

“The road to success is always under construction.”- Lily Tomlin

Phoenix Rising In Parma

by Daniel P. McCarthy

2020 has been a year filled with disappointing and hard luck news like no other. Who's ready for an inspirational and uplifting story? When he graduated from Valley Forge High School in 1989, John Allender, like many young people had a dream, and his was to play guitar, Blues guitar to be exact. Making a living was first and foremost, and John became a skilled rough-plumber, and later a certified Risograph Digital Duplicator technician, but all the while he



Phoenix of the Year award with the winning bands from all over the USA competing in Memphis for a national title and the prestige that goes along

he lived at all. When it is said "injured from head to toe", in his case, this was no exaggeration. The amazing and heroic first responders somehow saved his life, though many would have given up at the horrific scene. After several surgeries in Florida, and even more after returning to Ohio, John was left without legs from above the knees, injuries to the spine, both arms, neck, brain, eyes, and numerous other organs. His road to recovery was a long one, filled with daily challenges that not many could withstand, no matter what level of support existed. People watched, waited, prayed, and hoped for the best to happen. Little by little, step by step, our friend John struggled through his pain, persevered, and delighted his fans with every achievement great and small. Thanks to social media, we could see the progress he was making in his recovery. Through it all he consistently promised that he would indeed play his guitar again.

Though I never doubted it, even I was pleasantly surprised to learn that on November 17, a mobile recording unit came to John Allender's home in Parma for the purpose of recording some guitar solos to be included on an album due out in April of 2021, Mike Onesko's Guitar Army. Featuring Cleveland

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John Allender alive and well in Parma, Ohio doing the thing he loves best.

practiced his trade and played guitar wherever and whenever he could. By the time he lived in Florida in the early 2000's, he was established in the Fort Myers Area on his own, fronting the John Allender Band. In 2015 his band won the International Blues Competition title for South Florida, a contest started by B.B. King,

with it. The John Allender Band went to Memphis, competed fiercely, but did not win the Grand Prize on their first time. Everything was going well though. Until August 13, 2016, that is.

While crossing US 41, John was struck by an automobile and was so severely injured that it actually defies logic that

Script Parma Photo Of The Month



This month's script Parma picture of the month was submitted by Gina Casselberry. Bride Gina and her groom, Jake, appear with their wedding party. Gina and Jake will receive a gift card courtesy of Rookies Sports Bar and Grill, as well as a free car wash courtesy of Sgt. Clean's Car Wash. Pictures can be emailed for the monthly contest to Parma City Council President Sean Brennan at councilmanbrennan@msn.com. Be sure to include your name and address.



Santa On Parade

by Kathryn Mabin

The City of Parma is unable to have the Christmas Parade this year due to the pandemic. So, two Parma councilwomen teamed up to bring a parade to your door with Santa On Parade.

On November 28, 2020, Councilwoman Kristen Saban had Santa tour her Ward 4. Santa was accompanied by the Parma Police Auxil-

iary with lights flashing and sirens blaring to announce the arrival of Santa, much to the enjoyment of the children.

Saturday, December 12, 2020, Santa will hold court at Rudy's Strudel & Bakery parking lot, located at 5580 Ridge Road from 11am to 4pm with hot cocoa and treats.

Sunday, December 13,

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Seven Hills Spotlight Businesses



Seven Hills Councilman John Kulju presenting November Business of the Month on behalf of Mayor Biasiotta to Dairy Queen.

by Kristin Saban

This past year is certainly one that will not be soon forgotten. The obstacles and hurdles of 2020 have been well documented. Despite this, it has been this administration's desire and goal to continue to move our city forward. Indeed, it has been our continued purpose to foster an environment in which our City continues to grow and evolve in the 21st century. While we will continue to meet the challenges 2020 has presented head on, we also believe it is just as critical to embrace success and celebrate accomplishments. One initiative that embodies this is Mayor Biasiotta's Business of the Month Program, realized early on within the new Administration. While it is

unquestionably the residents that form the foundation of any city, the businesses within the community provide an avenue for cities to move forward. Therefore, it was an early priority within this Administration to make this idea into a reality.

Acumen Solutions, located at 5700 Lombardo Center was honored in March of 2020 as the first Business of the Month, followed by Si Senor located at 7729 Broadview Rd., Edward Jones located at 7305 Broadview Rd., Seven Hills Tavern located at 7265 Broadview Rd., Georges' Deli located at 3001 E Ridgewood Dr., Marge Walter Caterers located at 7589 Broadview Rd., Broadview's 20th Century Barber Shop II located at 5150 Broadview Rd., and

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COMMUNITY NEWS

The President's Corner

by Sean Brennan, Parma City Council President



I am currently training to complete my 100th full 26.2 mile marathon, which I will be running to benefit those in need. As the founder of the annual Parma Peanut Butter Drive, I have found that COVID-19 has resulted in a greater need for food assistance in our community and that the ability to collect donations is quite challenging. Determined to make the 10th annual Parma Peanut Butter Drive, sponsored by Rumpke Waste & Recycling, the most successful to date, I plan to parlay my personal achievement to ensure the success of the Drive.

Please consider donating to this

year's drive. Whether it is a total \$5 donation or \$1 or more for each mile I plan to run, I welcome whatever folks are able to give. The goal is raise \$5,000 to benefit the clients of All Faiths Pantry. Due to the challenges presented by the pandemic, jars of peanut butter will not be collected this year. Instead, cash donations may be submitted to <https://fb.me/e/2YQaXp8EJ> or checks mailed to All Faiths Pantry, P.O. Box 34239, Parma, Ohio, 44129 (place Parma Peanut Butter Drive in the message).

John Visnauskas, All Faiths Pantry Founder and Vice President, stated the following, "A pledge of just fifty

cents a mile is enough for us to source a whole case of PB as a Food Bank agency. Sean has not only brought tons of PB to Parma area seniors through the years, but more importantly, he has helped us bring public awareness to the challenges that local seniors face in feeding themselves every day." Visnauskas added, "We're very proud of all the individuals and community partners that have supported Sean's initiative over the past decade."

I plan to run all 26.2 miles within the city of Parma on Saturday, December 19 starting at 8:00 a.m. My route will begin and end at the script Parma sign, and take me through several of Parma's major thoroughfares and neighborhoods. To view the full route visit <https://www.plotaroute.com/mobile/route/1350569?units=miles>.

To learn more about All Faiths Pantry visit <https://allfaithspantry.org>. For questions about the drive or to become a sponsor email me at councilmanbrennan@msn.com or call 440-885-8091.

The drive will once again run from December 1 through December 31.



County Taking HEAP Calls While Donna Smallwood Activities Center Remains Closed

by Carolyn Kovach

The Donna Smallwood Activities Center and Office on Aging offers a variety of programs that benefit residents ages 60 and older. One program, which is available to Parma residents, is the Cuyahoga County Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP). For residents' convenience, a HEAP Office is located in the Activities Center. Residents should note, however, that HEAP is a county program, not a city program.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Activities Center and the HEAP Office in the center have been closed. County HEAP employees are working from home or the downtown Cleveland office. Whether it is Summer



HEAP, Winter HEAP or the PIP program, all applications or re-certifications must be scheduled by HEAP staff.

The Activities Center does not make appointments, and the staff is not allowed to take confidential HEAP information. Nor does the Activities

Center staff have access to the county database to look up information. Residents inquiring about HEAP must contact the county at 216-350-8008 or visit www.ceogc.itfrontdesk.com.

Each HEAP participant will receive a date and time for an appointment, and then a county HEAP employee will contact the participant. All appointments are being conducted over the phone.

During the phone appointment, the HEAP staff member will address the participant's questions or concerns, explain what paperwork is needed and provide location details about where the paperwork can be dropped off or an address where paperwork can be mailed.

When it is safe for the Activities Center to reopen, the HEAP Office in the center will also reopen for residents' convenience.

Seven Hills Spotlight Businesses

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Dairy Queen located at 7475 Broadview Rd. to date. Each one of these Seven Hills businesses is dedicated to making our community a better place by giving back to our community and providing superior customer service or products.

Seven Hills has always been a place that families want to call home. Today, it is becoming quite clear that the businesses within our border feel the same way. They have moved to our City for a better business opportunity and are working with our residents to see our city thrive.

The Business of the Month is more than a simple initiative. These businesses in our city are more than brick and mortar storefronts. They are more than just walls and window dressings. They are our friends and neighbors. The artwork and decorations that adorn the walls often tell a personal or

family story. It is quite common that when we frequent these stores that we are welcomed by name and are greeted with warm friendly smiles (albeit, often from under a mask). The owners and employees mean a great deal to the city. They are part of the Seven Hills Family.

This program is a way for this Administration, and by extension our entire city, to demonstrate our appreciation for the businesses that make up our community. We look forward to 2021 and the opportunity it affords us to acknowledge even more establishments. There are many reasons to be excited about next year. Our city's growth is fluid and remains impressive. It is our pledge to continue to show our appreciation. Please remember these fine businesses for your holiday needs this season.

O-B-S-E-R-V-E-R

Parma

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Free Coronary Calcium Test
Leads To Cardiac Surgery, Averts Medical Crisis

by CJ Sheppard

Exploring rocky, remote elevations fills Alan Studt’s leisure time. So luck was on his side when – just weeks before he was found to have four significant blockages in his coronary arteries through a coronary artery calcium score (CACS) test – the guitarist and graphic designer enjoyed a vacation climbing in the mountains of Idaho with his girlfriend.

The diagnostic cardiac test performed after Alan’s return home gave the Parma man a more sobering and immediate goal: to undergo further cardiac evaluation and, if needed, a stent replacement or bypass surgery before a serious heart attack struck.

“At first I wanted whatever was the best test to look at my heart,” says Alan, 62, who opted for a calcium score because the noninvasive test is offered free at all University Hospitals radiology locations. “Then my goal was to get a bypass before something happened.”

Far from a perfect score
A calcium score is a low-dose CT scan of the heart that shows calcified plaque in the coronary arteries, an indicator for atherosclerosis. The test is a useful and recommended tool for predicting future risk of heart attack. Zero is a perfect score. Under 399 means some hardening of the arteries is present. A calcium score over 400 reflects significant heart disease and

hence an elevated risk of a heart attack.

Alan’s calcium score was a whopping 1638. Considering his older sister had a heart attack and his brother had a heart procedure around the same age at which he was diagnosed, Alan wasn’t completely surprised. He knew he could not waste any time and pursued an appointment with a cardiologist at University Hospitals Parma Medical Center.

“Any patients with a coronary artery calcium score over zero deserves to be evaluated by a cardiologist for optimal risk assessment, risk factor modification, and further cardiac testing as needed,” says Farshad Forouzanmehr, MD, PhD, who performed an coronary catheterization on Alan through his wrist, a procedure that only took 10 minutes. “As opposed to the old days, when the cardiologist performed the catheterization through the groin, requiring the patient to lie flat for four hours after the procedure, we now do 90 percent of our heart catheterizations through the right wrist, which makes it much simpler and safer. Our patients can sit right up after the procedure and generally go home the same day even if stent placement is needed.”

In Alan’s heart arteries, Dr. Forouzanmehr found four blockages that were 70-95 percent occluded, including the left anterior descending artery, known as the “widowmaker” because a block-



age to this major vessel can trigger sudden death. Alan was scheduled for a quadruple coronary bypass surgery the next day.

“I think he dodged a huge bullet,” says his longtime girlfriend Gale Franko, a retired critical care nurse who spent several years working in cardiac rehabilitation and performs with Alan in an acoustic duo called Desmond & Molly that favors Beatles tunes.

“Everyone says they can’t believe

he had open heart. I guess it’s because he was in good shape and his heart was strong from the start.”

As a nurse who spent many years of her career rehabilitating cardiac patients who had undergone coronary bypass surgery or other cardiac events, Gale has been particularly impressed with Alan’s care in UH Parma’s Heart Center. She even noted that cardiac surgeon Masumi Yamamuro, MD, used a wound vacuum with Alan’s incision, resulting in the thinnest, cleanest scar she has ever seen.

“When my family goes into the hospital, I am very observant and not shy about speaking up,” says Gale. “I could not find one issue with the Heart Center, nurses or doctors. They were all top-notch – just amazing.”

A priceless free test

Many insurance companies and health systems don’t cover this test. UH offers it for free. Coronary calcium scoring is recommended for men over 45 and women over 55 who have never been diagnosed with coronary artery disease but have a history of high blood pressure or cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, smoking or a family history of heart disease.

Alan’s only previously known warning signs were moderately high cholesterol of 250 and high blood pres-

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GLIMPSES OF THE THE TRI-CITY AREA



Parma Mayor Timothy J. DeGeeter at the Westcreek Stormwater Stewardship Center in February delivering his State of the City speech, right before the pandemic started.



Parma Municipal Court Judge Deeana O'Donnell is sworn in by two of her children in January, standing in Parma City Council Chambers before an assembled audience.



Pleasant Lake Villa and Paramount Senior Living held a joint drive through event in November where boxed food, beverages and other useful items were provided by their staff to people in the community.



On 11/27/20 Supporters of President Trump stood on the corner of Pearl and Stumph Rds. in Parma Heights protesting the results of the November 3 election.



James E Hanna School building on Snow Rd. still standing long after it was originally scheduled for demolition. Unverified reports say that the Metroparks has expressed interest in the property. Stay tuned.



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Parma Schools Came Together for Annual PEA Food Drive

Win a New Chevy Trax!



Every year, the Parma City School District comes together to collect canned goods and non-perishable food items for the Parma Hunger Center through the PEA Food Drive.

“What once used to surprise does not anymore,” expressed Will Olexa, Green Valley Elementary teacher and Parma Education Association, or PEA, community relations chair. “Over the many years I have helped with the food drive, there has always been a great outpouring of generosity from the staff, students and families of our PCSD.”

It is estimated that over 5,000 items were collected from buildings across the district and donated to the community on November 12, 2020.

“As before, the PCSD family came through,” he further shared. “The number of donations during such a difficult period of time more than stocked the shelves at the Parma Hunger Center and will go on to help our surrounding families in need for a long time.”

To support the cause, Greenbriar Middle School held a ‘Stuff The Bus’ event on November 10.

“Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GMS wanted to err on the side of caution and make the event one day only,” explained Ryan Olsavsky, an intervention specialist at the school. “We also wanted a way to still have individuals drop donations off but limit the number of individuals within the building, so that’s when our administrators suggested a ‘Stuff The Bus’

event. We were able to donate a total of 70 boxes!”

Thoreau Park Elementary School challenged each grade to donate the most items. The school collected over 630 cans and boxes of food for local families, with 3rd grade named the winning class!

Many schools, like Renwood, Pleasant Valley, Green Valley, Ridge-Brook and Parma Park Elementary Schools, had dedicated drop off days where anyone could donate, while Valley Forge High School generously made monetary donations.

Local PTA units with PEA and PCSD’s Transportation Department also joined in the effort to help those in need with a Stuff the Bus event on November 7 at Byers Field and Pleasant Valley Shopping Center.

“Thank you to everyone who played a part in making this food drive a great success,” Olexa shared. “Thank you to all those who helped collect items, pack items, coordinate collections, donated food or money or time, our teachers, our PTAs, our home liaisons, our principals, our students and all those who I may have forgotten to mention that played a role in this event. A big thank you to my team at the hunger center that tirelessly unloaded cars and sorted items for hours. The combination of teachers, PTA representatives, and hunger center volunteers was yet another amazing show of care and teamwork.”

Read the full story at www.parmacityschools.org

The Parma City Schools Foundation, Inc. is once again giving away a brand new car! Serpentine Chevrolet of Strongsville has generously sponsored a 2020 Chevy Trax that will be awarded to one lucky winner on December 10, 2020!*

The winning ticket will be pulled live on the Parma Schools Foundation and Parma City School District Facebook pages!

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at any school building and the District’s Administrative Offices. Deadline to purchase tickets is December 3, 2020.

Cash or check will be accepted. Please make checks payable to Parma City Schools Foundation.

Second place prize is \$500 and third place prize is \$250.

All proceeds from this car raffle will benefit students and student organizations of the Parma City School District.

*Winner need not be present to win. Car must be titled to a person 18 years or older. Car pick-up is the responsibility of the winner and possession must be taken by December 31, 2020. All prizes must be claimed within 30 days. Sales and income taxes are the responsibility of the winners.



Lashonda Ablesator

“Lashonda is incredibly supportive of her staff and all our Remedial families. She helps us work through our tech, curriculum, and stress issues and makes sure we are taking care of ourselves, not just our students. She is understanding and realistic in her expectations of all and constantly encourages staff and students to improve and grow.”

— Stefanie Albright, PCSD Teacher

Mrs. Sengstack

“Thank you, Greenbriar Middle School Team & staff, for your friendship, leadership, dedication, and patience. You are able to hold things together during the most trying of situations. You are able to stay the course when curveballs are constantly being thrown in your direction. You have sacrificed so much of your time to help our House &W run smoothly. Through all this, you are able to lead our students in being the best they can be. We have an awesome team. Thank you!”

— Ms. Hoff, PCSD Teacher

Kate Bellett

“Kate has gone above and beyond to help me with my transition to Thoreau Park this year. She is always there to quickly answer my questions, keeps me updated on what’s going on around the building and community, and ALWAYS offering to help me any way she can. I would not have survived first quarter without her. I am beyond thankful for how Kate has helped guide me through these uncertain times as a teacher and has helped make my transition to TP as smooth as possible.”

— Brittny Grimes, PCSD Teacher

Mrs. Sengstack

“Thank you, Greenbriar Middle School Team & staff, for your friendship, leadership, dedication, and patience. You are able to hold things together during the most trying of situations. You are able to stay the course when curveballs are constantly being thrown in your direction. You have sacrificed so much of your time to help our House &W run smoothly. Through all this, you are able to lead our students in being the best they can be. We have an awesome team. Thank you!”

— Ms. Hoff, PCSD Teacher

thankful together

PCSD

PCSD Thankful Together

2020 has been nothing short of an epic challenge for all of us but as we enter the holiday season we want to take the time to share our immense gratitude!

With that, please use this form to nominate PCSD staff and students that you are thankful for! We will be sharing these nominations on social media throughout the holiday season.

Please visit www.parmacityschools.org to submit your nomination!

Congratulations PBIS Award Winners

In 2020, the Ohio PBIS Network and the Ohio Department of Education recognized 13 of our schools for their PBIS programs.

Three schools received silver recognition for their Tier I and Tier II PBIS Supports and 10 schools received bronze recognition for their Tier I PBIS Supports!

Tier I PBIS supports are school-wide programs that create a positive school environment with clear expectations for behaviors in the classroom and throughout the school. Tier II are additional and individualized supports and interventions for students.

According to the Ohio PBIS Network, districts and schools recognized “do a superior job of enhancing their school climates and cultures in support of their schools, students, and academic achievement. These districts recognize that improvement in student behavior and achievement within their schools requires changes in adult behavior and in district and school systems.”

Congratulations to all award winners! #PCSDProud

Silver Recognition for Tier I and Tier II PBIS Supports



John Muir Elementary School
Thoreau Park Elementary School
Parma Senior High School

Bronze Recognition for Tier I PBIS Supports



Dentzler Elementary School
Green Valley Elementary School
Greenbriar Middle School
Hillside Middle School
Normandy High School
Pleasant Valley Elementary School
Renwood Elementary School
Ridge-Brook Elementary School
Valley Forge High School

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Inspiration



Hide The Mistletoe!

by Susan Banks - Yurik

As our days come and go with pandemic challenges like wearing face masks and many other changes, I find myself reminiscing of past holiday celebrations with family and friends. There is nothing quite like a gathering where one is embraced with kisses and hugs from those we hold most dear. As I attempt to celebrate with a Covid conscience, my thoughts drift back in time.

I find myself reminiscing to the days when my adult children were youngsters. I would hug them ever so close with their arms wrapped tightly around me, nestled snug and safe in my arms. As I would reach down to kiss the top of their heads, the scent of burning oak and maple leaves lingered in their hair. The smoke from burning embers permeated the air around us.

We would walk along as the sounds of rustling leaves crunched beneath our shoes. It seemed like it was only a few days ago that the sun felt so warm against our skin. Every so often we would feel a slight winter's chill in the air as the anemic sun began its early descent over the horizon. Soon it would be time for Christmas trees,

ornaments, colorful paper packages with bright red bows and mistletoe!

Yes, holiday celebrations will be somewhat different this year. I suspect many of us will stay in our holiday flannel pajamas, perhaps just a bit longer. The fragrance of pine, cranberry, and pumpkin spice scented candles will still create a cozy atmosphere. Angels made of delicate porcelain and sparkling glass will remind us of the very first Christmas. Stockings will still be hung with care, bright red poinsettia flowers will continue to bring holiday cheer while Christmas cookies will be baked with swirls of sweetness that tickle our taste buds. Church bells will still ring out, virtual choirs will sing, and conversations will continue by phone, text or virtual videos.

Family members and friends will be greatly missed as we hold precious thoughts of them within our hearts. Even though this year we will celebrate differently than any time before, we will continue to celebrate with kindness and love for one another, whether they are near or far.

And, this year hide the mistletoe!!

Wishing you all a most blessed, happy and safe holiday season!

I Believe

by Daniel Taddeo

A parent's responsibility includes viewing every child without showing partiality. America evolved from a Biblical foundation. The majority of its residents have lost sight of this fact. Any permanent progress in life begins on the inside and spreads to the outside. Being in the majority can get us into a lot of trouble. Biblical stewardship (trustee) is a way of living in which our blessings take on primary importance.

Communication is hearing what has not been said. In the end, our choices shape our character and we receive what we give. It is foolish to deny ourselves joy by wishing we were in a future or past time. It is well to drop the old so that one may seize the new. Keep our faces upturned to God as the flowers do to the sun. Look, and our souls shall love and grow. Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who shows no discretion.

Love others just the way they are. Love should be in the center of our being and in all that we do. Making fun of people never helps and always hurts. Minimize looking back and looking forward and maximize the present. No temptation has seized us except what is common to all. One of the greatest steps in discovering who we are is discovering who God is. Our curiosity should focus on the Word of God. Our standards for living need to conform to God's Word.

Set our minds on things above, not earthly. Since we are like no other human being ever created since the beginning of time, we are incompa-

table. Some of the secrets of a happy life are continuous, small treats. The days and the years inevitably turn the pages and open a new chapter in our life. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. The only thing that we take with us when we die is our character. There are better things ahead than any we leave behind.

There is something in every season to celebrate with thanksgiving. Time is a precious gift of God, so precious that it is only given to us moment by moment. To be carnally (immorally) minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life with peace. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. We can grow, learn, and trust just as much or more presently than we ever did in the past. We do not remember days, we remember moments. Make moments worth remembering. We enter God's kingdom by birth. This means a person voluntarily chooses the "second" (spiritual) birth. We have the opportunity to demonstrate God's love to others in a way that no other person could ever do. We know that we have come to know God if we obey His commandments. We must do everything possible to focus on the many positive aspects around us. We should resist allowing others to compromise our moral values.

Who we believe we are is what will play out in the long run.

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?



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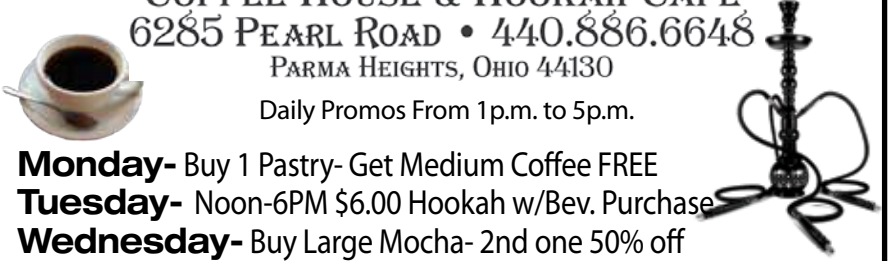
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"I'm Lucky To Be Alive - And I'm So Thankful To UH!"

by CJ Sheppard

Three years ago on Thanksgiving day, Destiny Faye Porter met her fiancé. This year, they will both be giving thanks that she is alive to celebrate the holiday. Two weeks before their October wedding, this otherwise healthy, 25-year-old woman had a medical crisis stemming from new onset diabetes. She went from teaching third grade, planning her wedding and preparing a new home for her and her future husband's life together to not feeling well and suddenly landing at death's doorstep.

When her fiancé, a surgical technician at UH Cleveland Medical Center, was unable to rouse her one morning, he rushed her to the Emergency Department at UH Parma Medical Center. They quickly discovered she was suffering from diabetic ketoacidosis – her body wasn't producing insulin, and her blood sugar was off the charts at over 600. She was admitted to the ICU for management.

But the ICU Medical Director Abdullah AlGhamdi, MD, felt strongly that there was more going on and immediately performed an ultrasound on her heart. Her heart was barely pumping due to severe stress-induced cardiomyopathy. Destiny was going into cardiogenic shock, a serious con-



Destiny Porter's life was saved in UH Parma Medical Center's Intensive Care Unit after an attack of acute ketoacidosis, resulting from new onset diabetes, triggered a medical crisis. The episode caused a cardiac condition that required mechanical intervention, coordinated between UH Parma and Cleveland medical centers. Destiny received more than a month of acute rehabilitation at UH Parma after the condition left her paralyzed from the waist down.

dition that occurs when the heart fails to pump enough blood and oxygen to the brain, kidneys, and other vital organs. They had to act quickly to prevent an imminent cardiac arrest. Dr. AlGhamdi consulted cardiologist Paul Poommipanit, MD, and cardiac surgeon Masumi Yamamuro,

MD. They all decided to initiate ECMO as a lifesaving measure since it was the only available option for her multiple organ failure. This heart-lung machine temporarily takes over pumping for the heart and requires a specific team to administer and manage. "I knew she'd experience a cardiac



arrest without mechanical support," said Dr. AlGhamdi. "A delay of even a couple hours and she would have been dead."

The ECMO team arrived within an hour, connected her to the machine and transferred her to UH Cleveland Medical Center. She suffered a cardiac arrest within an hour of arrival at main campus.

"I'm lucky" Six days later, Destiny woke up – intubated, with a feeding tube, and paralyzed from the waist down due to neuropathy. It had been a long road. She returned to UH Parma for 37 days of acute rehabilitation, learning to maneuver with a wheelchair. She is stunned by what she's been through, but happy to be alive.

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PERSPECTIVE

Empty Chairs At Empty Tables

by Lee Kamps

In the Broadway musical Les Misérables based on Victor Hugo’s classic novel of 19th century France; there is a poignant musical number in the second act called Empty Chairs at Empty Tables. The scene is where a group of women lament about the students and friends who gathered at the café were all killed when the French army stormed the barricades during a protest against conditions in Paris during unrest in 1830.

Fast forward to 2020 and this song could be sung at many tables this holiday

season as there are no doubt many empty chairs at empty tables. Since the United States recorded its first death attributed to the COVID 19 illness on February 29, at this writing more than 253,000 Americans have died from this disease. In addition, more than 12 million Americans have been infected by this virus.

No doubt that by the time most people will gather for Christmas, the total American deaths from COVID 19 will exceed the total battle deaths from the Second World War of 291,557 and no doubt by March 1, one year after the first death from COVID, the deaths

from COVID 19 will exceed all American deaths from the Second World War of 405,399. Put into perspective, the United States could have more deaths from this pandemic in one year than all the deaths from the Second World War which spanned almost four years.

During the Second World War, no doubt there were many empty chairs at empty tables during thanksgiving and Christmas as young men were off fighting in that war. The Second World War ended three years before I was born, so what I know of that war has been through the stories I heard from my parents and their generation as well as from history lessons.

another year when the family could be together. I’ll be Home for Christmas is another popular holiday song that goes back to the Second World War about a being away from home during the holiday saying that they will be home for Christmas, if only in their dreams.

There were many sacrifices that they had to make that I believe that few today would accept. Meat, butter and other foods were rationed. Gasoline was also rationed. There were no new tires made during the war as all rubber went into the war effort. In addition, the auto companies converted their factories to material needed to fight the war. No new civilian cars were made during the war.

Need Help Paying Bills? Financial Assistance Is Available For Limited Time

by Kevin Harrison

This year has been especially challenging for our customers. Throughout the year, The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District has been advocating to federal, state, and local officials to seek financial relief to customers who are struggling with their sewer and stormwater bills.

Money provided by Cuyahoga County is available to residents affected by COVID-19 who need assistance with utility bills. Eligibility criteria include being at or below 120 percent of Median Household Income and have been affected by COVID-19 through income loss, childcare needs, or illness. Funds are only available until December 31, 2020 so apply early at chnhousingpartners.org/utilityassistance/ or call 216-350-8008. Rental assistance is also available at neorenthelp.org or 833-377-7386 (RENT).

Additional funds are available to Cuyahoga County residents who are at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. If you are struggling with sewer, stormwater, or other bills then you are encouraged to apply with the Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland (CEOGC). Applications must be approved by the end of the year, so we urge anyone looking for assistance to apply as soon as possible. To apply or learn more, please visit ceogc.org/covid-19-emergency-assistance/ or call 216-370-3480.

The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District also offers various discount programs for sewer and stormwater bills. Apply or learn more at neorsd.org/save or call us at 216-881-8247. The Sewer District is committed to assisting customers with support during these trying times.

For many Americans who have grown up since then; it is inconceivable that on holidays many families would have empty chairs at their tables of a son, brother, husband or father who was off somewhere fighting in a bloody war. They didn’t really know where their loved one was or what he was facing during that war. At the same time, no one knew for sure when that war would end and whether their loved ones would be coming home. Many were buried in overseas graveyards or at sea.

But somehow, Americans kept their spirits up during that war. In fact, many of our most cherished Christmas songs are from that period from 1941 until 1945. The most popular song of all time, White Christmas was from a movie in 1942, Holiday Inn that expressed fond memories of Christmas back home. Another popular holiday song, Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas, is from another movie in 1944 titled Meet Me in Saint Louis, a nostalgic look back at an earlier time of peace and longing for

Families had to make do as long as possible with their old car and tires since they would not be able to buy new cars or tires. But, since gasoline was rationed, they had to be careful where they went and limit driving. Traveling to grandma’s house was out of the question unless grandma lived close by.

But that war came to an end, as this pandemic will come to an end. When that war ended, the entire world had changed. The nation after the war was radically different than the nation before the war. No doubt when the United States and the world emerges from this pandemic, the world will be much different than it was before the pandemic.

As the song in its original version, sung by Judy Garland goes, “Someday soon we all will be together, if the fates allow. Until then we’ll have to muddle through somehow. So, have Yourself a Merry little Christmas now”.

Phoenix Rising In Parma

continued from page 1

area guitarists like Frankie Starr, Butch Armstrong, and others, John Allender joins his friends in what is truly a joyous reunion. After more than 4 years, John’s recovery has progressed to this level, that he is able to pick up where he left off after this tragedy came into his life.

Even though John’s recovery remains an ongoing struggle, for all of us who have endured a year full of tumultuous madness, this story should remind everyone that the human spirit is capable of so much more than we may ever imagine. If you know John

already, then you are all too aware of the capacity to heal and grow back after witnessing what has happened to him. If you don’t yet know John, then you really should, since all of us need to be reminded that stories like his prove that every one of us has the capacity to endure pain and extreme setbacks, yet still realize our dreams and achieve our true potential, no matter how great the obstacles placed in your path. Right here in Parma, Ohio a real miracle is taking place, and I’m so proud of my friend John, and my city as well, for cradling him during this important time of rebuilding for one of our own. Stand back, behold and rejoice.

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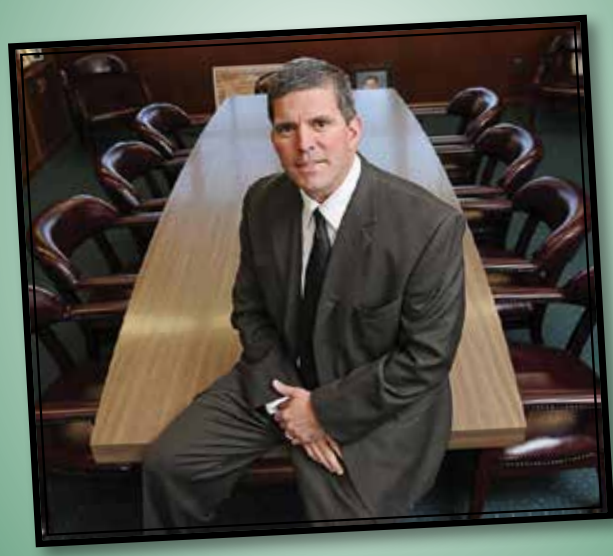
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PERSPECTIVE

Mohammad Isaifan: Blue Death Of An Immigrant

by Davidione Pearl

On the morning of December 15th, 2019, the lives of several Akron, Ohio families would forever be changed, particularly those of the late Mohammad Isaifan (40), an Akron city resident that made a name for himself in the community as a master car mechanic, and desired to obtain entry into the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy (OPOTA).

Early that Sunday morning at approximately 8:30am, his vehicle ran out of gas while on his way to the gun range. He steered it to a stop against the center median on Interstate -76, in the vicinity of East Market Street, at which point he abandoned the vehicle to walk back to his home a short distance away, presumably for a gas can to fill up at a nearby service station and continue on his way.

The Police began to receive calls soon after from neighbors complaining of a “man in camouflage and a vest” wandering the streets – “Special Duty” officers Jamie Rea and Matthew Akers were dispatched to the scene.

Earlier that month, Isaifan

purchased a purple and white camouflage outfit, as stated by ex-wife Kimberlee Vaughn.

She recalled the light-hearted moment, fondly joking with Isaifan about the unique purchase. They laughed and shrugged it off.

That morning, Isaifan wore the camouflage outfit he’d purchased earlier that month, and he wore his ammunition vest over it while walking home.

When officers located him walking near Brittain Road and Evans Avenue at approximately 8:54am, per the statement on their report, a struggle ensued when they attempted to search him for weapons, and Isaifan pulled a sidearm from its holster at which point officers Rea



and Akers discharged their weapons killing him.

The Summit County Medical Examiner’s Office concluded that fifteen shots had entered Isaifan’s body, ten lodged and five exited.

Assistant Ohio Attorney General Micah

Ault informed Vaughn that one officer discharged five rounds, and the other ten rounds, but did not confirm who shot which rounds, or how many rounds were initially contained in their clips, she said.

Additionally, Ault confirmed with Vaughn that video surveillance from a nearby business exhibited that Isaifan had complied with police when instructed to place his hands in the air, said Vaughn.

In March of 2018, the city of Akron passed an amendment to discontinue the use of dash and body cams, on November 3rd, 2020, Summit county residents overwhelmingly voted to overturn the amendment in the wake of nationwide protests.

Due to lack of evidence, the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office

escalated the case to the Ohio Attorney General’s office, who then presented the case before a grand jury of Summit County residents in late October, 2020.

Neighbors at the scene of the incident reported witnessing Isaifan running away from the police when he was shot, those neighbors were not called in to testify at the grand jury trial, and Vaughn to date does not know what evidence was admitted to the jury for consideration.

Mohammad Isaifan, a Jordanian-born United States citizen of ten years, possessed a weapon on his person that was legal and registered that fateful day – Akron police Lieutenant David Whiddon confirmed additionally, that Isaifan’s weapon was not loaded at the time he was killed, said Vaughn.

The Summit County Medical Examiner’s Office informed Vaughn that Isaifan was brought in to their custody with his pants pulled down around his ankles, and significant handcuff wounds to his wrists, she states.

Isaifan is survived by his ex-wife Kimberlee Vaughn (renewed fiancé in the months leading up to his death), and their eighteen year old daughter.

Akron Police, the Summit County Prosecutor’s Office and The Ohio Attorney General’s Office could not be reached for comment.

"I'm Lucky To Be Alive - And I'm So Thankful To UH!"

continued from page 7

“I’m an otherwise healthy 25-year-old girl, an elementary school teacher – there’s no reason to think anything would be wrong,” says Destiny, who’s eternally grateful to her UH caregivers who looked beyond the obvious. “I can say with certainty that every single person involved in my care had a role in saving my life. There were so many people on top of their game, and being proactive. They listened, and they acted quickly.

“I’m lucky I live in Cleveland, in this area with the best medical care. I’ve been surrounded by such positive, lovely people. I’m so thankful for UH.”

Half the battle: drive, determination, spirit

Kimberly Togliatti-Trickett, MD, Medical Director of the Acute Rehabilitation Unit, believes Destiny’s story shows the strength of a comprehensive system with attentive physicians and the critical tools necessary to treat this very sick young woman, including acute rehab to help

her gain confidence to return home. Destiny will continue to receive home care and outpatient physical and occupational therapy as she works to regain mobility.

“In Acute Rehab, we’re taking someone critically ill and dependent on her caregivers and helping her to become self-reliant and able to manage her day-to-day activities as she continues to recover,” says Dr. Togliatti-Trickett. “Her journey is not over. But half the battle is the drive, determination and spirit, and she has all those to continue to improve.”

“It’s been very humbling”
Destiny isn’t letting her inability to walk stop her. She plans to reschedule her wedding at a later date and has a deepened love for the fiancé who has stood by her side in sickness and health, before even taking that vow.

“I’m thankful for him, and for everyone who has taken care of me. It’s been very humbling. I’m so thankful for UH. I’ve been gifted this new opportunity at life.”



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OBSERVER

News You Can Use (And Where To Find It)

by Gene Lovasy

From The Cleveland Rape Crises Center...

This year’s Cuyahoga County Sexual Assault Response Team Conference is scheduled to be held virtually (ZOOM) from 9 am to 5 pm on Thursday, Dec. 3rd. Nationally and regionally recognized experts will be presenting topics relevant for multiple disciplines, including law enforcement, medical professionals, sexual assault nurse examiners, advocates, social workers, and prosecutors. Registration is FREE but required at www.clevelandrapecrisis.org/sart.

From Futures without Violence....Some facts:

1 in 4 US women experienced violence by a partner at some point in her life.

2 out of 3 children are exposed to trauma and violence.

1 in 5 tweens knows a victim of dating violence.

1 in 5 women is sexually assaulted in college.

Learn more here: <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/resources-events/get-the-facts/>

From OCALI (www.ocali.org)...

As an organization committed to promoting access and inspiring change for people with disabilities, OCALI and the Ohio Department of Education’s Office for Exceptional Children are partnering to support educators, education professionals, families, and others during this pandemic to help them find the information and resources needed to support learning and successful

outcomes for their students or children during this very unique time of learning. Go here <https://www.ocali.org/project/Inspired> to learn more & to register for any one of the 3 sessions scheduled for December.

From Buckeye Health... If you know of or have clients who may be members of any of Ohio’s five Medicaid Managed Care Plans (Buckeye Health Plan - 1.866.531.0615, Care-

Source – 1.800.488.0134, Molina Healthcare – 1.866.642.9279, Paramount Advantage – 1.866.837.9817, and United Healthcare Community Plan – 1.800.269.4190 make sure they know that their plan provides members with no-cost transportation services to and from food banks, food pantries, food

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

Free Coronary Calcium Test Leads To Cardiac Surgery, Averts Medical Crisis

continued from page 3

sure. While he has consistently taken medication for hypertension for about 15 years, he stopped taking his cholesterol-lowering statin due to side effects.

Never again will Alan stop taking a medication without consulting his physician.

“We are fortunate to have new classes of medications beside statins that can lower LDL with little or no major side effects,” says Dr. Forouzan-deh. “Also, there are ways to improve

statin tolerance. Cardiologists can help with these.”

Alan, for his part, intends to continue following up regularly with his cardiologist.

“I’m living the life,” says the musician, who counts “Here Comes the Sun” among his favorite songs and remains hopeful to once again climb in the mountains next year.

A physician order is required for a coronary calcium score. Talk to your primary care physician. To learn more, go to uhhospitals.org/calcium score.

Communications Accepting Applications For 2021 Community Grant Program

by Jeff Lavery

Applications are now being accepted for the 2021 Cox Communications Community Grant program, which supports non-profit organizations providing summer enrichment and after-school programming aligned with STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) learning initiatives. The call for applications is open now through January 20, 2021 and all non-profit groups within Cox’s service areas are eligible to apply via the Cox Charities website, located at <https://www.coxcharitiesne.org/>.

There are several criteria that proposals will be judged against, including the focus on enhancing academic achievement within core STEAM concentrations and the impact of the proposal on the positive development of youth during the summer and after-



school timeframe. Preference will be given to those programs that collaborate closely with low-performing middle schools, as defined by the jurisdiction of each respective non-profit institution that applies. In addition, this year’s program will include consideration for proposals that take into consideration the ramifications of a post-COVID-19 world.

“Student learning has gone through some of its most significant challenges ever in the past twelve months, and our educators and instructors have truly risen to the occasion,” said Jay Allbaugh, senior vice president and region manager for Cox Communications Northeast. “STEAM learning is essential not only

for helping students chart a course for their future, but for solving problems in real-time, much like the nation’s scientists and engineers do every day – and young people are the next-generation leaders in our midst.”

Grant awards range from \$5,000 to \$12,000 and applicants must demonstrate how the grant will be used in a cost-effective manner, including the number of youth who will benefit from this award.

Applications are to be submitted electronically, as Cox is now only accepting online submittals. The application is accessible via the Cox Charities website.

Chick-fil-A At Shoppes Of Parma



Chick-fil-A, under construction at the Shoppes in Parma across the street from Parma City Hall looks to be ready soon for business.

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PARMA ART SCENE



Parma Art Scene

BY Kathryn Mabin
Prama Artspace Gallery, 5411 Pearl Rd, is now open by appointment only, due to a family emergency. The

much publicized photo exhibit, Images of Haunted Ohio, will continue to run through December. In addition to the exhibit, the gallery also has a boutique with many various affordable hand made merchandise, suitable for stocking stuffers. Call (216)336-5585 for an appointment. View the web site for a sample of what's offered at, www.pramaartspace.com, or follow on Facebook and Instagram.
Artists and crafters are having a very difficult time this year. The arts and craft shows, and gallery shows, have been sporadic and limiting due to the pandemic. Please remember your maker neighbors and friends when doing your holiday shopping this year. Hand made gifts are unique and more meaningful.

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Santa Live Streaming!

by Kathryn Mabin
On Sunday, December 6th at 7 PM, grab the kids and log onto the We Are Parma Proud Facebook page for an enjoyable hour, with Santa! Yes, Santa! Santa has made arrangements with the We Are Parma Proud non-profit to take a break from his busy schedule to live stream a virtual visit and reading directly to your home.
The holidays are looking quite different this year. No parades, or mall Santa visits, or large holiday gatherings, such as the very successful Frosty's Fest in 2019 that followed the Parma Christmas Parade. To bring you some holiday cheer, the non-profit organization, We Are Parma Proud, has been very busy, looking for safe ways to celebrate the holidays with you.
During the entire month of

December they will also be bringing you 25 days of favorite holiday recipes. In addition, there will also be Christmas Crafts for you and the kids to enjoy. You can also post your holiday family photos, or decorations, or photos of your best Ugly Sweater to parmaproudphotos@gmail.com and watch for them to be shared on their Facebook page.
Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to the all the residents in the Parma area from the We Are Parma Proud non-profit organization. The New Year 2021 will hopefully bring us back to normalcy and they will be able to bring to you many new community fun filled events.
Follow We Are Parma Proud on Facebook!

Santa On Parade

continued from page 1
2020, Santa will parade through the streets of Councilwoman Debbie Lime's Ward 2. He will be escorted by the Parma Police Auxiliary with sirens blaring and lights flashing to alert you of his arrival.
Christmas Eve Jingle Event, an idea from Facebook. On Christmas Eve at 6pm step outside and ring a bell to spread the spirit and help Santa fly his sleigh.
Many thanks to Councilwomen

Saban and Lime for bringing the holiday spirit to your Wards.



Ornament courtesy of Hixon's

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