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LOCAL NEWS

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'It's different than big cities on the East Coast or West Coast. You've got these down-to-earth people that you really wish were your neighbors.'

Conrad Ricketts, executive producer of "Kim's Closet"

Local makeover show gets boost with Calif. producer

By Nancy Daly
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HEBRON – A former executive producer of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" has come aboard a Cincinnati-based home improvement and personal makeover program.

Conrad Ricketts, who worked on the ABC program starring Ty Pennington for eight years, will be executive producer of "Kim's Closet," the 3-year-old dream of Kimberly Anderson, 42, the show's host.

The pilot for "Kim's Closet" was filmed at the Hebron home of Jacki Alexander, a mother of five children, in July 2010. A few months ago Ricketts agreed to look at the pilot and gave Anderson and her team specific tips to improve it.

Changes were made by Inertia Media of Cincinnati, and Ricketts was impressed enough to agree to help Anderson pitch and produce "Kim's Closet."

Anderson hopes having Ricketts on board will give the show momentum to win a national TV slot.

The Hyde Park resident said she's always had "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" and its "feel-good nature" in the back of her mind.

Speaking by phone from Los Angeles, Ricketts said, "What I like about 'Kim's Closet' is it's a lifestyle show that works right now in our space in the economy with what's taking place. So many people are struggling to put their best foot forward, to get a job, to maintain some balance and happiness in their life."

A lot of shows "are very grand" but don't translate to the average person, Ricketts said. "Kim's Closet" would offer simple style and makeup tips and recreate a space to help everyday people "put their best foot forward," he said.



"Kim's Closet," hosted by Kimberley Anderson, helps people whose homes, wardrobes and work-life balance could use a boost.

In the pilot, "Kim's Closet" did a makeover of Alexander's living room as well as a personal makeover for the busy mom. Their family was selected after a casting call.

One year later, Alexander said the pilot has had a dramatic impact on her family.

Anderson secured California Closets as a sponsor and installed built-in bookshelves with drawers for storage. That brought organization to their hectic family room.

Anderson's style tips gave Alexander, who was concerned about weight gained after having five children, a lot of confidence. "She taught me how to re-dress myself."

That confidence led to Alexander finding a better-paying job with fewer hours.

She is director of special education and preschool for Southgate Independent Schools.

"I used stuff she'd given me to wear and I went in and felt poised and comfortable and I just took that with me," she said of her job interview.

Ricketts wants the show produced in Cincinnati, and will explore Ohio's tax breaks for television productions.

In addition, "I just like the space and the feel" of Greater Cincinnati, having produced several programs in this area.

"It's different than big cities on the East Coast or West Coast," Ricketts said. "You've got these down-to-earth people that you really wish were your neighbors."

Ricketts will also look for talent within Cincinnati.

LIVES REMEMBERED

Frank Foster was national Jazz Master

City native played with Basie

Associated Press

CHESAPEAKE, Va. – Frank Foster, a jazz saxophonist who grew up in Cincinnati and played with the Count Basie Orchestra, died Tuesday. He was 82.

Mr. Foster died at his home in Chesapeake, Va., of complications from kidney failure, according to Cecilia Foster, his wife of 45 years.

Mr. Foster was recognized in 2002 by the National Endowment for the Arts as a Jazz Master, the nation's highest jazz honor. NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman called him "an extraordinary saxophonist, composer, arranger, bandleader, and educator."

Landesman added, "We join many others in the jazz community and beyond in mourning his death while celebrating his life."

According to the NEA, Mr. Foster's many compositions included material for singers Sarah Vaughan and Frank Sinatra, and a commissioned piece written for jazz orchestra for the 1980 Winter Olympics: "Lake Placid Suite." He composed the Basie band's hit "Shiny Stockings."

The Cincinnati native, and Walnut Hills High School graduate, told NEA interviewer Don Ball in 2008 that he "had an ear for music" from an early age. He said his mother took him to hear opera when he was just 6.

Jazz big bands caught his attention when he was 12. Mr. Foster's first instrument was clarinet, but at age 13 he took up the sax. He told the interviewer he played in a dance band at Wilberforce University and went on to join Basie's band in 1953.

During his 11-year tenure with Basie, Mr. Foster played tenor saxophone and other woodwinds and contributed numerous arrangements and compositions for the band, including "Down for the Count,"



Frank Foster plays here in France in 1998. He learned to love music in Cincinnati.

WVXU-FM tribute

"Frank Foster: Cincinnati Jazz Icon," a one-hour tribute, will air 8 p.m. Sept. 18 on WVXU-FM (91.7). Host and producer Lee Hay will include comments from his friends and jazz colleagues.

and "Back to the Apple."

After Basie's death, he returned to assume leadership of the Count Basie Orchestra from Thad Jones in 1986. He won two Grammy Awards while leading the band until 1995.

However, Cecilia Foster said he was proudest of his own big band: Frank Foster's Loud Minority. He also played as a sideman in drummer Elvin Jones' combo and co-led a quintet with fellow Basie veteran, saxophonist-flutist Frank Weiss.

Mr. Foster also served as a musical consultant in the New York City public schools and taught at Queens College and the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Although he was partially paralyzed by a stroke in 2001, his wife said he continued composing "up until the end."

In the NEA interview, Mr. Foster said, "I had always had as much fun writing as playing ... You can write something, and if it's not right you can change it ... The thrill of hearing your music played back to you is almost indescribable."

EXTREME ICE-CREAM WEATHER

Roy Taylor, a Cincinnati firefighter, wipes his brow after helping to bring a fire under control on Dell Terrace in Mount Washington on Wednesday. The fire was contained to the kitchen, but two dogs died. Firefighting can be dangerous to firefighters in hot weather because of the protective clothing crews must wear and the heavy equipment they handle.



The Enquirer/Leigh Taylor

Streak of summer days in the 90s reaches 11; more is on the way

The Enquirer

With an official high of 94 Wednesday, the region recorded its 11th straight day of 90 degree-plus temperatures, closing in on the all-time record of 17 consecutive days in 1901, according to the National Weather Service in

Wilmington.

A smog alert is in effect for today in Hamilton County, the department of environmental services says, urging people with breathing difficulties to avoid prolonged or heavy outdoor exertion.

The streak should continue today with a predicted

high of 95 degrees and a heat index of 103. By Friday, the sweltering heat will finally bring a slight chance for showers and thunderstorms after 11 a.m. But the predicted high is 91.

The streak could end Saturday, when temperatures are expected to top out at 88.

MSD: County seeks oversight, city seeks answers

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20 on one count of wire fraud. A U.S. Department of Labor investigation accuses her of taking \$757,009 in union dues since 2006 from CODE. She faces up to 20 years in prison if convicted.

She is considered AWOL at City Hall because she hasn't officially resigned. She tried to do so by email, but did not follow up with the required resignation letter in writing.

Under CODE's contract, Frey was entitled to spend up to 1,000 hours a year – roughly half her time – on union business, except in years with contract negotiations, such as 2009 and 2010. In

those years, an additional 640 hours are allowed.

But Frey's MSD supervisor, Dianne Bookwalter, wrote in a December 2009 e-mail that Frey hadn't physically been at the MSD office "for a few years and that she hasn't performed city work." Frey earned \$64,000 a year as an administrative specialist.

Management must walk a fine line in overseeing labor union officials, Doherty spokeswoman Meg Olberding said. In March, when CODE's contract was renewed for another two years, Frey was told to go back to the 1,000-hour maximum on union business. She used 456 union hours since, but spent the rest of her working hours

on vacation, holiday and sick leave.

Frey has not worked at MSD at all since March.

"We made a judgment call," Olberding said. "We treated her as a professional."

She said it's important to note that this situation involves one worker who is an alleged embezzler.

Because commissioners did not vote on taking over operations of MSD, Olberding said the city had no comment Wednesday.

MSD was established in 1968 by the county. It handles the wastewater for 230,000 residential and commercial customers in 43 of Hamilton County's 49 juris-

dictions as well as parts of Butler, Warren and Clermont counties.

The sewer district is what the city calls an enterprise fund, which means it generates its own revenue through sewer bill payments. Money in MSD accounts cannot be used for anything but MSD projects.

City employees often try to get MSD positions because salaries there aren't paid out of the city's general fund, which faces at least a \$33 million projected deficit next year. Therefore, MSD employees are more protected against layoffs.

Staff writer Sharon Coolidge contributed.

By John Kiesewetter
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WEST CHESTER TWP. – When Vernon R. Baldwin was struggling to establish his Hamilton furniture store in the 1960s, a friend suggested he offer "first-cousin deals."

"People started calling him 'Cousin Vern.' They called him that the rest of his life," said his wife, Marcella Baldwin of West Chester Township.

Her husband – who sold the store to operate WCNW-AM, WNLT-FM and WMOH-AM – died at home Monday after a long battle with Parkinson's disease. He was 70.

Born in Jackson County, Ky., in 1941, Mr. Baldwin worked on the family farm until 1958, when he hitch-hiked in 1958, at age 17 to live with Hamilton relatives.

"He would be hoeing corn and dreaming of some day running a furniture store," said his wife, who met him at a church youth group party shortly after he arrived here. They married in 1962.

In 1966, Mr. Baldwin opened Tidy House Furniture at Erie Highway (Ohio 4) and High Street. He eventually moved to Hamilton Plaza, renaming the store Plaza Home Furnishings. He built a small radio studio in the store for remote broadcasts.

"He would play gospel music records, and between songs tell listeners to come down and see Cousin Vern," his wife said.

"He loved everybody and everybody loved him. My mom once said, 'To know Vern Baldwin is to love him,' and that's true," his wife said.

His passion for Christian radio led him to buy Fairfield's country music WCNW-FM (1560) and switch it to a gospel format.

Another dream came true in



Mr. Baldwin

1990, when the Federal Communications Commission granted Mr. Baldwin a license to start Christian contemporary

WNLT-FM (104.1).

"His dream was to get an FM station in the Cincinnati market. His goal and vision was to get the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people, and God blessed his efforts," she said.

From the Fairfield station next to Jungle Jim's International Market, Baldwin Broadcasting managed Hamilton's WMOH-AM (1450), WKLN-FM in Wilmington, Ohio, WVRB-FM, Nicholasville/Lexington, Ky., WWLT-FM, Manchester/London, Ky., and WKYB-FM in Burgin, Ky.

Four stations, including WNLT-FM, carry the national contemporary Christian K-LOVE format.

In addition to his wife, survivors include two daughters, Melissa Jackson of Fairfield and Susan Theiss of West Chester Township; two sisters, Carol Streater of Town Creek, Ala., and Betty Rudder of Anville, Ky.; and six grandchildren.

Visitation is 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday at Princeton Pike Church of God, 6101 Princeton-Glendale Road, Liberty Township, followed by funeral services at 1 p.m. Burial will be in Greenwood Cemetery.

Memorials: K-LOVE Radio, P.O. Box 2098, Omaha, NE 68103, or www.klove.com; or Operation Serve, P.O. Box 18070, Fairfield, OH 45018.

For consideration in Lives Remembered, please send information and contact number to livesremembered@enquirer.com.