

“What the new year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the new year” - Vern McLellan

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PCSD Board Of Education Approves Master Plan

by Charles Smialek

The GPD Group, a national architectural firm with local offices in Cleveland and Akron, recently presented their recommendation for Strategic Consolidation of the Parma City School District.

Through two phases of construction, the master plan will replace 15 currently operating schools with nine new campuses. The phases will develop in this order:

Phase One (Secondary):

Construct middle (grades 6-8) and high schools (grades 9-12) on the current Normandy and Valley Forge campuses.

Repurpose Parma Senior High School to become the home of central office, Opportunity Center for Students with Autism, Parma Schools Alumni Museum, Culinary and Cosmetology Career and Technical Education programs, and community assets including a pool, gymnasiums, and theaters.

Close Greenbriar and Shiloh Middle Schools, pre-

serving this land for potential elementary campus sites.

Repurpose Hillside as an Elementary School and site of future elementary school.

Phase Two (Elementary):

Construct six campuses (grades K-5).

Three campuses will compose the East Cluster, and three will compose the West Cluster.

One campus will be located in Parma Heights, one in Seven Hills, and four in Parma.

Actual location of campuses will be determined when the Board receives state contribution.

Two campuses in each cluster will also feature a Pre-Kindergarten program.

GPD worked with the senior-level administrators from the Parma City Schools to host 24 community input sessions during the 2019 calendar year. Further, the school district invited the public to eight different tours of new campuses throughout the Northeast Ohio region to help residents and staff

members envision the possibilities of new construction. Approximately 900 residents and staff members attended the Consolidation meetings or participated in the online survey.

“This is really a community plan,” explained Mark Salopek, GPD’s Director of Education. “We’ve rarely seen such an effort to engage residents over such a long time period. We’re hoping this results in a high level of support for construction and consolidation.”

The estimated cost of Phase One is \$263 million, which converts to a projected 6.12 mill bond issue, which the district intends to place on the November 2020 ballot. The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) will pay for 34% of the construction of the co-funded segments of Phase One, a credit the district will then apply to the cost of Phase Two.

“We believe we have really gone about this the right way,” explained PCSD Board of Education president John Schweitzer. “This plan is not a knee-jerk reaction to a difficult set of circumstances. It is a well-developed, well-researched plan that represents the input we received from almost 900 participants in our surveys and focus groups. We think that the secondary campuses can become pillars of the community as we work with our partners to truly develop 18-hour campuses.”

At the December 19, 2019 PCSD Board of Education meeting, the Board unanimously approved Resolution 2019-12-527, “Authorization to Accept Superintendent’s Master Plan Proposal.” Because of this approval, the PCSD will now move forward in developing the next steps of the Master Planning process.

Visit www.parmacityschools.org/masterplan for more information.



Parma Mayor Swears In Eight New Police Officers

by Carolyn Kovach

Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter swore in eight officers Dec. 16 to the Parma Police Department. The officers will fill positions opened due to police retirements. The new officers' family members had the honor of pinning on the badges during the ceremony.

mony in a full Parma Council Chamber. Family and friends, as well as the Safety Department Director Tom Weinreich and police department command staff joined the new officers at a brief reception in Parma Memorial Hall following the ceremony.

First Frosty's Fest Draws Nearly 3,000



Mayor Tim DeGeeter, his son Jack, daughter Molly and wife Pam enjoyed the celebration.

by Carolyn Kovach

When a group of volunteers with boundless love for Christmas and Parma gets together, Christmas magic happens.

Dec. 8 was a fun day in Parma! Christmas at the Farm began at noon with large crowds at Stearns Homestead. At 2 p.m., the Annual Christmas Parade traveled down Ridge Road. This year, the parade reversed its direction, starting at Stearns and heading north to Ridgewood Golf Course where Frosty's Fest began at 3 p.m. and went until 7 p.m.

Ridgewood Golf Course Manager Dave Chuba and his hard-working elves trans-

formed the clubhouse into the North Pole for Frosty's Fest, a holiday festival organized by We Are Parma Proud and supported by the mayor's office and city services. Volunteers Kathy Mabin, Chris Leo, Veronica Kovach-Dodd, Krysta Dodd, Karen Gundling, Leah Walden and councilwomen Debbie Lime and Kristin Saban worked long hours to make Frosty's Fest a sparkling success. It is estimated nearly 3,000 people came to the inaugural event.

Parma families who attended were treated to hot cocoa, popcorn, face paint-

continued on page 4

Script Parma Proud



Harry Paul and daughter, Stamy Paul at his Parma home. Ms. Paul is Founder and President of Graffiti HeArt - a non-profit that offers a platform for graffiti writers and aspiring artists to practice their artistic talent on a stage that promotes approved commissioned projects and beautifies and revitalizes communities while funding educational opportunities for under served youth.

Interested In Writing For The Observer? - Join Us At Our Public Meeting At Arabica Coffee House (6285 Pearl Rd.) Every Tuesday 7 PM

COMMUNITY NEWS

The President's Corner

by Sean Brennan, Parma City Council President

Primary Election Day: Tuesday, March 17

2020 will be an important year in the history of our nation, and we can all play a role in making that history through exercising our civic duty to vote. This year we will be voting for President of the United States, our respective member of the U.S. House of Representatives, state representative, state board of education member, county council member, county prosecutor, several judge positions, the county health and human services levy, and a Parma City School District renewal levy. It is especially important that we here in Cuyahoga County vote, as our county determines in large part how our state and nation goes in the Presidential election.

For many years, Ohio held its primary election on the first Tuesday, after the first Monday in May. However, several years back, it was switched to the second Tuesday in March so that Ohio would be considered more relevant in the presi-

dential primary process. It is important to recognize that in 2020 Ohio's primary election will be held on Tuesday, March 17.

This means we will be voting on St. Patrick's Day – a change the Republican controlled Ohio General Assembly and Governor DeWine made last year to comply with national Republican Party guidelines.

The primary election in Ohio determines the number of delegates a candidate will receive at each party's national convention this summer. The Democratic Party divvies up each

states' delegates proportionally among candidates, while the Republican Party has a winner-takes-all system.

In order to vote in the primary election, one must be registered to vote by Tuesday, February 18, which is 30 days before the election.

This summer delegates at each party's national convention will vote to select their respective nominee for President. Although it is too early to tell who the nominee will be for the Democratic Party, it is pretty much a given that President Trump will be the selected nominee for the Republican Party. It is typical that a sitting President receives the nomination of their party for re-election.

Next, we move into the general election, which will take place on the traditional first Tuesday, after the first Monday in November - Tuesday, November 3, this year. In order to vote in this election, one must be registered by Monday, October 5.

Registering to vote can be completed online by visiting <https://boe.cuyahogacounty.us>. Paper forms may be picked up at any library or city hall. You are also welcome to contact me and I will provide you with a form. Simply email me at councilmanbrennan@msn.com or call 440-885-8091. Keep in mind that you need to register to vote if you have never voted before, you have not voted regularly, you have changed your name, or you have moved.

In Ohio, you may vote in person at your polling location or by mail by completing a vote by mail request form. The form must be sent to the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. A vote by mail ballot will then be mailed to your preferred address. One completed, your ballot must be sent back to the Board of Elections postmarked the day before the election in order to be counted. Vote by mail request forms are available at the places listed above.



Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about registering to vote or voting. Best wishes to you and yours for a healthy, happy, and prosperous New Year!

It is especially important that we here in Cuyahoga County vote, as our county determines in large part how our state goes.

Parma Council Members And Mayor Recognize Citizens

by Carolyn Kovach

Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter, Ward 6 Councilman Larry Napoli and members of council honored Normandy Drama Workshop students in December for the dramatic 9/11 presentation they gave in the Parma Council Chamber on Sept. 11. Additionally, the council recognized the

graduates of the Fall 2019 Citizens Police Academy. These Parma residents received a behind-the-scenes look at Parma police work and saw firsthand what officers do to keep citizens safe. The academy also helps cultivate a stronger relationship between police and residents.



Parma City Council honors the Normandy High School Drama Workshop at a December council meeting.



Parma City Council recognizes the graduates of the Fall 2019 Citizens Police Academy.



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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Healthy Watersheds Help Communities Thrive

by Carolyn Kovach

West Creek Conservancy, formerly West Creek Preservation Committee, formed in 1997 when several concerned Parma citizens began meeting at a local library to discuss preserving the area’s greenspace and improving its accessibility to the public. Following the creation of West Creek Reservation, now managed by the Cleveland Metroparks, the organization recognized the need for its land conservation and watershed restoration services. Over the past 22 years, West Creek Conservancy (WCC) has expanded its reach into five Northeast Ohio counties, yet its mission has remained the same: protection, restoration and connection. “We acquire land to protect it, restore its functional integrity, and then we connect it to the people,” said WCC Executive Director Derek Schafer.

The restoration of watersheds goes beyond preserving outdoor spaces for the community. Watersheds are also essential for protecting wildlife, minimizing flood damage and offsetting heat and pollution. WCC’s preservation efforts often require restoring unsustainably developed lands to a natural state in order to restore watershed functionality. “You’re going to pay for sustainability whether you want to or not. Either you’ll be doing it upfront to create a thriving community or later with reactionary



West Creek Conservancy’s preservation efforts restore unsustainably developed lands to a natural state, thus improving watershed functionality.

mitigating tactics, which is often much more expensive and detrimental to the region,” Schafer said. The Parma-based organization has found power in partnerships to fulfill its mission. Some of their common partners include the Cleveland Metroparks, Parma, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District. The role the WCC plays varies based on the needs of each individual project and the partners involved. The organization’s efforts have been widely successful. Its work in Parma to create accessible greenspace has done

more than beautify the city. Ecological change has led to a positive economic impact, seen through the flourishing of Parma’s housing market near West Creek Reservation. This year, WCC was awarded “Outstanding Supporting Organization” by The National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials. Cleveland Metroparks nominated WCC for this award, citing its impactful work, local connection-building abilities and public-private partnerships catalyzed by local citizens. “The Conservancy is a great partner in helping provide a

unique experience in an urban setting while at the same time protecting our greenspace, streams and flood plains,” said Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter.

Currently, WCC is focused on a project in partnership with Cuyahoga County and the City of Parma regarding the demolition and restoration of the former Parmadale property, which will be transitioned into public greenspace. Following demolition, the 80 acres will be integrated into the West Creek Reservation. “The Parmadale project holds promise for restoring our ecological assets and converting a large tract of abandoned property into a beautiful public park. When complete, I think it would also be a great home for a dog park, which is something our residents have requested,” DeGeeter said. “This is a nice second phase for the Parmadale property – to open it up for the public. It’s great for our city and our region.”

Schafer said the addition of the former Parmadale land to the West Creek Reservation will create new access to the reservation for thousands of citizens. It will also remove a significant amount of impervious surface, decreasing stress on local waterways and infrastructure. “A healthy watershed creates a healthy community,” Schafer said. “It all comes down to water.”

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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 #121 by Gene Lovasy

SHOW KIDS YOU CARE: RESPECT THEM. Help young people bring out their best

The way people feel about themselves can fluctuate with circumstances. Depending on what's happening, you may feel confident or unsure, optimistic or pessimistic, in control or not in control. What's important is what a person's identity is like most of the time. People who have a strong, positive sense of self maintain these qualities even when difficulties arise. They continue to be hopeful and optimistic, and believe they can make a difference.

This column's focus will be on Asset 40: Positive View of Personal Future

Looking forward to a bright future. Stories about people who have overcome incredible odds to make a difference or achieve a dream abound throughout history. It's important to have goals and dreams, but what do you do when the going gets tough? It's important to model a positive attitude, seek solutions to problems, and keep moving toward your goal. Studies show when people envision themselves reaching their goals, they're more likely to make them happen.

Here are the facts

Research shows that young people who are optimistic about the future have better relationships with their

parents, increased self-esteem, and decreased emotional or behavioral problems, such as depression, early sexual activity, and violence. About 72 percent of young people, ages 11–18, are optimistic about their personal future, according to Search Institute surveys. Since young people are our future adults, it's important to help them realize the positive aspects of their lives now and in the years to come.

Tips for building this asset

Having a sense of hope is one of the most important human traits to embrace. Everyone faces ups and downs in life. But it's important to teach young people that a bad day, failed test, break-up, or loss of a loved one doesn't mean the future is without

hope. When bad things happen or mistakes occur, help young people focus on solutions or positive aspects of the situation instead of problems.

Also try this

In your home and family: Clip articles from newspapers or magazines of people doing hopeful things. Post them so the entire family sees them.

In your neighborhood and community: If you have concerns about your neighborhood, talk to neighbors about them. Gather a group to address these concerns and create a better future for everyone who lives nearby. Young people who live in a safe, clean, friendly neighborhood are more likely to feel positive about their future.

In your school or youth program: React positively when young people tell you their dreams—no matter how far-fetched or unreachable they may seem. Together, figure out a plan to make their dreams come true.

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

Register Now For Next Sessions Of Tri-C's Encore Campus Fridays At Western Campus

by John Horton

The Encore Campus Fridays program at the Western Campus of Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) begins new sessions of classes in January and March to enrich the minds and lives of those aged 55 and older. The winter program begins Jan. 24 and runs every Friday for seven weeks at the campus, located at 11000 Pleasant Valley Road in Parma. Age-eligible students can enroll in one to six courses for a \$99 fee. The 50-minute classes take place between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.

A seven-week spring session will take place at the site beginning March 20.

The overall course catalog at Western Campus features more than 50 options on a wide variety of subjects, including art, cinema, computers, history, music, religion, science, yoga and more. Classes are taught by Tri-C faculty, retired educators and subject experts. The popular program also is offered at Eastern Campus in Highland Hills and Westshore Campus in Westlake.

Visit www.tri-c.edu/encore for more information or to register for Encore Campus Fridays. Potential students can also call 216-987-2274 for information.

Second-Annual Pizza Bake Off

by Kathie Zipp

The Young Professionals of Parma (YPOP), in conjunction with the cities of Parma, Parma Heights and Seven Hills, is excited to host the Parma area's second-annual pizza bake off on Thursday, January 23, 2020, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Parma's UAW Hall (5615 Chevrolet Boulevard). This indoor, family-friendly event will benefit the Parma Animal Shelter. Last year's inaugural event was a huge success. More than 750 guests enjoyed pizza from nine vendors in addition to live music and raffles. Four vendors were honored with awards: First place, Giovanni's Pizza; Second place, Master's Pizza; Third place, a tie between Napoleon's Pizza and Fratello's Pizza. "Last year's event was a hit," said YPOP president Jackie Baraona. "We're taking what we learned last year and applying it to make this year's event even better. We're looking forward to an event that is not only fun but helps promote our local pizza vendors."

This year, guests from all over are invited again to come inside from the winter cold and enjoy sampling pizza from the area's array of local ovens — then vote for the best slice! In addition to voting for People's Choice, this year the event welcomes a panel of high-pro-

file judges including Channel 3 Anchor Dorsena Drakeford, Melt Bar and Grilled owner Matt Fish, 94.9 WQMX Morning News Anchor Ryan Lang, and Channel 3 Anchor Will Ujek who will evaluate slices on best crust, best sauce and best overall. The event will also feature a 50/50 raffle, beer tower raffle, music from The Baker's Basement, a magician (Nick Eaton) and balloon artist (Bob Durante) from Zap Entertainment, as well as a photo booth sponsored by Burning River Entertainment. It's a great opportunity for family fun!

Tickets are available in advance online for \$10 for adults and \$5 for kids 6 to 12. Children 0 to 5 are free. Tickets will also be available at the door for \$15 for adults and \$10 for kids. Tickets include a punch card for pizza samples and one pop/water. Also, enjoy wine from The Little Birdie Wine Nest and beer from Fat Heads Brewery available for purchase. Attendees who purchase their tickets by Sunday, January 5 (or the first 200) will receive early access to the event at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are available now at ParmaPizza.org.

Sponsorship and volunteer opportunities are also available. Learn more at ParmaPizza.org.

Frosty's Fest Draws Nearly 3,000

continued from page 1

ing, ornament making and free professional pictures with Santa by TAM Photography. Visitors listened to live music and watched ice sculpturing while Parma firefighters roasted marshmallows to make s'mores for the children. Jimbo's Concessions Original Cheese-Steak food truck, as well as the clubhouse snack bar and bar were open for business. Rudy's Strudel and

Bakery, Breads and Beyond Bakery and local baker Lisa Georgius had Christmas cookies available for purchase. The festival ended with an ugly sweater drawing, a raffle and a singalong with members of various Parma City School District choirs.

We Are Parma Proud is already discussing Frosty's Fest 2020. If you want to volunteer, contact parmaproud1@gmail.com.

Wishing every day of the new year to be filled with success, happiness & prosperity!

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Partnership with Gillingham Ford Benefits Students in PCSD



(L-R): PCSD Foundation, Inc. Trustees Nancy Fedak and Barb Filipow, PCSD Superintendent Charles Smialek, Ph.D. and Bob Gillingham Ford celebrate the donation from Bob Gillingham Ford from the Drive 4 UR School event in August.

by Amy Popik

Students and staff of the Parma City School District will be getting a financial boost in their classrooms and extracurricular activities thanks to a partnership with Bob Gillingham Ford and the Parma City Schools Foundation, Inc.

At the third annual PCSD Opening Kick-Off this summer, the foundation teamed up with Gillingham Ford for a Drive 4 UR School fundraiser.

In total, \$4,580 was raised through the event, with all proceeds directly benefiting students and teachers across the district.

Gillingham presented a check to the Foundation at a recent Board of Education meeting.

“The partnership is greatly appreciated,” expressed Barb Filipow, a Parma City Schools Foundation trustee. “This helps provide funds that the district cannot provide for the schools.”

The Drive 4 UR School program is funded through Ford Motor Company. The program donates \$20 for each test drive with a maximum donation of \$6,000.

With every test drive, money was donated back to the school or school program of the driver’s choice as well as the Foundation.

Although he wished PCSD could have reached the maximum amount, Gillingham was proud to be able to support the schools and the community through the program.

“I think this is important,” he expressed. “I have been a member of CBS (Community, Business, Schools) for a long time and we have

supported the schools in a lot of different ways. The schools are the lifeblood of the communities. You need a good school system to support the population. People don’t want to move to a community where the schools are bad or underfunded, so whatever we can do to help, we are happy to do it.”

“Bob is great to work with, as well as his team,” Filipow added. “They are extremely well organized, made sure the event ran smoothly, provided volunteers, it was a really nice event.”

The Parma City Schools Foundation, Inc. has donated thousands of dollars to the schools since it was founded in 2011.

This past school year, the Foundation gave away 12 grants to teachers throughout the district, supporting a wide variety of initiatives including flexible seating and diversified instruction. Additional money was donated throughout the years to school buildings for student incentives, programs, assemblies and field trips.

Only 71 test drives short this year of the 300 test drive goal, Filipow is hopeful the Foundation will reach their goal the next time around.

“Drive 4 UR School is really a no brainer,” Filipow shared. “It doesn’t cost parents or the community anything to participate. If each student would bring just one adult to test drive a car, it would be amazing.”

To learn more about the Parma City Schools Foundation, Inc. and to get involved, please visit www.parmacityschools.org/foundation.

What’s Happening in the Parma City School District

Become a PCSD Champion or Advisory Member

Parma City Schools are seeking to explain the Master Plan for Consolidation in a more person- manner than typical Board Meetings and even Town Hall sessions. Please consider becoming PCSD Champion or Advisory Member during this important Master Planning process. Visit www.parmacityschools.org/masterplan for more details.

PCSD is Now Hiring

Find your next rewarding career at the Parma City School District! View current open position and apply today at www.parmacityschools.org/jobs.

Stay Fit this Winter through the Community Walking Program

Get out of the cold this winter and join the PCSD for our Community Walking Program. The program is available at all three high school every Monday and Thursday night from 6 - 8 PM. Residents from Parma, Parma Heights and Seven Hills are welcome to participate. Sign-in is required at specific building entrances. Visit www.parmacityschools.org for more information.

Sign Up for PCSD’s Weekly Newsletter

Like what you see? Get more news from Parma City School District right to your email box each week! Sign up for the Monday Morning Monitor, the district’s weekly newsletter, at www.parmacityschools.org/monitor.

Ridge-Brook Students Raise Money for Wreaths Across America



by Dan Rajkovich

To honor Armed Services veterans during this holiday season, elementary students from throughout the PCSD raised \$850 for the Wreaths Across America program.

Organized by Ridge-Brook Elementary School third grade teacher Cheryl Trainer, students from Dentzler, Ridge-Brook and Thoreau Park Elementary Schools raised money to purchase 83 wreaths to be placed at the Western Reserve National Cemetery in Seville, Ohio. Seven PCSD students then had the opportunity to visit the cemetery on December 14 and place the wreaths at the graves of veterans, with help from Ridge-Brook teacher Anthony Adomaite and former Ridge-Brook

PTA president Jen Olson.

“I could tell that the kids, although froze from the bitter cold and rain, were happy to honor our veterans by saying each of their names out loud and thanking them for their service,” Trainer said of the experience. “I was overcome with emotion as I watched these young children see the importance and value of honoring those who have fought and died for their freedom. What a lucky woman I am to not only teach these young ones, but also share a life-changing experience with them.”

Each December, volunteers from Wreaths Across America remember and honor veterans at over 2,100 locations in all 50 states. At Western Reserve National Cemetery alone, more than 4,000 wreaths were placed at graves.

STEM Students Share Knowledge



STEM students at Greenbriar Middle School and Pleasant Valley Elementary School shared what they have learned in class during capstone events on December 18, 2019. Pleasant Valley second-graders (L) discussed the weather and even wore bracelets to describe the water cycle, while Greenbriar fifth-graders (R) created a museum of natural history with information about civilizations and ecosystems.

Kindergartner Named All-Star Kid



Averie C., a kindergartner at Renwood Elementary School, was named a Cleveland Cavaliers All-Star Kid for January 2020. She was surprised by her family and Cavs staff in her classroom on December 16, 2019!

PARMA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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INSPIRATION

I Believe

by Daniel Taddeo

All of our thoughts can be divided into two basic categories: right and wrong. Right thoughts are God-centered and wrong thoughts are self-centered. Any use of sex except as an expression of love and procreation in marriage is sinful and breaks the Seventh Commandment. Being gracious is difficult. It could mean letting go of grudges and prejudices and going beyond what is fair to what is merciful. Children respond to tragedy differently. They look to adults for guidance on how they should react to grief. If adults absorb it and continue their lives, children assume they should do likewise. Generous behavior reduces adolescent depression and suicide. Several studies have shown that teenagers who do volunteer work are less likely to fail a subject in school, get pregnant, or

abuse substances.

Gratitude and humility rather than resentment and grumbling should characterize our handling of circumstances that arise in everyday living. Life is made up of little things: smiles, kindnesses, obligations, and giving. They are what win and preserve the heart and generate comfort. Life is not passive activity. We are expected to sow, welcome, witness, and trust that even our smallest efforts could bear amazing fruit.

More people are making their own rules, setting their own standards, and living their own way. This can and in many ways will only end in disaster. Physical activity is among the healthiest things we can do for ourselves. Studies tell us that “taking it easy” is a real danger. Seven guiding principles to help nurture our faith

in God’s Word include justice, understanding, perseverance, endurance, reverence, friendship, and forgiveness. When we are filled with kindness and gentleness, there is no room for bitterness or self-centered motives. With God’s help we can strive to speak gracious words that can strengthen families and communities by building people up, bridging gaps, and restoring broken relationships.

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?



Two Parma Area legends together on Memorial Day 2016- Left-Bob Verdile, Right-Judge George Spanagel

Remembering Robert M. Verdile

by Daniel P. McCarthy

The Greater Parma Area will begin 2020 mourning the loss of a community leader like no other. It is hard to estimate just how many lives were touched by Bob Verdile during his 84 years of life. The real question seems to be, what didn’t Bob do? He was a U.S. Army Veteran, served the City of Parma Heights for 30 years as a Councilman and also Economic Director,

was once the President of the Parma Area Chamber of Commerce, Trustee for 17 years at Parma General Community Hospital and a Health Foundation Member, a parishioner at St. Bridget of Kildare Church, and a Holy Name Society Member. He also put a smile on the face of everyone he ever spoke with. He was a friend of us all. We have lost a wonderful member of our community and he will be missed forever.



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PERSPECTIVE

What A Year It Was

by Lee Kamps

As the world flips the calendar over to a new year, we are also entering a new decade as well. Therefore, I feel it is appropriate to go back and review another year in history. Like the old Rocky and Bullwinkle cartoon show with Sherman and his genius dog Peabody, let's enter their "way back" machine and take a trip way back to another year in our history. Let's go back 100 years ago to the year 1920.

That was a pivotal year in our country's history. It was a year that not only began a new decade, but a new era in history that was referred to as the "Roaring '20s". But the one thing that defined that period in history began on January 16 1920, just as the new year began. That was when the Volstead Act became effective. That act was the enforcement arm of the 18th amendment to the constitution that was ratified in October 1919 making the consumption, manufacture and distribution of alcoholic beverages illegal across the United States. Otherwise known as Prohibition, that defined the

decade as well as the era. Suddenly the United States was a "dry" country.

Times were changing in other ways as well. The new music known as jazz had been growing in popularity and suddenly hit all over the country. The 1920s became known as the "jazz age" as well. Jazz clubs and "speakeasies" sprang up where people could hear this new form of music as well as enjoy some now illegal adult beverages.

Another big change was the development of radio. Suddenly it seemed everyone had a radio in their living room that brought news as well as jazz music into the homes of America. The radio business really took off during the 1920s and stock in companies associated with radio were hot buys.

But perhaps the big event of 1920 was the presidential election. The world had changed. The "Great War" was over and there was a new world order. The current President, Woodrow Wilson was a feeble old man at 63 years of age. He had suffered a debilitating stroke in September 1919 and had become a recluse with his wife controlling access

to the President. He made no public appearances after that stroke.

The election of 1920 pitted two men from Ohio as the candidates for President in 1920. The Democratic candidate was Ohio's governor James Cox from Dayton. His running mate was a young man with a famous name who would make history later, Franklin D Roosevelt. The Republican candidate for President was a Senator from Marion Ohio, Warren G Harding. His running mate was a tight lipped governor of Massachusetts, Calvin Coolidge.

Another event that had a big influence on the election and the future of the country was the ratification of the 19th amendment to the constitution on August 26 1920 that gave women across the country the right to vote; just in time for the presidential election.

It was also a year of violence as well. On September 16 1920, anarchists set off a bomb on Wall Street that killed 38 people and wounded another 143. The bomb was in a horse carriage and consisted of sticks of dynamite that exploded at noon right outside the offices of the J. P. Morgan bank on Wall Street. The bombing was never solved, but it was believed that an Ital-

ian anarchist organization set it off in protest of the arrest earlier of two Italian immigrants, Sacco and Vanzetti in a sensational murder case that riveted the nation. That wasn't called "domestic terrorism" then, but the death count and the number of injured was the greatest toll in a similar incident until the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995.

In the sports world the year 1920 was full of news as well. The "black Sox" scandal involving the Chicago White Sox broke wide open in 1920. There had been rumors all along that the 1919 World Series between the heavily favored Chicago White Sox and the Cincinnati Reds was thrown by the White Sox for gambling interests. The owners got together and appointed a commissioner to oversee Major League Baseball. Then in the summer of 1920, after a trial where eight members of the White Sox were acquitted of throwing the series, the new commissioner kicked those eight ball players out of baseball for life. That was in the heat of a tight pennant race and it literally took the White Sox out of the race.

That was just one year. There will be more to follow next month.

Demonstrate Your Civic Pride

by Rick Haase

It's that time again. The Parma Area Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations for the 2020 Pride Awards. The awards will be presented Saturday, March 14 at a planned Roaring 20's gala at Stillwater Place on the grounds of the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, 3900 Wildlife Way, Cleveland.

The Pride Award was instituted in 1980 to honor individuals who have made a substantial contribution to the Parma area. Throughout the years, the awards have been bestowed in three categories: individuals, businesses and organizations who have made a lasting impression and contribution to the Parma area.

production mixes a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel and adds a dash of Monty Python-esque humor. It's a fast-paced whodunit which has won two Emmys and Drama Desk Awards.

April 10-26
Beehive: The 60's Musical
Created by Larry Gallagher, Beehive celebrates the powerful female voices of the 1960's with such timeless hits as "My Boyfriend's Back," "Be My Baby," "Son of a Preacher Man," and "Me and Bobby McGee." Told from the perspective of six young women who come of age in this decade of dramatic change, Beehive takes us from their first Beehive Dance to the challenges we faced as a nation.

A comedic drama by Mary Chase, Harvey is the story of a perfect gentleman, Elwood P. Dowd, and his best friend, Harvey -- a 'pooka', who is a six-foot tall, invisible rabbit. When Elwood begins introducing Harvey around town, his embarrassed sister, Veta Louise, and her daughter, Myrtle Mae, determine to commit Elwood to a sanitarium. A story of loving your family and acceptance, this classic comedic drama was made into the film of the same name, starring Jimmy Stewart.

October 9-26
The Wizard of Oz

Lyrics by E.Y. Harburg.

December 4-20
Harry Connick, Jr.'s 'The Happy Elf'
Book by Lauren Gunderson and Andrew Fishman
Music and Lyrics by Harry Connick, Jr.
Eubie is an elf – but not just any elf, the happiest Elf at the North Pole.
Eubie longs to be a part of Santa's Sleigh Team, but instead has been tasked with maintaining and check-

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The Parma Area Chamber of Commerce serves the communities of Parma, Parma Heights and Seven Hills.

For more information, visit the Chamber website, parmaareachamber.org, or call 440.886.1700.

Nominations for the Pride Awards are requested by no later than January 6.

A NEW SEASON AT THE CASSIDY THEATRE – The Cassidy Theatre has announced the line-up of shows for the 2020 season at our local gem and community theatre, and it is indeed impressive.

Here's a rundown of each show:

February 7-23
Alfred Hitchcock's 'The 39 Steps'
A comedy by Patrick Barlow, this

June 12-26
Monty Python's Spamalot
This musical with book and lyrics by Eric Idle and music by John Du Prez, the production is based on the classic British comedy 'Monty Python and the Holy Grail'. Join King Arthur, his Knights of the Round Table, the Lady of the Lake, and more off-color crazy characters on a mad-cap medieval adventure in search of the legendary relic itself. Including infamous renditions of scenes like 'The Black Knight' and 'The Swallow and the Coconut', and zany musical numbers including 'Camelot' and 'Always Look on the Bright Side of Life.'

August 14-30
Harvey



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PERSPECTIVE

AARP Tax-Aide Free Tax Preparation Announcement

by Stephen Donovan

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program will be getting underway again this year starting the first week in February and ending the 15th of April 2020. This IRS-supported FREE tax service is offered on a non-discriminatory basis without consideration of race, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. We give special attention to those with low or moderate incomes and/or aged 60 and older. Taxpayers do NOT have to be retired or a member of AARP.

Tax-Aide sites in southwest Cuyahoga County are located at:

Parma County Library, 6996 Powers Blvd., Parma, OH 44129. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM. To make an appointment, go to the Parma Library and complete sign-up book.

Parma Snow Road County Library, 2121 Snow Road, Parma, OH 44134. Open Mondays and Thursdays from 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM. To make an appointment go to the Snow Road Library and complete sign-up book.

North Royalton Library, 5071 Wallings Road, North Royalton, OH 44133. Open Wednesdays from 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM. Call 440-582-6333 for an appointment.

Brecksville Human Services Department, 2 Community Drive, Brecksville, OH 44141. Open Fridays

from 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM. Call 440-526-2499 for an appointment.

Broadview Heights Human Services Department, 9543 Broadview Road, Broadview Heights, OH 44147. Open Fridays from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Call 440-526-4074 for an appointment.

Middleburg Heights County Library (New Location), 16699 Bagley

Road, Middleburg Heights, OH 44130. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. To make an appointment go to the Middleburg Heights Library and complete sign-up book.

Strongsville Senior Center, 18100 Royalton Road, Strongsville, OH 44136. Open Mondays and Fridays from 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM. Call 440-

580-3275 for an appointment.

Brook Park United Methodist Church, 6220 Smith Road, Brook Park, OH 44142. Open Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Call 216-676-4738 Tuesdays through Fridays from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM for an appointment.

Demonstrate Your Civic Pride

continued from page 8

ing the Naughty-and-Nice lists. This Christmas, though, he's found something strange – a whole town of people, where every single person has made the 'Naughty' list. With a bit of Christmas magic, Eubie sets out to bring cheer to the town of Bluesville – but can he turn a whole town of naughties into nice in just one day? Based on the children's book of the same name, with a musical score by the renowned and award-winning Harry Connick, Jr., 'The Happy Elf' feels reminiscent of the classic 'Rankin & Bass' Christmas specials of old.

For more information, call the Cassidy Theatre Box Office at 440.842.4600 or visit Cassidytheatre.com.

FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC EXAMINATION – The entry-level examination for Firefighter/Paramedic in the city of Parma Heights will take place at 9 a.m. January 25.

For additional information visit the city website or call 440.884.9600.

OPEN SWIM – The swimming pool at Valley Forge High School, 9999 Independence Boulevard, Parma Heights, is open for open swimming from 6-8 p.m. Tuesdays.

COMFORT SOUPS – The Parma Heights branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library, 6206 Pearl Road, will present a cooking program on "Comfort Soups" from 7-8 p.m.

Thursday, January 9. The program has a waiting list which you can join at cuyahogalibrary.org. Warm away the winter blues where step-by-step instructions will be shared on how to make comforting soups to keep you warm all winter long.

Want to see your Parma Heights information featured here? E-mail column items to Rick Haase at rick.haase@sbcglobal.net.



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AREA WIDE EVENTS

News You Can Use (And Where To Find It)

by Gene Lovasy

Education/training opportunities & options

From Cleveland Rape Crisis Ctr:

For Students: Up to 11 programs/events spread over these three categories, Classroom & After-School Programs for Children & Youth, Gender Specific Programs, Youth Leadership Development

For Teachers and Staff: Three programs/events

For Parents: Five programs/events

Visit <https://clevelandrapecrisis.org/prevention-education/> for details on these programs plus more.

AG's Human Trafficking Summit coming up on January 9, 2020 in Columbus.

Go here: <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Human-Trafficking-Summit> for information and/or to register.

Watch for more information re Human Trafficking in the next issue.

Compliments of the Imagine Foundation.

Other Announcements:

he Parma Heights PACT (Police & Community Together) Youth Group:

The group's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan 7th. Check their FB page for the topic.

All area students ages 12 -17 are welcome to join. For announcements & detailed information visit the PACT Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/parmaheights.police; email: pactunit@gmail.com; ph: 440.884.1235.

From Achievement Center for Children/Camp Cheerful... Adapted Soccer Registration is Now Open - Adapted Soccer will start in January....10 am – 11:30, Saturdays, Jan. 18th – Feb 29th at the Force Indoor Sports in Rocky River. Children and young adults 7 years and older with physical limitations and/or cognitive/developmental delays are welcome to learn soccer skills, exercise, and play soccer games according to each player's ability. For more information, visit their website at <https://tinyurl.com/ACC-Soccer> or call Mike at 440-238-6200 ext. 245.

2020 Camp Invention... For kids entering grades K – 6th, this week-long

camp is being held at Pleasant Valley Elementary June 8 – 12, 2020. Visit invent.org/camp or call 800-968-4332 to register. Use promo code SUM25 to save \$25 (expires 3/31) or SUM15 to save \$15 (expires 5/12).

From the Educ. Svc. Center of NE Ohio... The 22nd Annual Summer Camp & Beyond Fair for children & youth w/disabilities is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 15th from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm at Woodside Event Center, 5025 Mill Rd, Broadview Hts. This is a huge, expo style event popular with districts, families & students alike. Go to <http://www.esc-cc.org/>, click on the event graphic & follow the links for more information.

From Aspire Greater Cleveland... offers FREE year-round classes for adults seeking GED® /HSE Test Preparation, Adult Basic Education, English Language/Civics Education, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). BEGINNING IN JANUARY they'll be offering a GED® /HSE class w/a Microsoft Office Certification component AT THE PARMA LIBRARY. For additional information call 1-833-ASPIRE2 or visit their website at www.aspiregreatercleveland.com.

MyCom December Highlights

by Qadriyyah Sultan

Reintroducing MyCom! A network that collaborates, advocate, navigate and connect Youth!

MyCom believes that Youth development is community development, and through the connection of partnerships and resources, we can create a network of support, opportunity and success. The MyCom Network is committed to amplifying Youth Voice to strengthen the development of neighborhood strategies to meet identified needs.

The new MyCom Coordinator serving the Parma, Parma Heights and Seven Hills neighborhoods has been on the go visiting many MyCom community partners such as the Parma Snow, Parma and Parma Heights Cuyahoga Library Branch managers and staff, Community member Gene Lovasy, PCSD parent Amanda Rouse, PCSD staff Mrs. Marian Armstrong, PCSD staff Craig Blike, PACT facilitator Kelly Latevola, Officer Taylor, Pastor

Karen Wolcott, and out of school time specialist Jean Micklewright and Kathy Hall from Ohio Guidestone. She will continue to meet with more partners and community members leading up to Christmas and after the new year.

LOGOS

We had a Family Night at Ridgewood United Methodist Church in Parma on December 11, 2019 that included a meal, group prayer and a speaker from Ohio Guidestone on the topic of boundaries and healthy relationships.

PACT

We had a great time caroling with the PACT youth group the evening of December 10, 2019 at the Parma Height Senior Center. There were eight youth involved plus Parma Heights police officers and community members. The caroling ended with cookies, warm beverages and table games for the guest.

PCSD

We hosted a MyCom sponsored Lunch and Learn with a group of

about 20 youth and facilitators Chuck Caldwell and Craig Blike from the workforce development at Parma Senior High school. We discussed their opinions about the current needs and challenges for youth, what they would like to see more of in their community, the tools they use to find information about what's going on in their community, youth employment and the their thoughts on the closing of Parma Senior High school and the youth merging to other schools. The youth enjoyed pizza and wings over the discussion and were extremely engaged with their responses.

Looking Forward...

Plans are in the making to create more youth council groups in the Tri City area where youth can exercise skills that will benefit them socially, professionally and scholastically.

PACT will start up their youth group meetings again early January 2020.

From the Parma Council of PTA's

The deadline to register for the 9th Annual Festival of Tables, scheduled for Feb. 22nd, 2020 at LaVilla Conference and Banquet Center, 11500 Brookpark Rd. Cleveland 44130 is fast approaching. This is a particularly well attended, unique & fun fundraiser for the PTA. It also offers an out-of-the-box opportunity for a business/organization to market/promote itself. Or, how about a "City Challenge" where Parma, Parma Hts & Seven Hills City Councils each host a table & compete for bragging

See all items online at:
parmaobserver.com

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Friday- \$4.00 Hookah All Day
Saturday- 50% Off Specialty Drinks Noon-6 PM
Sunday- Open Mic Night-Patio

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PARMA ART SCENE

A Look Back At 2019 - We Are Parma Proud

by Kathryn Mabin

In the Spring of 2019 a handful of people met to discuss the creation of a new nonprofit, We Are Parma Proud, based on, Proud of Parma, an organization that served Parma well for a great many years. The mission is to advance, develop and improve the image of Parma. A mission that is as viable today as it was back in the day, when Proud of Parma was created.

In June We Are Parma Proud volunteered our services at the Rib-n-Rock. A town hall meeting was our kick-off, inviting individuals, other nonprofits, businesses and government officials to hear who we were and what we are about. We asked you, the public, what you wanted, and we listened. Since that meeting we've continued to receive numerous emails and messages on our Facebook page, with family fun ideas to bring us together as a community. In August there was Picnic In The Park, a community picnic, complete with adult and children games, live music, food trucks, and various local nonprofits, at Anthony Zielenski Park.

In mid September planning began for Frosty's Fest, which was held in conjunction with the Parma Holiday Parade, on December 8th. It was a huge success.

Thousands attended. It was held in the historic Ridgewood Golf Course Clubhouse, both indoors and out. For sale were three local bakeries selling holiday cookies, a hot food truck, and We Are Parma Proud's official logo tees. Free fresh popped popcorn, s'mores, and hot chocolate for all. Kids received a free stuffed animal as they visited with Santa, got a free photo with Santa, the opportunity to make and take home a free ornament, and had their face painted by a professional face painter. There was live music, and choirs performing. Attendees got to watch an ice sculptor work live with various chain saws and chisels, creating a masterpiece in ice. Adults had the opportunity to sit at the bar in the clubhouse and watch the Brown's win, while enjoying an adult beverage.

During Frosty's Fest, I had the opportunity to chat with several of the attendees. One woman, who attended with her Great-Grandchildren said, "This event reminds me of the community events we used to have here in Parma when I was young." A young Mom, with her three children said, "This is so nice. I hope you do this next year." Mayor DeGreeter told me, "You guys hit a grand slam with Frosty's Fest." Looks like Frosty's Fest will be

back in 2020 folks.

The last six months of 2019, reminded me of that memorable line from the movie Field of Dreams, "If you build it, he will come." I say, "If you plan it, they will come." Frosty's Fest was planned and executed in a span of less than 3 months. A handful of local residents, a few government officials, and several local businesses came together and provided the community with an event filled with the holiday spirit, that was free and open

to the public. We Are Parma Proud is proud to be a part of this community.

Going forward into 2020, We Are Parma Proud wants you to share your feedback and your ideas with us. Help us to make this community the best place in Ohio to raise a family. Volunteer for an event, or join us in our planning sessions. Please follow us on the We Are Parma Proud Facebook page. You can send us an email at parmaproud1@gmail.com.

Prama Artspace And Gallery



Obviously inspired by a recent work of art that received a great deal of attention, this display at Prama Artspace and Gallery is maybe something that we can relate to so much more.

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