor Park-n-Ride, Mentor High School, Mentor Civic Center area, Mentor-on-the-Lake, Mentor Headlands

## *Learn how to ride*

To get started on Laketran, students can plan their trips and track their bus in real-time using Laketran's mobile app or contact Laketran's Outreach Specialist at 440-350-1067 for route suggestions.

Laketran's Route 11 from Madison Park-n-Ride provides morning and evening commuter service to campus.

Students commuting from Cuyahoga County receive free transfers from Laketran to Greater Cleveland RTA.

Students are required to swipe a current Lakeland Student ID card when boarding the bus and can take advantage of the free rides to get to get anywhere in Lake County at any time.

## *Cleveland-based college students get reduced fare on Park-n-Ride*

Cleveland State University and other Cleveland-based college students can also ride Laketran



## Electronics & Television Collection August 15, 2020

Lake County residents only, **no businesses** at **Lake County Fairgrounds**. Enter **only** from Mentor Ave. entrance, 1301 Mentor Ave., Painesville Twp.

**Saturday, August 15, 2020. 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Rain or shine**  
Fees may apply, cash/check accepted only

**FREE ACCEPTED ITEMS:** Flat/LCD/Plasma screens any size, battery back-ups, cable boxes, CD/DVDs, CD/VCR/DVD players, cell phones, circuit boards, coffee makers, computers/towers, curling irons, digital cameras, digital office phones, docking stations, fax machines, game systems, hair dryers, hard drives, keyboards, laptops, microphones, microwaves, modems/networking, printers, radios, scanners, servers, speakers switches, tablets, toasters, wires/cables, typewriters, vacuums and most other corded or rechargeable household electronics. **FEE-BASED ACCEPTED ITEMS:** Tube screens sized 21 inches or less, \$5 each, screens sized more than 21 inches, projection & console sets, \$10 each. **PROHIBITED ITEMS:** Anything on TRAILERS, any large appliances, batteries, any light bulb, carbon monoxide detectors, exercise equipment, cassette tapes, broken/bare CRTs, gas powered equipment, freon containing devices/materials, household hazardous waste, materials containing liquids, devices containing liquid mercury, PCB containing materials, propane tanks, radioactive materials, & smoke detectors. Due to social distancing, all items must be in the trunk area of the vehicle; items located in the front/back seat will not be accepted. Bring materials **ONLY** during collection event, as trained technicians will unload your vehicle.

Sponsored by the Lake County Solid Waste District, the Lake County Board of Commissioners, and the Lake County Department of Utilities.  
For more information about the collection:  
[LakeCountyOhio.gov/Utilities](http://LakeCountyOhio.gov/Utilities) – See Special Collections Information or Call the Solid Waste District at 440-350-2644 or Utilities 440-350-2645



# LAKELAND STUDENTS RIDE LOCAL ROUTES 1-6 FREE WITH YOUR STUDENT ID

Transfer to RTA for FREE:  
#28 - Euclid Avenue  
#39 - Shoregate  
#94 - Shops of Willoughby Hills

## COMING SOON...

Laketran's new Route 8 and Route 9 will serve

Great Lakes Mall  
Lakeland Community College  
Tyler Boulevard  
Diamond Centre

Mentor High School  
Mentor-on-the-Lake  
Mentor Headlands  
Downtown Painesville

Launching Fall of 2020



# Bankruptcy 101:

*Peace of Mind Now  
Through Bankruptcy*

You are in financial distress. You are going insane. You NEED some peace of mind. You are thinking about filing bankruptcy but the whole idea makes you uncomfortable and you don't know where to start. No worries. This is what you do and what happens when you file bankruptcy. First, you interview an attorney. This is probably the most important part of the whole process. The interview is called an initial consultation and you should not have to pay for it. Do not hire anyone who wants you to pay for the initial consultation. The initial consultation is the meeting in which you determine your comfort level with the attorney and vice versa. First and foremost, you need to be comfortable with your attorney. He or she will be the pilot of a big part of your life and you do not want a slacker or someone who thinks they are doing you a favor to listen to you.

You as a potential paying client are (or should be thought of) as a valuable commodity. You should be treated with the utmost respect and handled with sensitivity because you are going through a very tough period. It is natural for a potential bankruptcy client to be afraid, vulnerable and questioning their decision to file bankruptcy. A good lawyer is a good listener and sensitive to the needs and feelings of their clients. So, pay a great deal of attention to the attorney's and the office staff's attitude toward you.

A good attorney welcomes client questions. Question their experience and how many bankruptcies they do a year. If the attorney does not do at least one per month I would be concerned. Robert Delchin, our bankruptcy attorney is a partner and founding member of our firm. His entire practice is focused only on bankruptcy. He teaches other attorneys at bankruptcy seminars. He has over twelve years experience in exclusive bankruptcy practice and knows what the bankruptcy court judges like and do not like. He knows all the different bankruptcy trustees (the people who represent the creditor's interests) and how they want their cases prepared to ensure they are approved. Most importantly, Mr. Delchin is respected by the court and trustees because he has a reputation for being on time and prepared. He

has established Biales Delchin Law as a highly competent, seasoned professional bankruptcy firm. A reputation that directly benefits our clients.

Today it is a common practice for many bankruptcy firms to send inexperienced lower paid, younger attorneys to represent their clients at the meeting of creditors and in court. Oftentimes the clients that are put into this unfortunate situation meet their attorney for the first time a few minutes before they are questioned by the bankruptcy trustee. This will never happen at Biales Delchin Law. If you retain us for bankruptcy Mr. Delchin will be your attorney. In addition, you will have a dedicated bankruptcy paralegal who will be available throughout the week to answer your questions and provide assistance.

The practice of bankruptcy has become highly specialized. It's not really something an attorney can do once in awhile and maintain a competent skill level. Fees and costs should be quoted up front in an understandable fashion. You should understand exactly what is covered in the fee and what, if any, added charges might arise. You should meet with the attorney for the initial consultation. You should not meet with a paralegal or legal assistant for the initial consultation unless it is your preference due to a time crunch or some other legitimate reason. The attorney you meet with should be the attorney who will be representing you at the meeting of creditors and be responsible for your case throughout the duration of your representation. The information gathering process at the first meeting is profound and needs to be gathered by the professional so that any potential problem is identified early. Most importantly, you should follow your intuition. If you are not comfortable with the attorney, the office staff or the office environment you should not hire that firm.

In our office, when you come to the initial consultation bring a month of current pay stubs. If you do not have a month of pay stubs bring your most recent pay stub. If you are not employed or self-employed bring account statements or the records you keep of the income you are receiving. Have an idea who you owe money too. Bring any lawsuit, garnishment, repossession, utility shut off, license suspension or foreclosure court papers. If you

do not have anything- do not worry. Just bring yourself and we will help and guide you to get what is needed. We try to keep it simple and make the process as easy as possible.

We give the client a worksheet to take home and fill in his/her creditors and other relevant information. Then the client comes back, and we go over it with them to help them complete it. If the client decides to hire us, she/he puts a portion of the fee down and is put on an affordable payment plan. Once they put the initial payment down (as little as \$300.00 for our firm) we start taking all their creditor calls. We stop the creditors from calling them. The creditors are not allowed to call the client anymore once a bankruptcy attorney has been retained. We do not wait until we are paid in full to stop the creditor calls. The client needs peace of mind which cannot be obtained until all the creditors are backed off from calling. We focus on taking all the financially related stress out of the client's life so they can focus on getting back on their feet.

Once the case is paid in full, we will have a final meeting to go over the client's worksheets. We then enter it into our computer and create what is called a petition and schedules. The client is called in to review and sign it and then we file it electronically from our office. In about a week the attorney and the client will receive a notice of a meeting of creditors which usually is held approximately four to six weeks from the filing date. The meeting of creditors will be in Cleveland, Akron, Jefferson or Youngstown

depending upon where the client resides.

The client will have to attend the meeting of creditors with the attorney. It takes between ten and thirty minutes depending upon the issues in the case. The client will be asked questions by a person called a bankruptcy trustee. The questions are basically about what the client owns and how much money she/he makes. We meet with our clients early and thoroughly prepare them for this hearing so that everything goes smooth. It is rare for creditors to attend even though it is called a "meeting of creditors." Any problems or issues will be disclosed at the meeting of creditors. Clients usually are required to attend only one meeting of creditors.

After the meeting of creditors, for all practical purposes, the

process is over for the client. A creditor has sixty days from the meeting of creditors to object to the client's discharge. Unanticipated objections seldom occur, and if they do, we resolve them so the client can receive their discharge. The "discharge" is the court order that forgives all the client's debt. This is called "a fresh start." The client receives the discharge order which is a piece of paper in the mail. She/he needs to keep the discharge order in a safe known place because that is the paper they will send a creditor if that creditor claims the debt is still owed.

Then the client uses their fresh start to rebuild his or her life and credit rating and lives happily ever after (hopefully). That is what happens when you file a basic Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

Robert C. Biales

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# Don't Put Off Going to College! Top 3 Reasons to Choose Lakeland This Fall

With so many recent changes to daily life, it can be overwhelming to think ahead to the next couple of months. To support the education needs of the region, Lakeland Community College is moving forward with plans to offer remote and hybrid

options, as well as in-person classes this fall.

Here's why so many people are choosing to start college at Lakeland this fall:

**1. Study from the comfort of home** – For those who feel more comfortable staying close

to home, 60% of fall classes will be offered online. Once students are done with Lakeland studies, many choose to transfer to a bachelor's degree program offered through the Holden University of Lakeland, so they still get to stay close to home.

**2. Value – Two semesters for the price of one. Always.**

Shopping around for college this fall? Some colleges are offering special tuition discounts, like pay for one semester and get one free. But with Lakeland's low tuition, you'll still come out ahead! Since 1967, Lakeland's low tuition has been a great a financial decision for thousands of students in Lake County.

**3. High Quality Education**

Lakeland was named one of the 50 Best Community Colleges in the country this past April. Top factors included cost, reputation and student success. It's why Lakeland remains a top choice for families and students of all ages to start their college journey.

Apply for free today at [lakelandcc.edu/apply](http://lakelandcc.edu/apply).

Fall classes start Aug. 22.



## Fall Semester 2020

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## Home Remodels are the New "Vacation"

Covid 19 has many places shut down and travel plans have been cancelled. This is the story we hear from so many of our customers. Couped up in their homes they are making a choice to make the best of it.

One of our customers stated "We were upset our cruise was cancelled. After using that money to have our Bathroom remodeled and falling in love with our home again, the timing could not have been any more perfect"

These stories keep us positive as an overwhelming amount of

people stuck at home call our phones everyday. We appreciate your patience and understanding through all this. We are doing the very best we can to fit everyone in.

We are taking customer calls in the order they are received. Our new normal is being at home a lot. Take control of your home and get the repairs and upgrades done. You are going to get them done at some point, why not while you are home to enjoy ?

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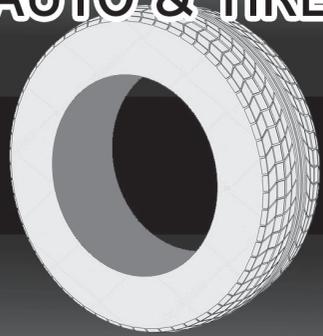
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## The Painesville Pride

A Lake Community News Publication

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# It is up to you to Speak Up

Health care professionals work hard to deliver the best possible care to their patients. However, the practice of medicine is often complex leaving the door open for occasional errors. While health care workers take every precaution to guard against mistakes, it is no longer good enough for patients to sit by passively allowing caregivers to handle all details of their care. Research shows that patients who take part in decisions about their own health care are more likely to recover faster and help to prevent health care missteps. So, what can you do?

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Learn to speak up. Be bold and speak up when you have questions or concerns. If you do not understand your doctor's explanation or instructions, ask again. Do not be embarrassed if you need to ask more than once. It is your body and you have a right to understand everything your doctor is telling you.

Pay attention to the care you are getting. Speak up and let your doctor or nurse know if something does not seem right. Keep track of medications you are given and say something if you suspect you are about to be given the wrong

medicine. Do not be afraid to raise your concern if you think your caregiver has you confused with someone else.

Educate yourself about your diagnosis and treatment options. Ask your doctor if he has any written information you can study. Do not search random websites as many are sources of misleading information. Stick with respected websites such as the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website or those recommended by your health care team.

Keep a notepad or journal for your medical notes. Use it to track appointments and write down questions for your doctor. Keep a record of any conversations you have with your insurance company. Retain your copies of your medical records and share them with your health care team so they have a better idea of your health history.

Do not be afraid to ask for a second opinion especially if you are unsure about the course of treatment being recommended to you. You have the right to seek out

the opinion of another doctor.

Learn to take an active role in your own healthcare. Your health care providers will welcome you to the team.

For information or to arrange a no-obligation consultation concerning your life, health, Medicare Advantage plan or Medicare Supplement, call me today at 440-255-5700. I will be happy to discuss your options.

*Laura Mutsko is a licensed insurance broker offering a complete line of health and life insurance products, including Individual, Group and Family Health, Annuities, Long Term Care Insurance, Medicare Advantage, Medicare Supplement Plans, Medicare Part D Prescription Coverage, Vision, Dental and Life Insurance. Mutsko Insurance Services, LLC is located at 6982 Spinach Drive in Mentor, Ohio. Laura can be reached at 440-255-5700 or through email at [Lmutsko@mutskoinsurance.com](mailto:Lmutsko@mutskoinsurance.com).*

*For more information, visit [www.mutskoinsurance.com](http://www.mutskoinsurance.com).*

## Exercise Benefits at Rock House Medical Gym

The Rock House Fitness Wellness Center is a medical based gym located in Painesville. It was started in 2006 by owners, Rocky and Elaine, who have over 30 years of experience in the health industry. It is a small private gym with 24-hour access to members. Gym memberships encourage regular exercise which have a number of health benefits.

Exercise is most known for controlling body weight but did you know it also it can combat health conditions, diseases and affect your mood? Physical activity boosts the body's "good" cholesterol and decreases unhealthy triglycerides which reduces the risk

of cardiovascular disease. It can also manage conditions with high blood pressure, type II diabetes, depression, anxiety, and arthritis. Regular exercise can help you sleep better, improve your sex life, and give you a boost in daily energy. It can even make your skin look better by naturally increasing the body's antioxidant production which offsets the free radicals produced during metabolism.

Regular exercise is especially important for older individuals. Increasing your blood flow will encourage brain stimulation and improve memory. It can also help alleviate chronic pain. In the past it was erroneously recommended to

rest and be inactive for conditions like fibromyalgia and soft tissue pain but studies now show that lower back pain and shoulder pain decrease when the supporting muscles are strengthened.

The facility offers around 3,000 square feet of free weight and free weight machine work space, the largest in Lake county. There is a circuit training area with suggested exercises prepared weekly. We use rubber coated weights to soften the noise to keep a pleasant atmosphere. Other equipment available at The Rock House are ellipticals, treadmills, kettle bells, BOSU balls, medicine balls, punching bags and plyo boxes. There is a multipurpose room in the back for using the calisthenic equipment, TV and CD player, which is also a good area for stretching and yoga. Our equipment is well maintained and we pride ourselves on the overall cleanliness of the facility.

We are a "beginner friendly" gym and each membership receives a detailed orientation on proper equipment use and lifting form. We can discuss training programs and nutrition plans to start you on your path towards your fitness goals. Although most of our members are new weight-lifters, we also cater to the amateur and professional athlete's needs as well. We follow COVID guidelines and have plenty of room for social distancing. And plenty of supplies for sanitizing. For more information call us at 440-477-3064 or visit [www.rockhousefitness.com](http://www.rockhousefitness.com). Find us on Facebook @ [therockhousegym!](https://www.facebook.com/therockhousegym/)

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# DIVORCE 101:

**DISSOLUTION:  
EXPEDIENT. ECONOMICAL.  
UNCOMPLICATED**

The most fundamental difference between a contested divorce and a dissolution and/or uncontested divorce is that in a contested divorce the parties cannot agree on one or more of the issues whereas in a dissolution or an uncontested divorce the parties agree on everything. Dissolutions and uncontested divorces are very cost effective and can be finalized in as little as six weeks from the date of the filing. The cost of the divorce or dissolution will vary on the number of issues in the case. In a dissolution or uncontested (no fighting) divorce the financial cost can be dramatically less than a contested divorce (the parties cannot agree on one or more of the issues) but, most importantly, the emotional cost to both parties and their children, if applicable, is much lower.

An action for divorce- if the parties cannot come to a voluntary agreement- can easily take a year or longer to finalize. There is the dread of runaway attorney fees averaging \$250- \$300 per hour. In a contested divorce (where the people are actively fighting) there is always the worry (which is justified) that the attorney will quit if you run out of money or the fear of receiving another several thousand-dollar bill unexpectedly. The information gathering process referred to as "discovery" can become a costly and stressful nightmare. Discovery is not required with dissolution.

The emotional price of continuous daily resentment, depression, fear and worry can become overbearing

and destructive to one's health. Dissolution avoids all of this. That being said; It is very difficult to get two people who are usually not the best of friends to begin with to agree on all issues. All issues must be agreed to for a successful dissolution to occur. This requires compromise. The cardinal rule is that nobody walks away happy. Each party usually feels wronged in some way by the other. Each party usually feels that they could have obtained a better result if they would have just held out longer or been more aggressive. The truth is the law is pretty settled on how property and children are resolved. In most cases, you will not get a better result by engaging in prolonged litigation.

If the parties are unable to come to an agreement regarding all the issues, as is often the case, a divorce must be initiated. I try to resolve as many issues as possible before hand and communicate with the other party or his/her attorney to coordinate the process. It is always best to work together and focus upon resolution of the issues on which the parties agree. The purpose of the attorney is to make the process as minimally painful, and least expensive as possible. Yes, you heard right our job is to make your life easier and less stressful by making the process as simple and affordable as possible. From my point of view I'd rather have regular infusion of smaller fees coming in that can be turned around fast ensuring client satisfaction rather than some monstrosity where the people are spending thousands of dollars an hour fighting over silverware (which I simply would not do.) And, of course, the client's

going to be angry at the attorney when he comes to his senses- and his anger is justified in a situation like that where a client is taken advantage of in an emotionally charged state. Not Cool! Happens every day. But dissolutions are so relatively inexpensive and simple that there is no way really to be taken advantage of. Lawyers concentrating in dissolution law are really more about providing a cost effective option to the average income Jane or Joe to be able to move on with their lives in this current pandemic crap economy where most people are either out of work or out of money. And the client doesn't really have to worry about getting bamboozled by dissolution attorneys because attorneys who are that way don't practice dissolution because its

more of a low buck, discount area. Contested divorce practice is where people can throw away money with no viable objective other than to hurt each other which is, also, a very sad commentary on the current state of the practice of domestic relations.

Bottom line. If both parties can be open and honest throughout the process a dissolution is the best way to go. Like in everything, communication is key. Unfortunately, in many cases, the parties have so much resentment toward each other that they are simply unable to cooperate. This is never in anybody's best interest and can be very damaging to children.

There are certainly ways to minimize the pain and cost of a divorce, but it will never be as efficient and emotionally healthy as

two parties coming to a voluntary agreement with dissolution. I believe that a dissolution really should be possible in most cases if two factors are present (1.) the parties are mature, sensitive and intelligent and (2.) the matter is approached with a cost versus benefit business analysis, an open mind and sound professional guidance. I know this is easier said than done. But- if accomplished- the financial and emotional rewards (including healing time) reaped are enormous for the parties and children and will simplify and bring to a peaceful conclusion a situation that, otherwise, has the potential of turning into an ugly thing in times that are already about as ugly and uncertain as we have ever seen.

Robert C. Biales



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