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Mayor Timothy J. DeGeeter Reveals

Vision For Parma With State Of The City Address

by Jeannie Roberts

In his sixth State of the City address on February 28, Mayor Tim DeGeeter highlighted Parma's neighborhoods, recreation opportunities, and businesses. During his speech at the General Motors Parma Metal Center, DeGeeter also unveiled plans to create a police bike patrol to enhance community policing. He opened his speech recalling that in December he was at the factory when it was announced GM planned to invest \$218 million into the factory. "I don't know who was more energized – the employees or me," he said. "This major commitment secures the plant's future in Parma – so critical for the



Mayor Timothy J. DeGeeter

workers employed here and crucial for our city and Northeast Ohio." He also likened GM's revival since the recession to how Parma has been recovering in the aftermath of the worst economy since the

Great Depression. "Parma, too, has come a long way since then as we've faced up to our challenges," DeGeeter said. "All of us – together – have confronted the effects of the recession, the near collapse of the housing market, and the millions upon millions of dollars we've lost through state funding cuts." He said he believed there was renewed confidence in Parma's future. "Perhaps that confidence in our future – that pride of place – is best encapsulated by the slogan, 'This is Parma,'" he said. DeGeeter said the city has embraced the slogan, which was formulated by a Parma-based young professionals group formed in the summer.

Using the phrase as a jumping off point, DeGeeter focused his speech on the positive developments occurring throughout the city that make Parma an attractive place to live and work. "The Parma

we know – and the one people are rediscovering – is home to strong neighborhoods that reflect our ethnic diversity in a way that honors our old-world roots while being very much in the present," DeGeeter

said. He said the latest trends in development indicate that people want to live in unique, affordable, and walkable neighborhoods. "We have that

continued on page 4

City Of Parma Recognizes Paczki Day



On February 20 Parma City Council and the DeGeeter Administration recognized two businesses, Rudy's Strudel and Colazzas Bakery, for what has become known as "Paczki Day", the day before Lent when people come from far and wide to the Polish Village Neighborhood of Parma and purchase the delicious donut-like delicacies by the thousands.

Showcasing Parma Heights

by Mike Byrne

Mayor, Parma Heights

I am pleased to announce that the City of Parma Heights is hosting the Akron Cleveland Association of Realtors (ACAR) at the Cassidy Theatre on Thursday, March 23, 2017, for a pilot program called "Becoming Familiar with Cuyahoga County Municipalities." Realtors in attendance will receive one continuing education credit.

"ACAR is excited to launch this new program in Parma Heights. This session is an excellent opportunity for real estate agents to learn what is new in the city, which ultimately helps them better assist home buyers and sellers. We look forward to offering similar programs in other communities throughout Cuyahoga and Summit Counties" says Jamie McMillen, Vice President of Government Affairs.

As Mayor, I am excited for the opportunity to meet with local realtors and promote all that Parma Heights has to offer new residents and families. The idea of getting this information directly into the hands of the people selling homes here is groundbreaking.

According to a cleveland.com article published on



Mayor, Mike Byrne

January 2, 2017, the median age in Parma Heights is 40.6, lower than every surrounding suburb. Parma Heights has so much to offer residents of all ages and we welcome the young families that are moving here. And there is even more good news to report, while our median age has decreased, our property values have increased, and that trend, according to Zillow, is expected to continue throughout the year.

Our homes are affordable, our housing stock is well-maintained, and my city administration prides itself on providing the highest quality of safety and public services. This event with area realtors is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the many recreation amenities, community events,

continued on page 4

Seven Hills Should Consider A City Manager Form Of Government

by Richard Dell'Aquila

Seven Hills city council is considering a charter amendment for the May ballot to expand the mayor's position to fulltime with a substantial salary increase and benefits package beginning in the next term on December 10, 2019. While I agree that the increasing complexities of serving as the city's CEO clearly demand a full time administrator, I have asked Council to instead ask the voters to convert to a city manager form of government, rather than to a full time mayor. Here are just a few of my reasons.

In the city manager form of city government, the council makes laws and policy decisions for the manager and directors to carry out. The city manager oversees the operation of the city and serves as the chief advisor to the city council. Every city employee answers to the city manager, so the manager has the right to hire and fire staff as appropriate and allowable by law.



Richard Dell'Aquila

Ultimately, the city manager is answerable to the council.

Council would be able to hire a non-political manager, with appropriate credentials and experience, to operate the city. This change would also promote ethical behavior by fostering professionalism, transparency, and accountability by separating politics from city management.

As their chief policy advisor, the city manager makes recommendations to council. If the manager is not responsive to council, they have the authority to terminate the manager at any time. Under

this proposal, the city could continue with a part time mayor as the ceremonial leader of the city and other functions, including a voice on Council.

Seven Hills has operated with very low expenses over the years, resulting in serious operational challenges. Many positions have been unfilled or reduced to part time or lowered salaries, impacting delivery of services. This includes having no Human Resources Director or Economic Development Director for years. These highly compensated unfilled positions and important functions could be merged into the city manager position. This would combine three directors' salaries into one much lower salary, saving money and increasing efficiency.

It is important to have competent professional full time administration to protect the city's fiscal stability, especially as Seven Hills continues to cut expenses. Although

continued on page 4

COMMUNITY NEWS

The President’s Corner

by Sean Brennan

Now that my wife and I are empty-nesters, we have been doing things together that we never had time for or just did not think about when the kids were home. As we enter the season of Lent, we are going to make it our goal to hit as many different fish fries in Parma as we can. So, this month I am going to give you a rundown of all that Parma has to offer regarding Lenten fish fries. As you can see, there is no need to leave town to keep this tradition going. Incidentally, if I leave any events out, please do not take offense – it was not intentional.

- American Legion Post 703**
(7667 York Road)
March 3 – April 14 (5:00 – 8:00 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, cabbage/noodles, mac and cheese
- St. Andrew Ukrainian Catholic**
(7700 Hoertz Road)
March 3 – April 7 (5:00 – 7:30 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, cabbage and noodles, potato pancakes, kid’s meal, carry-out




Sean Brennan,
Parma City Council President

- St. Anthony of Padua**
(6750 State Road)
March 3 – April 14 (4:00 – 7:00 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, senior special, kid’s meal (pizza and fries), carry-out
- St. Charles Borromeo**
(5891 Ridge Road)
March 3 – April 14 (4:00 – 7:00 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, fries, pizza, cabbage/noodles, pie, kid’s meal, senior

Kathryn Mabin Honored As Citizen Of The Month



Parma's own Kathryn Mabin was honored in the Parma City Council Chambers on February 6 as Citizen of the Month in recognition of her many contributions to the betterment of Parma over many years, including her work with the Parma Area Fine Arts Council and also the Polich Village Neighborhood.



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- St. Columbkille Elementary**
(6740 Broadview Road)
March 3 – April 7 (4:30 – 7:00 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, fries, cabbage/noodles, clam chowder, pizza, kid’s meal, carry-out
- Parma Elks**
1938 (2250 Snow Road)
March 3 – April 14 (4:30 – 7:00 pm)
Information was not available at the time of this printing. Visit www.parmaelks.com for details.

- St. Francis de Sales**
(3434 George Avenue)
March 3 – April 7 (4:30 – 7:30 pm)
All you can eat fish, pierogies, fries, cabbage/noodles, mac and cheese, carry-out, kid’s meal

- German Central Foundation**
(7863 York Road) March 3 – April 21 (4:30 – 7:30 pm)
Fish, shrimp, chicken fingers, fries, pierogies, senior and children specials, full service bar

- Holy Family Catholic**
(7367 York Road)
March 3 – April 7 (4:00 – 7:00 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, fries, mac and cheese, cabbage/noodles, pizza, entertainment, carry-out

- St. Josaphat Ukrainian Catholic**
(5720 State Road)
March 3 – April 7 (4:00 – 7:00 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, potato pan-

- cakes, cabbage/noodles, borscht, bakery, kid’s meals, carry-out

- St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox**
(5913 State Road)
March 3 – April 7 (4:30 – 7:30 pm)
Fish, shrimp, pierogies, mac and cheese, potato pancakes, clam chowder, kid’s meal, carry-out



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Grand Opening For
Vista Springs Greenbriar



On February 15 the Parma Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the Grand Opening of Vista Springs Greenbriar at 8668 Day Drive. Here Senior Executive Director Ron Elsner wields the scissors as he cuts the ribbon to signify the beginning of a long awaited opening of a significant living space in Parma.

Tri-C Western Campus Screens Film Showcasing Contributions Of Middle Eastern Immigrants

by John Horton

A Thousand and One Journeys: The Arab Americans, a documentary on the contributions of Middle Eastern immigrants to the United States, will be screened March 28 at the Western Campus of Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C). Filmmaker Abe Kasbo will attend the showing at the campus — located

at 11000 Pleasant Valley Road in Parma — and participate in question-and-answer sessions with the audience. The free event will be held from 1-3 p.m. Tuesday, March 28, in room 223 of the Health Careers and Sciences building on campus. The movie, released in 2015, tells the stories of immigrants from the Middle East, North Africa and

New President For UH Parma Medical Center To Start In March

by CJ Sheppard

University Hospitals has appointed Peter U. Bergmann, FACHE, as President of UH Parma Medical Center, effective March 6. A highly experienced health care executive, Bergmann has served as President and CEO of Sisters of Charity Hospital in Buffalo, N.Y., since 2006. His strategies and leadership at the two-campus Catholic teaching hospital have improved efficiency, enhanced patient safety and generated strong financial results. “Peter’s collaborative leadership style and relationship-building successes will benefit our patients as we continue to expand and align UH’s Westside service offerings,” said Richard A. Hanson, President, UH Community Hospitals and Ambulatory Network. “He and his team will



Peter Bergmann, the new president of UH Parma Medical Center.

advance the hospital’s role as a valued resource for Westside communities with a focus on physician recruitment, quality of care, patient experience, and employee and physician engagement.” A member of the American College of Healthcare Executives, Peter has been active on numerous professional association and community boards. He earned his bachelor’s degree in Business Administration/Health Planning and Management from Alfred University in Alfred, N.Y., and obtained a Master of Health Administration from Cornell University in Ithaca, N.Y.

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University Hospitals
Parma Medical Center

UHParma.org

7007 Powers Boulevard, Parma, Ohio 44129

TRI-CITY NEWS

Mayor Timothy J. DeGeeter Reveals Vision For Parma With State Of The City Address

continued from page 1

in Parma," DeGeeter said. "It's a source of strength for us – and a foundation upon which we can build."

In the speech, the mayor also touted the \$95 million redevelopment of The Shoppes at Parma and how it has become a cornerstone for the city's emerging "Town Center" concept – a vision incorporating, among other attractions, the nearby Cuyahoga County Public Library branch, University Hospitals Parma Medical Center, Anthony C. Zielinski Park, Byers Field, and the Day Drive Corridor. "When The Shoppes at Parma officially has its opening this summer, it'll mark the rebirth of a shopping center that could've been another in a long line of dead malls in Northeast Ohio," DeGeeter said. "Instead, it's a natural cornerstone for our Town Center." Parma's new splash pad – scheduled to open Memorial Day weekend in Anthony C. Zielinski Park – also is part of the vision in not only attracting visitors to the town center area, but to give residents another family-friendly option for recreational activities in the city. DeGeeter described the construction of the splash pad as "one of the biggest projects" the city has "taken on in years." "You only have drive down Ridgewood to the see the amount of construction work that has been done to get it ready," he said.

DeGeeter in his remarks also touted the recreational opportunities that could result from the city's collaboration with the West Creek Conservancy to acquire, preserve, and repurpose 80 acres of property at Parmadale. "It would be the most significant under-

taking in 20 years since the reservation's creation," he said. "The project would increase the park's size to more than 500 acres, and add an exciting dynamic to West Creek as it will integrate natural resource preservation, habitat restoration, and recreation activities – all in the heart of Parma."

In his address, DeGeeter also highlighted Parma's commitment to public safety as a crucial factor in the community's quality of life. "Our officers truly believe in community policing," he said. "The creation of the first bike patrol in the police department's history underscores that commitment." The bike patrol will launch after the beginning of May and will focus on business districts throughout the city, DeGeeter said.

Showcasing Parma Heights

continued from page 1

organizations and cultural opportunities in the Greenbrier Commons. Since becoming Mayor, one of the top priorities of my administration has been to provide various interesting recreation programs for residents of all ages, particularly for families with children. Our first "Kids in the Commons" event last summer was a huge success and we are already looking forward to this year's activities.

Our connectivity to the Cleveland Metroparks and the fact that every resident is within easy walking distance of a neighborhood park is a great selling/buying feature for area realtors. The National Association of Realtors Winter 2017 issue of their quarterly magazine On Common Ground head-

Seven Hills Should Consider A City Manager Form Of Government

continued from page 1

large tax increases were passed last November, these will only be a short term answer, especially if the voters fail to renew the refuse levy next year and the city falls back again. This is also why council's idea to borrow \$3 Million this year is so risky.

After several years of cutting large losses at the Recreation Center and even making a small profit in 2015, it lost money again in 2016. One of the Rockside Road projects touted last year as bringing new tax dollars to the city (but proceeding so far without a signed development agreement to more fully control the developer's plans) now appears to be smaller than advertised back then. The city manager form of government can more effectively meet issues like these and deliver more

beneficial results for the city by emphasizing professionalism, qualifications and performance, rather than politics. And the pool of possible candidates for the position is not limited to residents.

Moreover, this form of government encourages better communication between the residents and city government policy makers. It provides the wards and neighborhoods with a greater opportunity to influence policy. The influence of outside special interest groups, vendors, developers, and contractors is reduced so that all interests can be equally considered and not just those that are well funded.

The proposed charter amendment to make the mayor full time with an increased salary was brought up in council with little advance deliberation. It represents a very complex major change to the way Seven Hills operates since it was founded. Any change will affect the city for decades into the future and it deserves more careful thought than it has been given to date, along with fully considering other alternatives like the city manager form of government.

lined a story about the market demand for "Walkable Neighborhoods" stating that "If a place is more walkable, people will spend more money locally." This is exactly what we are implementing step-by-step, with a variety of funding sources, as a part of our updated Master Plan. You may have seen the new ADA ramps constructed and paid for with block grant dollars, making Pearl Road more pedestrian and bike/stroller friendly. As we continue to implement the Master Plan's recommendations, we will be planting the seeds of economic development along the Pearl Road Corridor which will grow and flourish for years to come with endless possibilities. This will undoubtedly increase the quality of life for our residents and spur a continuing increase in home ownership and property values.

For young families, quality education is a key component in every home search. We are proud of the Parma City School District schools within our border, Parma Park Elementary and Valley Forge High School, as well as with the partnerships we have developed with

the STEM program at Pleasant Valley Elementary and art program at Greenbrier Middle School. Additionally, there are two charter schools, Pearl Road Constellation and Invictus High School, and two private schools, Incarnate Word Academy and Holy Name High School, located here. We also want prospective residents to know that we are home to a diverse religious population with five different denomination churches serving thousands of residents with ministry services.

Parma Heights is a four-square-mile First Suburb. We are a small community in a big city location with 20,000 residents living on tree-lined streets in neighborhoods where residents really care about one another; and that's what we want people to know when they consider purchasing a home in Parma Heights.

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Polaris Cuyahoga County Career Fair

by Kathy Augustine

Cuyahoga Job and Family Services and Polaris Career Center will be hosting the 2017 Polaris/Cuyahoga County Career Fair, at Polaris Career Center at 7285 Old Oak Blvd in Middleburg Hts, Ohio, 44130, on Wednesday, March 29, 2017, from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

This free event, designed to foster the development of a competitive and productive workforce, will provide a vital link between employers, job seekers, community organizations and government agencies. The 2017 Career Fair will have 75 companies and approximately 600 job seekers. In addition, representatives from Polaris, and

local community based organizations will be on-hand, providing access to educational resources, job search assistance and much more.


The Career Fair is a collaborative effort between Cuyahoga Job and Family Services, Polaris Career Center, Middleburg Hts Chamber of Commerce, City of Middleburg Hts, Berea City School District, North Olmsted School District, City of Strongsville, City of Berea, Lakewood Area Collaborative, Ohio Means Jobs/Cleveland-Cuyahoga and WIRE-Net.

For information <http://www.cjfs.cuyahogacounty.us/>. For additional information visit www.polaris.edu.


EDUCATION

ASSET CORNER

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What All Kids Need to Succeed 40 Developmental Assets



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

Asset Corner #87

by Gene Lovasy

SHOW KIDS YOU CARE: TELL THEM HOW MUCH YOU LIKE BEING WITH THEM.

March's Asset Category: SOCIAL COMPETENCIES.

Learning social skills is a lot like learning to play the piano in that you need to learn some basic competencies and you need someone to teach you those skills. You need time to practice, guidance as you gain experience, and feedback along the way. Social competencies are the skills and life perspectives young people need to develop into healthy, competent adults. These skills are important daily, but they're even more crucial when young people encounter the tough times in life. Young people who can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations are more likely to avoid risky behaviors and focus on positive attitudes.

This month's column will focus on Asset #35 – Resistance Skills:

The art of resistance and reasoning

Learning resistance is one of the most important social skills to develop. This skill gives young people the confidence to say "no" to people or situations that make them uncomfortable. Learning to assert themselves also helps young people make their voices heard and express opinions. With these skills in hand young people make appropriate decisions and stand firm in what they believe.

Here are the facts

Research shows that young people who can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations are more likely to avoid risky behaviors and focus on positive attitudes. About 41 percent of young people, ages 11–18, say they can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations, according to Search Institute surveys. Speaking up for themselves takes practice, but with your help, young people can learn to take a stand.

Tips for building this asset

Teach young people resistance skills, but also teach them the values that support why they would take a stand on an issue. Having many conversations with

a teenager about drug use, sex, safety, and personal boundaries increases the chance he or she will make a safe choice when, for example, asked to ride in a car with a driver who has been drinking.

Also try this

In your home and family: Model and role-play resistance skills, specifying what to say or not say. Talk with your child about what was easy and what was difficult. Focus not only on how to resist, but also on what to say "yes" to.

In your neighborhood and community: Offer a safety net to the young people you know. Let them know they can call you if they feel pressured or tempted to do something unsafe or unhealthy.

In your school or youth program: Learn about people in the world who stood up for their values and resisted what everyone else was doing (such as Rosa Parks and Gandhi). Discuss why they were able to do so.

ASSET RELATED NEWS

Congratulations to the teams from Normandy & Valley Forge High Schools for their exemplary efforts representing the District on recent episodes of Academic Challenge. Both teams of 3 students each did a great job and should be proud of themselves, as should the community at large.

It's not too early for our youth to start looking into summer employment. One of the benefits of our Collab & MyCom initiatives is their connection to Youth Opportunities Unlimited (Y.O.U.). The organization has once again received funding to help match youngsters between the ages of 14 - 24 to meaningful summer work experiences. Visit www.youthopportunities.org for details and/or to register. If you're an employer and would like to support/participate in the program, visit the site & click on the "Employer" link for information. Focus on the Future Action Teams successfully completed their immediate charge & reported their short-term recommendations at the BOE meeting on Tuesday Feb 21st. In all cases, the recommendations were well thought out, focused & have the potential for dramatic & positive

impact on the District's future.

"Focus on the Future" Action Teams are: Athletics & Extra Curricular Activities Community Engagement, Finances, Technology, Facilities Usage & District Operations, Curriculum & Instruction, Restoring Trust in the DistrictAction team recommendations should be available here <http://www.parmacityschools.org/future>.

In addition to preparing for Youth Advocacy Day on March 30, the MyCom Tri-City Youth Planning Steering Committee is looking into ways to a) improve & expedite communications among its members, b) improve the distribution of youth surveys, c) develop a Tri-City Youth Council, d) address transportation challenges youth experience, etc. Watch for details of the first quarterly meeting open to the community at large, scheduled for March 23rd at the Collab (Hanna Elementary) where progress will be shared and input solicited.

The Collab's (at Hanna Elem on Snow & Chevy Blvd) next Mobile Food Pantry will take place on Thursday, March 9th. Help is needed in the morning (9:00 am) to unload & set-up, and again in the afternoon (2:00 pm) for distribution. During their afternoon distribution UH/Parma Medical Center, Community Health Nurses will be offering free blood pressure screenings. Contact Kira Karabanovs, Dir. of Family & Community Engagement if you have any questions or for details on how you can get involved. Email: karabanovsk@parmacityschools.org; ph: 440.842.7022.

Pass the word that, free tax preparation for low & moderate income families will again be available at the Collab, by appointment only, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm every Wednesday, from January 25th to April 13th. Call 211 for an appointment and/or go here www.refundohio.org for more details, to make an appointment online, or if you'd like, learn how you can become a tax prep

volunteer.

Coming soon to the Parma Hts. Branch Library (440.884.2313):

- > Party with the Pigeon: For ages 2-8 with a caregiver. Join us for some hilarious stories, hands-on activities, and fun crafts celebrating the characters of author Mo Willems. Registration is required. Location: Parma Heights Library, Monday, 3/6 at 6:30 p.m. <https://tinyurl.com/jrt4o97>
- > Reader Boost Camp: This 4-week program is for parents and children in grades 1-3 who are struggling with their reading skills. While parents meet with a Learning Specialist, a librarian does fun reading-based activities with the kids. Then, families participate in activities together. Space is limited. Registration is required. Location Parma Heights Library, Thursdays 3/16, 3/23, 3/30 and 4/6, 6:30 p.m-7:30 p.m. <https://tinyurl.com/hhxmm9w>

If you have or know a student in the 6th through 12th grade and he/she likes to read & bake then encourage them to enter the Library's Bake-a-Book contest. Registration closes April 14, 2017. Judging will be held April 22nd in the Parma-Snow Branch Auditorium. Go to www.cuyahogalibrary.org/cake for official contest rules and/or to register.

Individuals w/disabilities, their parents, caregivers and any interested families are invited to attend the first meeting of Partners for Community Connections, a new parent network supporting individuals w/disabilities and their families – www.facebook.com/disabilityconnect/. Contact Erin Hinkel at erin.hinkel@yahoo.com to register for the meeting taking place on Monday, March 13th, from 10:00 am to Noon at the Maple Hts. Library, 5225 Library Ln, Cleveland 44137.

Take advantage of this really fun and unique opportunity Camp Cheerful (located in Strongsville) will again offer their homeschool horseback riding classes this Spring!! The classes are held on Monday mornings at 10:30 - with one exception....April 10th there will be both a 10:30 and an 11:30 class.

The Spring Dates are as follows: March 13th 10:30 April 10th 10:30 AND 11:30 May 8th 10:30 May 22nd 10:30.

Here are the basic details: classes are for typically developing (i. e. no disabilities or health issues) children ages 4 - 18. Each class costs \$25 and includes a half hour of riding and a half hour of a



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Sunday- Open Mic Night-Patio

INSPIRATION

I Believe

by Daniel Taddeo

Be a good listener because God may speak to us through the mouths of others. Fix things; relate to people. Focus on the here and now rather than the there and then. “I know how you feel” statements are better left unsaid. It is better to ask, “How do you feel?” God’s conditional promise: If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land.

God’s presence comforts. It means that wherever we are, in whatever situation, we are not alone. Hurting people need caregivers who will match their moods to a certain extent rejoice when they rejoice and mourn when they mourn. It is a good thing when God’s Word fills our fuel tank. Look around to see what violating God’s law is doing to humanity. Make constructive use of “times-in-waiting” by focusing on the positive rather than the negative aspects; turn them into character-building opportunities. Never overlook the smallest blessings, because our biggest blessings are often composed of many small ones.

No one yet has succeeded in cross-

ing the bridge before he or she has come to it. Often without our knowledge, we compliment each other’s lives. Would it not be a good idea to relate this to one another? One’s presence communicates to others, more than anything else, that he or she is valued and loved. Talking less and listening more leads the way in caring for others.

The life of genuine wisdom is a life founded on the fear (reverence) of God and supported by seven mighty pillars: purity, peacefulness, gentleness, reasonableness, helpfulness, humility, and sincerity. The very best gift we can offer a suffering person is a heart full of understanding, eyes filled with tears, and ears ready to listen. We should not sell ourselves short. Though we might not gain proof of our value, we are of greater value than what many people think of themselves. With God in our lives we can do the impossible, reach the unreachable, and bear the unbearable. Worry is the most unproductive of all human activities; we can greatly benefit from minimizing it in our lives.

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?

The Magic Of Music

by Lizabeth Braskie

There are a few tasks around the house that seem to get pushed into the chasm of “maybe I’ll tackle it tomorrow.” Even well-intentioned lists go into the basket of “..if I have time.” Such is my repulse of shredding old copies of paid bills, letters, documents and other saved paperwork that I probably will never need reference to find. The task sits idly in my conscious knowledge that the unnecessary stock piles of paper need to be trashed. So today, I vowed to tackle this dreaded removal of clutter and lessen the useless proof of yesterday’s importance.

I positioned the shredder for easy access. Then I arranged my record player to let the soothing, vintage songs of Nat King Cole, Jerry Vale, Dean Martin and others comfort my spirit and camouflage my work in progress. I opened the overbearing file drawer, grabbed a handful of old documents from the back of the stack and sat down to work. The task involved going through several files at a time and accumulating a pile of discards to eventually run through the hungry shredder. The usually perfect and dreamy recorded songs washed over me and were a distraction from the job at hand. After a few long playing records eased my comfort zone, the shredder had its chance to eat a hearty meal. By repeating this regimen over and over, the first file drawer shrunk to half its size, thanks to the melodies that filled the air.

Doctors and dentists use this method of diversion in their waiting rooms to calm patients and obscure notice of time slipping away. In today’s busy world we are offered musical devices to enhance our workload and earphones to enjoy the miles we might

walk every day. I know some family members whose radio plays music in the garage when a car needs repair or a broken item needs fixing. Teenagers have wide access to various methods of listening devices to hear the latest in musical hits. Outside activity might require ear buds to make light of mowing the lawn or weeding the flowers. Cooks in the kitchen can hum along with taped recordings of favorite choices to enhance their tireless work. Music soothes the blues and brings smiles to hospital rooms and shares space with some who live alone. Who can resist tapping their toes to the sound of a marching band, sing softly to a sleepy baby or bow in reverence to church music? The magic of music can soothe heartache to some, bring tears of joy to others and share time dreaming the day away. Silly tunes can cheer up a sick child or get the party going when a group needs to interact. Good times elicit fun melodies and most couples have a special song with a unique meaning meant for them alone.

Besides many individual ways to enjoy music and absorb the magic, I find that specially selected songs on tape enhance my miles of driving and create a relaxing distraction of time. But at home, I have quite an assortment of long playing records. They remind me of years gone by and school dances that bring sparks and deep, precious memories to my smiling face. Even now, I enjoy those songs of yesterday and reward myself with time well spent listening to history. So, excuse me now, I believe I have earned a reward of sorts for finishing my dubious paper-shredding chore of the day. I’m celebrating a job well done by listening to some of my favorite Bee Gees, Eddy Arnold and Barry Manilow albums.

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PERSPECTIVE

What Made America Great, And Could Make It Great Again

by Lee Kamps

I have been reading an excellent book, *Once in a Great City* by David Mariniss. This book tells about Detroit during the time period from the autumn of 1962 through the spring of 1964. This was a time when the auto industry was booming and Detroit was selling more cars than ever. It was also a period when Motown was beginning to take the music of Detroit out to the world. With good wages, strong labor unions and plenty of good jobs, the working men and women of Detroit enjoyed a higher standard of living.

It was also a period in time when

city and state political leaders from both parties, labor leaders, business leaders and leaders of the religious community all came together to show support for Martin Luther King Jr and civil rights. They cooperated to stage the largest march for civil rights that had been seen in the nation on June 23 1963. That march went off without any violence and following the march Martin Luther King Jr gave his famous "I Have a Dream" speech at Cobo Hall, the same speech that he made famous at a larger gathering two months later in Washington DC.

Also during the early 1960s, the

nation's space program was providing thrilling news about manned space flights and there was no doubt that the United States would fulfill President Kennedy's pledge to put a man on the moon by the end of the decade. It was a period of optimism where Americans felt that there was nothing that this nation couldn't accomplish.

This story of Detroit could well have also been the story of Cleveland since Cleveland's economy and demographics then were very similar to Detroit's on a smaller scale.

I grew up in Parma during that period in time of the 1950s and 1960s and I remember this period of time very well. During that period in time Parma was one of the fastest growing cities in the country. But what made America great back then?

Like just about every family on my block in Parma, my father bought our house using a "G.I. Mortgage" that was made available with no down payments and low interest rates to veterans of the Second World War. My father worked in the post office when he bought that house. But he used the G.I. Bill to study marketing at Western Reserve University and left the post office for white collar jobs in marketing and advertising. His two brothers, who also bought houses in Parma, used the G.I. Bill to attend college and became lawyers. Two uncles on my mother's side used the G.I. Bill to become engineers. The G.I. Bill literally built Parma and Parma Heights.

But not every returning veteran went to college. Most fathers on my block worked in the auto plants, steel mills and other manufacturing plants in the area. But thanks to strong labor unions, they had secure jobs that paid wages good enough for those fathers to buy a house in the suburbs and to send their children to college.

When I graduated from Valley Forge High School in 1966, over half of my graduating class went to college. For many, they were the first in their

families to go to college. Back then attending college was very affordable for middle income families, thanks to low cost state supported universities. When I graduated from college in 1970, I was debt free like about 80% of my college class.

But what has happened since then? Back in the 1970s, the state of Ohio provided 80% of the operating expenses of Kent State University as well as the other state supported universities in Ohio. Now that state support provides less than 20% of the operating expenses of Kent State University as well as the other state universities in Ohio. The difference is made up by increased tuition and donations. As a result, almost 80% of current college graduates at Ohio's state universities graduate with large student loan debts that have to be repaid.

Today, labor union membership in the private sector is a fraction of what it was back in the 1960s. Those well paying jobs in the auto plants, steel mills and other manufacturing plants are mostly gone. A steel mill where I spent a summer working back in 1968 was torn down in 2003 and standing in its place is a shopping center anchored by a Super Wal Mart. But how many of those jobs at that shopping center pay the kind of wages people working at that steel mill earned?

Back in the 1960s, the top marginal income tax rate for the wealthy was at 90% of income.. Today the top marginal income tax rate for the wealthiest is at 35% and Republicans in congress had a hissy fit when President Obama suggested increasing it to 39%.

Perhaps if the United States government adopted some of the government policies that built and made for a strong middle class while encouraging more income equality with less concentration of wealth; we could make America great again. I'm not holding my breath waiting for the current cast of clowns in Washington DC to do that.

Food

by Leo Lampeter

At present we have over three hundred million people, and growing, living in the United States. Not that long ago it seemed like two hundred million people were more than the planet could support with food. Ralph Nader wrote a book about population growth called *Zero Population Growth* concerning the expanding population. It is simply wonderful how the agricultural and scientific communities have combined to increase the food supply. With a little manipulation of genes and introduction of a chromosome here or there it is overwhelming as to how the scientific community created answers where once there was only concern. Production per acre compared to only a few decades ago is unimaginable, not only to the layman but to the farmer as well. Nothing is all good or all bad. Is there a cost to the increased production of food, remembering that it is done with gene manipulation? Up to this point there is no published research to indicate that there is any harm in the genetically modified produce. But then look at cigarettes and the amount of time it took to publish cigarettes' harmful effects. This is information that the tobacco industry was aware of and buried. They attempted to protect their income and not the people who used their product. If their information had been released to the public it would have affected the sales of tobacco. Could a similar scenario be in play with the food we consume? The unscientific observation that brings this question to mind is of how many people are adversely affected by what is produced on most farms. One

of these is the peanut allergy. Not that long ago it didn't seem as though there were many people allergic to anything. It was unusual to have allergies before G.M.O.s. And let us not forget the steroids and antibiotics that are injected into livestock. Today it seems that wherever you go you see warnings about peanut exposure. There are those who, if they are in the same room with anything made from peanuts, have a reaction.

The other allergy that comes to mind is Celiac disease, basically, a reaction to grain products. Those who have this allergy resort to gluten-free foods. Being Lactose intolerant is nothing new. There are pages of additives that the F.D.A. approves for food. About one-tenth of the way through the count of forty, the counting was discontinued. The authorities keep bombarding us with messages of eating healthy, but how can one follow these directives with the numerous additives in food? Notation was made that Europeans are healthier than Americans. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that Europeans don't have additives in their diet unless the food comes from the United States. Their diet is said to be the answer to their health. It seems that the content of the food would be closer to the answer. The question begs, why would something be placed on the market if it hadn't been screened for safety? The food chain may also be affected. Could it be that business is more concerned for themselves than the safety of the consumer? What a sad commentary on society that the financial gain of a few be the only measure of marketing a product.



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OBSERVER

Spin, Innuedo, Half-Truths And Lies

by Corbin Luna

Last month Lee Kamps had a piece in the Observer in which he said, "Perhaps the people we have sent to Washington DC and to Columbus should realize that ... no matter how hard they try, no one can stop the march of progress."

The whole piece is based on a false premise, actually two. The first has to do with progress. To stop progress there has to be progress and and what he calls progress isn't. For example, he cited the ACA. But the ACA only benefited a few people, while hurting about 99% of the people in this country, including many of the people who gained coverage under the ACA. (The specifics are in last month's Observer and on the Observer web site in my piece titled Enough is Enough.) Liberal elites like to look at the few people who benefited and tell us how much progress THEY made in health care. Rational people understand that it is not progress when the overwhelming majority of people suffered due what THEY did.

Mister Kamps spent most of his piece talking about how bad this country's period of isolationism was. He said we are part of a global economy and

that "The United States cannot suddenly break international agreements and treaties because of a change in administration" and he concluded that putting America first would "prevent progress." Not only is that nonsense, it is the second false premise because putting America first has nothing to do with isolationism.

Isolationism refers to the belief that a nation should stay out of political and military disputes of other nations. It does not mean that a country shouldn't have economic or other ties to other nations, and during this countries period of isolationism our economy grew globally.

An example of isolationism is President Obama's refusal to enforce his infamous "red line" in Syria. But whether that was good or bad is arguable. Feel free to pick your side. What is not arguable is that President Trump's America First policy has absolutely nothing to do with isolationism. It just means that agreements with other countries should benefit this country at least as much as, if not more than, other countries.

There are two reasons why agreements can and should be broken. The first is that the agreement is not what

the people of this country wanted and, therefore, the peoples' representatives were bypassed. Agreements are done by Congress. The Constitution gives the President the right to negotiate treaties, but NOT without approval from the Senate. There are ways a President can act on his own, but if he does it can be rescinded by the next President and I certainly wouldn't call it progress. It's exactly why this country fought the Revolutionary War and made the Constitution our governing law. We didn't want a dictator then and don't now. If the people wanted a particular agreement, their elected representatives would vote for it and there would be no reason for the President to bypass Congress.

The second reason is that circumstances change and/or the agreement has an adverse effect. After all, if nothing ever changed, the liberal elite would still believe the world is flat and they could just push anyone who doesn't agree with them off the edge.

NAFTA is a great example of the second reason. It was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President. At the time, most people believed it would be good for all the countries involved. Now we know

better. According to a study commissioned by the AFL/CIO, NAFTA has been responsible for the loss of 700,000 jobs in this country (including about 35,000 in Ohio) and it increased our trade deficit by \$50 billion. I'm all for free trade in North America, or anywhere else, but if the interests of the United States were put first in NAFTA, it would not have been detrimental to American workers.

Every treaty or agreement that is done correctly has a clause that states the conditions under which it can be changed. NAFTA simply states that any country can pull out of it with six month's notice. Since pulling out would hurt the other countries more than us, the best option for American workers is to give notice to pull out, which would bring the other countries to the table to renegotiate to put American workers on a level playing field. And that's exactly what should be done regardless of how much the liberal elite whine about it being wrong. It's like almost everything we hear from the liberal elite today. It's all just broad strokes designed to gain political advantage with no basis in fact. It's all just spin, innuendo, half-truths and lies.

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SENIOR LIVING

Royalton Royalty

by Kathleen Williams

At Royalton Woods’ Annual Valentine’s Day Party on February 14, 2017, Milton Jennrich and Hattie Gray were crowned King and Queen of Hearts, as voted by our residents and staff. Hattie and Milton were both surprised to receive the news of their victory at the polls. While Hattie couldn’t thank everyone enough, Milton simply welcomed the opportunity to serve with “his beautiful queen” with a quick kiss. Both would like to thank the residents

and staff for the kindness and thoughtfulness shown to them. Milton, a WWII Army Veteran, and Hattie, a soon-to-be centurion, love living at Royalton Woods. Aside from the wonderful parties and musical entertainers they love so dearly, they “are honored to share their lives with such wonderful people” and look forward to “all the fun we have.” Congratulations, Hattie and Milton! We know you will serve Royalton Woods admirably in 2017!



Milton Jennrich and Hattie Gray

Dating In Our Golden Years

by Susan Banks - Yurik

“How about a dinner date?” His eyes twinkling and filled with hope that I would accept his invitation. This was to be my first date with someone other than my late husband in over forty years.

After the loss of a spouse or loved one, many of us feel like war veterans with post traumatic stress disorder. How does one reemerge into society especially in the latter decades of life. Perhaps, dating is not that easy regardless of age or gender.



My best friend, a widow in her mid-sixties, dove into the online dating pool. She connected with a man 72 years young, a Christian, non-smoker, and non-drinker, meeting all her criteria for a potential date. They met in person at a nearby café safely occupied by many of the neighborhood locals.

Plans were made for an evening of fine dining. Perhaps he would bring her flowers? Do men of today still bring flowers, she wondered. She pictured him in her mind's eye dressed in fine linen pants, crisp shirt, suit jacket, polished shoes and a bouquet of beautiful flowers to present to her. She wore her newest outfit to impress him on what would be her first official dinner date in over five years, since the passing of her husband.

He arrived in wrinkled long shorts, muddy tennis shoes, and the flowers? There they were on the pattern of his 1950's outdated Hawaiian shirt. He had been a widower for some years with no wife to advise him about his choice of clothing. Perhaps she could excuse his attire, after all, she recalled having to correct her late husband's many choices of what to wear at one time or another. In spite of his attire, the evening went quite well.

Rather than have dessert served table side, she heard her words lyrically float across the table, “I baked a very good coffee cake and I have a special roast coffee. Would you like to stop over for dessert?” A part of her psyche was wishing he would decline her offer. To his great delight he said, “I accept!!”

How and where do women and men of age, widowed, single, begin life again in their golden years? There are those who would say, “You are still young and attractive, perhaps you will meet someone and marry again.” From your mouth to God's ears. I, being a realist, have to consider the seventh decade of my life is rapidly approaching. Am I too old? How old is too old? So many questions, doubts, and fears surface along with an eagerness to simply get on with living life.

No one desires to grow old alone. Statistics indicate individuals who are in a relationship, couples, live longer than those who live alone. I want to live longer, don't you? Today's senior women and men, many of whom have a plethora of life experiences, find themselves asking these very questions. We are like fish out of water.

My friend arrived home just a few minutes ahead of her date. As she reached for the coffee cup, there in the doorway stood her invited guest. A flood of emotions consumed her from out of nowhere. This was the first man to enter in what was always considered as her husband's castle. She thought herself momentarily crazy. Crazy or not, with accurate certainty she knew this man could not stay. This was the night she planned to move on with her life, to be in the company of a male guest. However, her emotions had a completely different agenda. Grief has it's own agenda.

“You will have to leave now. Something from dinner just isn't sitting right.” He mentioned that her color was quickly draining from her face. “I think it's probably best we call it a night. Good night then.”

Moving on isn't always easy. Indeed, his visit was over even before she could have guessed. First baby steps are always a little shaky, sometimes as unstable as a drunken sailor attempting to walk. It is also said that the universe brings people into our lives for reasons we do not always understand. Lessons for us to yet learn. Perhaps.

Live life, do not merely exist. Embrace the unknown with great expectation. There will be days you will wish to forge ahead. There will be days you will prefer to sit in the solitude of your dwelling and speak with no one. According to the experts, these steps are necessary and quite normal.

My dinner date has arrived. I look forward to being in the company of a nice gentleman, to enjoy good conversation, and a scrumptious meal. Oh, did I mention, dessert will be served table side! Bon Appétit!

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PARMA ART SCENE

55th Anniversary For PAFAC

by Kathryn Mabin

The Parma Area Fine Arts Council (PAFAC) is celebrating its 55th anniversary this year. Their mission is to bring art to the community for the enrichment and enjoyment of the residents by providing affordable classes, art education, entertainment and special events.

Founder, Betty Woodworth Clark was a long time member of the Ohio Watercolor Society. Her work is held in many collections, including the Canton Art Institute, and Massillon Museum. Locally her work hangs at the PSE Credit Union in Parma and Middleburg Heights Library. She earned her bachelors and masters degrees in art at Otterbein College and Ohio University. She taught art for 44 years in Euclid City Schools, the Cleveland Museum of Art and various other programs, including at Parma Area Fine Arts Council, before retiring and moving to Westerville, Ohio in 1993. Two of her painting were published in Watercolor Magazine. She dedicated her life to the arts and passed away in 2007. Betty and her husband Tom worked diligently to grow the Fine Arts Council. She is best remembered for her watercolors, and Tom for photography.

In 1962 PAFAC was incorporated as a nonprofit by the State Of Ohio, and served as the umbrella organization for 23 affiliates in and around Parma. In 1963 Parmatown officials gave PAFAC a small space and the first artist exhibitor was August F. Biehle. PAFAC later rented a larger space which housed Center Gallery, and room space to hold classes. The first exhibit at Center Gallery showcased the work of Marc Moon and Kinley Shogren. After 18 years PAFAC lost their lease. They were rescued by Kate Petruska, wife of Mayor Petruska. Through her efforts PAFAC was relocated to Parkview School.

While PAFAC was located at Parkview, they offered classes through CETA funding. CETA, Comprehensive Employment and Training Act/Neighborhood Arts Program, employed artists, musicians, poets and gardeners to work in schools and community

centers to add value to their communities, by using federal dollars at the state and local levels. This program trained unemployed creative people and provided musical programs, visual arts and dance programs to the community.

PAFAC moved to Pleasant Valley Jr High for a period and later to a building behind City Hall which was a much smaller space and limited their ability to hold classes. Under the auspices of Mayor Boldt, PAFAC moved into the renovated Schaaf Community Center. When Schaaf was sold they moved to their current location within the Donna Smallwood Activities Center.

In its heyday, in addition to the gallery shows, they held art festivals where The Parma Symphony and The Messiah Chorale preformed. Rent-A-Painting was a popular fundraiser, where people rented a painting with the option to buy. Party In The Park held at Ridgewood Lakes Park showcased both arts and crafts. Many scholarships were provided to the five area high schools over the years for graduates interested in pursuing a career in art. Fashion shows, luncheons, potlucks, and dinners were popular. PAFAC also created an 8 page monthly newsletter which included art, poetry, and listed current events. At one time, they boasted



Center Gallery - Parma Area Fine Arts Council 1976

a mailing list of 500 members.

Many prominent local and nationally known artists were members and instructors, such as Fred Leach, Robert Laessig, James Seward, Clarence Perkins, Windsor Chen, Ruth Benson, Ann Fassinger, Helen Lubinski, Jo Greenwald, Doug Pasek, Cheryl Fetko, Mitzi Lai, Marco Vaccher, Bob Backston, Ann Marie Pribish, Gus Volas, and John Kua.

Today, PAFAC has three affiliate organizations, Great Lakes Wood Carvers, High On Dolls, and Common Thread Quilters. They continue

to offer beginner friendly, very affordable, low cost classes for adults and children at the Smallwood Center. Over the last few years they have partnered with Polish Village and the City of Parma on community events which benefit families and youth. They continue to make art accessible by offering free admission to their art shows.

For more information on Parma Area Fine Arts Council, or if you are interested in becoming involved, check out their web site, www.parmafinearts.org, or follow them on Facebook.

FLAMINGO FEVER – CALL FOR ARTISTS

by Kathryn Mabin

2017 is the 60th Birthday of the Pink Plastic Flamingo! Capistrano has Swallows. Hinkley has Buzzards. Parma has Pink Flamingos!

Don Featherstone designed the famous Pink Plastic Flamingo lawn ornament in 1957 for the Massachusetts plastic company, Union Products. The initial cost for a pair in 1957 was \$2.76. During the 1960's and 70's Parma was the target of jabs by local TV hosts, Ghouardi, Big Chuck & Little John and The Ghoul, who focused on Parma residents love of white socks, pink flamingo lawn ornaments, chrome balls, kielbasa, pierogi, and polkas. Mention Pink Flamingos to a Parma Born Baby



Lovely Marie Antoinette Flamingo

Boomer and they immediately relate it to Parma.

In 2013 Parma's Polish Village hosted the first ever public art event in Parma, called Flamingo Fever. So what is Flamingo Fever? Artistic minded individuals apply their talents to create

table top sculptures in various styles, using the pink plastic flamingo as a base for their designs. The one of a kind flamingos are as unique as the individuals that create them. Some are painted, others are dressed in costumes, some are humorous, others are beautiful. The flamingos are placed on display in local businesses over the summer, and the festivities culminate in an auction in the fall. It is a family oriented fun filled community event. Net proceeds benefit other Polish Village community events throughout the year.

So join in on the fun and create your own pink flamingo. You'll be glad you did. For more information, or for an application to create your own flamingo email kathrynmabin@att.net, or call 440-843-6474 and leave a message.

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Kim Stearns, MD
Orest Stecyk, MD
Eva Szathmary, MD
Donald Thaler, DDS
Arthur Ulatowski, MD



At Legacy Health Services, we are committed to improving the quality of life for those entrusted to our care. Physicians play a vital role as we work towards fulfilling this mission.

On Doctors' Day, join us in expressing appreciation to the physicians that serve on our medical staff at Pleasant Lake Villa.



Five Star Overall Rating

by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

For more information, or to schedule a tour,
call **440-842-2273**



Pleasant Lake Villa

Part of the Legacy Health Services Family

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