THE PLAIN DEALER

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METRO

3 Cleveland charters test well

Students at three Cleveland charter schools posted impressive test results on the Ohio report card. Statewide, results from charters were mixed. **Details, B1**

Dome to take its place in history: A state advisory board recommends that the futuristic dome and headquarters of ASM International in Geauga County be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. **Details, B1**

Workers say dismissals unfair: Sixteen workers fired from an embattled halfway house say they are unfairly paying the price for decisions made by the agency's former leaders. **Details, B1**

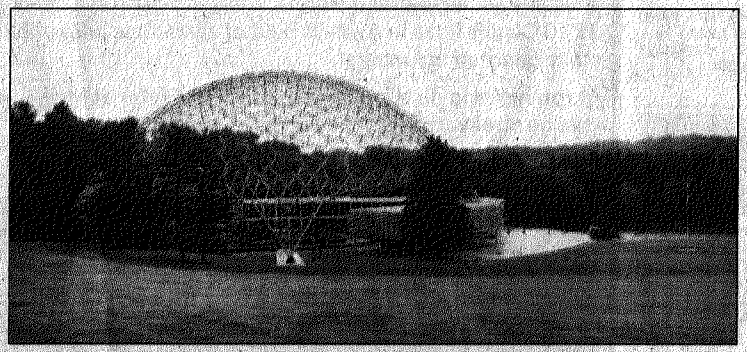
Battle goes on over seized trucks: Michael Ayers wants to be repaid for trucks taken from his warehouse, but a judge threw out the case. His fight now is fueled by principle alone. **Details, B1**

METRO

Dome to take its place in history

ASM headquarters in Geauga is headed for National Register

JOHN HORTON
Plain Dealer Reporter



CHUCK CROW | THE PLAIN DEALER

The geodesic dome spanning ASM International headquarters in Geauga County seemed like "one of the Seven Wonders of the World" when it went up in 1959, recalls a longtime local resident.

RUSSELL TOWNSHIP — A geodesic dome landed in Geauga County five decades ago like a lost spaceship looking for directions. Its next destination? The National Register of Historic Places.

A state advisory board on Friday recommended that the futuristic dome and headquarters of ASM International be nominated to join some of the nation's oldest treasures on the federal list. The panel's nod of approval, which followed a rigorous vetting process, typically translates into inclusion within a few months.

The recognition reflects the architectural and engineering significance of the dome and office complex built in 1959 off Ohio 87, according to the Ohio Historical Society. The nominating form describes the open-air dome as an "engineering marvel."

The structure, named "Space Lattice," rises 103 feet above the ground, stretches 274 feet across and weighs in at 80 tons. It's billed as the world's largest openwork geodesic dome. Workers welded 65,000 pieces of extruded aluminum — or 12 miles of tubing — in a hexagon pattern to create the giant sculpture.

It's tough, too: strong enough to withstand an 8-inch coating of ice or 500-mph winds.

SEE HISTORIC | B2

The nominees are . . .

The Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board on Friday recommended 10 nominees for the National Register of Historic Places. Three trace to Northeast Ohio:

ASM International dome: The open-air dome and headquarters, built in 1959 off Ohio 87 in Geauga County, rises 103 feet above the ground and is considered an engineering marvel.

Wilson-Falkner-Baldauf House: The 19th-century farmhouse, at 3260 Center Road in Avon, is built of sandstone and rubblefield stone quarried in Amherst.

Akron historic district: The commercial center at Main and Exchange streets reflects the Summit County city's early 20th-century rubber boom.

SOURCE: Ohio Historical Society

HISTORIC

FROM B1

ASM dome headed for National Register

The only reported damage to the dome followed the 1986 earthquake, which sheared off a few bolts while shaking Northeast Ohio.

The dome symbolizes "what humankind can do by reaching down into the Earth and taking out its raw materials," said Stan Theobald, managing director of ASM, formerly the American Society for Metals. (The nonprofit organization is a worldwide scientific society that shares technical knowledge on metals and materials.)

Renowned inventor and engineer R. Buckminster Fuller designed the dome. Others with a hand in the overall campus known as Metals Park include Cleveland architect John Terence Kelly and one of ASM's founding members, William H. Eisenmen.

The dome and semicircular headquarters are separate yet seemingly intertwined, creating an "artistic connection," according to the nomination.

ASM sought the historic designation to qualify for tax credits on a planned renovation of the headquarters, Theobald said. Owners who rehabilitate income-producing properties listed on the National Register can qualify for a 20 percent federal income tax credit if the work follows federal guidelines.

Visitors can often be seen gazing up from under the dome while strolling through ASM's Mineral Garden.

The site — on Ohio 87 just west of Ohio 306 — is open to the public.

The amazed faces show the visual impact of the dome, Theobald said.

"It still has that 'wow' factor," he said.

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