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A Message From Mayor Byrne

by Mike Byrne

Well, we are certainly living history and maneuvering our way through this time is not always easy and often confusing. As things change on a daily and weekly basis, the City of Parma Heights strives to share information with our residents, businesses, and community in as many ways as possible and I am grateful to the Parma Observer for the opportunity to communicate here.

During this pandemic and under the stay-at-home order, we have been following protocols recommended by the CDC and State of Ohio to restrict exposure to COVID-19 and to keep our residents as safe as possible. City Hall, our Senior Center, and Cassidy Theatre have been closed to the public. During this time we have had these three facilities as well as the police and fire vehicles cleaned and sanitized.

As always, the health and safety of our residents is my highest priority. The men and women of the police and fire departments have taken necessary actions and precautions to keep Parma Heights safe. The lobby at the Parma Heights Police Department continues to remain open to the public with a phone outside the lobby door for the public to contact staff 24/7. Officers have received training on responding to calls for service where an increased risk of potential exposure may be present.



Michael P. Byrne, Mayor of Parma Heights, Ohio

Officers and/or Firefighters that respond to a residence may request to speak with people outside of their homes. In accordance with the CDC, officers have been directed to maintain acceptable social distancing as well as to wear PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). Officers will continue to contact residents by phone for non-emergency calls and for service/reports. The non-emergency phone number is 440.884.1234.

BUSINESSES RE-OPEN

As Ohio re-opens for business, we will continue to follow the recommendations of Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and his administration. We post updated information on our city website, Facebook page, and on the digital sign in front of City Hall. You can always call us if you need us at 440.884.9600.

As City Hall re-opens to the public, face masks will be

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Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter and the Ohio Mayors Alliance are asking Congress to create a fourth-phase stimulus package that will support Ohio cities.

Parma Mayor Advocates For Federal Stimulus Package To Help Cities

by Carolyn Kovach

In early March, Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter and city council members were looking at a balanced budget for 2020. Then COVID-19 hit. Most state governors took drastic measures. When Gov. Mike DeWine gave the Stay-at-Home order, forcing many businesses to close, the balanced budget was not immune to the economic impact. "It's all based on projections," said Parma Treasurer Tom Mastroianni. "The closures are going to impact the city. Cities mostly rely on income tax. Our projected income will be down \$5.5 million, of which \$4 million is collected from income taxes." The other \$1.5 million comes from income obtained through court costs, traffic citations, building permits and recreation registration fees. "We are still getting requests for building permits, but with the courts temporary closed, less traffic on the streets and rec sports suspended, that income is not coming in at the same rate," said Parma Auditor Brian Day. "In a normal year, we can project for the year. We are still looking ahead, but it is hard to determine where we will be. This is such a moving target." Mastroianni noted that the city will know much more at the end of July when more people file their city income taxes. Federal, state and city

2019 income tax deadlines were extended to July 15, 2020.

Like other mayors throughout the country, DeGeeter anticipates the financial impact will continue into 2021 because 2020 income tax returns will also be reduced. The bleak outlook for 2021 is why DeGeeter and other mayors from the Ohio Mayors Alliance are asking Congress to provide financial relief to cities now. DeGeeter, a board member of the Ohio Mayors Alliance, participated in an April 16 press teleconference organized by the Alliance, a bipartisan coalition of more than 24 mayors of Ohio's largest cities. During the conference, the mayors outlined their dire circumstances and urged Congress to create a fiscal relief package. The goal is to prevent service reductions at the local level and help accelerate economic recovery. The current economic downturn has caused layoffs and some service reductions in cities across Ohio.

"In early April, we laid off 47 employees until July to make immediate budget cuts. Depending on how quickly the state reopens, the return of consumer confidence, testing capabilities and the number of confirmed future coronavirus cases, we will continuously assess the situation. It is challenging because there are many factors now affecting our local

economy that we can't control," DeGeeter said. DeGeeter explained that the city does not have a reserve fund. "We have a small carryover from year to year. Every March, when we enact a balanced budget, it is survive and advance. Our budget is always tight."

While the recently passed Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act includes funding from Congress for state and local governments, it mainly assists large counties and cities. Even though Parma is the seventh largest city in the state, it is not receiving any money from the CARES Act. That's why the Ohio Mayors Alliance, which recently sent a letter to Congress, is advocating for direct emergency stabilization funding to cities in the next federal aid package. "We are making tough decisions. We are trying to provide services, but I am very concerned about what our city's financial outlook will be without a phase-four federal package. We need direct emergency stabilization funding to survive, and we need it quickly," DeGeeter said.

Throughout the economic crisis, many analysts have compared America's current economic crisis to the Great Recession of 2008. Day is optimistic the economy will rebound faster than it did after

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Script Parma Picture Of The Month



This month's script Parma picture was sent in by Karen Kowalchik and includes her beautiful grandchildren (from left to right), Claire Svihlik, Mark and Nora Dwenger, Johnny Svihlik, and Teddy Dwenger.

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

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Parma Hospital Health Care Foundation Provides Critical Support In Fight Against Coronavirus

by CJ Sheppard

UH Parma Medical Center received a \$500,000 community challenge grant from Parma Hospital Health Care Foundation to support the hospital’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds will help support the unanticipated costs of the health crisis, including extensive patient care, medical supplies and research as well as providing for the protection, wellness and resilience of UH Parma caregivers.

“UH Parma Medical Center understands the importance of community and ensures our patients have quality, compassionate care close to home,” said Angelo Pimpas, Board Chair, Parma Hospital Health Care Foundation. “In return, we hope our communities can pull together and help alleviate the cost and of this crisis while also providing for the impact it’s having in other clinical areas.”

The gift from Parma Hospital Health Care Foundation is one of four, \$500,000 challenge grants awarded by area hospital foundations to help sustain UH communities during the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis. Other grant-makers include Elyria Medical Center Foundation, Portage Medical Center Foundation and Samaritan Hospital Foundation. Each grant will support the Community Response Fund at that foundation’s local UH medical center with the hope



UH Parma Medical Center has many caregivers on the front lines in the fight against COVID-19.

of inspiring additional local giving. “University Hospitals has a long-standing commitment to the health and well-being of our community, a promise that we extended in recent years to more patients than ever with the health system’s regional expansion,” said UH Chief Operating Officer, Eric Beck, DO, MPH. “Today, that promise is more important than ever and we are grateful to have widespread support throughout Northeast Ohio and beyond as we face this pandemic together.”

Community members can join the foundation in supporting UH Parma Medical Center and its caregivers by making a gift at UHGiving.org/Parma.



Area Fire Departments Pay Tribute To UH Parma Medical Center Staff

by Carolyn Kovach

More than two dozen emergency vehicles from eight different fire departments quietly pulled into the lot at University Hospitals Parma Medical Center on Wednesday evening, April 22. They weren’t there to drop off patients. Instead, they arrived to show their love and support of UH

health care workers. The Western Reserve Fire Museum and Education Center approached the Parma Fire Department with the idea a week earlier. The two organized the event and invited local media. The participation was larger than Parma Fire Chief Mike Lasky anticipated. Firefighters from

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EDUCATION

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What All Kids Need to Succeed 40 Developmental Assets

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PCSD SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

Asset Corner #125

by Gene Lovasy

May's Asset Category: COMMITMENT TO LEARNING Commitment to learning doesn't happen naturally in all young people. Instilling this important trait involves a combination of values and skills that include the desire to succeed in school, a sense of the lasting importance of learning, and a belief in one's own ability. This commitment is strongly influenced by the school environment and relationships with family and peers. The more committed a child is to learning, the more likely it is that she or he will grow up healthy.

This month's column will focus on Asset #25 – Reading For Pleasure:

Reading should be done for fun.... Have you ever been so engrossed in a book you skipped watching a favorite TV show, didn't hear the phone ring, or stayed up too late at night? Now that's a good book, and as anyone who loves to read will tell you, that's the best part of

reading! Books are the way most teachers instruct their classes. But there's also a reason for young people to read for fun. The Commission on Reading contends that reading for fun teaches young people how to become strategic, skilled readers. They learn the difference between reading for a test and reading for pleasure. They learn when to read carefully or skim, ask questions or consult a dictionary.

Here are the facts Research shows that young people who read for pleasure at least three hours a week (that's only 26 minutes a day) exhibit more positive than negative values. Only 22 percent of young people, ages 11–18, read for pleasure three or more hours a week, according to Search Institute surveys. But reading—whether it's for a grade or not—can open up a new world, transport you to faraway lands, bygone eras, or lives only dreamt of. Reading

is important. It uses facts, figures, and emotions to both teach and inspire. Inspire young people to read for pleasure, and they will have a far richer life.

Tips for building this asset Make it easy for your child—and other young people you know—to read for pleasure at your house. Provide a variety of reading materials such as novels, magazines, newspapers, and comic books. Also, set an example with your own behavior. Don't just read in bed when everyone else is asleep. Let the young people around you see you reading. Discuss issues with them that come up or other ideas you've learned from books. Finally, limit TV and computer time and remember to check out the library's extensive list of e-books & other digital resources ...

Also try this In your home and family: Set aside a family reading time once a week. With younger children, read aloud together. With older children, read different books while hanging out

together, or read the same book and then discuss it.

In your neighborhood and community: Volunteer to read books aloud to children in your community center, school, faith community, child-care center, or library. During this time of distance-learning you can do so via phone or virtually via computer.

In your school or youth program: Set up a book club to read popular fiction, nonfiction, or classics. Get together outside of class or during the regular program time to informally discuss the books you read. This can easily be done via Zoom/Facetime type computer apps.

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.

A Grey Bearded Man

by James McCarthy Fifty years, hah September...but I suppose this is just my own cadence. A grey bearded man stands tingling in the retrace...somber faced,in the dawn-ing days of the 2020's. A witness,staring at the bricks,and glass, and aluminum trim of the mid -century architecture. A witness, peering into the past, of the building which was.

As a matter of record, now fifty years hence, my formal association with this place began in September 1970. For some years prior, growing up within its' shadow, it had been a guide stone in witness to my earliest childhood experiences.I had grown up with Snowview School over my shoulder, informing the daylight skies of my backyard discoveries. I lived just a couple of doors away, in my boyhood home. I discovered the richness of the World unknown, with its' silhouette, always as backdrop to my emergence as a child of middle-sixties America.

The schoolyard around this building,was my first, and lasting introduction to the realm of the World external. The first tree that I climbed, lived there too. I collected pine cones from beneath its' pine grove, and marveled at stones in its' fields. I chased grasshoppers, and caught lightening bugs, watched birds,bugs, plants and anything that moved or lived...all there. My first skinned knee happened



James E. Hanna Elementary School there, my first kiss too, and my first bike ride. Learned basketball,and four corners, and flew my first kite there. There cradled within those safe and sacred greens, I was treated to an offering of the World.

A boy met the world there, and the many people within it. And somehow, he found his place in mind, and resolved an order to things in young life...there on those grounds of Snowview School. From within the humble walls of this place, I would learn my first life lessons about the World around me.

I started Kindergarten in September 1970 at Snowview School on Snow road in Parma, Ohio. I built life-long friendships while there, and was taught the ways of the day. The teachers and staff were patient, thoughtful, but firm. we learned what was expected of us from dedicated teachers, staff, noon aides, janitors, and each other. There weren't excuses made...not from our teachers , or from our parents. They did, and we did, what we all came there

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PSH senior earns second-place finish
at historic state wrestling tournament

by Dan Rajkovich

Two years ago, Parma Senior High School’s Liz Matis accepted a challenge from her best friend, and the results changed her trajectory forever.

During Matis’ sophomore year, friend Jil-laine Bagby, a senior, proposed the challenge to join, compete and succeed as a member of the Parma Redmen wrestling team.

Over the last two years, Matis dedicated her-self to the sport and the hyper-physical nature of training and competition it provided. The positive results from her hard work paid off almost immediately.

“Beating a boy for the first time was pretty awesome,” Matis said. “It was my first match ever and it was at Amherst. We went into over time, and I got a takedown, so I won. I had all my teammates there and it was my first match ever...It means a lot more if your teammates are all there.”

In February, Matis traveled to the first-ever Ohio High School Wrestling Coaches Association girls wrestling tournament and represented her school in the 111-pound weight class. During this historic, two-day tournament, 240 girls from 99 different schools competed.

Matis pinned her first opponent at the tournament in just 24 seconds. The following day in the semifinals, she pinned her next opponent in under two minutes, setting up a finals rematch with a familiar opponent from Reynoldsburg.

In the end, Matis took her opponent to the third period in the finals but came up short of the win and a first-place finish.

“I like to have my goals high,” Matis con-fided. “My goal was to be a state champ, but,



Senior Liz Matis has wrestled for the Redmen her junior and senior year.

even if I didn’t make, I got the next best thing. I’m not upset that I lost...I shook her hand, and then I went and shook her coach’s hand and then I went back to my coaches. I teared up and I hugged them.”

In April, Matis signed a national letter of in-tent to continue her wrestling career at Indian Hills Community College in Iowa. She plans to get her associate degree in Athletic Coaching, and later possibly wants to become an emer-gency medical technician.

“If you want to be a diligent, hard-working, disciplined person, then you do wrestling,” Matis explained. “I’ve learned to never give up on anything. If you feel you can’t do it, you for sure can do it...If you set yourself a goal, you can achieve it. Wrestling also teaches you also to be a good person. I’m grateful. Wrestling taught me to be ten times more grateful for every-thing that I have.”

Read the full story at www.parmacityschools.org.

Six VF juniors step up and make
positive changes at their school



Valley Forge High School juniors representing the school at the First Ring Student Leadership Institute. Back row (L-R): VF Physical Education teacher John Wessel, Zach Ansbro, Emily Beckner, Vito Frate, Adrian Mendez. Front row: Solomiya Dmitriv, Bryan Borowski.

by Dan Rajkovich

For six Valley Forge High School students, changing the world starts in their school.

These six Valley Forge juniors, Zach Ansbro, Emily Beckner, Bryan Bobrowski, Solomiya Dmitriv, Vito Frate and Adrian Mendez, have been working since the fall to identify and create solutions for problems at the school.

They are members of the First Ring Student Leadership Institute, a program sponsored through the First Ring Schools Col-laborative.

“The platform that the First Ring offers kids in the building is just trying to make changes for the better in the school,” Valley Forge Health and Physical Education teacher John Wessel explained. “They are everyday students who care about their school and want to make things better.”

The group of juniors chose to address mental health issues by better connecting students to school programs and events.

“We felt that if people were more connected to each other, or the school as a whole, we would improve our mental and social health,” Borowski said.

After identifying this problem, and a so-lution, these juniors developed a survey to send to all students. 972 out of 1400 students responded.

“972 students who took the survey gave us qualitative and quantitative data that really backed up what we were noticing ourselves

throughout the school over the last four years,” Borowski added. “It really set us on that this was a problem in our school, we noticed it, and data from almost 1000 students in the survey really showed what was going on.”

The group continues to develop and work on recommendations for addressing this problem. They will make their final recom-mendation to the 17 superintendents from FRSC districts. Additionally, they will make recommendations to Valley Forge adminis-trators.

Some of the ideas included allowing stu-dents to purchase dedicated parking spaces at the school, and then decorating them to be more welcoming. Another idea included allowing students to buy an athletic pass for the school for an entire season, boosting at-tendance. Other ideas included additional bonfires, pep rallies and maybe even talent shows.

“It’s really been a learning experience, for all of us,” Frate shared. “It’s something we can take with us and help develop upon it. Even after we graduate, we hope to make an impact and it changes the school for the bet-ter. It’s our goal.”

“I think it’s really interesting because it gives an opportunity to actually make change,” Ansbro expressed.

“I’m definitely proud of the work they have done,” Wessel explained. “They have re-ally good conversations, it’s been great.”

Read the full story at www.parmacityschools.org

PCSD families came together to learn
how they could Be Internet Awesome!



Parma Council of PTAs held a Be Internet Awesome! family night for elementary students in March. The program created by Google was made possible through a \$5,000 National PTA grant.

by Amy Popik

Are you and your family internet safe, se-cure and kind?

This was the question students and their families thought about and discussed during Be Internet Awesome!, a program hosted by the Parma Council of PTAs.

Made possible through a \$5,000 grant from National PTA and Google, the program was planned for three nights at in March at Parma Senior High from 6–8 p.m.

Students and families explored age-appropriate topics surrounding internet safety, such as cyber bullying, safe passwords, sharing too much information, connecting with strangers and inappropriate content.

“Things are constantly changing in the internet world and the conversations get harder and harder as kids get older so establishing that relationship early is helpful,” shared Angela Marvin, Parma Council of PTAs Recording Secretary who helped lead the information nights. “We want to share things that parents

aren’t aware of that are going on online.”

The program focused on five pillars of being internet awesome: Smart, Alert, Strong, Kind and Brave. At the event, families were split among the five pillars and discussed real-life experiences and worked through scenarios with the information provided by Google.

“It was interesting to hear discussions be-cause families were really getting involved and asking their kids questions,” Parma Council of PTAs President Heather Ekechi commented. “It’s really important to gain that trust between the parent and the child so when they get older, they feel comfortable sharing when things do come up on the internet.”

The Be Internet Awesome! workshops and grant program are part of National PTA’s PTA Connected Initiative.

“I want kids to know that they don’t have to navigate all of these things on their own, they can go to adults with it,” Marvin expressed.

“If anything, this was another evening for families to talk to their children,” Ekechi said.

Read the full story at www.parmacityschools.org.



Normandy High School sophomore Noah Bishop recently earned the rank of Eagle Scout!

Eagle Scout is the seventh and most in-volved rank that Boy Scouts can achieve.

Bishop had to complete a number of merit badges to earn the Eagle Scout rank. Over 220 different merit badges exist, and Eagle Scout candidates must com-plete 21 of them, with 13 required badges.

Another part is demonstrating leadership by planning and completing a service project for someone or something in your commu-nity. Bishop dedicated time doing small reno-vation projects at the Parma Animal Shelter.

Read the full story at www.parmacityschools.org.

The Parma City School District can’t wait to meet our incoming kindergartners and their families next school year!

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Heroes

Legacy Health Services Honk For Heroes Parade

Family-owned Legacy Health Services, which operates 10 skilled nursing facilities and three assisted living communities in Northeast Ohio, hosted a parade in tandem with “National Superhero Day” to honor its company heroes working to keep their residents safe. Called “Honk for Heroes,” the parade was held on Tuesday, April 28 – “National Superhero Day” – and featured local firefighters and their trucks, city leaders, including the mayor and city council members, plus families and community members who wanted to show their support for the Legacy staff.

The parade kicked off at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday at multiple Legacy locations and took place at each location until about 4:15 as staff changed shifts. Legacy has skilled nursing facilities in Parma, Cleveland Heights, Chardon, Cleveland, Middleburg Heights, Wickliffe and Oregon in suburban Toledo.

“Every department has shown extraordinary strength and dedication to our residents during this time, and they all deserve a #Superhero thank you,” said Legacy CEO Eliav Sharvit, who is part of

the third-generation of the family who founded Legacy more than 50 years ago after immigrating to the U.S.

Local community members and resident families were invited to participate by decorating their cars, dressing up as their favorite superhero or simply just showing up to honk and say thank you. Parade participants stayed in their vehicles and simply drove by or around our facilities. Staff at each of Legacy’s buildings received cookies from Devine Delights in Strongsville in the shape of a Captain America shield and stars to enjoy during the day.

About Legacy Health: Legacy Health Services is a family-owned and operated post-acute care company based in Parma, Ohio. “Our Family Caring for Yours” is as true today as it was when the company was created over fifty years ago. Legacy Health Services manages over 1,600 nursing home beds in ten nursing facilities and three assisted living facilities that serve northern Ohio. With over 2,500 dedicated employees, Legacy Health Services provides a complete con-

tinuum of care that includes skilled nursing, assisted living, rehabilitation services, long-term care and affiliates that provide full-time nurse practitioners and hospice. We provide our residents with compassionate care and quality services to meet all their needs, both clinical and non-clinical. We value each of our residents as individuals, with unique physical, spiritual, social, emotional and intellectual needs. Our goal is to treat everyone like family-with professionalism, respect and kindness. For more information, visit: <http://www.lhshealth.com>



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Honk For Heroes Parade at Broadview Multi-Care, 5520 Broadview Rd., Parma, Ohio



Pleasantview Care Center, 7377 Ridge Rd., Parma, Ohio, welcomed the Honk For Heroes Parade as it drove past their front entrance.



The staff of Pleasant Lake Villa, 7260 Ridge Rd. Parma, Ohio, were deeply moved as the Honk For Heroes Parade drove around their facility.

Parma Mayor Advocates For Federal Stimulus Package To Help Cities

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the previous recession. “The main difference is that our country controlled this economic shutdown. My hope is that there will be a shorter impact on our economy this time.” DeGeeter is

also hopeful. “Every day I’m communicating with mayors throughout the state, county health professionals and state leaders, including Gov. DeWine and Lt. Gov. John Husted. We are all working together, and I’m confident we’ll get through this.”

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Heroes

Area Fire Departments Pay Tribute To UH Parma Medical Center Staff

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Parma Heights, Broadview Heights, Brooklyn Heights, Brooklyn, Seven Hills, North Royalton and Independence joined Parma firefighters in the noisy celebration. Mission BBQ, which regularly honors veterans, police officers and firefighters, added health care workers to its list of local heroes and sent two trucks.

About a dozen red emergency

vehicles parked in the shape of a heart, which was only recognizable from the upper-level floors of the hospital. The rest of the vehicles sprawled out in the expansive and nearly empty parking lot. After all the vehicles were in position, the fire chiefs gave the signal, and the sirens flashed and wailed non-stop for more than 10 minutes. Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter and his family, as well as Parma Safety Director Tom Weinreich, participated in a parade of vehicles and SUVs that drove past the hospital entrance, honking their horns and waving to employees who stood outside or peered from hospital windows. Bagpipers played in the hospital vestibule.

If hospital employees weren't aware of the activity occurring in their parking lot when bright red fire and ladder trucks maneuvered into position, they were well aware when the sound-and-light show began. Anyone living in the hospital's vicinity might have assumed there was a major emergency in the city. Fortunately, there was no emergency, just an outpour of gratitude and shared pride.

In a message Parma Medical Center President Brian Monter sent to the Parma Fire Department that night, he wrote: "Everyone was so surprised and loved it. I so very much appreciate you doing this for our team."



Mayor DeGeeter and family showing their appreciation.

Korean War Vet Tell Us To Relax It Will Be Over Soon



Mount Alverna resident Alan Weilacher, 87, says "In the Korean War I was isolated in a tent for two years. This stay at home order is a piece of cake".



Parma Fire Chief Lasky

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AREA WIDE EVENTS

Staying Home Is The Safe Thing To Do

by Geoffrey Moore

Even though Norris has the help of his wife and Home Instead CARE-Givers at home, he understands this is not the time to bring in family members who live outside the home or visit with friends like he might have done just a few weeks ago. By now, we all know social distancing is necessary to slow the spread of COVID-19. But one downside of doing that is the emotional impact of isolation, which has become a real danger. And seniors, many of whom live alone, are at higher risk of serious health issues indirectly caused by loneliness and isolation.

During this public health crisis, we all should strive to use some creativity and intention to ensure regular contact with friends, neighbors, and loved ones. By using video chats, phone calls (or texts), or maybe even an “old fashioned” letter, we can offer the next best thing to being there. Home Instead Senior Care and its home care workers are providing that daily human interaction, too – via in-person visits or technology – that allows seniors to stay connected and engaged. Every Home Instead client receives a Care Tablet that is pre-loaded with his or her contacts (friends and family) that makes staying connected as easy as clicking a button.

While staying home is good strategy for us to avoid exposure, the social



Home Instead Senior Care Client Norris Jett has some advice for all of us.

distancing makes us feel, well, socially distant. But there are things all of us can do to stay connected. While the world stays home to prevent illness, family members, neighbors, friends – all of us! – must reach out to our neighbors and loved ones to make sure our seniors stay engaged. There is a source for ideas about acts of kindness: go to www.ReadyToCare.com and sign up to receive free weekly tips, care missions and inspiration from others delivered right to your phone. If everyone can do a little bit of caring, together we can

care for everyone.

During this time of uncertainty, Home Instead is providing kind, compassionate care to seniors in their own homes, the safest place to be. Until a vaccine is created, staying at home, even with a little help, is the best way to minimize the risk of contracting COVID-19, a very contagious disease. Of course, our CAREGivers are using “universal precautions” and best practices as outlined by the CDC and are mindful of the vulnerabilities of this very important group: the seniors we cherish.

A Grey Bearded Man

continued from page 4

for...and we learned...in that building. I graduated from the sixth grade in June 1977.

The name of the school was changed in 1973 after the death of a beloved Principal. Thereafter it bore his name as James E. Hanna Elementary School. The school was closed in response to declining enrollment between 1983 and when it was re-opened in 1998. It was finally closed in 2013. During the interim periods, the building has been leased for various purposes during the course of its' lifetime, since the initial opening in 1955. In 2019 plans were announced to schedule for the demolition of the aging building. As of late 2019 contracting bids for the demolition are being reviewed.

I am sad to see this treasure of local history, perish into collective memory. A grey bearded man, along with hundreds, and perhaps thousands of former students, as well as families within the Parma community, will likely mark the passing of Snowview/ James E. Hanna Elementary School as a somber event. Somehow, the passing of traditions into the record of the past, along with the shared memories there, ages us all...a little further along.

Farewell to Hanna School R.I.P. 1955-2020



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PERSPECTIVE

A Massive Government Failure That Was Avoidable

by Lee Kamps

While being confined to home the past several weeks except for an almost daily walk in the park and some visits to the grocery store, keeping proper social distancing, I have had plenty of time to read many columns and articles from different sources. One item that has become very clear during this coronavirus pandemic is that fact based, decisive and coordinated leadership from our government, especially our elected officials, is essential. This is not the time for boasting, campaigning or blaming others.

At the time of this writing, the United States leads the world in the number of confirmed cases of COVID 19 as well as the number of deaths attributed to the disease associated with the coronavirus. Every one of those deaths has been within the past two months since the first confirmed death from COVID 19 was reported on February 29.

At the current pace, and likely when you are reading this column, the total of confirmed deaths from this pandemic in the United States will exceed the total number of Americans killed in the Vietnam War. Experts also

believe that both the number of confirmed cases as well as deaths from this pandemic in the United States has been under reported, so the actual numbers might be considerably higher.

There were plenty of warnings that a potential pandemic was heading our way. As early as last December, the World Health Organization had issued a warning of a possible pandemic originating in China. Four years ago, the United States was perhaps the most prepared nation in the world for a pandemic. Our country had assembled a pandemic response team and had a plan in place to deal with a pandemic in our country. That was part of the National Security Council and the Centers for Disease Control. In addition, the CDC in Atlanta had a staff of competent physicians and scientists with expertise in dealing with possible pandemics.

Their reaction in dealing with the Ebola outbreak in west Africa was instrumental in keeping that epidemic confined to a few nations in west Africa. When a case of Ebola came to the United States, it was identified and quickly isolated. The only other people infected were some nurses treating

the patient. They were identified and treated successfully. No others became infected and this disease remained confined in west Africa. Granted, Ebola was not as contagious as COVID 19, but it was much more deadly.

Since 2017, that pandemic response team has been disbanded and many physicians and scientists have left the CDC due to hostility from the executive branch of the government. That loss of expertise as well as the pandemic response team, I believe has only exacerbated this pandemic.

But there is no excusing the lack of coordination and direction from the federal government and the President. There is no coherent message from the President on this pandemic. First, he says that he has the ultimate authority. Then the next day he says that the state governors are on their own as far as obtaining much needed supplies to treat COVID patients.

We saw it first a few months ago in Italy with overcrowded hospitals and people dying right and left in hallways; of doctors and nurses working round the clock with inadequate supplies and equipment. Americans believed “that can’t happen here, after all the United

States has the best health care system in the world”.

But it did happen here. We saw the images from New York City with bodies being stored in makeshift morgues of truck trailers in parking lots and mass burials in unmarked graves. We saw doctors and nurses getting sick and even dying.

Then there is the President saying that he takes no responsibility for any of this.

I remember from history where President Harry Truman once had a plaque on his desk saying, “The Buck Stops Here”. That meant that he took full responsibility for anything that was under his authority.

Nothing epitomizes the failure of the current President more than his saying that he takes no responsibility in the matter of the coronavirus pandemic in the United States. Harry Truman also had a famous expression “if you can’t stand the heat, get out of the kitchen”. The current President never should have entered the kitchen at all if he wasn’t willing to accept responsibility for the results. He should also realize that with great power comes great responsibility.

Rep Crossman Assists Constituents With Unemployment Issues

by Mallory DeTota

In the past five weeks nearly one million Ohioans have applied for unemployment as the state has grappled with life under quarantine. According to some estimates, Ohio’s jobless rate is 17% and, if that is true, that is higher than Ohio experienced at the depths of the Great Recession when Ohio’s unemployment rate peaked at 11.1% in January 2010. According to Ohio Jobs and Family Services, it has been receiving approximately 500,000 calls per day to address the unprecedented demand which has still not been sufficient to address the various delays and issues with obtaining unemployment funds.

According to State Representative Jeff Crossman, his office has been dealing with numerous complaints of problems and have been working with constituents to resolve issues with unemployment claims and help people get the needed funding during this

time of crisis. “It’s been very frustrating for many and I truly sympathize.” Said Rep. Crossman. “One thing we have been doing for constituents as I work from home here in Parma, is continue to press their claims with JFS staff members. I have insisted that constituents receive personal telephone calls to answer questions that cannot be addressed online and that has been fairly successful.” Nevertheless, Rep. Crossman stated that there were “several” constituents that had not been paid benefits despite filing their claims several weeks ago. “We will continue to advocate for these unemployed workers until they are paid. We are not going to stop fighting on their behalf” said Crossman.

One group not working and not traditionally eligible for unemployment payments from the state are people that are self employed or are classified as “1099” contract workers through their employer. Fortunately Congress included funding for these workers in the stimulus package and those claims can now be filed with the state of Ohio. This new program will provide 39 weeks of benefits and there is no minimum income requirement to qualify for these benefits. An additional \$600 per week will also be provided to workers through July 25th. That application process is now open and persons that might be eligible should begin applying now.

According to the Governor’s office, the state will begin relaxing some restrictions beginning May 1 but the Governor has been slow to provide specifics. According to Rep. Crossman he’s heard from many unemployed workers and business owners that are

eager to simply get back to work. “We have heard these concerns and we’re listening to everyone while providing this feedback to the Governor” said Crossman. “We want to return everyone back to work safely so we can resume a semblance of normal life as soon as possible.” Said Rep. Crossman.

News You Can Use (And Where To Find It)

by Gene Lovasy

From Cleveland Rape Crises Center (CRCC)....Telehealth Services are now available to include counseling, victim assistance & Project STAR (Sex Trafficking Advocacy & Recovery) services. Chat online at <https://clevelandrapecrisis.org> ; Hotlines continue to be monitored 24/7....Project STAR: 885.431.STAR (7827); Crisis & Support: Call or text 216.619.6192 or 440.423.2020.

The Center for Community Solutions.... has compiled information about things like how have benefits changed, how to get food assistance, unemployment benefits & also how to give back to our local foodbank during this crisis. Check it out here: <https://tinyurl.com/CCS-Covid>

From Islamic Center of Cleveland (6055 W. 130th St., Parma)....Has reinstituted its fresh produce food pantry for low income families. It takes place the 1st Saturday of each month from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. Please bring ID & your own bags. No admittance to property before 10:30.

Local Hospital Systems Coronavirus web sites & phone numbers:

University Hospitals.... <https://www.uhhospitals.org/services/coronavirus>; Ph: 440-703-8121.

Parma Medical Center....

<https://www.uhhospitals.org/locations/uh-parma-medical-center> Ph: 440.743.3000

Cleveland Clinic.... <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/landing/preparing-for-coronavirus>; Ph:855.697.3750.

MetroHealth.... <https://www.metrohealth.org/infectious-disease/covid-19>; Ph:440-59-COVID (440-592-6843).

From University Settlement’s Southwest Community Based Services:

Was formally known as the Parma Area Family Collaborative &, effective April 1st, reflects a change in lead agency from the Parma City School District to University Settlement (<https://www.universitysettlement.net>) . They will serve the same 14 communities; their mission: Nurture – Strengthen - Connect , youth, adults, families and communities, will continue & the first class services/programs provided will likely grow. Follow “Southwest Community Based Services” on FB for updates and announcements.

Every Wednesday, starting May 6th, from 6:00 to 7:00 pm University Settlement will be hosting a ZOOM based discussion about managing your money during this crises period.

Read the rest of this article online at:parmaobserver.com

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PARMA ART SCENE

Parma Art Scene

by Kathryn Mabin

I recently read an article in April 21st The Nonprofit Times that really caught my attention. Covid-19 has had a devastating economic impact on America’s arts sector. Thousands of arts organizations across the country are reporting a \$4.5 billion loss to date to their bottom line with an impact of \$10.7 billion to our economy. Additionally, 94% have had to cancel their events. This data was culled from a Covid-19 Impact Survey by Americans For The Arts.

Our creative individuals have to imagine what they wish to create, determine the steps to do so, work to produce it, find ways to promote it, and now due to social distancing, look for creative venues to sell it. Those creatives that can, are using virtual venues

to do so.

Prama Artspace Gallery is closed due to Covid-19. You can view the Gastronomy exhibit online at www.pramaartspace.com, Show Galleries tab, as well as boutique items on the Boutique tab. Artwork and boutique items are for sale. Contact owner and curator, Sean Mabin, at mind2made@yahoo.com, if you are interested in purchasing any of these reasonably priced items.

Here are more online exhibits:

Cleveland Institute of Art – Handled With Care, an online exhibit featuring painting, drawing, sculpture and more from Institute juniors.

Ursuline Collage – Self Portraits-Artists Respond to Covid-19, a fully digital exhibit.

Our Small Businesses

by Kathryn Mabin

I’ve always thought of Parma as a big city (7th largest in Ohio) with a small town feel. Our neighborhoods have a sense of community. When bad things happen, neighbors step up to help. Covid-19 has confirmed my belief that Parma is a good place to raise a family. On several Facebook pages I’ve noticed so many different individuals doing lots of good deeds. Like donating food, or cheering on those working so hard in the medical community. Many are just small gestures that mean so much to the recipient. Some are large donations of supplies to those that need them. I’ve heard of neighbors donating their stimulus money to food banks too, to help those that need it more now. All in all it warms my heart to see our community come together to help one another.

I’ve always felt that what makes this community so special is the small unique businesses. They are the backbone of our community. When you drive down our main streets, what you see aren’t tons of big box stores, but small family owned restaurants, butchers, bakeries, pet groomers, hair salons, barbers, and deli’s. In cities like ours across the U.S. you don’t find the ethnic shops in the abundance you do here. Predictions indicate that 24% of these small family owned businesses won’t be able to survive. It will be a sad day to see 24% of our store fronts vacant, and devastating to our cities economy. Not to mention the sense of loss we’ll feel, when our favorites are

gone.

When the U.S. government started offering loans/grants to small business I was elated. I had hoped that this would surely be a solution for them. Unfortunately, none of the small businesses I spoke to in our area ever received a penny of those funds. Instead, I understand large chains found loop holes to the program and took advantage of the situation. That really makes me mad. The 20 million a certain chain restaurant received could have saved 200 to 300 of our small businesses. You can bet I won’t be giving those chains that took advantage of the situation my business, and I hope you won’t either.

Last month I reported that for every \$100 spent at a small business, \$68 of it stayed in the community, whereas \$100 spent at a big box store, only \$43 stayed local. That difference means a lot to our community. As our businesses slowly re-open, I hope that you will remember the importance of our local small businesses, and what they bring to our local economy and the uniqueness of their goods.

By the way, the Parma Observer is a small business also. It is the only local print media dedicated to the Tri-City area. Articles, like mine, are written by volunteer staff, and offer an open forum for individuals to voice their opinions and share news which is pertinent to the community. Support the Parma Observer also.

Please take a stand to support our local small business, we need them.

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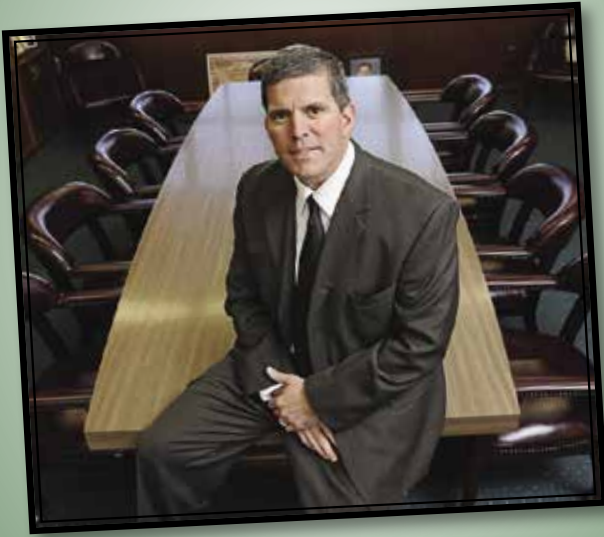
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PARMA OBSERVER

Faith Community Directory

- All Faiths Pantry
P.O. Box 34239 Parma, OH 44134 216-496-4329
allfaithspantry.org
- Bethlehem Lutheran Church
7500 State Rd. Parma, OH 440-845-2230
www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com
- Divinity Lutheran Church
11877 Blossom Ave. Parma Hts., OH 44130, 440-845-2060
www.divinitylutheran.com
- The Islamic Center of Cleveland
6055 W. 130th St. Parma, OH 44130 216-362-0786
www.iccleveland.org
- Ridgewood United Methodist Church
6330 Ridge Rd. Parma, OH 44129 440-885-1360
www.ridgewoodumc.org
- St. Bridget's of Kildare Church
5620 Hauserman Rd. Parma, OH 44130 440-886-4434
www.Stbridgetparma.com
- Holy Family Catholic Church
7367 York Rd. Parma, OH 44130 440-842-5533
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A Message From Mayor Byrne

continued from page 1

required by both employees and the general public entering. Dentist and veterinary offices will re-open May 1, general offices will re-open May 4, and consumer retail and services will re-open on May 12. Until further notice, the stay-at-home order remains in place and the gatherings of ten (10) limit is still in place which means that this year we will not be having our annual Memorial Day parade. We will have a small private service in conjunction with the Parma-South Presbyterian Church and make sure it is available to the public via the internet. Please remember those who lost their lives in the defense our country and freedom, as they have earned our eternal gratitude.

On the home page of our website, there is a list of businesses that remain closed. We will continue to update the website with information but please note that the following remain closed at this time: restaurants and bars, personal appearance and beauty services, recreation and swimming pools and senior centers.

Even though the Parma Heights Senior Center is closed for daily lunch, programs and activities, our Director Trish James, her staff, and volunteers have been busy reaching out to our senior population. They have made and delivered over 200 lunches a day since

the Center closed. They have worked with the Cleveland Foodbank and have also delivered boxes of non-perishable foods as well as providing uplifting messages and news. I have received dozens of messages from our seniors about how pleased they are with the services they continue to receive.

You may also be aware that the deadline to file federal, state and local taxes has been extended to July 15 though you can submit your taxes at any time. The CCA Tax office here at City Hall is not providing walk-in service at this time, however, our residents can call them for help at 440.888.6440. There is a drop box conveniently located outside City Hall (6281 Pearl Road) for taxes as well as for building permit applications.

PEARL ROAD RE-CONSTRUCTION

Construction projects and road repairs continue. In the Manorford and Parma Park neighborhoods, Columbia Gas is undertaking a line replacement project. Anyone with questions or concerns can contact Raquel Colon, External Affairs Specialist, at 419.315.8398 or Rcolon@nisource.com.

Taking a regional approach to tackling infrastructure issues, the Cities of Parma Heights, Middleburg Heights and Strongsville partnered

Read the rest of this article online at:parmaobserver.com

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