

“To recommend thrift to the poor is both grotesque and insulting. It is like advising a man who is starving to eat less”- Oscar Wilde

December, 2021
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Former Topps Grocery Store on Day Drive. Since it closed, children have been born and are now in Middle School. This place in the middle of our city could go from being a sad, empty shell into becoming a vibrant center where people meet, exercise, and enjoy life events in the 7th largest city in Ohio. Vision, leadership and action is called for.

Why Not A Community/ Recreation Center In Parma?

by Daniel P. McCarthy

Community/Recreation Centers. Most cities have one, especially larger cities- some have even more than one. It's hard to say why Parma lacks this basic amenity. Depends on who you ask and who's doing the asking. Can't Lives on Won't Street, that's for sure, so whatever the excuse my be, it's obvious

that no one has ever really made the effort to provide our citizens a place for year round recreation, spaces to enjoy parties, gatherings and events, in a functional facility. Some people will say "we don't need a rec center, because we've made an agreement with Seven Hills to use theirs". So borrowing a facility belonging to a city

with 1/8 of our population is the best we can hope for? Good grief! How did our much smaller neighbor ever manage to build one then? It's a lot like owning a home with a 10 acre lawn and saying "I don't need a lawn-mower, because I borrow my neighbor's instead". Your neighbor with a 1/4 acre lot is indeed a good, kind neighbor, but honestly, they really do wish that you would acquire your own mower.

"We can't afford it" is another popular excuse. "Rec centers lose money" is another one. Does the Fire Department make a profit? Parks and Recreation? Or do those things exist in order to provide sustainable quality of life for the citizenry? If a public entity manages to break even, that is as much as people in a community can expect. Interesting note-while attending a function at the wonderful Community Center in nearby Middleburg Hts. a few years ago, a Councilman there told me that when they built the facility they had placed several million dollars in a fund, anticipating needing the money for future expenses associated with care and maintenance. He informed me they were pleasantly surprised that to date, they had never touched a penny of that fund, since

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Script Parma Photo Of The Month



This month's script Parma picture of the month was submitted by Jen Barilaro. It includes her two beloved children, Gabriella and Gennaro Barilaro. She 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.

Parma Recognized As A Purple Heart Community



Randy Howson, commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, presented Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter with a plaque.

by Carolyn Kovach

Parma was recently named a Purple Heart Community. During an October city council meeting, American Legion Post 572's Honor Guard posted the colors and assisted in a Purple Heart ceremony. Several veterans attended the special meeting. Randy Howson, commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, was the special guest speaker at the ceremony. An Army Vietnam veteran and Purple Heart recipient, Howson presented Mayor Tim DeGeeter with Purple Heart Community signs and a plaque. Purple Heart

cities are known for their commitment to veterans. Parma is home to many military families, active duty and retired service members and has active veteran groups such as American Legion Ohio Post 572. Those traveling into the city can now see Purple Heart Community signs at the city's main entryways.

The Purple Heart medal is the oldest military decoration. Gen. George Washington created the medal during the Revolutionary War on Aug. 7, 1782. There are about 1.8 million recipients of this pres-

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Karen Prokop Honored As Citizen Of The Month



Karen Prokop, along with her family and a close friend, Mayor Tim DeGeeter, and Ward 5 Councilman Allan Divis on 11-15-21 accepting her award.

by Daniel P. McCarthy

Karen Prokop was honored by the City of Parma as Citizen of the Month in November. She was nominated for the award by Ward 5 Councilman Allan Divis. Karen has spent the last 35 years advocating for children and adults with disabilities. She has intricate knowledge concerning special education law and has provided valuable support to parents of children with special needs. Among her accomplishments is working with Ohio Protection & Advocacy, and the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children With Disabilities. She is also a volunteer board member for Zane's, a non-profit organization offering resources to children and adults with special needs. Perhaps inspired by her mother's passion and career, her daughter has a degree in special education and is employed by the Parma City School District.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The President's Corner

by Sean Brennan, Parma City Council President

On Saturday, November 13, I was honored to be invited to attend the Holodomor commemoration at St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral on State Road. Having been an international studies major, concentrating in Soviet and East European studies, at the University of Dayton, I recall studying one of the 20th century's most horrific events. What is unfortunate is how few people are aware of this tragic story.

Typically, when one hears the term genocide they think of the Nazi "Final Solution" perpetrated against the Jews in the 1930s and 40s with images of concentration camps, emaciated human beings, and crematoria, where an estimated 6 million human beings were killed in what we now call the Holocaust. However, fewer are



aware of the Holodomor that occurred in 1932-33 in Ukraine while the nation was under the control of the Soviet Union's dictator Joseph Stalin, which led to deaths estimated as high as 7 to

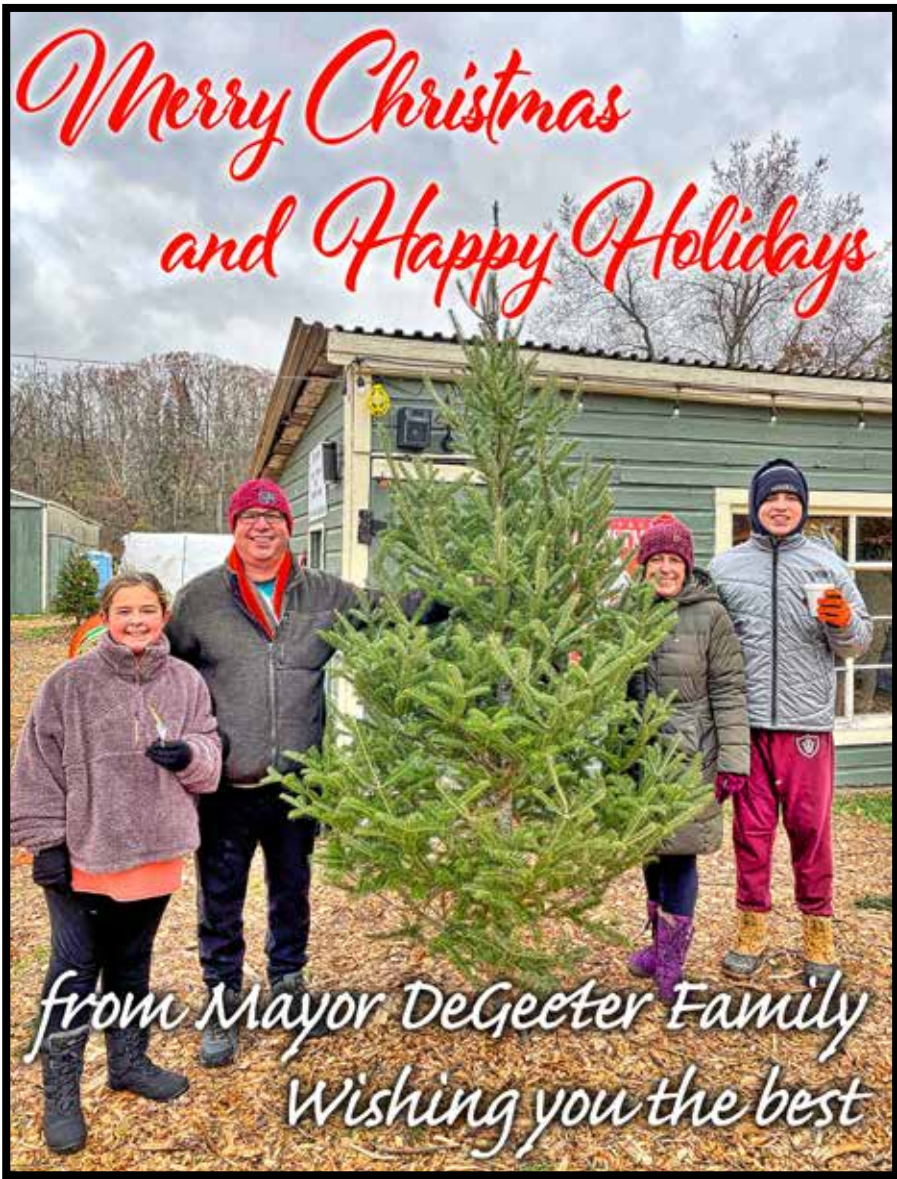


10 million. Holodomor comes from the Ukrainian words for hunger (holod) and extermination (mor). In 1932, the Russian-controlled Soviet Union began a policy of collectivization in which private farms were seized by the government. Collective farms were to be run by locals "collectively," who were forced to turn over large amounts of grain to the government, which it used to fund industrialization and militarization. With little food left over, the Ukrainian people found themselves in the midst of a man-made famine.

Today Ukraine finds itself, once again, in a fight for its survival against Russia. In fact, Russian President Vladimir Putin, a former Soviet KGB leader, seems hell-bent on resurrecting the Soviet Union. Beginning with seizing the Crimean Peninsula and eastern regions of Ukraine in 2014, which sparked the Russo-Ukrainian War, Putin and his cronies continue the cruel persecution of the Ukrainian people.


Parma has found itself home to many refugees and others fleeing Ukraine in recent years. As a result, the Ukrainian Village neighborhood on the State Road corridor is flourishing. Ukrainian culture abounds with Ukrainian schools, churches, flags, festivals, parades, etc. While their love of America is clear, they hold their homeland very dear. On that cold Saturday morning in November, State Representative Jeff Crossman and I were honored to be a part of the Holodomor memorial service at St. Vladimir's. We were very impressed with how many children were involved in the event. Reading in Ukrainian and English, the Ukrainian community of Parma is clearly passing on their culture and history to the next generation. Although Putin and his predecessors have given it their best shot, the Ukrai-

nian people thrive. Before leaving, we were invited to visit the Famine Room, where we saw devastating pictures from the Holodomor. If you are interested in visiting this room and the Cathedral, feel free to contact any member of the clergy at 440-886-3223. Best wishes to you and yours for a beautiful Christmas Season – shscasly-voho Rizdva (Merry Christmas)!



Wishing a blessed holiday season and joyous New Year upon our Parma residents.

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- Kammy Shuman, Parma Ward 7 Councilwoman

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Nurse Navigator Helps Prevent Hospital Readmission For Patients With CHF

by CJ Sheppard

When two chronic conditions collided to land Christine Rand in the hospital, a special nurse navigator was waiting to guide her back to health – and keep her from returning. Just a month before her 69th birthday, Chris was exhausted, depleted of energy, winded and worn down. Feeling progressively worse, her legs were swollen and she noticed an alarming increase in shortness of breath. The daughter with whom she shares her third-floor walk-up condo in North Royalton called an ambulance. Chris was cheerful but concerned as she was wheeled into University Hospitals Parma Medical Center’s Emergency Department, waving to caregivers. Her blood pressure was very high and paramedics had put her on oxygen. She was surprised to receive a double diagnosis: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and congestive heart failure (CHF). “All my vices had to go away,” says the North Royalton retiree, a pack-a-day smoker for many years, who enjoys indulging in potato chips and an adult libation. “Son of a gun, it’s a lot of adjustments to make.”

Admitted to an inpatient floor, her mind swirling with this double whammy, she was comforted by the arrival of Elizabeth Prahst, BSN, RN, UH Parma’s CHF Clinical Nurse Navigator. Initially funded in a pilot initiative by the

Parma Hospital Health Care Foundation with COPD patients in 2017 and CHF patients in 2020, nurse navigators have been so successful at educating patients to avoid readmission that the role was made permanent. Elizabeth focused on educating Chris on her new diagnosis of CHF, explaining signs and symptoms, discussing the importance of following a low-sodium diet, limiting fluid intake and taking prescribed medications. The nurse navigator urged her patient to pay special attention to the following symptoms and notify her cardiologist of any of these warning signs:

- Sudden weight gain** of 3 pounds or more overnight
- Swelling** in the legs
- Shortness** of breath

Hospitalist Dallin Tonks, DO, who met with Chris, sees what a “huge bonus” Elizabeth’s presence is to patients. “She genuinely cares about helping all of her heart failure patients,” says Dr. Tonks. “In many instances, when I try to explain something relevant to a patient, I find Elizabeth has already taught them. I’m grateful she is around and our patients are lucky to have her here at the hospital.”

Interventional Cardiologist Farshad Forouzandeh, MD, Medical Director of the Heart Failure Program for University Hospitals Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute at UH Parma Medical Center, sees a dis-



Christine Rand with Heart Failure Nurse Navigator Elizabeth Prahst, RN.

tinct improvement in quality of life for patients whose lives are touched by the nurse navigator. No one wants repeat visits to the hospital for a condition that may be managed at home with clear guidance. In fact, some insurance companies may not pay for a readmission less than 30 days after a hospitalization. With a generally older population at UH Parma, the clinical team was closely watching these readmissions and trying to prevent them. Three years ago, 23 percent of heart failure patients were readmitted to the hospital within 30 days. Now, the rate is 14 percent.

“Over the last couple of years with Elizabeth’s dedication and the hard work of all of our team members in the Heart Failure group, we have witnessed a sharp

decline in our readmissions,” says Dr. Forouzandeh. “This team includes our great nurse manager on the cardiac floor, Melinda Lakatos, and our heart failure specialist, Dr. Ravi Ramani, who sees our challenging heart failure patients in his clinic at UH Parma.” Elizabeth made sure Chris had a follow-up appointment with a cardiologist in the UH Harrington Heart & Vascular Institute scheduled before she left the hospital. She also called Chris soon after discharge and checks in periodically, to answer questions about reading nutrition labels for sodium content, incorporating more fresh fruits and vegetables into her diet, regular weight checks, and what to do if her feet swell, or she has trouble sleeping. “She’s wonderful – calm, well-spoken, never makes you feel rushed,” Chris says. “She gave me really helpful information about healthful eating in an exceptionally well-organized packet. While these ARE all things you should know, she did not make me feel stupid for any questions I had.”

Elizabeth appreciates the opportunity to sit down and really connect with her patients, educating them on how to manage their symptoms at home and avoid readmission. “I love interacting with the patients and their family and getting to know them on a personal level while also giving them the tools they need so they can feel the best that they can at home,” Elizabeth says. “It is the greatest feeling knowing that I am not only helping to reduce the hospital’s CHF readmission rate, but I am also having an impact on improving my patients’ quality of life.”



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GLIMPSES OF THE THE TRI-CITY AREA

Comfy All The Way With Board Games At Gamers

by Emery Pinter

The board gaming hobby can be a little overwhelming to start, but Brandon at Gamers Haven will show you how to jump in head first. Or maybe you've wanted to join a gaming community and want an opportunity to meet even more gamers? Checking out Gamers Haven, 6639 Pearl Road in Parma Heights, might be the next best step for you! The staff is knowledgeable, beyond friendly, and all around great to talk to about board games.

Gamers Haven has a wide selection of board games, trading cards, Pokemon, miniatures, strategy games, dice, card games, Dungeons & Dragons, magazines, and accessories. Board game enthusiasts can see demos of board games and on certain nights, specific games are promoted.

Their hottest games include CATAN which was a "game changer" in the board game world. In the imaginative strategy-driven CATAN board game, you and your game night comrades must compete with each other to become the first settler to build up cities, own the longest roads, and develop the largest army on the island of Catan. GLOOMHAVEN is the fantasy adventure of your dreams. An engrossing



RPG stuffed with branching storylines, miniatures, and a game world that's influenced by your decisions. It's the sort of game you can lose yourself in for months!

There's no shortage of choice when it comes to best board games at Gamers Haven. There's also games that are strictly single player, and they are good. There's also reasonably priced games for the kids: Munchkin Deluxe. Days of Wonder, and Ticket To Ride. To get the scoop on these games and others, check out gamershavenohio on Facebook, and Shop Local this Holiday season!

Book Review: The Koala Manifesto

By: Deborah Tabart OAM

by Michelle E. Rice

Deborah received one of Australia's highest individual honors, the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in 2008 and is the chair for the non-profit, Australian Koala Foundation. Deborah wrote a Koala Manifesto stating 10 solutions as to what needs to be done so the koala's existence is ensured and thrives, firstly by initiating into law, The Koala Protection Act. The book contains a plethora of current and historical information and pictures.

Before the devastating fires in Australia in 2019-2020, the Koala had already been heading toward endangered. Now, experts label them as functionally extinct as 2/3 died during those fires. Functionally extinct means that within 3 generations they could go extinct due to their fragmented habitat and lack of potential mates. Deborah recounts the history of the koala as in the millions to now less than 80,000. The first initial decimation of the population was the koala being killed for fur

sold in the USA and Europe during the beginning of the 20th century. Now, habitat loss, and fragmented habitat caused by mining and the various forms of human settlement (housing, roads, agriculture etc.) is threatening their existence due to lack of eucalyptus trees (gum trees) which is their home and food. Having their habitat fragmented leads to them being victims of cars and dogs, competition for eucalyptus trees, lack of potential mates and increase in disease.

Koalas are at the top of the list when we think of Australia. It is very sad that the government of Australia is lacking to take immediate action to preserve the precious koala, native to



Good Time To Preserve Your Memories

by Jim George

A unique store has relocated its Cleveland operation to Parma. Familyography, which is located at 5551 State Road, is in the business of digitizing family memories. "We digitize everything from one photograph to a whole lifetime of memories," said the owner, Daniel Smith. "Photos, slides, negatives, film and videotape. All kinds and all formats." Familyography has been in business since 2009, and established its first Cleveland store in 2012. "We moved from our previous location because Parma offered a location closer and eas-

ier to get to for our customers, and we needed more space to accommodate our growing business," Smith said.

Besides a low price and excellent results, Smith is proud that his business offers exceptional customer service. "We provide good advice to our customers. We want to make sure that their dollars are well-spent. As a result, many of our customers become our friends, and over 80% come back time and again for help to preserve their family memories," Smith said.

It is important to note that all work is done in-house, at the Parma store, unlike other businesses which ship out all or part of the materials brought to them to be digitized. Pricing information can be found on the Familyography website, www.myfamilyography.com Smith said. "Our pricing is straightforward and there are no hidden costs. And if you have any question, you can just stop in or call us at 216-938-6711." The biggest problem that people have about Familyography, Smith said, is how to pronounce the name. "It's Family-AWE-graphy," Smith said. "So be prepared to be awed, and you will pronounce the name correctly!"

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AUTUMN ALMANAC

It's Time For The 11th Annual Parma Peanut Butter Drive

by Felicia Martinez

Parma City Council President Sean Patrick Brennan will run a half marathon on December 12th to raise funds in support of the community through the 11th Annual Parma Peanut Butter drive. All Faiths, a local award-winning non-profit is honored to be a part of the Parma Peanut Butter drive. For 15 years they have been raising awareness about senior food insecurity while delivering nutritious groceries at no cost to qualifying seniors in the Parma and surrounding communities. In 10 years, the drive has raised over 5 tons of peanut butter and thousands of dollars, thanks to the generosity of the community.

Brennan, the founder of the annual Parma Peanut Butter Drive, says “food



assistance in our community is needed now more than ever”..... Why a peanut butter drive? Peanut butter is a well-liked, high protein, calorie dense food. It is a staple in many households,

including Brennan’s household growing up with a single mom who worked hard to make ends meet. Brennan said. “Looking back, peanut butter was our main source of protein. When I saw peanut butter prices spiking (11 years ago), I called John Visnauskas at All Faiths and asked what he thought about The Parma Peanut Butter Drive.” The rest is history.

Last year due to the pandemic there were no drop off locations for peanut butter, but thanks to the help of Brennan who ran his 100th marathon in honor of the 10th drive, the community raised an amazing \$5,000.

On Sunday, December 12th, Brennan will run a half marathon through all nine of Parma’s wards that will begin and end at Zielinski Park. “Whether it is \$5 or \$1 or more for each mile I plan to run, we welcome whatever folks are able to give,” Bren-

nan said. The hope is to surpass the amount raised last year.

The community is invited to join for a celebration at the finish line from 10 am to 11am. We will celebrate with cookies and hot cocoa and a visit from Santa. Santa will be ready to take photos with you in front of the script Parma sign.

This year there will be collection bins at Parma City Hall and the Office Depot on Snow Rd. Executive Director Martinez explains “We gladly accept jars of peanut butter, but encourage monetary donations because as an agency of the food bank we can purchase peanut butter for far less than the retail cost. Your monetary donation will go much further to help those in need.”

This year’s sponsors include Lamar Advertising, Rumpke Waste & Recycling, Office Depot in Parma, and the Parma Area Chamber of Commerce.

Cash donations may be brought on December 12 to Zielinski Park, or checks can be mailed to All Faiths Pantry, P.O. Box 34239, Parma, Ohio, 44129 (place Parma Peanut Butter Drive in the message). To find out more and to donate visit www.allfaithspantry.org. For questions about the drive or to become a sponsor email Brennan at councilmanbrennan@msn.com or call 440-885-8091.

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

Why Not A Community/Recreation Center In Parma?

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revenues generated by events and activities have paid for all operations since it had opened. The citizens of Middleburg Hts. love their community/recreation center, are especially proud of it, and look forward to having a world class facility at their fingertips. So in my opinion, the endless excuses offered up for not addressing the obvious need for a Community/Recreation Center in Parma are used as a cover for simply being risk averse- nothing more elegant than that. That includes voters in at least one ballot issue.

One might ask "but how and where would we choose to locate, build and operate such a facility?". For me the answer is quite apparent, and it sits in the middle of our town center for all to see. The former Topps Grocery Store, a huge building, which has been vacant for a decade now and has become a depressing, chronically visible eyesore, would be the perfect choice to obtain and re-purpose, converting the structure into what would be a very impressive and highly func-

tional community center. With the Giant Eagle right next door, it is not very likely that this building will ever house another competing store again, which is probably the main reason it has sat empty year after year and will undoubtedly continue to do so.

If a genuine committed effort was undertaken, we could acquire this long vacant property, transform, retrofit and equip the structure, and before you know it there would be a first class Community/Recreation Center which would meet the requirements of our citizens in the 7th largest city in Ohio, and they would experience what residents in every other city our size can take for granted. If marketed properly and managed professionally, we could enjoy the fulfillment of a need that has always existed, despite the insistence of a vocal minority that it is not important. People will start to vote with their feet if we continue to keep our heads in the sand. Later on we'll find out that all we needed was vision, leadership and action. Ever forward!



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INSPIRATION

Senator Antonio Announces Relief Funds To Support Adult Day And Senior Centers

by *Nickie Antonio*

I am happy to share the exciting news three adult day and senior centers in Parma and Cleveland will be awarded CARES Act relief funding to support nutrition services, including home-delivered and congregate meals, and to assist with the purchase of Covid-19 personal protective equipment. The Covid-19 pandemic has

forced the closure of many adult day and senior centers, cutting older Ohioans off from the services they relied on, including critical meal programs. As we begin to recover from the pandemic, this funding will go a long way toward supporting providers and ensure they can safely re-open to serve our community. I recognize the extraordinary sacrifice of all the hardworking individuals who administer these services and will continue to do everything possible to support them.

The Ohio Department of Aging awarded more than \$5.3 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding to 53 senior centers and 22 adult day services across the state, including three in Parma and Cleveland. The Donna Smallwood Activities Center in Parma is set to receive \$9,600. The Senior Citizens Resources senior center in Cleveland will receive \$62,200, and the Your Second Family adult day service in Cleveland will receive \$21,000. Providers will begin receiving relief payments this month.

If you have questions about nutrition programs that may be available for you or someone you know, contact the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging at 216-621-0303 or go online here. For a full list of providers receiving funding, click here.

Parma Recognized As A Purple Heart Community

continued from page 1

tigious honor. Parma is now part of the Purple Heart Trail, established in 1992 by the Military Order of the Purple Heart as a symbolic trail throughout all 50 states honoring men and women who have been wounded or given their lives in combat while serving in the U.S. armed forces. In Ohio, 56 organizations and 39 cities have earned this designation.

The idea for the Purple Heart distinction came about when DeGeeter was reading an article in Ohio Municipal League's Cities and Villages magazine. The article explained how a city can become a Purple Heart Com-

munity. The application process began when the Mayor's Office contacted the Military Order of the Purple Heart in March 2021. He explained why the city made the request: "The distinction is a way to honor wounded veterans while reminding citizens and travelers that our city respects those who gave their lives for their country. In the past, the city has recognized World War II, Korean War and Vietnam veterans at special ceremonies. It was fitting that we also honor Purple Heart recipients."

For more information on the Military Order of the Purple Heart, visit www.purpleheart.org.

FAITH COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

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allfaithspantry.org
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- Bethlehem Lutheran Church**
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NEW LOCATION

Neighborhoods

Christmas In Polish Village

by Kathryn Mabin

On Saturday, December 11, 2021 the non-profit Polish Village Parma invites you to the inaugural event, Christmas in Polish Village. Polish Village is the business district in Ward 2 that runs along Ridge Rd. Although the name denotes Polish ethnicity, Polish Village is a melting pot of various nationalities and many small family owned businesses. This event is a combination of Polish and American customs.

In modern Poland most Poles love to return to their old traditions during the holiday season, much like we do here in the U.S. Traditional dishes are served at the holidays at home. Gingerbread ornaments have hung on Christmas trees since the 1900's in Poland. Trees are also decorated with apples, fruit, nuts and candy. Poland is also known for their colorful glass ball ornaments decorated with snowflakes or religious scenes. Cities, towns, and villages host Christmas fairs in their town squares, a tradition dating back to the middle ages. Food stalls fill the air with smells of roasted chestnuts, mulled wine, and pierogi, in addition to stands selling gift items. The fairs are decorated with brightly colored lights and decorations. Christmas Carols are popular. One almost became the national anthem.

The event kicks off with a big

bang! With the guest appearance of Mr. Jingeling, Santa's Keeper of the Keys and Cleveland's iconic harbinger of Christmas, (an elf who saved Christmas after Santa lost his keys), will be visiting Polish Village, where he'll meet up with Santa, of course, to compare notes. Immediately following Santa goes on tour travelling the streets of Polish Village's Ward 2 residents.

The Polish Village's business district, from Pearl and Ridge to Ridge and Snow, joins the celebration. Much like the Christmas Fairs in Polish cities, towns and villages you'll find the participating businesses welcoming shoppers. Of special note, Rudy's Strudel & Bakery will be selling, for one day only, the Halle's Pot Pie Pierogi. Participating businesses will have a luminary with LED candle to alert the public of their participation. An arts and crafts pop-up will be set up also, that day only, with handcrafted items for sale. Santa will be available to listen to children's requests. Children will be able to make and take home their own (free) gingerbread ornament. The Parma Firemen will have a fire pit blazing to toast marshmallows with the kids. Hot chocolate and popcorn will also be available.

As you drive down Ridge Rd look for the bright lights in the pocket park, the holiday flower pot decorations and Christmas décor provided for your pleasure by Polish Village Parma,



Polish Village
Christmas

Saturday December 11th
4-8pm - Polish Village

Come enjoy the fun!
Businesses will be open. Santa will be there.
Hot chocolate and cookies. Fire pit to make s'mores.
Caroling and much more!

where great neighbors make a great neighborhood.

The event is free and open to the public. Shop Small for unique gifts and come celebrate Christmas in Polish Village, on Saturday, December 11, 2021. Times to remember, Mr. Jingeling

11:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Santa's Tour of Ward 2 streets Noon to 3:00 PM, Shop Small, Shop Polish Village 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM. Follow Polish Village Parma on Facebook for updates on this festive family fun holiday event. Brought to you in part, with funding from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

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PERSPECTIVE

We Need A Little Christmas

by Lee Kamps

In the 1960s Broadway musical and movie *Mame*, the title character is an eccentric woman named Auntie Mame who is the central character of the story. Toward the end of the first act, the 1929 stock market crash leaves the family destitute and the mood becomes as gloomy as the weather. To liven things up and ease the depression, she sings a rousing musical number that has become the most popular song from that play and movie, “We Need a Little Christmas” as she lavishly decorates the family home for the holidays.

The song is a lively, bright optimistic number that sticks with the listener, and it is no wonder why that song has become so popular through the years. Perhaps that song might best express the feeling of joy at this time of year, especially during tough times like it was in the play and movie.

After almost two years of COVID induced lockdowns, closings and sickness; with more people getting vaccinated and the rate of new infections falling again, perhaps we can have some hope of returning to some sense of normalcy. After last year when it seemed that somehow the grinch had actually stolen Christmas from us with no Christmas parties, shows, concerts and plays or family gatherings. After being



all hunkered down and afraid of being exposed to COVID last year, we really need a little Christmas this year. Last year my family gatherings at Thanksgiving and Christmas were on zoom.

After an almost two year period of civil unrest and protests, including an assault on our nation’s Capitol as well as our political divisiveness, perhaps one thing that everyone might agree on is that we need a time to celebrate just the joy of the season. Regardless how anyone celebrates this holiday, we need a little Christmas right now. We need the shopping, the shows, the music and most important, the gathering with friends and family to celebrate the holiday.

When you think about it, December is a very gloomy month of the year. It is dark in the northern hemisphere as the winter solstice comes a few days before Christmas when the sun is at the lowest point in the sky and the daylight is the shortest of the year. In this part of the country, December is often the cloudiest month of the year with a sunny day being a special treat. December also brings cold rain as well as sometimes a lot of snow. But the snow soon turns to slop and then freezes into ice making it difficult to get around outside.

Without the lights and decorations of the Christmas holiday, this would really be a very gloomy depressing time of the year. But for a few weeks, we can enjoy all the lights and special things of the holiday season.


In fact, the reason why we celebrate Christmas on December 25 is that the biggest holiday in the ancient Roman year was the Saturnalia celebration following the winter solstice. That marked the time when the sun began its annual climb in the sky and that the warmer and brighter days were ahead. It was a time of great celebration and of parties. The early Christians who were persecuted by the Romans celebrated their holidays at the same time as the Romans so as not to be seen as different. The Jewish celebration of Hannukah, the festival of lights is also celebrated at the

same time of year when it is darkest in the northern hemisphere.

Many of our Christmas traditions have their roots in the pagan celebrations of the winter solstice. One is the lights on the Christmas tree. This Christmas tradition began in Germany as the ever-green trees kept their green throughout the long winter were brought inside the house. The lights on the tree indoors represents the stars in the heavens. In what is now Great Britain, the Druids celebrated the winter solstice with bonfires that provided heat and light, but also to help bring back the sun. It worked since after the winter solstice the sun began rising higher in the sky.

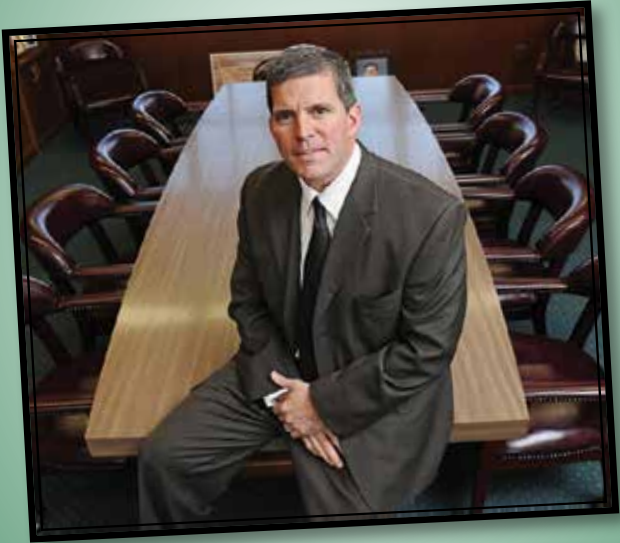
The days after the winter solstice the sun began its slow climb in the sky. it was a cause for celebration and the ultimate return to sunnier and warmer days to come. That celebration was the beginning of the Christmas feasts of the season which led to the famous “boar’s head” celebration and the yule log, a large log brought in for the fire since the night was long and cold. Somehow those ancient pagan celebrations that began long before the birth of Jesus endure as ways to celebrate the Christmas holiday.

Therefore, despite our differences and beliefs, we can enjoy the traditions and joys of this glorious holiday season because after the past two years, we sure need a little Christmas now.



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Earth First

Planet Earth: Dystopia Or Stepping Stone?

by Lucy McKernan

Not a morning goes by I don't wake up grinding-my-teeth furious that, as humans, we're simply not working hard enough to bring this planet down so that we can move to our new home in my lifetime. It's time we admit what the richest people on this planet already know: Earth is just a stepping stone and, though those who've thrived here have done so through adaptation, the new law means colonizing and despoiling of a pristine planet where adaptation can be circumvented, if needed.

Consider it has been an interminable 60 years since Rachel Carson published her seminal book *Silent Spring*, a well-intentioned but misguided manifesto concerning environmental perils caused by yours truly: homo sapiens. Allegedly concerned with the future of planet Earth, Carson called for its responsible stewardship.

Coincidentally, I recently reached the milestone of inhabiting this wandering, wobbling rock for 60 years and, far as I can see, Carson's legacy has only contributed to Earth's slow demise. In fairness, Carson isn't entirely to blame for the mind-numbing crawl. Now, we have snarky, Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg. Not only should she stop with the braid already, but realize she's rooting for the wrong team. If she truly cared about humans and all life on Earth, Thunberg should crown herself "Ambassador to Reality" and promote the quickening, downward spiral. To do otherwise, would be tyranny.

Here's another pet peeve: climate action based on increasing tree canopy. Seriously? if those trees weren't getting in the way of desperately needed new housing and roads to every imaginable place we no longer need to go because of a raging pandemic and delivery of all things to our door, maybe we wouldn't be at war with them. A friend wouldn't have been arrested for driving while drunk, asleep, texting, and eating all at the same time if that damn oak tree hadn't jumped out in front of him. He might otherwise be free!

Speaking of freedom, we need to put the brakes on all this free speech propaganda. Make it more like that other constitutional right: gun rights. Apply it arbitrarily and back it by special interest groups. Crushing masses are increasingly jailed for speaking out against everything from climate change to corrupt government and



corporations, and from racial and economic inequity to so-called "mass incarceration" itself. But If we're going to get serious about bringing down planet Earth, shouldn't we pack more people into buildings like jail and prison, and profit off it? Mass incarceration. Voila!

But warehousing humans is just a drop in the bucket towards the coveted end. If we're going to put a ginormous dent in this acceleration process, we need to increase worldwide deforestation. But how, you ask? The fastest way is right under our fat, carnivorous noses: more large grazing animals. Now that we know methane produced by concentrated numbers of animals like cows and sheep is dozens of times more potent than any other source including industry and transportation combined, wouldn't we be remiss to not seize this golden opportunity by ramping it up?

Like no other action, animal consumption holds the keys. Think of the water consumption, virgin forest clearing, immeasurable methane output and, perhaps most importantly, putting one billion starving fellow humans and countless other species facing extinction out of their misery. How selfish can you be?

Speaking of animals, some may wonder what will happen to non-human species when the Great End comes. Well, bless your little heart. Sure, they've been here tens of millions of years longer than we. But if, with their inferior intelligence and worth, they haven't figured out a way to build a spacecraft to shove off and conquer another home in this

or another solar system, then whose fault is it?

We need to focus on finding a way out for our species.

Coal has its part, since we need the lights on in order to research more ways to bring this hell hole to its knees, and order more stuff from amazon. So bring on the digging,

stripping, mining, and feed these hungry utilities and greasy-palmed regulators.

While we're at it, let's increase fracking, polluting air and water, degrading soils which, despite those who argue for sequestering CO2 emissions, holds potential for crop failure and worldwide starvation. All excellent ways to speed up the death spiral.

If you're not doing your part to bring this cruelty to a quicker stop, you're a sorry excuse for a human being. And if, with your huge mammalian neocortex, you can't follow along, put simpler: Let diseases run rampant; eat everything that doesn't move; build out more; cut down those effing trees; build more roads; make more humans; burn more coal and everything; shop more; drive more, a lot more.

Stop with the petty arguments about recycling and harvesting energy naturally. Think BIG! We can do this, people, if we put our big brains together.

Just think of it: A much bigger planet like Jupiter, or even an exoplanet, could be ours to plunder!

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Parma Art Scene

This Holiday Season Support Local Art

by Kathryn Mabin

The holidays are fast approaching, as we contend with supply chain issues this year it makes more sense to shop small, shop local. Buying local from small businesses, independents, artists and craftsmen is a wonderful way to ensure the dollars spent will support your neighbors and community.

Holiday Boutique at Prama Artspace & Gallery, 5411 Pearl Rd, has enlarged their boutique through the holiday season to make your



Abstract by June Hund

shopping easier. You'll find an assortment of hand painted purses, back-packs, jewelry, books, decorative boxes. Postcards, greeting cards, magnets, wax melts, mugs, scarves, face masks and ornaments, all made by local artists.

Currently on exhibit until December 5th, at Prama Artspace & Gallery is Charles McNoldy, a photographer and owner/operator of the Parma Pro Photo Lab. He is also a poet, and on display are some of his Christmas poems. He can be reached at ParmaProPhotoLab@gmail.com.

Opening on December 10, 2021 is June Hund's mixed media abstract exhibit Excessive Wakefulness, her journey dealing with insomnia.

December 3 through the 10th Sean Mabin, photographer and owner/operator of Prama Artspace & Gallery, is appearing in the Cleveland Print Room's, Off The Wall Members Show. Located in The ArtCraft Building at 2550 Superior Avenue.

Michelle Behal, President of Parma Area Fine Arts Council and owner/operator of Bear Tracks Art is at The Rift Shop in Olmsted Falls, Rooted Oaks in Streetsboro, Hand Made Treasures in Middleburg

Heights, Cleveland Craft Nook in North Royalton, and German Christkindlmartin Huron.

Katrina Lindsley, Board Member of Parma Fine Arts and owner/operator of Devotions, is at Rooted Oaks in Streetsboro and The Rift Shop in Olmsted Falls.

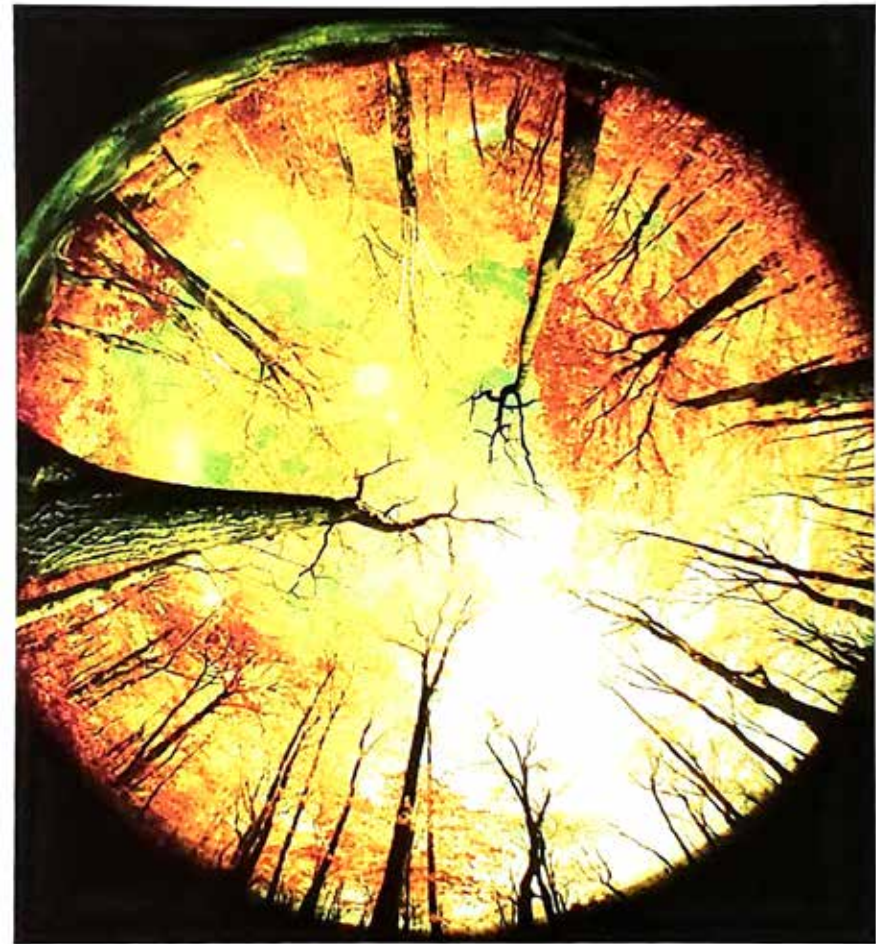


Photo by Charles McNoldy,

Frosty's Fest And More!

by Kathryn Mabin

Frosty's Fest is back!!!! Frosty's Fest immediately follows the Parma Christmas Parade on December 5, 2021. The parade begins at 1:00 PM on Ridge Road near Stearns Homestead and will travel north on Ridge and end at the Ridgewood Golf Course on Hollywood Drive. Frosty's Fest is brought to you by the non-profit We Are Parma Proud, corporate sponsor Little Birdie's Wine Nest, and 20 other sponsors. Santa, of course, is the star of this event. There will be family-friendly activities both indoors and outside.

Ridgewood Golf Clubhouse, an almost 100 year old facility, will be a holiday vision, resplendent with new lighting and decorations. Look for the 20 Snowmen lining the walkway with names of the sponsors to this event. Workers have been very busy in order to provide you with a visual extravaganza. Outdoors behind the clubhouse, in the pavilion, you'll find Santa, the star of this event, waiting to greet you after the parade. TAM Photography LLC will be on hand to capture those special moments of Santa with your child. Photos are free. Santa will also have a special gift for your child. Also,

outdoors you'll find the Parma Firemen making s'mores for your child (also free of charge). An ice sculptor will be demonstrating his skill in carving for your viewing pleasure. The famed Jimbo's Concessions food truck will also be on hand and will be selling his renowned cheesesteaks.


Inside the clubhouse, stop to see, participate, and buy from Little Birdie's Wine Nest's Ultimate Hot Cocoa Bar and Christmas Cookie Decorating Station. Owner/operator Robin Keenan and staff would love to tell you about the Birdie's Nest Social Sanctuary, which will be opening in 2022. Also indoors, you'll find goodies for sale from local bakeries, fresh popcorn, and the We Are Parma Proud tees for sale. (The shirts make great gifts-show your Parma Pride!). There will also be a free kids craft: a make-and-take home wooden ornament, and face painting.

Holiday music will be provided indoors and out, and there will be costumed characters strolling the grounds. The event ends at 4 PM. Follow We Are Parma Proud's Facebook page for more holiday activities, such as the 12 Days of Recipes and residents

sharing their pictures of holiday decorations and displays (both initiatives will start after Frosty's Fest).

We Are Parma Proud is also pleased to announce the creation of the newly created Christmas In The City Facebook Page. Visit, like, and follow for a list of holiday-related activities throughout the city. You can message

the page if you have an event you'd like to share. Already listed is information on the Holiday Lighting Contest, Pop Up Christmas Bar & Lights Tour, Pet Photos with Santa Paws, Christmas At The Farm, Santa Story Time, Parma Symphony Orchestra Concert, Christmas in Polish Village, and more.



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