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Community Pride At GM Parma

by Thomas Mock

The General Motors Foundation and GM's Parma Metal Center have announced \$25,000 in grants to Greater Cleveland nonprofit organizations through its Community Grants program. "Through the GM Foundation, these important community organizations are able to drive programs that continue to improve the quality of life in our communities," said Lamar Rucker, Parma's plant manager. "We are proud to be a part of a company and community that both work hard to support education, enhance community revitalization and help those in need."

Funded by the GM Foundation, the GM Community Grants will support the following Northeast Ohio organizations and community programs:

United Way of Greater Cleveland (\$10,000) - Aspires to create and support healthy communities where all kids succeed in school and families and individuals are financially stable. To do this, they engage community members to volunteer their time, talent and voices to support its work. More than 150 Community Impact volunteers oversee the

annual investments in programs designed to address some of our community's most difficult problems, and Campaign Cabinet volunteers work to mobilize some 1,400 workplace campaigns. More than 2,000 volunteers participate in hands-on projects through Days of Caring programs. The result is 450,000 Greater Cleveland residents benefit from United Way every year.

American Cancer Society, Northeast Ohio Region (\$5,000) - The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives, and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. The Northeast Ohio Region partners with Parma in major initiatives like Making Strides Against Breast Cancer where Parma is a leading supporter in the Cleveland area.

Big Creek Connects (\$5,000) - Is committed to conserve, enhance, and bring recognition to the natural and historic resources of the Big Creek Watershed and develop a



Parma team members and community support representatives following the Community Appreciation Day event Wednesday, November 16th.

recreational trail network that connects these resources to each other and the community.

Greater Cleveland Food bank (\$5,000) - Each year, 52 million meals are missed in the Food Bank's service area. Its mission is to ensure that everyone in Greater Cleveland communities has the nutritious food they need every day

through both food distribution and food stamp outreach efforts.

"Through the Community Grants Program, GM Parma is fostering an environment that supports education and growth of the region," said Lori Wingerter, vice president, GM Foundation. Partnerships with these organizations

underscore our commitment to the residents of Parma and all of Greater Cleveland."

This year, the GM Community Grants program will provide over \$2 million in funding to hundreds of organizations in 47 communities where GM employees live and work.

UH Parma Among Nation's Top Heart Hospitals

by CJ Sheppard

UH Parma Medical Center is recognized among the 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals in the nation for 2017, according to Truven Health Analytics. The ranking demonstrates that UH Parma outperformed its peers on a balanced scorecard that considers inpatients and extended outcomes, clinical processes, efficiency and cost for common cardiovascular conditions and treatments.

The 2017 50 Top Cardiovascular Hospitals have:

- Significantly higher inpatient survival than non-winning cardiovascular hospitals (25 to 55 percent higher)
- Fewer patients with com-

plications (20 to 22 percent fewer)

- Higher 30-day survival rates and lower readmission rates for acute myocardial infarction (AMI), heart failure (HF), and coronary artery bypass grafting (CABG) patients

If all cardiovascular providers performed at the level of award winners like UH Parma Medical Center, Truven estimates that more than 9,000 additional lives could be saved and more than 6,000 more heart patients nationwide could be free of complications.

Truven bases its analysis on Medicare patients. It estimates the impact would be even greater if these standards were applied to all inpatients.

Parma Saves More Than One Million Dollars

by Tom Mastroianni

Since taking office in 2011, I have looked into many different ways to save money for Parma residents. One area that I looked into was outstanding bond debt and the possibility of refunding some of these bonds to save money with better rates. I am pleased to report that in 2016, I was able to complete another bond refunding and save approximately \$665,929, which puts our total savings for the residents of Parma at \$1,376,608 since 2011.

Tim Reidy, Managing Director in Fifth Third Securities' Public Finance group, and a 17-year veteran of the municipal finance industry says "The Treasurer's Office has successfully executed strategies to save City resources by capitalizing on debt refinancing opportunities and maintaining its credit

rating in challenging economic times. Mr. Mastroianni's leadership in the Treasurer's Office has played a key role in con-

tributing to the City's strong fiscal management practices, as recently described by the

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Fundraising Event For Parma's Own John Allender



A Fundraising Event was held on 11/13 at Smedley's in Kamm's Corners in order to show support for Parma's own John Allender, Blues musician, Valley Forge Graduate and past Parma Observer writer, who was seriously injured after being struck by a motorist on US 41 in Florida on 8/13. Defying odds, he is improving steadily and needs love and support from anywhere and everywhere.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The President’s Corner

by Sean Brennan

Are you familiar with the following individuals: Bonnie Dunkelman, Carole DePaola, Mary Anne Christie, or Curt Braden? Like a great majority of Ohioans, probably not. However, if you voted in the Presidential election on November 8, chances are you voted for two of them. This month I explore the elusive Electoral College – the group of Americans who have the Constitutional power to elect the president.

During the summer of 1787, as our Founding Fathers were designing the new government of the United States, one of the issues they debated was how the head of the federal executive branch should be selected. Some suggested by popular vote, while others suggested Congress or state governors select the President. Like everything in the U.S. Constitution, a compromise was struck



Sean Brennan,
Parma City Council President

and the Electoral College was born.

The Electoral College was supposed to be composed of individuals who were well educated in the realm of politics and were of means with a large vested inter-

est in the success of the nation. Each state is allotted a number of electors equal to its Congressional delegation. Ohio, for instance, with 16 members of the U.S. House and 2 U.S. Senators, has 18 electoral votes. Each political party then selects 18 individuals to serve as potential electors.

When we vote for President, we are actually voting for electors in the Electoral College, not for the candidate him or herself. The small print on the ballot does state this. The candidate whose electors win more popular votes become the electors for that state in a winner-takes-all system (with the exception of Maine and Nebraska). Electors, being party loyalists, are essential rubber stamps for their party. Whoever wins at least 270 electoral votes becomes the next President, despite the popular vote outcome nationwide.

The first two people mentioned above were potential electors for Hillary Clinton, while the other two are electors for Donald Trump. Therefore, as I alluded to above, most Ohioans have no idea who they truly voted for. Further, despite the fact that Secretary Clinton won the national popular vote, Mr. Trump will be elected the next President.

Many Americans feel it is time to eliminate the “antiquated” Electoral College. However, this would require an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. I would argue that the chances of amending the Constitution are highly unlikely, given the difficulty of getting two-thirds of both Houses of Congress and ¾ of the states to agree to the change.

States have the power to determine how their electoral votes are allocated. Therefore, my suggestion to fixing the Electoral College system is to go to a proportional system. That is, instead of winner-takes-all, the state legislature or the people, via a referendum on the ballot, could switch to a system in which candidates for President would divide electoral votes based on the percentage of the popular vote they achieve.

If Ohio had been using the proportional system this year, Trump with about 52% of the popular vote would have won nine electoral votes, while Clinton, with about 44%, would have won eight. The law would have to state how the extra

vote would be allotted. This system would much better reflect the wishes of Ohio’s voters and eliminate the feeling of being disenfranchised that the current system creates every four years for many of those who voted for the losing candidate – Democrat or Republican.

If you agree with the suggested change above, write to State Representative Nick Celebrezze or State Senator Mike Skindell to share your sentiments. Celebrezze can be reached at rep15@ohiohouse.gov or 77 S. High Street, 14th Floor, Columbus, 43215, while Skindell can be reached at sd23@mail.sen.state.oh.us or 1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor, Columbus, 43215.

QUICK OBSERVATIONS
by Daniel P. McCarthy, Publisher

Parma Heights Mayor's Business Breakfast



Parma Hts. Mayor Mike Byrne hosted a Business Breakfast at the Venue Restaurant and Event Center on 11/10, where an innovative information session took place which served to improve the public/ private connection within the city. In attendance were, left to right, State Representative Martin J. Sweeney, Parma Hts. Mayor Mike Byrne, and Parma Hts. Councilman Reobert Verdile.

College Colleagues



Christine Vodicka cuts the ribbon to signify the Grand Opening of College Colleagues, a Success Center providing skilled tutoring and learning spaces. The center is at 6887 Smith Rd., Suite 2.

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HEALTH AND CULTURE

New Treatment For Patients With Atrial Fibrillation

by CJ Sheppard

Breathless and exhausted, 60-year-old Susan Bercan felt her heart was failing her. Cryoablation, a new treatment option for atrial fibrillation now available at University Hospitals Parma Medical Center, has breathed new life into patients like Bercan.

“I was on death’s door – I could not breathe, and all I did was sleep,” says Bercan, who feels like a new person after cryoablation. “Now I’m doing better than great.”

Atrial fibrillation, the most common heart rhythm disorder and one of the most undertreated cardiac conditions, affects more than 3 million Americans. Untreated atrial fibrillation gives patients a fivefold increase in stroke risk. For patients whose condition is no longer sufficiently managed with medication, this minimally invasive procedure performed in the cardiac catheterization lab opens possibilities for patients of all ages.

In cryoablation, the abnormal cardiac tissue is frozen – rather than burned – to disable unwanted electrical circuits. Following a procedure of just two to three hours, rather than approximately six for radiofrequency ablation, patients recover overnight in the hospital and typically go home in 24-36 hours.

Cryoablation is expected to decrease the frequency and severity of atrial fibrillation attacks, eliminating or reducing symptoms such as shortness of breath,



Walking her dog was nearly impossible until Susan Bercan underwent cryoablation, a minimally invasive treatment for atrial fibrillation. Now she enjoys daily walks with Lacey.

fatigue and weakness. A large clinical trial found that almost 70 percent of patients treated with cryoablation were free from its symptoms at one year, compared with 7.3 percent of patients treated solely with drug therapy.

“Our primary concern when treating atrial fibrillation is to return the patient’s heart to a normal rhythm, reduce the risk of stroke and improve quality of life,” says James Ramicone, DO, who partners with Bartolomeo Giannattasio, MD in performing these procedures at both UH Parma Medical Center and Southwest General Health Center. “We are seeing amazing results from our patients.”

EMT, Paramedic Classes At UH Parma

by CJ Sheppard

The EMS Education Program at UH Parma Medical Center, which has trained more than 1,700 of the region’s EMTs and paramedics over the past 32 years, begins its new session of courses in January.

All of the 18 instructors in this state and nationally accredited program are working in the field as firefighters and paramedics. Call 440-743-4970 for

details on the upcoming classes:

- EMT-Basic – Approximately four months long starting Jan 4. Classes are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Night class held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-9:30 p.m. beginning Feb. 2.
- Paramedic Education – 13 months beginning Jan. 3. Classes held Tuesdays and Fridays, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.



Annual Parma Peanut Butter Drive

by John Visnauskas

Parma City Council President Sean Brennan has again organized the annual Parma Peanut Butter Drive. Celebrating its 6th year, community partners will be collecting peanut butter throughout December for All Faiths Pantry, a Parma area 501(c)3 nonprofit group, that delivers groceries at no charge to local low income seniors and others with challenges to mobility.

“We are hoping to collect over 1,000 jars of peanut butter this year,” Brennan stated. “However, monetary donations to All Faiths Pantry are really important because they can purchase 8 pounds of peanut butter for about \$10,” he added. Peanut butter is food bank gold, a valuable commodity. It is a primary source of protein for many low income households. Peanut butter is a staple that many families are having a hard time affording.

The following Parma locations will accept peanut butter donations:

- Cuyahoga County Public Library branches at 6996 Powers Blvd. and 2121 Snow Rd.
- Parma Animal Shelter 6260 State Rd.
- Parma Area Chamber of Commerce 5790 Ridge Rd.
- Parma City Council Office 6611 Ridge Rd.
- Studio Zia Salon 1339 Rockside Rd.
- UH Parma Medical Center 7007 Powers Blvd.

Checks made payable to AFP can be mailed to Sean Brennan care of the City Council office, 6611 Ridge Road, Parma, Ohio, 44129. Donations are tax-deductible.

All Faiths Pantry is celebrating ten years of the program bringing free groceries to the homes of low income, elderly and mobility challenged clients. With the help of its supporters, All Faiths Pantry has brought a million and a half pounds of food directly to the homes of our most deserving and vulnerable neighbors and is on track in 2016 to complete fifty thousand deliveries to local residences since beginning the program.

All Faiths Pantry is known as a model of best practices in serving homebound and older adults, a demo-

graphic that is growing rapidly as the Baby Boom ages. Many seniors today are retiring into poverty after working hard throughout the decades of their earlier adulthood. The Greater Parma area has until recently not known the poverty that seniors left behind more prosperous neighbors struggle with each and every day. How can we not act to help the older people in our community who choose not to buy enough nutritious food, as their budget requires they prioritize prescriptions, medical care, utility bills and other housing costs?

Remarkably, All Faiths Pantry has been able to come far serving its mission with the generous support of a few charitable foundations, a handful of church and business supporters and about a hundred unique individual financial contributors. All Faiths Pantry wants to continue its success and move into a second decade of service with a more sustainable and broader base of support. The organization is looking to diversify its small, working Board of Directors, and especially invites local people with business experience to inquire about serving on the Board. The program always looks for volunteers to help deliver groceries once a month, and are able to accommodate more clients too, homebound and low income seniors over sixty living in and around Parma.

More information is available by phoning All Faiths Pantry (216) 496-4329 or via e-mail at www.all-faithspantry.org

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EDUCATION

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Show Kids You Care: Learn What They Have to Teach.

Asset Corner #84

by Gene Lovasy

December’s Asset Category: CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME. The pace of everyday life varies depending on the activities young people participate in. These fluctuations are normal, even healthy. As long as young people don’t consistently have too much to do or not enough to do, they’re right on track. Problems arise when the balance begins to tip too far to one side or the other. Too much involvement can lead to stress or anxiety. Too little involvement can be a sign of depression or isolation. Ensure that young people constructively use their time for both fun and learning.

This column’s focus will be on.....
Asset #18 – Youth Program

After-school activities: They may be extra but they’re also essential

It’s appropriate that the word extracurricular starts with the letter “E.” But the word should really be essential-curricular. In fact, they’re so important many schools are now calling them co-curricular activities. For many young people, youth programs at school and in the community are the highlight of their day. They meet new people who share their interests or introduce them to new pursuits. They spend time with adults who also enjoy the activity. And they boost their skills.

Here are the facts

Research shows that young people who regularly spend time in sports, clubs, or other youth programs have higher self-esteem and better leadership skills, and are less likely to feel lonely. About 57 percent of young people, ages 11–18, spend three or more hours a week in youth programs, according to Search Institute. Young people involved in interesting activities helps bring out their best.

Tips for building this asset

Encourage young people to join a school or community activity that matches their interests, or try one they have never considered before. People can learn a lot about themselves by taking a chance on something new. Clubs and programs can also help young people make new friends of all ages, give them leadership opportunities, and make school more fun. Many groups also let them choose how much time and energy to commit.

Also try this
In your home and family: With

your child, make a list of activities he or she wants to learn about. Rank the ideas according to her or his level of interest. Together, research ways to try out the top two choices.

In your neighborhood and community: Check your newspaper for upcoming community activities such as charity lunches, art openings, or athletic events. How many are youth-centered or allow youth participation? If you don’t see many, consider starting an activity for young people with your neighbors.

In your school or youth program: Discuss the following with the young people in your class or program: If you could start a club of your own, what would it be? How would you get it started? What materials would you need?

ASSET RELATED NEWS

After competing with youth/adults leaders from across Cuyahoga County, please join me in congratulating Zahraa Alribeawi, Noah Utterback, and Zaria Johnson, three of our outstanding local students, and Kathy Hall, MyCom Grant Project Assistant, all of whom were individually recognized at the Annual MyCom Youth Voice Awards ceremony at the downtown Hilton Inn on November 17th. Having our local youth and adult leaders consistently recognized, now for the last 6 years, demonstrates the efficacy of our MyCom and district-based youth initiatives.

And, in regard to our youth initiatives, November’s meeting of the MyCom Tri-City Steering Committee brought clarity and refinement to our goals of Advocacy, Out-of-School Time, Transitions, and Youth Engagement. Action steps were discussed as was a process for implementation and communication. If you’re involved with or at all interested in youth development/programming and/or youth outreach, please join us for our next meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 6th at the Parma Branch Library across from UH Parma Medical Center on Powers Blvd.

If you’re looking to help families over the Christmas holiday, start by giving the Parma Area Family Collaborative a call at 440-887-4873. Their Holiday Giving Tree initiative is still going on and the need in our community is great.

If you’re not already aware of the great programs and services available from the district’s community

education department visit www.parmacityschools.org/pce. Links listed on the left hand menu bar will take you to a whole range exciting and unique opportunities. This is another of the many hidden gems of our community.

The Collab’s (at Hanna Elem on Snow and Chevy Blvd) next Mobile Food Pantry will take place on Thursday, December 8th. Help is needed in the morning (9:00 a.m.) to unload and



by Jean Micklewright

2016 MyCom Youth Voice Awards

The MyCom Youth Voice Awards honor Cuyahoga County residents, leaders and organizations taking action to support the needs of young people in Greater Cleveland. Nominations were received from across Cuyahoga County.

We have three MyCom Youth Voice Award winners from the Parma Tri-City area:

Zahraa Alribeawi and Noah Utterback were presented with Youth Voice Awards and Kathy Hall was presented with the Caring Adult Award.

Zahraa Alribeawi, a junior at Parma Senior High School is both gracious and articulate, using her voice to make a difference in her school and community. She is an invested member in the Tri-City Youth Plan meetings. Zahraa is a good student, musician and confident spokesperson. She volunteers at the local food pantry. She is able to engage both adults and youth seamlessly. Her energy is contagious. She was an integral voice in organizing a peaceful student protest involving students from all three high schools in the school district. Her voice is being heard and she is making a difference in her community.

Noah Utterback does not hesitate to advocate for himself and others. He wants youth voice to be heard and considered a vital contribution to



set up, and again in the afternoon (2:00 p.m.) for distribution. Contact Kira Karabanovs, Director of Family and Community Engagement, for details on how you can get involved. Email: karabanovsk@parmacityschools.org; ph: 440-842-7022.

And finally, a sincere thank you to all those who worked and voted for the school district’s renewal levy. In addition to the uninterrupted inflow of \$8M, its passage gives the district an opportunity to seek input from its stakeholders and develop a well thought-out plan for its future. Watch for information related to the “Focus on the Future” campaign and don’t hesitate to get involved

Visit www.parmacityschools.org/character and www.search-institute.org/assets for more information about the 40 Developmental Assets and ideas for helping young people build them. Or go to www.parentfurther.com for great asset-based parenting tips, tricks, activities, and ideas.

CORNER



Zahraa Alribeawi and Kathy Hall

planning and decision making. Noah is a senior at Parma Senior High and a strong advocate for youth. He joined MyCom this past summer because he wanted to use his skills to benefit youth. His “voice” is heard every day since he does morning announcements at Parma Senior High. Noah helped to organize youth at his high school for protests and rallies regarding the school district’s proposal to close two high schools. Noah readily spoke with news channels and newspapers and was quoted regarding the proposed cuts to arts and drama.

Kathy Hall is a tireless advocate for youth. She believes that all youth are important and that all youth deserve to have their voice heard .Kathy has worked with youth for over 40 years. She plays an important role with her church youth group as they meet every Wednesday night throughout the school year. She has volunteered at the Cedarbrook Summer camp in Madison, Ohio for years. Kathy is a trustee for the National Cedarbrook Camp Organization. She frequently states “It’s all about relationships” and she practices what she preaches. Kathy was the Shiloh Café Program Assistant for five years. Our Teen group P.A.T.C.H. loved playing “Spoons” with her. She is a shining example of a caring adult.

INSPIRATION



Christmas 100 Years Ago

by Bob Stilwell

One-hundred years ago, World War I was still going on and most of the attention was about the War. If you asked a kid what they wanted in 1916, this would be their normal response: candy, nuts, rocking horse, dolls, mittens or gloves, toy train, oranges, books, handkerchiefs, ice skates. Generally, each child was given only one item on this list so they would only ask for one thing. Everything here with the exception of the skates could easily have been made by hand or purchased for a small amount of money.

The cost of food was on the rise so people made what they could from what was available. An average Christmas dinner was probably brown onion soup, venison, and rice with boiled rutabegas. For dessert, baked apple dumplings with raisins.

We easily forget what people in the past had to endure. At the time, this would probably have been considered a good Christmas as there were many more families that had less than this or nothing at all. We should all be very thankful for what we have today. Merry Christmas!

I Believe

by Daniel Taddeo

A number of people portray a form of godliness that is contrary to Biblical truth; turn away from such people. According to a doctor, there are no drugs that are one hundred percent safe; however, there are occasions when their use is the lesser of two evils. Be strong and of good courage (faith) to cope in a dangerous world with all of its temptations and intimidations. Because of our “fallen nature,” we are all born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil and need to be redeemed. It is wise and beneficial to refrain from all kinds of sin (wrongs), especially those that produce deadly consequences in everyday living. Examples are the following: MONEY, the love of money meaning gain at any cost is a good thing; IDOLATRY, worshipping created things more than the Creator God; FORNICATION, premarital sex that is degrading and often results in sexual disease and abortion.

Many people have trouble understanding the prosperity of the ungodly along with the suffering of the righteous. Why would a loving God seem to endorse such a system? The answer to this paradox is not apparent in the present time but in the world to come, where hell awaits the ungodly

and heaven awaits those whom God has redeemed through faith in Christ. God’s justice will prevail in His time. Our words should not be crude, obscene, foolish, bitter, false, or malicious; instead, they should be good, true, and gracious, so that they build up are hearers. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord, especially by their example and spoken words.

The Bible is not just a great book—it is THE Book! Its content is and will be forever. Those who abide by it are guaranteed salvation. The sin of pride (arrogance) was the very first sin and is still the most difficult one to overcome, but God opposes the proud and gives grace to the humble. There must be an authorized chain-of-command in any church body or other organizations for them to functions responsibly. The key is loyalty to God’s Word. Those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters are liars, for those who do not love a brother or a sister whom they have seen cannot love God whom they have not seen.

Self-reflection is always a good exercise. What I believe is a work in progress, not limited to these statements and subject to change. What do YOU believe?

Hockey Mom

by Lizabeth Braskie

A popular fast and furious sport is the game of hockey. It requires careful watching and, more importantly, total concentration every second the players are on the ice. Barbara has been a hockey mom for seven years, since her son, Logan, was in third grade. He is now a sophomore and an active player for his high school’s team. Since he’s been involved in this sport, he has functioned as a goalie and takes great pride in his position and contribution to the team’s total effort.

It’s a goalie’s job to devote absolute attention to the back and forth possession of the puck and be in constant alert status while the game is in play. The friends and families of the players have been the faithful cheering section for all the games. The seated fans are the hub of verbal advice and praise directed at the teams on the ice. Barbara, however, likes to watch her son from the close vantage point of the corner “on the glass.” She stands at her observation point and watches the action from behind the protective Plexiglas, concentrating on the skills of the team’s performance. She calls

this area her “Zen” corner of the arena where her solitude and vision can appreciate the intricate calculations of the goalie’s job. Being away from murmurings of the audience elevates this process to actual detailing of Logan’s actions and dispels any negative noise.

The casual observer may not know the differences that a goalie’s job entails. This position requires constant presence on the ice throughout the game. He must be vigilant at defending his goal and be alert as the last line of defense. He must watch for projectiles at all times, keeping his eyes trained on the puck. A mom is aware of these challenges and stands by, communicating her thoughts, praising successful outcomes, examining the occasional negative ones, and expressing suitable encouragement.

There have been many years of this scenario for Barbara. She has transported Logan and his bags and cases of equipment from days of youth hockey to the present practices and games. The thick padded uniform he wears is heavier than the skaters’ and covers his body from extra-protective neck and head to extra-padded toes.

continued on page 9

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SENIOR LIVING

Parma Heights Historical Society 2016 Review

by Bob Stilwell

The Historical Society has made significant improvements in 2016. In addition to our monthly meetings, informal weekly meetings are held every Tuesday at 10:00 a.m. at the Parma South Presbyterian Church as an opportunity for available members to discuss any new or old business updates.

The previous 36 year old wooden fence was in disrepair as well as the roof. A new vinyl fence was installed, along with new roof shingles by Vocational students from Parma High School. We thank them very much as they did an outstanding job.

Volunteers also helped to paint the Tollgate House. A new sign for the Tollgate house will be installed in the spring of 2017.

Our membership has more than doubled from 7 to our current total of 18. Committees have been formed,

with some members serving multiple groups. We are always encouraging more people to join our group which will aid our future projects to Preserve the Past and Present for the Future, which is our motto.

The Historical Society planned and implemented a pumpkin painting in early October for children 12 and under. This was a huge success that was enjoyed by all in attendance.

We have many other projects that our membership is working on for the future. We plan on implementing a newsletter, continue Century home progress, procuring a State Historical Marker for the Parma Heights Cemetery, continued improvements to the Tollgate House and surrounding grounds, and many other projects. Anyone interested in joining may call the Parma Heights Historical Society President, Aldo, at 216-496-7150.



Veterans assembled in the chapel at Mt. Alverna Village during ceremony honoring their service.



Veterans at Pleasant Lake Villa being honored on Veterans Day.

Vista Springs Greenbriar Poised For Opening

by Karen Schaefer

The construction on the Vista Springs Greenbriar building located in the revitalized heart of Parma at The Shoppes at Parma will be completed in December. We expect licensing by the State of Ohio Board of Health to be completed early in January. At Vista Springs Greenbriar, we are creating an exquisite senior living community in which our community members and families will enjoy an incomparable vibrant lifestyle with 5-star resort amenities, a variety of floorplans, inspiring signature events and activities, fine and casual restaurant dining, and specialized personal care options to engage the body, mind, and soul... It's what we mean by Full of Life.

Our apartments and suites will feature exceptional style, comfort, and luxury. In addition, we invite

you to discover the art of spacious living in our Penthouse Sky Lofts with vaulted ceilings, large windows, fireplaces, flat screen TV's, walk in closets, and many other amenities.

Reservations are being taken now. Do not spend another Winter watching the snow while you can be part of our family and enjoy our life enrichment activities sitting with your friends by our fireplace.

Call for an appointment:
Ron Elsner – Executive Director
or Karen Ann Schaefer – Director of Professional and Community Relations.
8668 Day Dr., Parma, OH 44129
Phone: 216-712-4400

Parma Village Senior Apartments Grand Opening



Parma Village Senior Apartments at 11500 Huffman Rd. celebrated their Grand Opening on 11/18. Manager Vicki Gibbons is pictured cutting the ribbon to signify the opening of this much anticipated apartment complex helping to fill the vital position of serving the needs of Senior Residents in the Parma Area.

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PERSPECTIVE

What A Year 2016 Has Been In Cleveland,
And It All Was Made Possible By A Key Vote In A Local Election Long Ago

by Lee Kamps

This year certainly placed Cleveland on the map in a very positive way. In June, the Cleveland Cavaliers won the NBA championship and more than one million people came downtown to celebrate. Then, in July, the city hosted the Republican National Convention and again received national exposure. Finally, over the past month, the Cleveland Indians surprised the sports world by almost winning the World Series in a monumental seventh game.

Those visitors to the city this past year gave rave reviews about the entertainment district surrounding the ball park and arena as well as the Jack Casino and the new Public Square downtown. Just down the road from that is Playhouse Square that hosts several events throughout the year and is the largest theater district between New York and Los Angeles.

Cleveland is a city on the rise and on the move. The city is now attracting many new residents, especially younger college educated young adults who are coming here for new opportunities in health care and technology. However, none of this would have been possible if

it were not for a group of forward thinking visionaries who saw a better future for Cleveland and an important local election held in 1990. It was not without the nay-sayers and controversy.

I remember the campaign in 1990 to finance the Gateway development that built Progressive Field and the Quicken Loans Arena. That campaign was about a county wide vote to impose a "sin tax" on alcoholic beverages and tobacco. The vote was in the May primary election.

I was a staunch supporter of that issue. I believed that locating a baseball park and a sports arena would be the catalyst for a significant redevelopment of the neighborhood near the downtown center. Back in 1990 that neighborhood was a bunch of parking lots and second hand stores that was deserted after 500 PM and dangerous.

I remember the old men at the barber shop complaining about more taxes to pay millionaires and spoiled athletes who didn't care about the fans. "What is wrong with the Stadium?" I heard them say often. But then those same old men bragged about how long it had been since they went downtown.

That sentiment wasn't just confined to grumpy old men. Other people I knew said the same thing. Of course, those people lived and worked in the suburbs and never went into the city. "So what if the Indians leave? They stink and have stunk for a long time" was a familiar comment I heard.

Cleveland was all about the Browns back in the spring of 1990. As long as the Browns played, they didn't care about the Indians. The Cavaliers were playing in the Richfield Coliseum and they had a good team. So what if the old Coliseum was out in the sticks, at least it wasn't in the city.

In the spring of 1990, Cleveland's entertainment district was in the flats along the river. It was the place to go in the summer, but wasn't so hot the rest of the year. Many people then believed that the flats was the greatest thing for an entertainment district. Also, in the spring of 1990, a lot of people were also saying that the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame would never get built.

In the spring of 1990, I was part of the Greater Cleveland Growth Association Speakers Bureau as well as a member of that organization. There were visionaries who saw that Cleveland could come back to life and that the Gateway development was the key. That "sin tax" levy passed, thanks

mainly to more yes votes in the city than the suburbs.

Fast forward 26 years. Who then would have believed what has happened since? The new ball park got built as well as a new arena. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame got built. Then the Indians got good. They made it to the World Series in 1995 and again in 1997. The Cleveland Indians broke attendance records with entire seasons selling out before opening day.

The Browns collapsed in the 1990 season with a 3 and 13 record. They moved out in 1995. We tore down the old stadium and built a new stadium for the Browns when they returned in 1999. Of course, they still stink. The flats died and a new, much better entertainment district was established near the ball park and arena.

But in 2016, the Cavaliers won the NBA championship and the Indians almost won the World Series at home. Cleveland hosted the Republican National convention this summer. There is a new casino where Higbee's used to be. But none of that would have been possible without some bold vision and the voters passing a tax levy.

It was bold progressive leadership that saw past the conventional thinking of the day that made all this possible. This is the face of progress.

Engineering

by Leo Lampeter

A highly regarded and intellectually revered occupation is that of engineer. There is a great deal of study, time, and energy involved in acquiring such a degree. The requirements are above the norm. A great deal of math and science are the surface of study for those who wish to become proficient in this area. Detail is the code word for working in this area of expertise. Should you glance around, you will marvel of the accomplishments of engineers. All that is constructed must have architectural drawings and structural engineering input. The coordination of the fields is a symphony when in concert. The wise engineer also listens to the input from all parties involved. Details gleaned from those with knowledge of what is practical and functional are a portion of what a quality engineer takes into consideration when undertaking a project. Individuals with day-to-day experience in what is to be utilized when completed, is how designs become most functional, and to dismiss this input would be a grave error. Recent constructions are examples of how attention to detail can create a completely successful task or one that is lacking.

Why are engineers in this city dismissing these details? Immediately noticeable are those of the new splash park and the parking for both the library and the senior center. One of the difficulties is navigating the parking lot. At various vantage points when the lot has a larger number of vehicles, the sight line of the driver is fairly poor. This should be of primary concern, yet it doesn't seem to have been considered, a significant error. Somewhat of

a lesser error is how the islands have taken valuable parking spaces from a relatively small parking area. Also, the positioning of the parking lanes specifically for seniors created more distance for seniors to travel and obstacles for them to traverse that may not prove to be a concern for those not in the elderly category. You see many seniors use an aid when walking, thus what one considers a decoration others consider an obstacle. When there is an event at the senior center, the elderly must attempt to find not only a close location but one without impediments. That is where the parking spaces that were replaced with islands would certainly have aided a number of individuals.

The other engineering decision more recently concerns the water park. There is one drive that leads from the park to Roycroft. With a great deal of insight, it is designed to allow only one vehicle on the street when exiting, as the drive is approximately 20 feet from the traffic signal. The input from outside sources was not considered. As has become accepted from those with government positions, any advice from outside the government circle is readily discarded. Engineers also get paid for correcting their errors and have little to fear of being replaced. For what seems to be such a basic task as designing a parking lot, it certainly brings into question the mayor's definition of quality. Engineering is one of the positions the mayor dubbed as needing a pay increase to keep quality people. Perhaps the need for keeping "quality" personnel isn't as worthy of an increase in salary as we are led to believe.

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OBSERVER

Reflections On A Great Sports Year



A photo of Progressive Field, at the begining of the last game of the World Series. Also in the photo is Quicken Loan Arena, home to the World Champion Cavaliers!

by Davidione Pearl

November 4th, 2016, would have marked the day of our parade, a parade of champions, yet we still have a great deal to celebrate as winners.

Thank you, Cleveland baseball for helping to win the long arduous and very uphill battle of opinion, by returning national respect to our scrappy little rust belt parcel of the north coast. Your hearts are as tried, tested, and proven as the steel that is our own, and no one will ever take that away from us again by way of derisive overtures and insensitive overt ridicule.

You were at once written off, as were the rest of us for what has felt like endless decades, yet we have regained

our rightful dignity and relevance upon these shores because of your hard work and heavy lifting.

Thank you LeBron James, for your return not only sparked a team, but it clearly catalyzed a veritable avalanche of triumph. You sir, simply poured golden honey again upon this town, no other way to put it.

Thank you Lake Erie Monsters for seizing the oldest championship trophy in the country. You skated like your lives depended on it, and into history you were forever crowned.

And to you Chicago, our rust belt sister to the west, now that all the screaming, hissing, and cursing at the TV has subsided, as I for one admit-

tedly went temporarily insane, we salute you. We salute the only team that had a longer drought than ours, we salute all your friends and loved ones that you grew up with watching your team almost make it for so long, but are no longer here to cry with you the tears of joy through this historic accomplishment, we salute you because we know, we know all too well and ever intimately what you've been through, and those you wish you could share it with now... Know that they truly are here with you, just as all the great ball players of the dusty old days with crackling speakers, they are here with

you, too.

Know that we are here with you as well, you deserve this in no uncertain terms, but also know that we are coming for you again, even stronger.

At heart, true to form, we still had the parade of our team's successes this year, in our forever faithful Cleveland spirit. That is what makes us who we are.

So enjoy what is rightfully yours our rustbelt sister to the west. We'll be here, listening in from a distance between the cresting waves on our quiet autumn beaches.

Well played. See you next year on the mound...

Hockey Mom

continued from page 6

His skates and helmet are also different from those of his group, since his job requires deflecting the puck sent sailing by the other team. A goalie mom might cringe when an errant projectile hits her son's face mask or a scramble ensues in front of the goal. Many seasons have resulted in her nerves being tested. But the bottom line is that her pride has been earned.

Families of hockey players share in their child's passion. They empathize with one another, discuss the health issues, the practices they must have and the distances they travel. But the players are joined as a group and have the spirit of helping one another. The cohesive unit blends like-minded players who learn to function as a team. This builds character, sets goals and instills pride in accomplishments. It's a great way to share in your child's life. It makes a lot of fabulous memories. Just ask a hockey mom.

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COMMUNITY PULSE

Tri-C Volleyball Coach And Player From Parma Earn Conference Honors

by John Horton

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) volleyball coach Mary Colovas, of Parma, has been named 2016 Coach of the Year by the Ohio Community College Athletic Conference after guiding the Challengers to their best season in more than a decade.

The conference also honored a Tri-C player from Parma — defensive specialist Rachel Geiss — for her performance during the team’s turn-around season in 2016.

The Challengers finished 17-16 and fourth in the OCCAC while winning more conference matches than the past four years combined. The team also qualified for the NJCAA regional tournament.

“We had a great group that meshed really well together,” said Colovas, now in her eighth season as coach. “They played with a lot of heart.”

Geiss ranked among the national leaders in digs while playing in her defensive specialist role. The sophomore who graduated from Valley Forge High School is working toward an Associate of Science degree at Tri-C.

The volleyball team plays its home matches at Eastern Campus in Highland Hills. For more information on Tri-C teams, visit www.tri-c.edu/athletics.



Rachel Geiss



Mary Colovas



West Creek Conservancy staff members show-off their shirts. From left to right, Dawn Petkov, Derek Schafer, and Jakob Hamlescher.

West Creek Conservancy Seeks Stewardship Sponsors As They Promote “Lake Erie Starts With Me!”

by Liz Hersh

In a coordinated campaign across Greater Lake Erie, northeast Ohio residents have likely seen the phrase “Lake Erie Starts Here”...or “with Me!” Although daunting to consider, every action we each take affects the water we drink, the water for our crops, and the water we play in.

The West Creek Conservancy has worked to protect vital stream and wetland systems, forested areas, as well as open green spaces - all in an effort to protect the waters of Greater Lake Erie. The conservancy’s goal is to protect, restore, connect, and reclaim important natural areas throughout the Greater Cleveland area. As the organization continues to raise awareness about protecting the water quality within the Lake Erie watershed, it invites you to become a Stewardship Sponsor. With each individual donation of \$20 or more, you’ll receive a “Lake Erie Starts With Me!” shirt. All proceeds benefit the West Creek Conservancy Stewardship Fund to help the organization continue its great work.

“We want to show people that Lake Erie starts at their driveway,” said Derek Schafer, Executive Director of West Creek Conservancy. “Storm water runoff plays a big part in the overall health of local streams, the Cuyahoga River and ultimately Lake Erie. We’ve made significant progress with the health of Lake Erie but there is much more we can do and it starts with smart choices at home.”

West Creek Conservancy has been connecting people to nature since its founding in 1997. Its mission is to enrich the lives of people in Greater Cleveland by conserving natural habitats, restoring the ecological value and sustainability of urban lands, and expanding neighborhood opportunities to experience nature.

As a land trust serving all of Cuyahoga County, West Creek Conservancy permanently protects the conservation values of selected land by acquiring and holding land and conservation easements, and providing ongoing stewardship of those lands. For more information, visit www.westcreek.org.

Parma Saves More Than One Million Dollars continued from page 1

City’s credit rating agency.” Working closely with Law Director Tim Dobeck, Mayor Tim DeGeeter, former Auditor Dennis Kish, and current Auditor Brian Day, I will continue to aggressively look for ways to save our

residents money. I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Reidy as well as bond counsel Climaco, Wilcox, Peca, Tarantino & Garofoli LPA for their assistance in the ongoing process of saving residents money.



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Merry Christmas
and a
Happy
New Year
from
Mayor
DeGeeter
Family

Polish Village

Parma Tradition

Treat & Greet 2016 Most Successful Yet

by Kathryn Mabin

Saturday, October 29th, was certainly a big day for the business community in Polish Village. Treat & Greet 2016, had the largest turnout ever. Mother Nature was certainly onboard with blue skies and unseasonably warm weather. All the kids, decked out in their various costumes, were impatiently waiting the kick off at 11:00 a.m. with some still going strong when it ended at 3:00 p.m.

Treat & Greet began 6 years ago, when Ward 2 Councilwoman, Debbie Lime, and the all-volunteer Polish Village Community Development Corporation (CDC) were brainstorming ways to increase foot traffic to the various small businesses on Ridge Road, and provide a fun, safe, community oriented project for the residents. Each year Treat & Greet has grown, and offered something new and different. The concept behind this is that many people drive on Ridge Road daily, but are not familiar with the small businesses and shops. Treat & Greet, offers residents a chance to walk Ridge Road, visiting the various participating businesses with their children for candy, while allowing the adults to see what the businesses have to offer.

As a resident of Polish Village, a mother and grandmother, I was particularly happy to see the children in costumes, walking with adults, during the daytime, rather than the normal trick-or-treat hours in the evening during Halloween. Less trips and falls on those porch steps, sidewalks, and driveways. Plus, the really little ones can see



and experience Halloween in daylight.

Kick off this year was located at 5767 Ridge Road, next door to the new Barabacu Smokehouse. Adults were given a passport per family, with the names and addresses of each of the participating businesses. As the families went from site to site, the passport was stamped. For each ten stamps the families were given a ticket to enter a drawing. The prizes were donations from area busi-

nesses and valued from \$50 to \$150 each. About 30 lucky families received gift baskets, gift cards and certificates. This year there were 45 places participating between the intersections of Pearl/Ridge and Ridge/Thornton. Over 65,000 pieces of candy and gum were distributed this year. Many businesses supplement the candy and gum provided by Polish Village CDC with coupons for discounts and other free items. Residency is not

required for Treat & Greeters and many people traveled from all over Northeast Ohio. There were 360 passports turned in - an increase of about one-third over the prior year. Many businesses from outside of Polish Village and individuals sponsored the event.

This year, Sparky The Dog, The Northeast Ohio Ghostbusters, Spiderman, A Minion, Elmo, a Ghost, and a Skeleton were spotted walking amongst the crowds. The Parma Auxiliary provided photo opportunities for kids in a real live police car. Parma Police K-9 Dexter, his handler, and other Parma Police were on hand as was the Parma Fire Department to meet with the children and pass out candy and stickers. So were some balloon twisters. As one drove down Ridge Road, the sidewalks were jammed with pedestrian traffic walking to the various businesses. It was a sight to behold, just like in the movies, of small town community spirit. Events like this are what makes Parma a wonderful place to live and a great place to raise a family.

Parma Art News

by Kathryn Mabin

CAC ART GRANT: November 14th was a great day for the Parma Area Fine Arts Council. That was the day the announcement was made that they have been awarded a matching grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture for 2017. Cuyahoga Arts & Culture announced \$14.5 million in grants to 241 Cuyahoga County Nonprof-

its that day. A matching grant is one where funds must be raised to equal the amount of the grant. The matching grant PAFAC will receive is one of the smallest, but it will help to fund free art classes in the Spring and Summer of 2017 for the Parma area community. Watch for details on upcoming classes and workshops in early Spring of 2017.

Parma Coloring Book: Just in time for the Holidays! Parma Area Fine Arts Council Members have created The Parma Coloring Book. Great stocking stuffer! Each coloring page has a Parma theme, and costs \$3 each. Included are coloring pages with Ghoulardi, Big Chuck & Lil' John, Stearn's Homestead, West Creek, Parma High School, The Gazebo, Polish Village, Ukrainian Village, and more, for both children and adults. Proceeds will benefit the free art class program being offered in 2017.



For sale at the following locations:
Donna Smallwood Activities Center 7001 W. Ridgewood Dr.
Parma Area Chamber of Commerce - 5790 Ridge Rd.
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Or call 440-888-4514, leave a message and someone will return your call.

Wishing you & your family a very Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

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Pleasant Lake Villa is holding a gift drive to help make the holidays a little brighter for senior citizens who may be isolated or not have the financial resources to celebrate this year. We are asking for donations from our community to help support our local seniors in need.

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