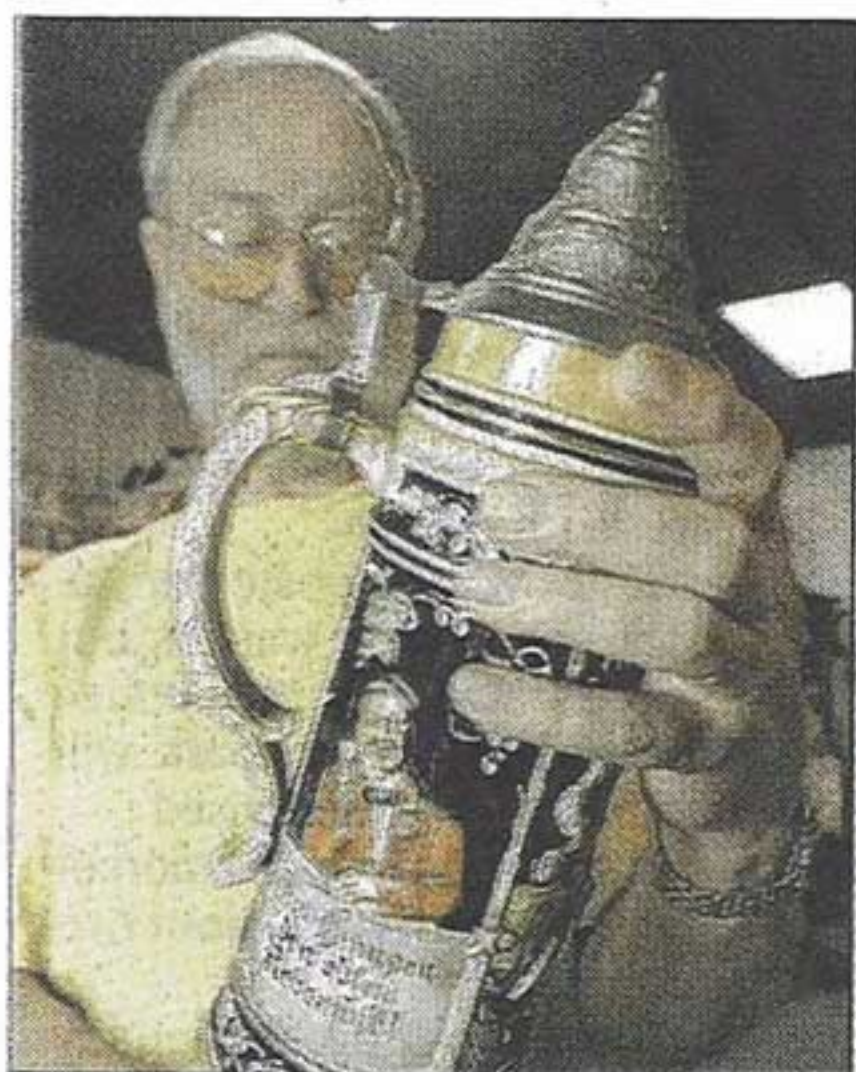


[places to go]



Expect everything from steins to the familiar mugs of acquaintances at the Spring Antique Faire in Dade City on Saturday and Sunday.

Today

SINGING THEIR SONG: The Betmar Chorus, now in its 37th year, will perform at 7:30 p.m. at Clubhouse 2, 47245 Lakewood Drive, Zephyrhills.

The chorus has more than 100 members from the mobile home community, which is for people 55 or older. The doors will open 30 minutes before the performance. Tickets are \$5 and available from members or at the door. For ticket information, call (813) 788-9606.

Today and Saturday

FOOLISH PLAY: Saint Leo University hosts a student production of "Fool for Love," with performances at 8 p.m. today and Saturday in Selby Auditorium on the main campus. Admission is free and open to the public. The play contains some adult content and might not be suitable for people 17 or younger, according to a theater announcement.

To reserve seating, call or e-mail Dave McGinnis, director of theater, at (352) 588-8401 or david.mcginis@saintleo.edu. The main campus is at 33701 State Road 52, four miles east of Interstate 75 (Exit 285).

Saturday and Sunday

GO ANTIQUING: Downtown Dade City Main Street Inc. will host its Spring Antique Faire from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday in downtown Dade City. A variety of pieces will be offered, from country primitive to fine antiques.

Saturday

BARBECUE DINNER: Trilby United Methodist Church, 37504 Trilby Road, will serve a half-barbecue chicken dinner including salad, beans, dessert and beverage for \$7 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Takeout dinners will be available. For information, call (352) 583-2577.

CRUISING THE CITY: Saturday Night Cruise will be hosted by Main Street Zephyrhills from 4 to 9 p.m. Saturday along Fifth Avenue in downtown Zephyrhills.

The event will feature vintage and classic cars, food and music. For information, call (813) 780-1414 or e-mail mszi@verizon.net.

COMMUNITY SHOWCASE: The Meadow Pointe Community Council will host its annual Community Fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Meadow Pointe 1 clubhouse, 28245 County Line Road, Wesley Chapel.

There will be a free drawing and 1000 samples. An animal rescue service will be on-site with pets available for adoption. A bounce house and other activities will be available for children while parents peruse vendors' wares. For information, e-mail mp1cc@yahoo.com.

MOVIE MANIA: A family movie will screen at 2 p.m. at the Hugh Embry Branch Library, 14215 Fourth St., Dade City. Parents and children are invited to watch a free G- or PG-rated movie. There will be free popcorn and juice. For information, call the library, (352) 567-3576.

ALL ABOARD: The second Pioneer Florida Museum & Village Model Train Show will be held from 10 to 4 p.m. in the Mabel Jordan Barn. It will feature a collection of model trains layouts.

See PASCO PLACES, Page 8 ▶

Termination Fight Stalls

A fired Zephyrhills employee and his attorney missed a hearing because they had the wrong time, his lawyer says.

By LAURA KINSLER
lkinsler@tampatrib.com

ZEPHYRHILLS — Former sanitation director Norman Graham tried for months to appeal his 2008 firing, so city officials were perplexed when he and his attorney were no-shows for the 1 p.m. hearing Thursday.

After waiting around for a half-hour, hearing officer Karla Owens left. "They defaulted," she said.

But Graham's attorney, Steven Wenzel, said he thought the hearing was supposed to start an hour later. City Attorney Joe Poblack said he would decide by Tuesday whether the city will agree to reschedule.

Wenzel said he offered to pay Owens' fee. "If the city says we'll have a hearing, we'll have a hearing," he said. "If not, there may be other developments."

Graham worked for the city for more than 26 years but was terminated amid accusations he misused a city credit card. Records show he spent about \$1,360 with five different auto parts vendors.

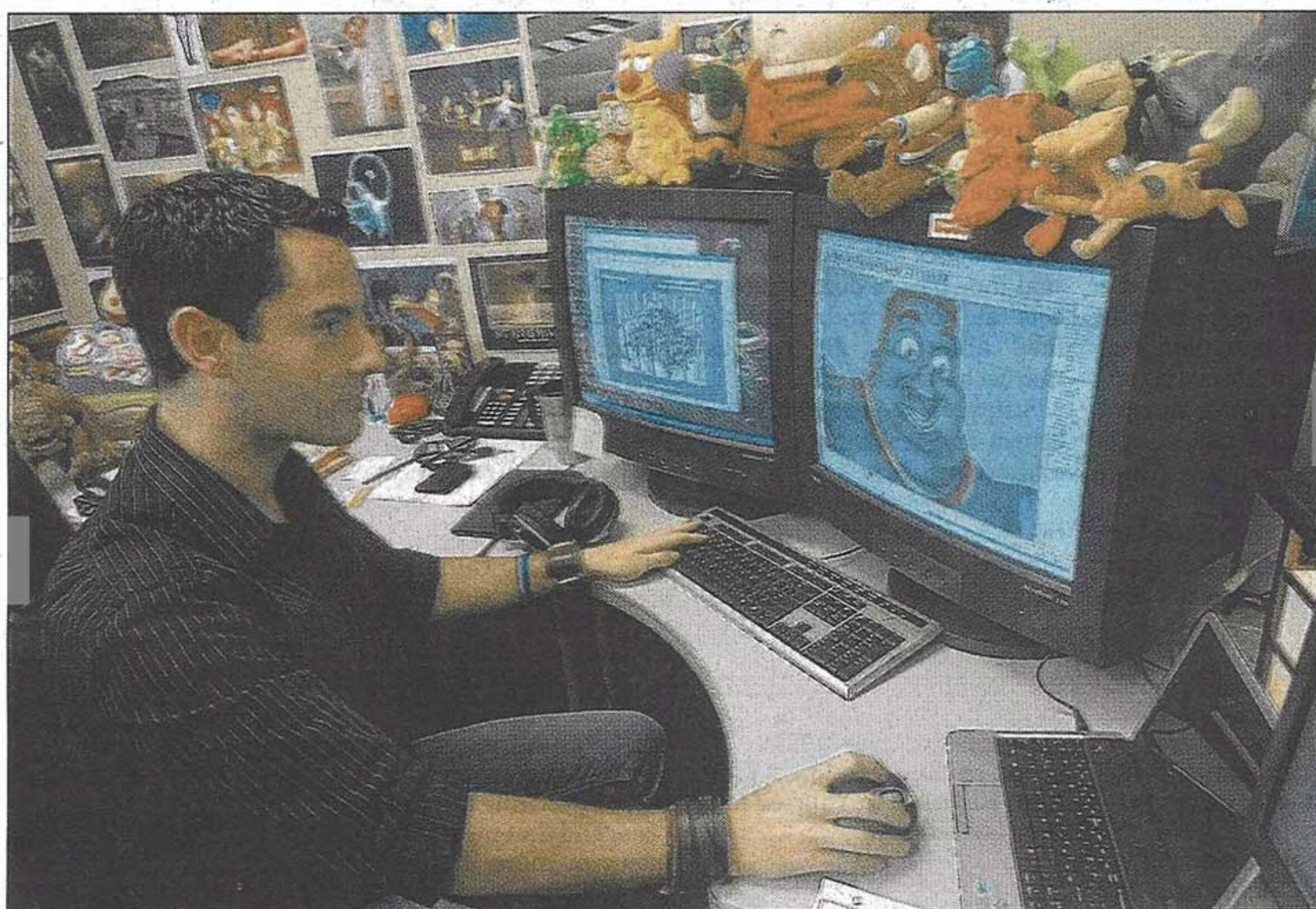
Graham reimbursed the city. After his firing, he wrote two letters seeking to appeal the termination. Both requests were denied. The city granted him an appeal after his attorneys filed a notice of intent to sue.

Graham, who is black, contends the city was more lenient with white employees who committed similar

infractions. Graham's firing came after a police payroll scandal that led to the suspension of one detective and the resignations of the police chief and the head of internal affairs. It also came one week after the demotion of a high-ranking city employee, Gregg Bricker, who was accused of violating city policies.

Bricker, the former city streets supervisor, was demoted to foreman after City Manager Steve Spina learned he had used city equipment,

See TERMINATION APPEAL, Page 8 ▶



Mert Balta is lead 3-D production artist at Digital Tap in Wesley Chapel. The company creates Web sites, graphic designs, marketing materials and cartoons with characters such as Bad Breath Lucas, whose superpower is halitosis.

Digital Tap Image Mostly Graphic

The commercial artists' creations include superheroes.

By GEOFF FOX
gfox@tampatrib.com

WESLEY CHAPEL — With a few clicks of his mouse, Mert Balta turned Earthquake in a complete 360, showing off the glaring side effects the cartoon superhero suffers when he eats too many calories.

Typically a rail-thin 11-year-old boy named Samuel Samuelson, Earthquake expands to sumo wrestler proportions when he eats junk food.

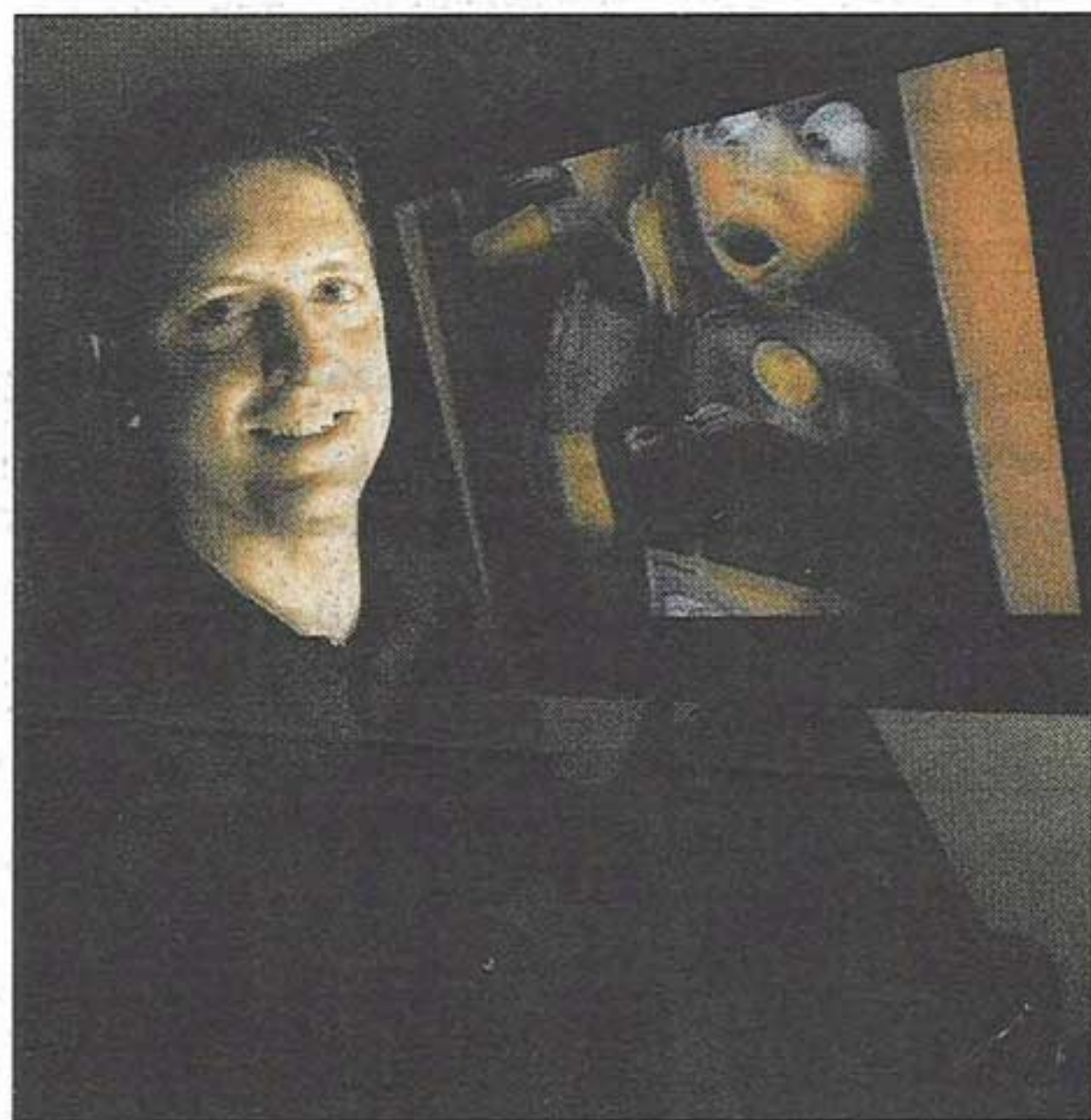
"In the action sequences, he's almost like a bowling ball," Balta said, his voice rising with excitement. "Plus, we can get him in a kind of wrecking ball mode. He kind of beats down [the bad guys] and rolls over them, and they get stuck on his backside — they get squished."

With his squeaky Southern accent and happy-go-lucky demeanor, Earthquake is one member of Zap Squad, a "secret club of superkids that protects the world from evil," say his creators at Digital Tap, a Wesley Chapel company that also creates Web sites, graphic designs and marketing materials, among other high-tech functions.

Digital Tap — and Zap Squad — is the brain child of Martin Grebing, a thirtysomething St. Louis native and Ringling College of Art and Design graduate who launched the business in 2008.

The company is housed along with American Consulting Engineers of Florida in a gleaming 45,000-square-foot building on Cypress Creek Boulevard at

See GRAPHIC ARTISTS, Page 5 ▶



"Our Web side of things has really taken off recently. We're kind of a turn-key company for anything a company needs — anything to do with graphics."

MARTIN GREBING, on Digital Tap, a Wesley Chapel company he launched in 2008

Town Center Land Available But Not For Sale

Developer envisions a mix of tenants for 150-acre portion of Cypress Creek Town Center that can be leased.

By KEVIN WIATROWSKI
kwiatrowski@tampatrib.com

WESLEY CHAPEL — The man charged with handling the northern portion of Cypress Creek Town Center said Thursday the property is not for sale.

The 150-acre site north of State Road 56 is available for lease, said Henry Hillsman, vice president of Brightwork Real Estate, which posted a sign on the property Wednesday

declaring it "available." The company is looking for tenants, and developers envision a mix of retail, commercial and office spaces and apartments.

"We're staying in touch with people," Hillsman said.

Tampa-based developer John R. "Hi" Sierra owns the land, part of 510 acres straddling S.R. 56 just west of the junction with Interstate 75. The

south side of the property is divided between Sierra's company and Cleveland-based Richard E. Jacobs Group, which intends to put more than 1 million square feet of retail space on the property.

Work on both sides of the property has been suspended since early 2008 when heavy rain caused muddy runoff to pollute Cypress Creek, which borders the property on the west and south. That pollution prompted the Army Corps of Engineers to suspend the developers' permit to work on

crucial parts of the site.

Brightwork Real Estate is working to secure a gas station for part of the property in the northwest corner of State Road 54 and Wesley Chapel Boulevard. Sierra and Walgreens have agreed on a land lease for the same corner, according to documents filed this month with Pasco County. Construction on that store is under way.

Reporter Kevin Wiatrowski can be reached at (813) 948-4201.



Time To Start Shredding

Pasco County opens a skate park in Land O' Lakes.

DETAILS, Page 2

[pasco news]

GRAPHIC ARTISTS

Continued From Page 1

State Road 56 and Interstate 75. American Consulting, where Grebing worked before launching Digital Tap, is one of the start-up company's major clients.

"We basically do all their graphics needs, company-wide," Grebing said. "We help with proposals, business cards and a lot of before-and-after [animation], which is one of our biggest services. We also do their Web site and maintain it, which is a major undertaking. They have like 160 pages."

"Our Web side of things has really taken off recently. We're kind of a turnkey company for anything a company needs — anything to do with graphics."

With a staff of seven, Grebing runs an all-hands-on-deck operation. And he's not afraid to do the grunt work. When he isn't dreaming up adventures for Zap Squad, he can be

found stuffing envelopes full of marketing materials or other items ordered through Digital Tap's Web site.

Besides Balta, a Turkey native who lines his work area with colorful stuffed animals, Grebing has assembled an accomplished, flexible team with a collective résumé that glitters like the monacle favored by Baron Von Vaughn, the Zap Squad's archenemy.

Animator Heather Carpini, for example, has credits that include the 2008 movie "Horton Hears a Who!" Senior digital artist Rick Mongaya, gifted enough to produce elaborate, detailed drawings of spiral staircases, spaceships and castles with seeming ease, also is versatile enough to create a digital rendering of a proposed bridge that could connect Buffalo, N.Y., to Fort Erie, Ontario.

Tyson Stockglausner, a 3-D graphics specialist, seems to thrive in the laid-back atmosphere. He has installed a small thatch roof over his cubicle, making it look like a miniature Tiki hut. On a re-

DIGITAL TAP

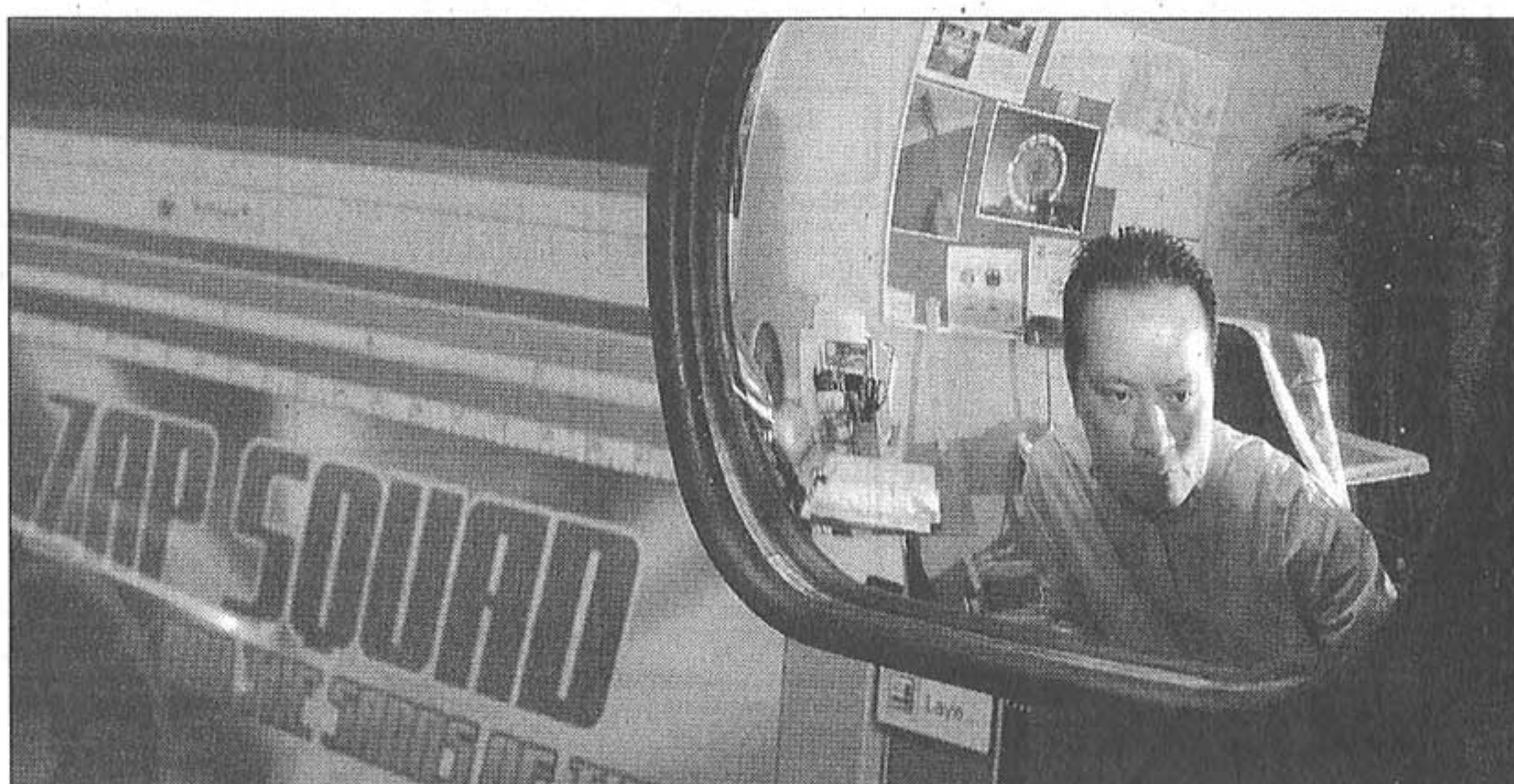
For information about Digital Tap's services, visit www.digitaltap.tv or call (813) 435-2552.

cent weekday, he was busy creating Zap Squad sites on YouTube and MySpace.

"This doesn't even feel like work," he said with a grin.

For now, Grebing is content with the strictly word-of-mouth advertising Digital Tap has garnered and is happy to boost Zap Squad's visibility through Internet and grassroots efforts that include giving away the cartoon's first 30-minute episode during children's nights at the nearby Texas Roadhouse restaurant. "People seem to like it," Grebing said of the cartoon. "It's family-friendly but there is an edge to it. One of the characters is Bad Breath Lucas. That's Lucas Luigi; he's from Brooklyn. His [superpower] is his bad breath."

"I've been making cartoons and comics since I was a kid." Balta has even taken copies to friends and family in Tur-



A wide-angle rearview mirror on Rick Mongaya's computer monitor reflects the senior digital artist at work on a Digital Tap cartoon series featuring the Zap Squad.

key, where, he said, the "general concept and global theme" seemed to resonate.

Grebing wouldn't mind a lucrative distribution offer, but he takes pride in producing and marketing the product himself. He says he can do anything in his suite off I-75 that a Hollywood studio can do — even voice-over work

can be phoned in without compromising quality.

For now, the original episode, "Zap Squad and the Sands of Time," is available at www.zapsquad.com.

As he perused some of the show's marketing materials, Grebing stopped on a picture of Baron Von Vaughn's sidekick, Shockwave, an over-

weight boy from Detroit with a shirt that reads "I'm With Stupid." The accompanying arrow points to Shockwave's face.

"He thinks that's cool," Grebing said with a laugh. "He's a moron."

Reporter Geoff Fox can be reached at (813) 779-4613.