

“Democracy is ceremonial: its feast, its great function, is the election”- H.G. Wells

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Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Opens Ukrainian Heritage Park

by John Allender

On September 24th. in Ukrainian Village, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held in order to officially open Ukrainian Heritage Park, on State Road directly across from St. Josephat Cathedral. A wonderful parade preceded the ceremony, starting from Grantwood Ave. heading north to the park site. Featured in the parade for the first time ever were the marching bands of all five high schools in the Parma area, numerous civic groups and organizations, including the Parma Police Honor Guard, Ukrainian Women's League, American Legion Post 75, O'Hare School of Irish Dance, Polish American Congress, just to name a few of the seemingly endless procession of groups that came out to help the Ukrainian community in Parma celebrate this very special occasion.

Of course, many elected officials from the community were present and spoke

to the crowd, including Mayor DePiero, Congressman Kucinich, and State Representative DeGeeter. Having only recently returned to the Parma area, I was quite impressed with the overall support from the various groups and organizations, and it reminded me of just exactly what has always made Parma the special place that it is. Trust me, it's easy to take that for granted until you move away and live somewhere else for some time. I was especially impressed with the way that the Parma Police Department handled the security arrangements, and the organization by the Ukrainian Community of this event seemed to leave nothing unplanned whatsoever. Meeting Roman Fedkiw, Chairman of Events, was a real pleasure, and I am looking forward to working with him again on future events in Ukrainian Village. Check out the park when you have a chance; many of the

plants and shrubs are actually native to Ukraine; I can tell that despite the busy traffic on State Road, there will be a peaceful, tranquil atmosphere for visitors. Go to the Observation Deck on the Parma Observer website where soon you can view videos of the parade and ribbon cutting ceremony.



Onlookers view the parade as it moves down State Road

Parma Observer Is Two Years Old!

by Daniel P. McCarthy

The older we get, it seems that time has a way of just flying by, and it seems hard to believe that two years have gone by since the unmistakable smell of a batch of freshly printed newspapers filled the office for the first time. I'll admit that each new issue of the paper still seems like the first one, and I still get a thrill each time that I see the latest issue in my hands. To describe the experience that this has been so far, and what I have learned about the city that I have spent my whole life in and thought I knew everything there was to know about it, is just simply not possible in the limited space that the paper affords me.

Impossible still is it to be able to thank everyone who has so graciously and generously contributed their time, talent, and funds to make it possible for this community citizen journal-

ism project to come to life and grow for two years now. From the writers, to the editors, to our advertisers, and most definitely our readers, it is obvious that this has been the product of a real group effort from the citizens of a truly unique community -- one of hard working people that, quite frankly, don't always have a great deal of extra time to spare on things like a community journalism project, but nonetheless have somehow found the time to do just that. I'd like to think that we are an even better place for it.

As time passes, the idea of the Observer project will catch on more and more, I believe, because the conditions of our modern society make it inevitable that sooner or later, because people are not being properly served by the available mass media (which is just as conglomerated and homogenized as so many other commercial prod-

ucts), they will look to all things local in order to make sense of their lives and to remain Human, and that includes the news. Every issue brings a few new writers, who after all are members of the community who want their voices heard. They find a certain equality when they write for the Observer, alongside everyone from mayors, council members, and everyday people living lives no different from theirs. There are times when someone will call to comment on a story with which they are in total agreement, or better yet, one with which they couldn't disagree with more. We encourage them to contribute their own story, written in a civil, rational manner, of course, so that the rest of their fellow citizens may gain wisdom by hearing their unique perspective. Isn't that what democracy, beyond just voting, is really supposed to be about?

Parma Moving Forward With Streetscape Projects To Improve Walkability

by Jack Marshall

Parma City Council has given its approval to major funding projects for several streetscape and sidewalk improvement projects. The programs are designed to make foot traffic safer, more attractive and user-friendly for residents and businesses.

"Federal funding has enabled the city to invest more than \$250,000 a year in each of the last 5 years for commercial and residential neighborhoods," said Parma Mayor Dean DePiero. "The goal is to help in taking the cost of these improvements off their books, so to speak, and allow them to invest in other priorities or improvements."

Community Development Block Grant funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development provides the money for the street improvement programs.

Commercial streetscape improvements include new concrete curbs and public sidewalks. The target sites are the former Geppetto's Restaurant on Pearl Road, the Zabor Funeral Home on Pearl Road, National Bank on Ridge Road, the Mallchok Funeral Home on Ridge Road and Red Circle Lanes on State Road.

Public sidewalk replacement is designed for income eligible census tracts. That amounts to 27,000 square feet of replacement concrete and 1,250 feet of new curb. The target sites are Orchard Avenue between W. 67th Street and Ridge Road. The area will receive all new code compliant sidewalks with all new curbing on the south side of the street. Also, Westlake Avenue between West 67th and Ridge Road will receive a new public sidewalk.

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As Redistricting Lines Come Into Focus Kucinich Commits To Northern Ohio Race

by Margaret Brinich

With the recent announcement of Ohio's redistricting efforts pitting long time Congress members Dennis Kucinich and Marcy Kaptur against one another, Kucinich sat down with the Lakewood Observer to talk about the upcoming campaign. His passion for his district remains strong and although hopeful that the redistricting numbers are set in his favor, he readily acknowledged that his office is going to have to construct a strong campaign in order



Congressman Dennis Kucinich, ready to represent.

to successfully return to Congress for a ninth term of office.

A key component of this effort over the next several

months will be making his constituents aware of what efforts are being made on their behalf down in Washington. Whether the issues are specific to District 10 or nationwide Kucinich pointed out, "There is such a volume of work created that you don't really hear about it all. But when people do, I think people will know that they're being well represented- and that they're being represented in a forthright and forceful manner."

Perhaps most well known for his adamant opposition

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Parma Business

The President's Corner

by Sean Brennan,
Parma City Council President

As President of Parma City Council, one of my priorities has been to inform the community about the make up, procedures and initiatives of Parma City Council. This article represents the latest in a series in which I will provide you, the reader, with a monthly glimpse into your local legislature. This month I would like to discuss the process of redrawing ward boundaries within the city of Parma.

As you are, no doubt, well aware, every ten years the United States Constitution calls for a census or count of population nationwide. This is required Constitutionally in order to determine the number of delegates every state is entitled to in the U.S. House of Representatives. For instance, based upon the 2000 census, the state of Ohio was entitled to 18 Representatives, including the likes of our Representative Dennis Kucinich, as well as Betty Sutton, Marcia Fudge and John Boehner, among others. The results of the 2010 census revealed that Ohio's population rose at a much smaller rate than that of other states in the Union, therefore, we will drop to 16 U.S. Representatives beginning in 2013. This is why the Ohio General Assembly recently approved new boundaries for Ohio's U.S. Congressional Districts.

Just as the population nationwide



Parma City Council President Sean P. Brennan

shifts, so do populations of cities. In fact, the population of Parma is currently around 81,000, making us the seventh largest city in Ohio, followed by Youngstown. The Ohio Revised Code requires that Parma City Council study the new census data to determine the number of residents per ward. Further, State law requires that each of our nine wards have approximately the same number of residents. As a result, Council approved a contract with TRIAD Research Group to study our census data and assist us in redrawing our ward boundaries to ensure that we are complying with State law.

TRIAD is a respected leader in census data research and the drawing

of political boundaries. In fact, they drew the boundaries of the new County Council districts, the wards for the City of Cleveland and Akron, the creation of wards in the city of Parma Heights, among many others.

The preliminary data seems to reveal that Parma's northern end has seen a slight repopulation in the last decade, probably due to the moving in of young families. Further, the southern end of the city seems to have gained in population, while the middle section may have decreased slightly.

TRIAD will soon be reaching out to the members of City Council to discuss their respective wards. Council will, for instance, inform the company's representatives with information regarding neighborhoods that should remain within a particular ward, such as the Parma Circle area, the Polish and Ukrainian Villages, etc. Triad will use the information gained, as well as census data to complete their work. City Council will then have the opportunity to review the draft(s) and ultimately vote on the final map. This process will be completed by the end of the year. The new ward boundaries will then be reflected in the 2013 Primary and General elections for City Council and implemented beginning on January 1, 2014.

I hope that you find my column helpful and informative. I am always

looking for ideas regarding what you would like to know more about regarding your local legislature. If you have any suggestions, feel free to contact me at (440) 885-8091 or councilmanbrennan@sbcglobal.net. To find out more about City Council and its membership please visit the City of Parma's website at www.cityofparma-oh.gov or simply call the Parma City Council office at 440-885-8091.



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Leadership For Tomorrow

by Timothy J. DeGeeter-State
Representative 15th District

We would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Cox Communications and the Cox Charities Employee Grant Program for their generous donation of \$1,000 to the Anthony Zielinski Leadership for Tomorrow Program. The Leadership for Tomorrow Program, entering its fifth year at Parma City Hall and Parma Municipal Court, has served over 5,000 public and private fifth graders.

The Program itself is a "real world" civics lesson for students who hear from elected officials, and then conduct their own mock city council

meeting on a topic they have chosen in school. We then provide them a second surprise topic, which really gets the students thinking on their feet. After the meeting, the students are provided a tour of city hall, and a lunch. The students then travel to the court for a tour, and a surprise mock trial.

Finally, it was an honor to create the Leadership for Tomorrow Program with our good friend Anthony Zielinski, who was an instrumental part of this successful nationally recognized program in Parma, along with our successful partnership with our schools. Without the schools' commitment, the Leadership for Tomorrow Program

could not be maintained.

It is with the generous gift from Cox Communications that will hopefully help to continue this program for the youth of our city.

Thanking you,

Tom Mastroianni-Parma City
Treasurer

Timothy J. DeGeeter-State Representative 15th District

News From Parma City Treasurer Tom Mastroianni

by Jack Marshall

Parma City Treasurer Tom Mastroianni has had a busy summer in 2011. He completed his college degree, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Justice Studies from Kent State University.

Tom also attended the Certified Public Finance Administrator training program sponsored by The Ohio State University and earned his CPIM certificate from the Center for Public Investment Management. In accordance with the Ohio Revised Code, the certificate is required for any public funds manager.

In addition to his studies, Tom was also helping his fiancée, Kelly Schurdell, plan their October 1st wedding! "I'm not sure what has been more difficult," said Mastroianni.

"Hitting the books was a challenging process. But I think helping Kelly as a wedding planner takes the cake, no pun intended."


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October 15 Retreat To Inspire, Refresh Women

by CJ Sheppard

Gather a group of friends and refresh yourself at the Third Annual HealthiHer Retreat on Saturday, October 15. This inspiring half-day retreat, held from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Strongsville Holiday Inn, offers insight from Parma Hospital physicians, a lesson on the benefits of a Mediterranean diet and the chance to see a celebrated transformational leader and best-selling author. Marci Shimoff is a top-rated trainer for numerous Fortune 500 companies who has inspired millions of people around the world with breakthrough methods for personal fulfillment and professional success.

Ravenna Miceli, midday host on 107.3 FM and a longtime supporter of the organic health movement, will emcee this event, which includes a healthy breakfast and lunch, important health screenings and a variety of vendors presenting items for perusal and purchase, from skin care, cosmetics and fragrances to handmade jewelry,



Marci Shimoff

accessories and more. Guests also can choose two of the following three informative breakout sessions:

- **"Oh My Aching Back!"** with Jonathan Salewski, DO, director, Parma Hospital's Pain Center, who will dis-

cuss how bones and joints degenerate over time and what can be done to find relief from chronic low back pain.

- **"The Bionic Surgeon: From Hormones to Hysterectomies"** with Kristine Pelagalli, MD, OB-GYN, Parma Hospital, who will answer questions on a range of topics, including birth control, menopause and more. She also will explain how women who undergo robot-assisted hysterectomies at Parma Hospital can look forward to quicker, less painful recoveries.

- **"Olive Oils: Basics and Benefits"** with Candice Berthold, owner of The Olive and The Grape, who will discuss how to purchase, use and store this "liquid gold," a fundamental component of a smart, well-balanced diet.

Following lunch, guests will gain inspiration from Shimoff, the best-

selling author of *Love for No Reason: 7 Steps to Creating a Life of Unconditional Love* and *Happy for No Reason: Being Happy from the Inside Out*. Shimoff is the editor of six Chicken Soup for the Soul books and is an acclaimed authority on success and happiness. She has been on more than 500 television and radio shows and has been interviewed for more than 100 newspapers articles worldwide. Her writing has appearing in many major magazines, including SELF, Ladies Home Journal and Woman's World.

Register online at www.parmahospital.org/healthiheror call 440-743-4900. The cost of the event is only \$35 for HealthiHer members, and \$40 for non-members. Membership in HealthiHer, Parma Hospital's women's health and wellness program, is free.

Parma Hospital CEO Named Among Nation's Top Hospital Leaders

by CJ Sheppard

In his second year at the helm of Parma Community General Hospital, President & CEO Terrence G. Deis has once again been selected among the nation's Top Hospital and Health System Leaders to Know, published in Becker's Hospital Review.

Deis has been president & CEO of Parma Hospital since July 2010. In his 11 years at Parma Hospital, Deis also has served as Chief Operating Officer and Chief Information Officer.

"These men and women help lead prominent institutions and are actively involved in American healthcare beyond the walls of their hospitals," the magazine stated in its announcement. "The Becker's Hospital Review editorial team used several resources to develop this list, including nominations, prior Becker's Hospital Review lists and input from industry experts."

Becker's Hospital Review is a bimonthly publication, web site and e-newsletter with business and legal



Terrence G. Deis

analysis relating to hospitals and health systems. Its audience is largely executives in the medical field and hospitals, including CEOs, CFOs and COOs. Individuals cannot pay for inclusion on the list.



Parma Hospital President & CEO Terry Deis, right, and Laura Matthews, left, chairwoman of the Alzheimer's Fundraising Committee, presented the Grand Prize to Royalton Woods at the 12th Annual Spaghetti Cook-off. A panel of local celebrity judges selected the top sauce.

Diners Celebrate At Parma Hospital's Spaghetti Cook-Off

by CJ Sheppard

More than 400 diners sampled zesty sauces at Parma Hospital's 12th Annual Spaghetti Cook-off to benefit the Alzheimer's Association. The event, held September 15 at Parma Hospital's Health Education Center, raised \$3,119, with all proceeds going to raise awareness about Alzheimer's Disease. Royalton Woods of North Royalton was chosen as the Grand Prize winner by a panel of judges that included: Eddie Cerino, owner of Eddie's Pizzeria Cerino in Seven Hills; Tom Mastroianni, treasurer, City of Parma; and Lori Stancato, president of Stancato's in Parma.

People's Choice awards – the favorite sauces selected by the more than 400 diners who attended the two-hour lunch event – went to Crystal Waters Retirement Community in Strongsville and Royalton Woods.

"Our success is largely due to the fact that we have a team of dedicated employees from various departments who have been together for 12 years and are motivated by knowing the impact that the Alzheimer's Association is having on our patients, friends, neighbors and families," says Laura Matthews, manager of Parma Hospital's ElderCenter adult day programs

and chair of the fundraising committee. "The other main ingredient to the success of the Spaghetti Cook-offs is our community partnerships. So despite the toll that a struggling economy imposes, we were all winners at this year's Spaghetti Cook-off."

Other facilities participating in the Cook-off were: Altenheim/Shurmer Place in Strongsville; Arden Courts in Parma; Berea Lake Towers; Brookside Estates in Middleburg Hts.; Crystal Waters in Strongsville; Mount Alverna Village of Parma; and The Woods at Pleasant Lake Villa in Parma. Parma Hospital's Seasons of Life Hospice provided bakery. A bingo hall and prizes were provided by Mount Alverna, Royalton Woods brought in a Dean Martin sing-alike, and Pleasant Lake Villa provided the festive checkered tablecloths and decorations.

"Thank you so much to Laura Matthews and everyone at Parma Community General Hospital for once again supporting the Alzheimer's Association's Walk to End Alzheimer's," said Nancy Udelson, executive director of the Alzheimer's Association's Cleveland area chapter. "It's amazing to think that the hospital has actively been raising money for the Walk for 17 years! We sincerely appreciate their commitment to our cause."



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Parma Schools



Asset Corner #22

by Gene Lovasy

October’s Asset Category: **SUPPORT. Supportive, healthy relationships make a big difference.**

Many studies over the years confirm that caring, supportive relationships with adults are critical for raising young people who are healthy and resilient. Support means freely giving young people love, affirmation, and acceptance; surrounding young people with caring families, guardians, friends, teachers, neighbors, and other adults; and helping young people know they belong, are not alone, and are both loved and lovable.

- Support Assets include:**
- #1 Family Support – Family life provides high level of love & support. (68%*)**
 - #2 Positive Family Communication – Young person & his/her parent/s communicate. (28%*)**
 - #3 Other Adult Relationships– Young person receives support from 3 or more non-parent adults. (43%*)**
 - #4 Caring Neighborhood – Young person experiences caring neighborhoods. (37%*)**
 - #5 Caring School Climate – Schools provide a caring, encouraging environment. (29%*)**

#6 Parent Involvement in Schooling – Parent/s are actively involved in helping young person in school. (29%*)

(* The percent of youth who experience or have this asset in their lives. Data based on an aggregate Search Institute sample of 148,189 students surveyed in 2003. The sample included students in 202 cities in 27 states.)

This column’s focus will be on..... Asset #1 Family Support

Love and support: The family foundation

You can show the children in your family that you love and support them in many ways. When you hug them or say, “I love you,” the sentiment is obvious. Paying attention to them, listening to them, and taking an interest in what they’re doing are less noticeable ways of giving support. After all, does your child feel supported when you come home from an exhausting day, and he or she wants to talk—but you want a break? The young people closest to you know your body language. They listen to what you say—and don’t say. They notice when your words and actions don’t match. Make it a point to be sure

they hear your message of love and support loud and clear at all times.

Here are the facts

Research shows that young people are more likely to grow up healthy when their families provide them with high levels of love and support. It’s important for parents and guardians to create a home environment that fosters loving words and actions, consistency, and openness. About 68 percent of young people, ages 11–18, say their family life provides high levels of love and support, according to Search Institute surveys. Spending quality time together is the first—and most important—step toward establishing a great family support system.

Tips for building this asset

Be consistent. Be loving. Develop openness so that the children in your family know that you’re available and you’ll love them—no matter what. If you’re exhausted or angry, say so. Tell children what you’re feeling so that your body language and words are consistent. Inconsistent messages are often misinterpreted by youth to mean that they have done something wrong.

Also try this

In your home and family: Spend one hour a week alone with each of your children. Take a walk, listen to

music, cook together, or just hang out. In your neighborhood and community: Try to arrange a babysitting swap with a neighbor. It’s important for parents and guardians to have time away from children, doing things they enjoy alone and with other adults. This will make family time that much sweeter.

In your school or youth program: Assign students and participants activities that encourage family sharing. For example, one Minnesota class studying a Native American tribe learned that tribal members passed down stories from one generation to the next. The teacher assigned students to ask their parents for family stories to share with the class.

Now, to update you on the Parma Area Family Collaborative’s Backpacks for Kids program, 435 area students received backpacks & school supplies as a result of partnerships with KIKS Office Supply and the following churches: All Saints Episcopal Church, The Branch Community Church, Bethel Temple, New Life Fellowship, Parma Baptist Church, Parma Christian Church and Parma Lutheran Church. On another note, the popular “Pay It Forward Café” weekend meal program that was run by the now closed Parma Park Reformed Church (Church in the Woods) is now being hosted by the folks at Branch Community Church. Give them a call for details. Great work everyone. Thank you!

Visit www.parmacityschools.org/assets or www.search-institute.org/assets for more information about the 40 Developmental Assets and ideas for helping young people build them.

Federal Secretary Visits Valley Forge High School

by Kevin Brennan

Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier, Assistant Secretary of Vocational and Adult Education for the United States Department of Education, visited Valley Forge High School on Wednesday, September 7. Accompanied by Dr. Kathy Shibley, Director of the Office of Career and Technical Education for the Ohio Department of Education, Dr. Messier came to Valley Forge to tour the Biotechnology Career and Technical program, which is known statewide as an exemplary class due to the rigorous coursework, the amount of knowl-

edge and variety of skills acquired by students, and the wealth of options available to graduates of the program. Several local business, education and industry leaders were on hand to accompany Dr. Messier on her tour and to take part in a roundtable discussion about Career and Technical programs within the district. Select graduates of the Biotechnology program were also included to share their experiences since graduation, including college and employment opportunities. Look for a segment produced by Parma Area Community Television in

the coming weeks which documents the tour and includes interviews with Dr. Messier, Valley Forge principal

Janine Andrzejewski, and founder of the district’s Biotechnology class, Gary Maurer.



Dr. Brenda Dann-Messier and Superintendent Jeff Graham visit the Biotechnology classroom

Parma Area Chamber Of Commerce Seeks Pride Award Nominations

by Lisa Zaremba

The PACC is seeking nominations of individuals, businesses, or organizations that deserve to be recognized for their outstanding accomplishments, and contributions to the Parma area. The “Pride Award” is a prestigious honor that is presented annually during the PACC Pride Award Gala. It is the Chambers way of recognizing those exceptional individuals, businesses, and organizations that have made a significant impact in our area, above and beyond their employment responsibilities. “We look forward to celebrating their excellence and show our appreciation for their contributions to our area,” says Lisa Zaremba of the Chamber. “ For nomination forms or for more information, please contact the PACC at 440-886-1700 / Email: Lisa@parmaareachamber.org or visit our website at www.parmaareachamber.org

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Parma Observer

What's Right? What's Wrong?

by Daniel Taddeo

The topic for this issue is Contentment. Contentment is the state of being satisfied with the present situation. It's not necessarily wealth, material possessions or positive circumstances, although they can contribute to it. The world is filled with disappointed people longing for contentment, but "things" don't guarantee it. How do we know? Because millions of people have all these things and are not content, and there are

many who possess much less and are.

Our pursuit of contentment is the driving force in almost all that we do. There is no limit to the sacrifices we make and the pain we endure to gain it. Contentment is a real mystery. You can't see it or touch it and no one has really defined it. But, those who possess it, treasure it and those who don't often spend the greater part of their lives searching for it.

How do we acquire contentment? Before elaborating on this question,

I want to comment on the difference between contentment and happiness. Happiness results from a particular event or occurrence and is usually short-lived at best. On the other hand, contentment may or may not include happy moments and/or circumstances but not rely on them for contentment.

Contentment is realized and experienced best when we apply Godly principles to our expectations, desires and wishes. Only then will we feel truly

satisfied with our possessions, status and circumstances. Contentment reflects satisfaction with what we have and with what we are at this point in our lives regardless of what our future hopes may be. "Be content with such things as you have." The world is filled with disappointed people seeking contentment from worldly, material possessions. Contentment is rooted in what people are and not in what they have.

Another key to the contented life is to look upward and not inward. The apostle Paul is a good example of such an approach to living. He chose to live his life in accordance with God's will. In spite of his many trials, he managed to live the contented life as noted in the following passage: "for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

When people understand the value of God's love, they will then discover His peace and joy, no matter what the circumstances that surround them. If living each minute, hour and day is devoted to the following biblical principles, then each day will be one of contentment. As challenging as this may seem, it is very comforting to know that "with God all things are possible."

Contentment is a state of mind that depends almost entirely on the individual. We often depend on others and/or circumstances for our contentment, but this is seldom the way it is. Each person is responsible and accountable for his or her degree of contentment or discontentment. It's a matter of attitude. The truly contented person is one who can be as enthusiastic about the things one is required to do as well as the things one wants to do.

In the words of Billy Graham, "The happiness for which our souls ache is one undisturbed by success or failure, one which will root deeply inside us and give inward relaxation, peace, and contentment, no matter what the surface problems may be." Contentment is a wonderful thing. It is one of the most precious gifts that we can give to ourselves as well as to wish for others.

Let's End This Talk Of Medicare Going Broke

by Lee Kamps

Some politicians are saying that Medicare is going broke and is unsustainable in its present form. That may be true without any changes in Medicare and Medicare funding. But Medicare will go broke only if we allow it to go broke. First, anyone should think logically who Medicare insures. Medicare insures the oldest and sickest while Medicaid insures the poorest Americans. Medicare covers every American over age 65 and who has been on disability at least two years who has enough credits through social security. You build those credits by working or having some connection to the work force. I ask, would any private health insurance company insure the people insured by Medicare? Of course not, they would lose their shirts, or premiums would be so ridiculously high that only someone like Donald Trump could afford to be insured.

The problem with Medicare's funding is that a major source of funding for Medicare, the Medicare tax has been stuck at the same rate since it became effective in 1986. That Medicare tax is 1.45% of income, matched by the

employer for a total of 2.90% of income. We would not be having this discussion if health care costs would have increased at the same rate as incomes since 1986. But everyone knows that health care costs have increased more than three times faster than incomes since 1986.

Any private health insurance company would have gone out of business long ago if they had not increased their premium rates to keep up with the cost of health care, so why not Medicare? The problem is that increasing the Medicare tax rate requires an act of Congress and Congress just hasn't mustered the courage to increase the Medicare tax rate to keep it in line with what Medicare pays for - health care. It is a shame that some irresponsible politicians would rather see the program go belly up than see people paying more to keep it alive and solvent into the 21st century.

Here is a radical idea. How about expanding the Medicare risk pool to include every American, the young and healthy as well as the old and sick? By expanding Medicare to include everyone, especially the young and healthy, the risk pool is also expanded to include everyone in the nation.

Medicare is not like Canada's single payer system. It does not pay for everything and carries high deductibles and co-payments. There is also a premium for part B which pays for medical expenses that are over \$115 for people new to Medicare in 2011. Everyone is paying part of the cost and everyone is covered. In addition, Medicare's deductibles and co-payments have generated a vibrant market in private Medicare supplement policies and Medicare Advantage plans. Therefore, private health insurance would not go out of business under a Medicare for everyone plan.

It is time for the United States to realize that we have had a great health insurance system for more than 45 years. It is time to embrace the rest of the developed world and expand Medicare for every citizen. After all, the program has been around for 45 years insuring the oldest and sickest people in the country. Now is the time to make it work for every citizen.

Kucinich Commits To Northern Ohio

continued from page 1

to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, Kucinich reoriented the focus away from the fighting itself and instead honed in on the impact that war has had stateside, particularly on the U.S. economy. "When you're spending over a trillion dollars for wars," he said, "choices are being made. You spend money on wars instead of education, you spend money on wars instead of job creation, you spend money on wars instead of health care, instead of retirement security."

continued on page 10

Parma-South To Host Ox Roast

by Mary Beth Breckenridge

An old-fashioned ox roast will be held at Parma-South Presbyterian Church from 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 14.

The community is invited.

On the menu are beef sandwiches, coleslaw, baked beans, potato salad, dessert and beverages. Cost is \$7. Reservations are recommended. Call 440-885-2652.

Parma-South is at 6155 Pearl Road. For information, visit www.parma-south.org.

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Want to write the author?

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Parma Military Wall Of Honor Dedication

Parma Observer

What It's Like To Be On Medicaid

by Bryan Griffin Jr

A warning to the reader: This is going to be a semi-impartial look at the current Medicaid system through the eyes of a recipient. I plan on pointing out both the good, the bad, and sometimes, the ugly parts of what will be the closest thing to socialized medicine in the United States. It is the only way I know how to tell this story. My goal is to share my experiences on what it is like to be in the supposed caring hands of our government. Read this in full,

judge for one's self, and ask which way is better, private or public health care.

PART ONE: GETTING INTO THE SYSTEM

One has to ask themselves: how do I actually get onto Medicaid? First off, you need to have a mountain of health problems. That was easy for me, for I was diabetic. Because I have had it ever since I was born (I'm 41), I have amassed a list of complications. These health problems include retinopathy in both eyes, kidney problems, digestive problems, constant

bouts of hyperglycemia, some circulation problems (and, yes, carpal tunnel syndrome counts), enlarged liver, and a partridge in a pear tree.

There are other factors that go into getting into the system as well. One must not be able to hold a regular nine-to-five job because of the health problems. Also, the older you are, the better your odds at getting it. Finally, and for the hat trick, if he or she is living in an apartment, or some other rented living situation, the greater their chances. If one owns their own house, they can forget about it.

The cherry on top of the sundae, though, and this is my situation, is the fact that I am living with my family. Luckily, it works both ways for me. My parents are in their seventies. They need me as much as I need them. Also, because of my retinopathy, I have a hard time seeing the tiniest things. For example, I have a hard time reading my syringe to take my insulin shots. Even with my reading glasses, I still have difficulty. I need my mom or dad to read it for me.

Now, that the requirements are out of the way, there is one other situation: dealing with the case worker. That is an experience one has to hurdle over. When you deal with that middle person, they do not know anything about their background. There is no information on

them that is public record. There is no idea whether they, the case worker, has a good or bad reputation. No one knows how much they know about the system. No one knows how long they have been doing it. Finally, there is no public critique on that particular case worker.

I have experienced both types of help during my 3 year tenure on Medicaid. The first case worker I ever dealt with knew exactly what she was doing. She stuck her neck out for me when I needed her help. She never lost a document that I had to fax to her. The only problem she ever had was getting the computer network to function correctly sometimes. Unfortunately, she retired a couple years back.

The current case worker I have is the complete opposite. Just take what I stated before and flip-turn it upside down. She took a day and a half to respond to my phone call. Sometimes, I had to call her supervisor to get her to call me back.

In one situation, when I needed help with food benefits, she tried to bribe me into taking less than what I really needed to sustain myself. She took the government's side, instead of mine! How does one like that for loyalty? I could say more about this situation, but I'll save that for another article.

Parma Hit By Nebulous Cloud

by Kathryn Yates

What travels a little over the speed limit, is leaving before you know it's arriving, is as impossible to photograph as a shooting star in the daylight, and causes power companies to work overtime? If you guessed an EF 0 tornado at night, and your name isn't Dick Goddard, you are probably an amateur weather buff like me.

Few people concern themselves with the Fujita Scales' least of all ranked tornadoes, although over one-quarter of all recorded tornadoes are rated as EF 0's. What is an EF 0 you might ask? The Enhanced Fujita (EF) Scale is basically the 2007 operational upgrade to the scale devised by Dr. Ted Fujita in 1971 that ranks tornadoes based on the damage they cause and wind speed estimates. An EF 0 rating would indicate a tornado with wind speeds between 65 – 85 mph in a 3 sec. gust, replacing a gust of 45 -78 mph necessary to qualify a tornado as an F0 on the old Fujita Scale prior to February 1st, 2007.

So what has this to do with the price of kielbasa in Parma?

Think back to the balmy summer night we had about four weeks ago – August 24th, to be exact. It was a Wednesday, and if you were a resident of Ward 1, your power might have gone out too, and not because a renegade squirrel chewed through a wire at a substation.


You were simply in the path of "the cloud", and as it passed over your roof, it might have downed your trees and taken out a utility pole, felled some wires that were needed to watch TV., make microwave popcorn, or re-juice your cell phone. Maybe you slept through it, but were late for work the

next morning because your alarm had no back-up? Maybe it crumpled your kids' trampoline or repositioned your fence? It might even have redesigned your car, now eligible for donation in next summer's church carnival – two bucks a sledgehammer swing.

As "the cloud" passed through, some residents of Oakdale Ave. experienced the brunt of its power – one man suffered glass shards to the foot when a tree tore a 30-ft. hole in his roof, another said he heard a sound like a train that instantly conjured up memories of another tornado he'd experienced in his past. The word "tornado" flashed in many minds that night, however, due to the 2007 upgrade, Parma cannot claim "the cloud" as an official tornado. No... suffering residents will only be able to reference it as: "the windstorm", or, the night that "insert damage here".

One can't blame the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) who only recorded wind gusts of 54 mph for "the cloud" that night – good enough for the old Fujita Scale but not for the upgraded version. One can only credit Mother Nature. She was kind enough not to give us an EF storm after all, but sent a merciful reminder of Millsbury – the little Ohio town that was ravaged by an EF 3 on June 5th, 2010. That "cloud" also struck at night but killed five residents and did millions in damage.

We are very fortunate by comparison, that all we had was, a rather nebulous cloud, and grateful to Mother Nature if she would be so kind as to confine the EF biggies to the Midwest cornfields where they belong as photographic fodder for the nut cases who chase them.



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Parma Observer

The Patriot Corner

by Wayne Mahowald

For the last several months, the State of Ohio has been torn apart by discussion of SB5. Many of you are probably asking yourselves why it has been such a big issue. The answers to that question are many, the smoke-screen of misinformation that has been widely spread on the issue has been difficult to navigate through and the passions on both sides are running at a fever pitch. I would urge each of you to look carefully at the facts before casting your vote and not be misled by advertising on either side. If you believe in smaller, less intrusive government, you will most likely vote for issue 2, otherwise, you won't.

One issue that has not been discussed thoroughly during this debate is the issue of pension plans. This is a hidden cost to taxpayers that potentially could be reduced by voting for Issue 2. Most public sector employees in Ohio are covered under PERS or a similar defined benefits plan. The majority of private sector employees have had some type of defined contribution plan for many years if they have had any plan at all. So what's the difference? Defined benefit plans, as the name implies, tell you how much you will receive each year. Defined contribution plans do not. The differences over a few years can be quite significant. Let's look at a real world example and see what the difference really is.

So let's take an employee, call her Ms. X. Our Ms. X worked for 31 years and 10 months and contributed a total amount of \$27,968 towards her retire-

ment at age 58. Under the defined benefit plan that Ms. X worked under, she receives an annual pension of \$95,839. This pension also includes a 2.5 percent annual inflation rider but we won't use that in our calculations.

Calculating the same level of contribution under a defined contribution plan payable as an immediate annuity at the time of retirement, the number is significantly less. The value of the investment, accounting for an 8 percent annual rate of return, would be \$111,258. This would be distributed using a standard mortality table at the rate of \$7,116 annually. Quite a difference in annual distribution, isn't it?

So let's assume Ms X lives for 20 years after retirement. With a defined benefits plan, the payout would be \$1,916,780. Under the defined contributions plan it would be \$142,320. The difference is an unfunded liability of \$1,774,660 for one employee. Multiply this type of scenario across the many thousands of employees that are and have been covered under the public sector employee defined benefit pension plans. Is it any wonder why the City, County and State are headed to bankruptcy? This is an unsustainable system and needs to be corrected immediately or we are all going to suffer the consequences.

For this and many other reasons, I believe Issue 2 is a good tool that will help us begin to restore sanity to our government by giving us an opportunity to control some of these costs. I hope you will join me in voting Yes on Issue 2.

Parma Blues Scene Is Really Happening

by John Allender

I've been gone from Parma for over a decade, but since I've been back I've noticed a major change; once upon a time you had to go to Cleveland to see a blues band or to book a gig for your blues group, but now it is plain to see that there are plenty of venues right here in Parma featuring Blues. On State Road, Butch Armstrong is hosting a jam night at Grillers, while right across the street and up a little ways, the Hive features a Blues jam every Tuesday night. There are many other clubs in the Parma area that seem to be willing to give it a try.

Being a musician myself, I find this growing Blues scene in Parma to be very exciting, and I intend to become much more involved. I am booking shows for my own band now, and I sense a greater overall appreciation and acceptance for this great American art form. That is just fantastic! It's very gratifying to be part of this resurgence and enjoy being around such good musicianship and fine music. Anyone who feels the same should not hesitate to come out and be part of this, too; make a difference and let club owners know that they made a good decision to book a Blues band, and that you're willing to support them while having a good time doing it.

After having a totally successful gig at Lucky T's Pub in Parma on September 17 (we'll be appearing there again on Friday, October 21st. at 6:00 p.m.), I'm bringing the John Allender Band to Flyers on Pearl Road in Parma Hts. on Friday October 14th. from 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. We'll be playing Blues and Blues-Rock favorites with virtuoso musicians Tommy Varga on drums and Adam Constantine on bass. Come on out and enjoy, and be part of something that is growing here in our community.

Parma Republican Club Meeting

by Myrtis Litman

The Parma Republican Club meets at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month at Parma Memorial Hall. Programs are speakers who keep us informed on current events. On October 13, 2011, the speaker will be Jack Shron, Jr., who represents District 6 on the Cuyahoga County Council. He will update us on the news from there.

To get to Parma Memorial Hall, 6617 Ridge Road, turn into the driveway on West Ridgewood Drive, just east of Ridge Road. Drive a short way up the hill, turn right into the parking lot, and enter the side door. All are welcome. Be an active citizen and make a difference.

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Setting Yourself Up To Fail With Diets

by Pam Hoffman,

It seems as if there are as many diets as there are people in the world. Sometimes they even seem to contradict each other: high carb, low carb, high protein, low protein, low fat and on and on. So what is a person to do? To some degree the answer is to stop “dieting”. What does this mean? Simply put, if you go “on” a diet, at some point you have to go “off” the diet. What happens now? Well, usually the cycle starts all over again and slowly weight comes creeping back on...no worries, we can just starve it off again, right? WRONG! Every time this cycle reappears, it becomes more difficult to drop –fat, not weight, but fat.

Weight control, fat loss, is a way of

life. We can alter some healthy eating plans, even kick start some quick loss for a brief stint, but in the end, we have to learn how to eat differently. We set ourselves up to fail when we decide to diet, decide to eliminate this or that etc. To stop the roller coaster ride, the meal pattern has to change. It can have some dips along the way, but no huge peaks and valleys.

When the body is pushed into starvation mode, as it is when drastically dieting or even eating only 1-2 meals a day, all you teach it is how to survive. The way it does this is by slowing down metabolic processes-*ie.* Burning fewer and fewer calories and giving you less over all energy. If you continue to deprive your body of needed nutrition

it starts breaking down muscle to get what it needs. This is the opposite of what we need to have happening. The more lean mass you lose, guess what? Once again, the slower the metabolic process gets. Hopefully you can see the negative trend that is developing here

making it harder and harder to lose weight. If you only eat one or 2 meals, when you do eat, your body soaks up the food like a sponge because it knows it needs to make it the next 10+ hours with out nutrition.

...Stay tuned for what you CAN do

Kucinich Commits To Northern Ohio

continued from page 6

“War limits our economy’s ability to grow. It limits job creation and creates conditions which undermine the nation.”

His vision for the region and for the country is one based on fundamental changes to the existing economic system. From the need for a “coherent energy plan” to “renegotiating trade agreements based on human rights,

worker rights and environmental quality principals,” Kucinich spoke passionately about his plans for the future.

Next on the horizon for Kucinich is his “National Employment Emergency Defense Act” (NEED), which he is introducing to Congress this week. NEED aims to put the “money power” back under government control- under

continued on page 11

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Parma Observer

OCTOBER 2011 Calendar of Events

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 * T'ai Chi 9:00 a.m. Jewelry Making 12:30 p.m.	4 * Fit and Balance 10:00 a.m. Digital Photography 1:30 p.m. SCRABBLE 2:00 p.m. Popcorn and Movie American Experience—"Freedom Riders" 2:30 p.m. Sign Language 4:00 p.m.	5 * Zumba Gold 9:00 a.m. * Wii Bowling 4:00 p.m.	6 BINGO Bash 2:00 p.m.	7 * Wii Bowling 9:00 a.m. Popcorn and Movie "Funny Girl" 1:30 p.m.
10 * T'ai Chi 9:00 a.m. Healthy Options- Eating out with Diabetes 2:00 p.m.	11 * Fit and Balance 10:00 a.m. SCRABBLE 2:00 p.m. Popcorn and Movie American Experience – "The Mormons" 2:30 p.m.	12 * Zumba Gold 9:00 a.m. * Wii Bowling 4:00 p.m.	13 Polka Lessons 11:00 a.m. WESTERN THEME PARTY 2:00 p.m.	14 * Wii Bowling 9:00 a.m. * Sweatin' to the Oldies 10:00 a.m. * Zumba Gold 11:30 a.m. Popcorn and Movie "RED" 1:30 p.m.
17 * T'ai Chi 9:00 a.m. Jewelry Making 12:30 p.m.	18 * Fit and Balance 10:00 a.m. SCRABBLE 2:00 p.m. Popcorn and Movie "Out of Ireland-Emigration into American" 2:30 p.m. Sign Language 4:00 p.m.	19 * Zumba Gold 9:00 a.m. Medical Buzz Words 12:00 p.m. * Wii Bowling 4:00 p.m.	20 BINGO Bash 2:00 p.m. Knit Caps for the Rainbow Babies 3:30 p.m	21 * Wii Bowling 9:00 a.m. * Sweatin' to the Oldies 10:00 a.m. * Zumba Gold 11:30 a.m. Popcorn and Movie "The Young Victoria" 1:30 p.m.
24 * T'ai Chi 9:00 a.m. Blood Pressure / Glucose Check 2:00 p.m.	25 SCRABBLE 2:00 p.m. Popcorn and Movie American Experience "Influenza 1918" 2:30 p.m.	26 * Zumba Gold 9:00 a.m. * Wii Bowling 4:00 p.m.	27 BINGO Bash 2:00 p.m.	28 * Wii Bowling 9:00 a.m. * Sweatin' to the Oldies 10:00 a.m. * Zumba Gold 11:30 a.m. Popcorn and Movie "Secretariat" 1:30 p.m.
31 * T'ai Chi 9:00 a.m. Jewelry Making 12:30 p.m.	Special Events * VIP – HUMANA BUCKS ELIGIBLE ACTIVITY RSVP for: Jewelry Making-October 3rd, 17th and 31st WESTERN THEME PARTY-October 13th			

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