

Good Things Happening

They've been partners running on 30 years now

If you see a pile of boxes on a sidewalk, or think about cutting-edge technology in fighting heart disease, the name Dick Thomas should come to mind.

Thomas, retired owner of Priority Dispatch, drove his delivery truck past a pile of boxes stacked on an Avondale sidewalk 30 years ago and asked several people standing there if he could help.

As it turned out, Thomas was more than help. He was more like an angel, said Karen Niemeyer, Heart Mini-Marathon specialist for the American Heart Association. She was one of the people who stood with the boxes filled with equipment for the Mini-Marathon in 1977.

"We stood bewildered outside the Heart Association office with boxes piled a mile high," Niemeyer said. "We were completely clueless on what was involved in making this even happen."

She said that chance encounter was the beginning of a 30-year partnership.

"From that first day, Priority Dispatch



Photo provided

Dick Thomas (right) got his company, Priority Dispatch, involved with the Heart Mini-Marathon in 1977. He has now passed the baton to son Jeff.

has continued to provide unfailing loyalty and support for the Mini-Marathon. This event truly could not happen without them," Niemeyer said.

The volunteer help from Priority Dispatch has been like a relay team. Thomas passed the torch to his son, Jeff Thomas, now president and CEO of Priority Dis-

patch, who is chairing the 30th Mercy Heart Mini-Marathon on March 24-25.

Jeff Thomas said the long-term commitment hit home when his father underwent quadruple-bypass surgery in 2001.

"My father is a heart disease survivor who has made a complete recovery, thanks to cutting-edge care and technology," he said. "The Heart Mini-Marathon is a great way to support the lifesaving work of the American Heart Association."

Priority Dispatch is in charge of moving all the equipment, preparing and tearing down the course and coordinating communications on race day.

For more information about the Mercy Heart Mini-Marathon, visit www.heartmini.org.

Exhibit at City Hall through Jan. 19

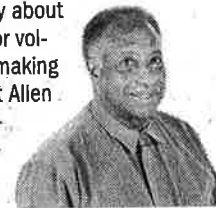
The Betts House Exhibit – "Lost Cincinnati: Why Buildings Die" – has been moved to the first floor at City Hall and will remain on display until Jan. 19.

Last year, the exhibit received an educational preservation award from the Cincinnati Preservation Association and a public education and awareness award from the Ohio Historic Preservation Office of the Ohio Historical Society.

It showcases a selection of lost landmarks, offering a nostalgic look at the past glories of Cincinnati, such as canals, parks, houses, industries, schools, theaters, churches and inclines.

The exhibit, presented through photographs, explains which buildings are gone and why through eight major

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themes: fire and fury; natural disaster impact of the automobile, neglect and structural failure, functional obsolescence, urban renewal, changing land and financial factors.

Nominations due today

Nominations for African-American Leaders of the Future in the Reaching for the Stars awards program are due to Sallie Elliott, Reaching for the Stars founder, said they are looking for the community's most outstanding young African-American achievers, age 30 and under, to be honored March 1 during the African American Professional Development Symposium at Xavier University's Cintas Center.

Elliott said 10 leaders will be chosen a panel of prominent local judges.

Nomination forms are available online at www.leadersforthefuture.com or 513-362-2743.

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