



## News briefs

### offers workshops

Wednesday, January 7, 2009 12:01 PM

Grove City resident Dale K. Ouzts was honored recently with the inaugural Founders Award by the Center of Vocational Alternatives for his efforts to help establish the organization and guide it through its early years. Ouzts, retired general manager of WOSU stations, was a founding board member of COVA, which has grown to be a leader in vocational rehabilitation services for people with mental illnesses and other disabilities that pose a barrier to employment.

COVA started 1982-83 as Serve-A-Co Inc., a subsidiary of Netcare Corp., and became the first provider of vocational services for the Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Board of Franklin County in 1986, separating from Netcare.

The following year, the name was changed to COVA.

Ouzts worked to secure COVA's Clintonville headquarters at 3770 N. High St. in 2002, which facilitated the expansion of services for residents of central Ohio. The Clintonville location features a walk-in resource center, Rehabilitation Readiness courses, a computer training classroom and work areas.

Ouzts moved to Grove City in 1992. He retired in December 2003 after nearly a quarter of a century as general manager of the WOSU radio and television stations

"There isn't anything I wouldn't do for COVA," Ouzts said in accepting the award at a gathering of COVA's 60 staff members. "There were some very tough times in those early days, but we always believed that our community needed this type of innovative approach to helping people with mental illnesses return to the workforce."

Mount Vernon Nazarene University, with locations in Grove City, Gahanna and Polaris, is seeking public comments in preparation for periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency.

The university will undergo a comprehensive evaluation Feb. 16-18 by a team representing the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The university has been accredited by the commission since 1972 at the master's degree level. For the past two years, MVNU officials have been engaged in a self-study, addressing the commission's criteria for accreditation. The team will review the college's ongoing ability to meet the requirements, and recommend to the commission a continuing status.

Following a review process, the commission will take the final action.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding MVNU to Public Comment on Mount Vernon Nazarene University, the Higher Learning Commission, 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 2400, Chicago, Ill. 60602 by Jan. 16.

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. They also must be in writing and signed. They cannot be confidential.

The office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel is offering free weatherization workshops around the state.

The workshops are available to audiences of 30 or more people, including community groups, senior centers and service organizations.

"With today's tough economy, residential consumers need to be able to control their energy bills throughout the winter," said Janine Migden-Ostrander, Consumers' Counsel. "By learning easy and effective ways to lower utility usage, consumers will be able to prepare for the cold weather and higher utility prices."

In the workshops, consumers can learn low-cost or no-cost energy saving tips to use in their homes.

Installing plastic on windows, weather stripping a door, installing a door sweep, and learning about the benefits of using compact fluorescent lights and programmable thermostats are among components of the program.

Groups wishing to schedule a weatherization presentation may call the OCC toll free at 1-877-742-5622.

The OCC also offers free fact sheets and an online interactive Smart Energy House at [www.pickocc.org](http://www.pickocc.org).

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