Serving the Tri-City Area of Parma, Parma Heights, & Seven Hills

State Rep. Brennan Announces

\$4.16 Million Award To Parma Schools

by Sean Patrick Brennan

State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan (Parma) has announced that the Parma City Schools have been awarded a \$4,116,570 Career Technical Construction Program grant from the state of Ohio. The Ohio schools selected for the grants were awarded nearly \$200 million to help expand career technical educational and training facilities to serve more students.

"One of the gems of the Parma City Schools is their career tech program. Program director Kristen Plageman and her team have put together a top notch program that leads to students leaving high school with the skills necessary to immediately enter the job market. In fact, they have received very high marks in every category of the state report card. These funds will go a long

way in making their program even stronger. I could not be prouder," Rep. Brennan said.

59 schools throughout the state applied for funding with 35 being selected in a competitive selection process. The Parma City School District will use the funds to expand their auto collision and carpentry programs. It will provide the students with state-of-the-art facilities in which to learn and hone their skills. The Parma City Schools offer a robust catalog of career technical education choices for students, including culinary arts, cosmetology, medical professions, carpentry, auto collision, business/computer skills, digital media creative arts, biotechnology, networking/advanced computers, dental technologies, medical professions, cooperative marketing management, and engineering.



by Felicia Martinez

The 13th Annual Parma Peanut Butter Drive kicks off on December 1st and runs through the 31st.

The Parma Peanut Butter Drive has been going strong since its inception in 2010 when its founder, State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan, had the idea to collect peanut butter to help the community. It is estimated that in 12 years, the drive has generated over 12 tons of peanut butter through monetary donations and jars of peanut butter, thanks to the generosity of the community.

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. "Peanut butter is the primary source of protein for those of little financial means," Brennan said. "In recent years, the price of peanut butter has skyrocketed, making it out of reach for those who need it most."

All Faiths Pantry, in its 17th year, has been delivering nutritious groceries directly to the homes of qualifying seniors in Parma and surrounding communities. Executive Director Felicia Martinez says "The rising cost of food has impacted us all, but especially for an older adult on a fixed income, it is even harder to make ends meet. We are so grateful for this annual drive, which helps

continued on page 2



2023 Gratitude And Success

by Tony Biasiotta

As we approach holiday season, I want to take a moment to express my gratitude to our community. I'm continually honored and humbled by the support you have shown me. There has been much success over the last year. I want to highlight a handful in this article.

Our total unexpended cash balance is \$17.9 million. Our total cash dipped slightly from my last communication because of a large payment being made on our road resurfacing project. However, our balance remains comfortable for a city of our size. We are well-positioned to accommodate needed improvements such as our new service truck storage garage, infrastructure improvements, and pay down notes (when it becomes advantageous to do so).

Some of our major components of our Parks Master Plan are rounding third

and heading for home. The Splash Pad, Concession Stand / Restroom Building, and new parking lot at Calvin are scheduled for completion this December. Next up is the addition of a Disc Golf course at Calvin. Construction on the Lodge at North Park and expanded parking lot is starting to take shape. The Lodge is expected to be completed by March 2024. This facility will be available for residents to rent this coming Spring. Additional projects completed over the last few months include new pickleball courts and resurfaced tennis courts at both John Glenn and Meijer Parks, replacement backstop at Meijer Ball Field, and additional walking paths at Summitview. We encourage everyone to check out one of our six parks.

The 2023 Road Program rehabilitated over 2.65 miles of roadway (curb to curb) on ten (10) different streets in the

The Calvin Park Stormwater Basin (located adjacent to Somerset Drive) was recently rehabilitated by the city. The existing stream channel was reinforced with armor rocks (erosion control system), as well as removal of approximately three feet (3') of sediment from the basin to restore storm water storage capacity in this basin. Nearly 500 trees and plants were added to the project to help reforest the area.

In addition, the dredging of Driftwood Basin (located between Chestnut and Driftwood at the southern edge of the Bayberry development) is nearly complete. These basins are an integral part of our storm water management system. They capture storm water and retain it until the sewers can convey it. It is important that they be maintained and are working properly. These basins are now functioning at

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Script Parma Picture Of The Month



Thanks to Mike Holden from NewsChannel 5 for sharing the story of Parma resident Robert Funk who donated the funds to install a pink flamingo sculpture in front of script Parma in memory of his beloved wife and daughter whom he lost to breast cancer and all who have been touched by the scourge. If you have a photo in front of the sign that you would like to have published, email it, along with your address, to Sean P. Brennan at pierogie5k@gmail.com. You could win a great prize if yours is selected.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Representative's Corner

by Sean Brennan, State Representative, Ohio's 14th District

Last month we honored our military veterans on Veteran's Day. As you may know, in 1938, following World War I, Congress created Armistice Day to honor our veterans of the Great War on 11-11, the date in 1918 when the armistice was signed ending the hostilities at 11:00 am. Later, in 1954, following World War II and the Korean War, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the law changing the holiday to Veteran's Day to honor all of our nation's military veterans.

Last month I had the distinct honor of being invited to attend the Parma Area Senior Veterans group's Veterans Day Tribute at the Donna Smallwood Activities Center (formerly the Parma Senior Center). The room was packed with what I estimate at over 200 veterans, their friends, family, and supporters. Founder and Administrator Tony Kessler, his wife Shirley, and their volunteers put together a very moving and fun event. In fact, there were many tributes to our veterans, as well as entertainment provided by Parma's very own Italian Cowboy Harry James.

I was very honored (!) to receive a certificate of appreciation, along with Mayor Timothy DeGeeter and WEWS Channel 5 News Anchor Rob Powers. As Mr. Kessler brought me to the podium, read, and handed me the beautifully framed certificate, I was literally brought to tears and expressed how deeply humbled I was and how my grandpa, who served during Korea, would be so proud. Our certificates read, "For your above and beyond continued support of our Military Veterans and their families. Thank you from a grateful U.S. Veterans Community and from a Grateful Parma Area Senior Veterans." Channel 5 captured some of the event, which can be watched at the following websites:



WEWS Channel 5 News Anchor Rob Powers, State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan, Parma Area Senior Veterans Administrator Tony Kessler, and Parma Mayor Timothy DeGeeter.

Christmas in Parma

by Kevin Kelly

It's almost 12 days til Christmas and Shocker Enterprises Production, located here in Parma, Ohio, has put together a one hour Christmas special for the residents of Parma. This footage includes past Parma Christmas parades, light decorations, Normandy High School and Christmas events. Most of the footage was filmed by Parma residents themselves. The video will also include videos created by the Parma group, "The Young Professionals". So, check it out and enjoy the beautiful decorations and colorful lights and more in the suburb of Parma Ohio. Who



knows, you may even recognize yourself or even your own home on this television special.

The show will air on Wednesdays at 8 PM and Sundays at 9 PM on Cox Cable, channel 45.

PARMA PEANUT BUTTER ORIVE EDUNDER AND DRGANIZER SEAN BRENNAN

continued from page 1

us continue to support older adults in our community and including peanut butter in our monthly deliveries is appreciated by clients."

Monetary donations are encouraged. As an agency of the food bank, peanut butter can be purchased for



Crime Tip Line (440) 887-7340 crimetips@parmajustice.net www.cityofparmapolice.com

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less than half the cost of retail, a dozen jars for about \$22. Jars of peanut butter, of course, are also welcomed and can be dropped off at: Parma City Hall, Parma libraries (Snow and Powers Branches), and UH Parma Medical Center.

This year's drive is supported by community partners Lamar Advertising, Rumpke Waste & Recycling, UH Parma Medical Center, and the Parma Libraries. We also encourage people to host a PB collection at their workplace or civic group.

To learn more or to donate online visit www.allfaithspantry.org. Donations by check can be mailed to All Faiths Pantry, P.O. Box 34239, Parma, Ohio, 44134 (place Parma PB Drive in the message). For questions about the drive email Brennan at pierogi5k@gmail.com or call 456-885-8091.

news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/we-take-care-of-veterans-here-parma-group-works-to-help-so-cialize-veterans

news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/news-5s-rob-powers-honored-for-your-service-series-at-veterans-tribute-day-in-parma

I want to thank all of our military veterans for your selfless service - you deserve our thanks every day. As a proud husband, father, Ohioan, American, and American History teacher for three decades, I truly appreciate your sacrifices for me, my family, our state, and our nation. It is an honor to serve you as your state representative. May God bless our veterans, their families, and our entire community during this very sacred time of year.



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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

University Hospitals Parma Medical Center Awarded Fall 2023

'A' Hospital Safety Grade From Leapfrog Group

by Christopher Harris

University Hospitals Parma Medical Center received an "A" Hospital Safety Grade from The Leapfrog Group, a national nonprofit upholding the standard of patient safety in hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers. This national distinction celebrates UH Parma Medical Center's achievements in prioritizing patient safety by protecting patients from preventable harm and errors. This marks the second 'A' rating UH Parma Medical Center has received this year (spring 2023, fall 2023).

"Safety is at the forefront of our health systems, caregivers, and patients across the board. Therefore, it's important that we embrace a culture of safety within our medical centers," said James Hill, MD, Chief Operating Officer of UH Parma Medical Center. "UH Parma remains steadfast in providing support and ensuring the utmost safety for our patients. We are proud to have received an 'A' hospital safety rating from the Leapfrog Group for our continued efforts."

Leapfrog's publicly available hospital grades are an important tool that empowers patients, Dr. Hill added. UH Parma closely monitors quality measures like hospital-acquired infections and readmission rates. All caregivers, including nurses and physicians, are encouraged to actively advocate for



State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan visits UH Parma Medical Center.

their patients, which leads to a culture of shared responsibility and accountability.

The Leapfrog Group, an independent national watchdog organization, assigns an "A," "B," "C," "D" or "F" grade to general hospitals across the country based on over 30 national performance measures reflecting errors, accidents, injuries and infections, as well as systems hospitals have in place to prevent harm. Leapfrog evaluated more than 2,800 hospitals in fall 2023, with only 30% receiving an 'A' rating.

"Earning an 'A' Grade means University Hospitals Parma Medical Center made a true commitment to put patients first," said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. "We congratulate the leadership, Board, clinicians, staff and volunteers that all had a role to play in this achievement."

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital ratings program based exclusively on hospital prevention of medical errors, infections and injuries that kill more than 500 patients a day nationally. The grading system is peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public. Grades are updated twice annually, in the fall and spring.

To see UH Parma Medical Center's full grade details and to access patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, visit HospitalSafetyGrade.org and follow The Leapfrog Group on Twitter, Facebook and via its newsletter.

About University Hospitals Parma Medical Center / University Hospitals Health System

For more than 60 years, UH Parma Medical Center has served the southwestern suburbs of Cleveland. UH Parma Medical Center provides acute and sub-acute care, with 287 beds and specialty centers for stroke, cardiac, cancer, orthopedics, pain management, acute rehabilitation and bariatric care. As part of the University Hospitals health system, UH Parma Medical Center gives patients access to nationally recognized UH Cleveland Medical Center, which is perennially among the highest performers in national ranking surveys. UH has a history of more than 150 years of serving the needs of patient and now see more than 1 million patients per year through an integrated network of more than 20 hospitals including five joint-venture hospitals, more than 60 outpatient health centers and 200 physician offices in 15 counties throughout northern Ohio. UH is home to some of the most prestigious clinical and research programs in the nation, including cancer, pediatrics, women's health, orthopedics, radiology, neuroscience, cardiology and cardiovascular surgery, digestive health, dermatology, transplantation and urology. For more information, go to UHhospitals.org.

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When you receive the right care at the right time from the right caregiver, you know you've come to UH Parma Medical Center. We've earned the five-star rating, the highest possible, from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for our work to bring the science of health and the art of compassion to the patients we serve.

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TRI-CITY AREA



The City of Parma swore in several new police officers and firefighters early in 2023.



Ukrainian Village in Parma hosted the Ukrainian Constittuion Parade in August.







The Pizza Bake-off hosted by the Young Professionals of Parma returned in 2023. This eageerly anticipated event was sidelined by the pandemic but came roaring back. Here Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter stands with Ohio State Rep from Parma Sean Patrick Brennan.

History was made in Parma Heights on September 11, 2023 when the first woman Chief of Police, Tanya Czack, was sworn in by Mayor Marie Gallo.





Lucky the Parma Observer Dog joined the team in the Summer of 2023.

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PARMA HEIGHTS

Tis' The Season To Shop Parma Heights

by Emery Pinter

Instead of anticipating a package in the mail, which might not even get here on time, let's head to Pearl Road in Parma Heights and shop small this holiday. We've got you covered with these holiday gift ideas. Discover an assortment of local shops and boutiques, along with places to stop and get a bite to eat. There's something for everyone on your shopping list.

Your choice to support small businesses matters. Shopping at local businesses not only helps their owners but an entire community. Small businesses use their purchasing power in neighborhoods and boost local tax revenue. A thriving small business means betterfunded schools, more money for roads, more chances for other businesses, and a healthier community. With the holiday spirit in mind, and obviously a love for shopping local, here's where to shop small in Parma Heights for the holidays:

Samosky's Home Bakery, 6379 Pearl Road. Don't feel like baking but still want to serve something homemade? A holiday cookie platter just isn't the same without a few cheerful gingerbread people. While almost too cute too eat, their ginger, cinnamon, and molasses flavors make it hard to stop nibbling. And their Christmas cookies will satisfy all your holiday-cookie-decorating wants and needs. Always buy two dozen: one to share and one to keep for yourself.

Thee Tree House, 6269 Pearl Road, Share the magic of the universe with astrological gifts this holiday season. Find something to match their sun, moon or rising sign. Spiritual gifts for women & men, incense burner and wall hangers, Reiki gifts, positive energy candles, and meditation room spiritual decor.

Hair & Stuff 216, 6277 Pearl Rd Discover a world of possibilities for your hair with their collection of women's wigs, extensions, and hairpieces. They also have affordable leg warmers, winter hats, and the best earmuffs and ear warmers to keep you cozy this winter.



Village Cards & Gifts 6643 Pearl Road, curates a selection of greeting cards, stationery, indoor Christmas decorations, and other assorted gifts for him and her. The store carries Lemon Lavender Spa Products which include Heated Neck Wraps, Shower Steamers, Aloe Infused Hydrating Socks, Bye Bye Bed Head Satin Pillow cases, Hot & Cold Eye Masks, Hot & Cold Spa Pillows, & more! Perfect Stocking stuffers, for all those you want to pamper! This is where to go for a unique gift for the hard-to-shopfor person on your list. From clothes to accessories to jewelry, Ty products and inspirational items, you can find a ton here. I especially love its selection of humorous gifts, like greeting cards and silly Christmas socks by Two Left Feet.

Gamers Haven, 6639 Pearl Road, is a store where you can take the fam-

ily and have as much fun hanging in the store as you will playing with board games you can buy there. They have hundreds of engaging board games with stunning art and innovating gameplay. Whether someone is into the classic board games or the newer editions, odds are they'll appreciate a board-game-themed gift (or just being gifted a board game!). This store stocks everything from games for the younger crowd and classics from my childhood to trendy Pokemon cards.

Heidy's Nail Supply, 6625 Pearl Road. If you're craving a design that's festive and interesting with a reindeer or snowman, you've come to the right place. Heidy is here to guide you through Christmas nail designs that are elegant and restrained. The store has all types of nail art designs that will make your Christmas season so

exciting. The designs contain iconic Christmas related objects, items, colors, and even Christmas cartoon characters.

Mistyfied Hair Salon, 6653 Pearl Road, offers haircuts & modern styling as well as nail care, makeup & special-occasion services. Mistyfied Hair Salon takes the time to listen to you and takes the time out to listen to what you want. They make every trip a pleasurable and relaxing experience.

168 Optical is located at 6315
Pearl Road on the 2nd floor, Ste #206 in
Parma Heights. At 168 Optical, frames
start at just \$38 and carry a line called
Twelve84. And get ready for Christmas
fashion with stylish eyeglass cases like
the Christmas Story, or National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation Eyeglass
Cases. A great Christmas present or
just for festive fun.

'Tis the season for gifts, treats, movies, and more: Christmas is the season of giving, indulging, and treating yourself and loved ones. Here's hoping you'll find everything you need locally for your jolliest Christmas yet. Now it's your turn to tell me. Where are you shopping local this season?





INSPIRATION

My Wife Saved My Life



by Robert Stilwell

In 1967 while in the US Navy, aboard the USS Mississinewa AO144 we arrived at our home port of Naples Italy to take on more fuel to replenish other Ships while patroling the Mediterranean Sea. Upon arrival a few officers came aboard looking for volunteers to go on the USS Forrestal, Aircraft Carrier and head to Vietnam. As an incentive they offered \$50.00 more a month for Hazardous Duty pay. We were given 24Hrs. to decide. 6 men immediately agreed to go. 2 friends tried talking me into going with them. I told them that I needed to call my wife wife before deciding. That evening we went ashore and I called my wife. She did not care about the extra

money. She was upset that I would even think about going anywhere near Vietnam, as the War was intensifying. As a result I told her that I would not volunteer. I informed my friends and they decided to go anyway. About 3 months later we were informed that both of my friends and 132 other Sailors were killed in the terrible accident on the USS Forrestal July 29, 1967. Almost all of the Damage Control men were killed because of the explosion and intense heat. It's likely that I would have been killed also because I was a Damage Control man, which is the equvalent of a Fire Fighter in Civilian life. My wife was an Angel in

disguise.

Thank You For Answering The Call

by Joanie Gedeon

November is a good time to reflect on our country and the freedoms we enjoy. Without the sacrifices of Veterans throughout history, these privileges would not be possible. That is why remembering Veterans on Veterans Day is so important. Alpha Delta Kappa Ohio Sigma recently recognized the Veterans at the Parma VA Clinic on Brookpark Rd. in Parma. ADK is an organization of women educators which builds Educational Excellence, Altruism, and World Understanding through fellowship. ADK gives from the heart to help others.

It was amazing to see how many Veterans use the Parma facility. We passed out 110 appreciation bags in about an hour and a half. Each patriotic bag contained a bottle of water and a snack bag of Bugles, along with a Thank You note from our local members. It

was an eye-opening experience. There are so many Veterans from so many different wars. They so proudly wear their hats. They were so appreciative of the bags. We were there to thank them, but in turn, they kept thanking us.

One member from ADK described her experience there. "The first Veteran I met was from WWII. His son told me he had been shot down during the war. His father took my hand, held on to it for several minutes, talked to me and smiled. His son thanked me profusely! The gratitude in their eyes brought tears to mine."

When leaving, we asked some of the employees how many times a day they get tears in their eyes. They responded that they have to put up shields, otherwise they would constantly be in tears. We must NEVER forget the HEROES who answered the call to secure our freedom.







Faith Community Directory

All Faiths Pantry

P.O. Box 34239 Parma, OH 44134 216-496-4329 allfaithspantry.org

All Saints Episcopal Church

8911 West Ridgewood Drive, Parma, Ohio 44130, 440-888-4055 parishadmin@allsaintsparma.org

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

7500 State Rd. Parma, OH 440-845-2230 www.blc7500.com

Divinity Lutheran Church

11877 Blossom Ave. Parma Hts., OH 44130, 440-845-2060

www.divinitylutheran.com The Islamic Center of Cleveland

6055 W. 130th St. Parma, OH 44130 216-362-0786 www.iccleveland.org

Ridgewood United Methodist Church

6330 Ridge Rd. Parma, OH 44129 440-885-1360 www.ridgewoodumc.org

St. Bridget's of Kildare Church

5620 Hauserman Rd. Parma, OH 44130 440-886-4434 www.Stbridgetparma.com

Holy Family Catholic Church

7367 York Rd. Parma, OH 44130 440-842-5533 www,holyfamparma.org

Parma Christian Church

7000 Ridge Rd., Parma, Ohio 44129, 440-842-1614 www.parmachristianchurch.org

Calvary Lutheran Church

6906 W. Pleasant Valley Rd., Parma, Ohio 44130 440-845-0070 CalvaryParma.360unite.com

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NEIGHBORHOODS

Handmade Treasures Holiday Pop Up Shop

by Cyndi Brunnet

Handmade Treasures Holiday Pop Up Shop is back for it's fourth year in Southland Shopping Center. The shop started in the middle of the pandemic as there was a need for crafters to do shows and customers who wanted to purchase handmade items. With the pandemic, all the shows were cancelled and that is how the pop up shop came to be. Two friends decided to help fill that need, contacted their crafting friends and see if they would be interested in being a part of the shop. The shop opened November 1, 2020 and there was a line around the building of people wanting to get in. Local TV stations featured the shop on the news and it was a hit.

Now here we are with the shop in its fourth year with a new, larger location. Handmade Treasures is still in Southland Shopping Center at 6875 Southland Drive and has moved from next to Petco to the strip between Marc's and Giant Eagle. Roxanne Harmuth, one of the owners stated, "We are so excited to be in our new location. It is the old Avenue clothing store. About half of the customers that come in, didn't even realize we were over by Petco the past three years. We are on course to having a record year and for the month of October we are up 20% in sales compared to last year."

There are 70 local crafters featured

with a variety of unique items. You can find handmade cards, candles, men's grooming items, artwork, aprons, table runners, porch signs, air plants, purses, ornaments, crochet items, wood items, cross stitched Kleenex boxes and so much more. You can even find framed advertisement from the early 1900's and ornaments made out of CDs.

Every year the shop focuses on a need and has done fundraisers for needy families, donated to the local food pantry, etc. This year the shop has partnered with Hiram Farm. This non profit organization was born out of the desire to provide inspiration and meaningful work for the individual growth for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other developmental disabilities. The residents of the farm live there and work the farm as well as making the amazing ceramic pieces which Handmade Treasures is selling on behalf of Hiram Farm. 100% of the prodeeds go back to the farm.

Handmade Treasures is open for the holiday shopping season through December 27 Monday-Saturday 10am-

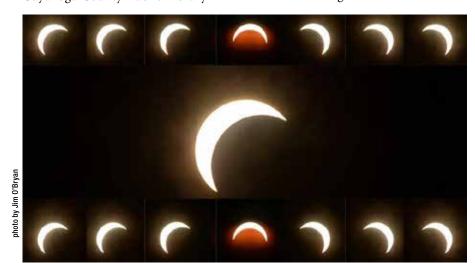


6pm and starting Black Friday until 7pm and Sundays 12-5pm. You can find additional information on their Facebook page at fb.me/handmade-treasuresohio and can reach them at hmtohio@gmail.com or call the shop at 440-545-1046.

Eclipse Over Cleveland

by Bridget Lavelle

The Parma Heights Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library will host Eclipse over Cleveland on Saturday, December 2nd, 2023 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. in Meeting Room A. Learn about



The last eclipse over Cleveland was this partial eclipse, August 21, 2017

the astronomical event that will happen this Spring 2024. A total eclipse of the sun will occur over Ohio and the first total eclipse of the sun in this area since 1806. On April 8th, 2024, Cleveland and Cuyahoga County will experience about three minutes and 50 seconds of totality. Jay Ryan, a longtime astronomy educator, will explain this special astronomical event using a colorful and illustrated presentation. Ryan will address misconceptions about eclipses and eye safety. Prepare and learn in December and be ready for April 8th! Registration required. To register, visit www.cuyahogalibrary. orgor call the Parma Heights Branch Library at 440.884.2313.

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PERSPECTIVE

The Story Behind A Holiday Classic (And More)

by Lee Kamps

Perhaps the most popular song of all time is the classic Bing Crosby Christmas classic "White Christmas". Although Bing Crosby has been dead since 1977, his song will be played everywhere during this holiday season. But no doubt few people today know how or where this song originated.

The song was written by Irving Berlin, perhaps one of the greatest song writers of the 20th century. It was first heard in the movie Holiday Inn, a musical made in 1942 about a resort hotel that was only open on national holidays. The movie starred Fred Astaire and Bing Crosby. It is a romance movie, and the movie featured many song and dance numbers with songs corresponding to the holidays. The song White Christmas is heard toward the end of the movie, sung by Bing Crosby.

The movie was released late in 1942, when the nation was fighting the Second World War with many young men far from home. The movie was one of the top grossing movies of 1942 and the song was awarded the Academy Award for Best Song in a movie at the 1943 Academy Awards. The song immediately resonated with the public and especially with the men overseas fighting the war and far from home. The images of the song reminded them of a Christmas back home and it was said that it was a big morale booster during a difficult time in the war.

Another popular song that premiered in that movie was Easter



Parade, which has also become a classic. In fact, the song became the theme of another movie Easter Parade in 1948 starring Fred Astaire and Judy Garland singing and dancing, culminating with the Easter Parade down Fifth Avenue in New York city with Fred Astaire and Judy Garland leading the parade.

In 1954, the movie White Christmas was released in time for Christmas. Unlike Holiday Inn, which was filmed in black and white and was a relatively low budget movie; this version was in living color with a lot of great song and dance routines. Besides Bing Crosby, this movie also starred Danny Kaye, Vera Ellen and a young Rosemary Clooney. This was a romance as well as a song and dance movie that culminates with a big finale. No doubt these movies will be available for streaming this holiday season. Both are also available in-home video.

Another favorite Christmas song is

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas. This song was sung by Judy Garland in the 1944 musical Meet Me in Saint Louis, directed by Vincente Minelli. It is set in Saint Louis during the "World's Fair" of 1904 featuring an affluent family where the father is being transferred to New York. This movie also introduces classic songs like The Trolley Song and On the Atchison, Topeka and the Santa Fe. But the song Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas appears toward the end of the movie and is about "next year we

all will all be together". Again, that resonated with the people since the war was still going on but with the end in sight.

A side note to this movie was that the director Vincente Minelli and the lead actress Judy Garland had an affair where Judy Garland became pregnant. They were married and the child of that pregnancy was a daughter who is Liza Minelli.

Another popular Christmas classic song is We Need a Little Christmas. This was from a 1960s Broadway musical about an eccentric auntie Mame, called Mame!" The story is about an affluent family living in New York and after the 1929 stock market crash destroys the family's wealth, "Auntie Mame" breaks out in song singing the cheery number We Need a Little Christmas.

Many of our most popular Christmas songs were written during or about hard times with the promise of the holiday that better days lay ahead. Despite the cold and darkness of winter, eventually spring will come. So, enjoy the music and songs of the season that never seem to grow old.

Overdevelopment In Parma

by Sharon Stahurski

The City of Parma is at a cross-road. With the proposal of 57 new households or the single family cluster development ok'd and the "fast track" passing of the required zoning change provided by council (one council member dissented). Parma residents are witnessing a serious conflict of interest.

The problem is twofold. After attending the developer's meeting Tuesday 11/21 it was clear that there is little consideration for the adverse effects the new subdivision will bring to neighboring properties and roadways. The loss in green space is substantial, topography will be shifted dramatically on parcels untouched for almost 100 years.

Developers at the meeting appeared under prepared and the team not completely in agreement. Impact studies were not provided. Developers lacked city engineering reports demonstrating that the change in topical geography and increase in impervious surfaces would not lead to additional flooding.

A single detention basin was the sole solution provided, and as residents are well aware detention basins frequently fail or under-perform.

Part Two

Complete abandonment by our municipality of those established residents, who have paid taxes and mortgages for decades. Who have been vocal about the already existing flooding and lack of solutions.

Add to the mix the majority property owner is a councilman who stands to gain handsomely. A suspicion is now cast upon all of council. Politicians are not to profit from public position.

A nearby resident attending the meeting who is a master plumber of 40 years summed up the sentiment saying 'I guess you can see we are not happy."



Yet the developers insist on an astonishing amount of dwellings on a small amount of land.

Can this be mediated? Yes, it can. 57 households are not "Required". Income property can exist without creating a new flood plain in Parma.

Greed is the catalyst behind this debate.

Parma does not need to continue to overdevelop our city, The flooding we currently experience proves we are overdeveloped. Those at the helm have been asleep up there at city hall. A small group of developers profit. Today's politicians will eventually leave office leaving the homeowners on the hook. The flooding we currently experience proves we are overdeveloped. Yet the municipality is complicent by helping developers reap the benefits while the neighborhoods surrounding the subdivision lose.

The Parma City Municipality, the Mayor and City Council have a duty to protect its citizens.

They need to be held accountable now.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Ohio Senate Minority Leader Nickie J. Antonio and State Senator Steve Huffman testify on Senate Bill 101.

Ending The Death Penalty

by Nickie Antonio

This General Assembly, Senator Steve Huffman and I have once again jointly introduced legislation to end the use of the death penalty in the state of Ohio, replacing it with a sentence of life in prison without parole for capital cases. Senate Bill 101 is historic for several reasons.

Death penalty repeal bills have been introduced in Ohio many times over the last decade. While it might be tempting to think that we still haven't arrived at the right moment, we speak to our colleagues in the Statehouse every day, and the momentum for ending the death penalty is palpable.

Though there has always been bipartisan support for abolishing the death penalty, this General Assembly's bill has brought together the strongest bipartisan and bicameral effort yet. The bill is sponsored by over one-third of the Senate, including five Republicans and seven Democrats. The House also has a bipartisan companion bill, House Bill 259, which has already received multiple hearings this year.

These benchmarks are unsurprising. For many legislators, abolishing the death penalty has been described as a commonsense policy. Not only is the death penalty at odds with moral, religious and pro-life stances, but capital punishment is an enormous drain on our state's financial resources. In Ohio, the cost of prosecuting a capital case is ten times more expensive than that of a non-capital case, even before accounting for years of appeals that may follow a conviction.

On March 31, 2023, Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost released Ohio's annual Capital Crimes report for 2022. Findings within the report estimate that it will cost Ohio between \$128 million and \$384 million to impose the death penalty on the 128 prisoners currently on death row. These numbers are even more egregious when we consider how rarely we actually use the death penalty. Even after setting an execution date, a prisoner is "more likely to die of suicide or natural causes than as a result of execution." This is due to multiple factors, such as the length of trials

and appeals, high demand for lawyers, and the ongoing difficulty in obtaining lethal injection drugs.

Perhaps one of the most compelling arguments to end capital punishment in Ohio came from former Supreme Court Justice Paul Pfeifer. He was one of three Republican state senators who resurrected Ohio's capital punishment statute in 1981. In 2012, he testified as a proponent in support of the abolition bill. "The death penalty in Ohio has become what I call a death lottery," Pfeifer told the House Criminal Justice Committee. "The application is hit or miss depending on where you happen to commit the crime and the attitude of the prosecutor in that county." He added, "I believe Ohio is no longer well served by our death penalty statute. It should be repealed."

Where you live, your economic status and the county tax dollars available to a prosecutor can also determine whether or not a death sentence will be sought. Ohio has had eleven innocent people sentenced to die and then exonerated, eight of whom were Black men. These exonerees illustrate that the death penalty is fallible, administered with disparities across both economic and racial lines. Meanwhile, the torturous, decades-long process ignores the needs of victims' family members and repeatedly traumatizes them. We have also heard from leaders in law enforcement who have spoken out about the trauma the death penalty causes prison

The death penalty's flaws are more than just its practical failings. The death penalty is an affront to our ideals as an evolving society, whether we politically identify as Republican, Democrat, somewhere in between or no affiliation at all.

We work hard to make Ohio a better place to work and live for our constituents. And as we know all too well, Democrats and Republicans can have very different ideas on how we should accomplish that. That's what makes repealing the death penalty such a remarkable issue: no matter where we are politically, we can agree that repealing it just makes sense.

Sharks In The Great Lakes?

by Kevin Kelly

Global warming is causing sharks to move farther northward in the Atlantic Ocean, towards Long Island, New York. Because of this, sharks have been coming close to shore, which is increasing attacks on humans. Several Great Whites have even been seen off the New York shorelines.

Recently, there have been unsubstantiated reports of shark fins being seen breaking the surface of the waters in the Great Lakes. There have also been reports of dead sharks washed up on the shores of Michigan and Lake Erie. In addition, a biologist from Penn State University verified that a photograph of a shark in Lake Erie, circulating on Facebook, was authentic. Even though scientists say this is unlikely, it's not impossible for sharks to get into the Great Lakes. One species of man-eating shark in particular, the "bull-shark", is able to adapt to freshwater. Over the years, this shark has been found inland, miles up rivers. In 1937, a 5 foot, 85-pound bull-shark was caught in the Mississippi River in Alton, Illinois. If it had traveled any further, it could have entered Lake Michigan.

Experts say there are different possibilities for how sharks could enter the American Lakes. One is through a ship's ballast. After a ship unloads its cargo, it allows water to enter the bottom portion of the ship for balance before returning to the Great Lakes. This allows ocean life, including sharks, to get into the ship's ballast. After arriving at lake ports to load more cargo, the ship will release the ballast water into the lakes, along with any hitchhiking cargo.

To find out more about this pos-



sibility, make sure to watch "Sharks in the Great Lakes", on Cox Channel 45, Friday Nights at 8:30 PM and Channel 1025 on Spectrum at 9PM. For those who do not have Cox Cable or Spectrum, you can find the video on YouTube under the title "Sharks in the Great Lakes", by Shocker Enterprises. For more information: you can send an email to: Kevin@shockerEnterprises.com or call: (440) 888-8327.





OBSERVER

News You Can Use (And Where To Find It)

by Gene Lovasy
LOCAL EVENTS

AND OPPORTUNITIES:

From Ohio House District 14 Representative Sean Brennan - Monthly Newsletter... or website.

Grant Sources for Nonprofits...
Here is another set of five grantors identified & vetted by the MyCom network. These funders support organizations, programs, and projects that offer afterschool activities to kids. > The ALDI Cares Community Grants program > Tim Hortons Foundation Camps > The Lisa Libraries > The LeRoy Neiman Foundation > The Wabtec Foundation. If you're affiliated with a family/youth-serving organization visit these funders' sites to see if your program/service fits their mission.

From Parma City Schools:

Help bring some joy and relief to the students and families of Parma City Schools. Join others in spreading warmth and cheer to those in need. Go here to learn how you can Adopt-A-Family for the Holidays.

Normandy's Sword and Shield student-run restaurant is ready to serve you & it is now open for business. Click on the hyperlink for details & current menu selections.

Go here to display the 2023 – 24 Community Swim & Walk schedule for Normandy & Valley Forge High Schools. **From Parma Council of PTAs:**

Total membership has seen a steady increase over the past 3 years now exceeding 2,000 women and MEN. You do not have to have a child attending a District school & and you can join the PTA of any or all PCSD units. Clicking on this LINK TREE provides immediate access to all individual school PTAs as well as Parma Early Childhood, First Step Preschool, and A.C.E.S. Center For Education PTAs. Get involved; make a difference.

Plan now to attend PCPTA Night at the Cleveland Monsters Hockey Game the evening of Saturday, February 10, 2024. Go here to learn more & to purchase tickets.

From Seeds of Literacy... is a non-profit organization that provides FREE basic education and GED® and iSET® preparation to adults in the Cleveland area. If you're a direct service provider & would like to learn more, they are hosting a Partner Info Session starting at 9:30 am on Friday, Jan. 12th at their west side office – 3104 W. 25th, 3rd Fl. (at the corner of W. 25th & Clark). To register, email John Martin, at outreach@seedsofliteracy.org.

From SW Community Based Services (SWCBS)... will be collecting warm weather clothing (Coats, hats, gloves and socks) through December.

From Recovery Resources... Located in Lakewood & on Cleveland's

west side (4269 Pearly Rd.) RR specializes in providing mental illness, alcoholism, drug, and other addiction services. A partnership w/MetroHealth System expands services for the community, allowing for the coordination of care for these services.

From PC for PeopleCLE... provides refurbished computers & internet access to eligible customers at affordable prices as well as Business Data Destruction, Donate Office Laptops, Office Tech Wanted, and Certified Data Wipe. If you're looking for vendors/exhibitors for an event? Give them a call.

From Bessies Angels... If you're working with or know of a young lady between the ages of 16 – 24 impacted in some way by the foster care system, Bessie's Angels provides a whole menu of support services to help w/such things as housing, food insecurity, employability, general life skills & much more. Click on the hyperlink for details.

From Refugee Response.... Their Youth Mentoring Program is an after-school extracurricular program that connects refugee students with volunteer mentors to help them achieve their academic, language, and social-emotional goals, nurture a growth mindset, and build confidence.

From Cuyahoga County Office of Early Childhood -- Invest in Chil-

dren ... Starting Point is partnering with Grants Plus to offer a grant writing workshop to childcare programs in Cuyahoga County. Learn more about this free, virtual opportunity and register here.

Food Strong... A previously referenced unique "Food Is Medicine", "Farm To Table" focused nonprofit

Vacant Lot Restoration Project ... has once again launched an RFP for groups and organizations throughout Cleveland and the inner ring suburbs to apply to receive support for their own grassroots vacant lot restoration projects. A link to apply is on the RFP - interested groups should apply online. Please email info@foodstrong. org to receive updates and information about this initiative. Perhaps a youth/family serving organization, a schoolbased program, or even one of our local Gardening Clubs might consider responding.

Care-A-Van... A program that brings food, music, and art to Northeast Ohio farmers markets. Perhaps folks coordinating the Seven Hills Farmers Market might consider connecting for next summer.

From County Div. of Children & Family Services (DCFS) ... Click here to connect to their Public Safety

continued online with hotlinks at parmaobserver.com



PARMA ARTS DISTRICT



Parma Art Center

by Kathryn Mabin

On November 12th the Parma Area Fine Arts Council held the Grand Opening of the new Parma Art Center, located at 7335 Ridge Rd. The event was well attended. Many people signed up for emails regarding their class schedules and events for 2024, several became new members. Attendees were welcomed with free refreshments, viewed a brief program, an exhibit of member artists, and a few vendor tables.

The centerpiece to the event was the showcasing of their permanent art collection on the wall of the lobby. The collection is a result of artwork donated by members, both past and present. Many are from well known Cleveland

area artists. The installation is permanent and open for viewing whenever the building is open.

This non-profit has operated in the area for over 60 years. Their mission is to bring arts to the community at large. Residency is not required to be a member, to take classes or attend events. It's operated by a board of volunteers. The organization has not raised membership, or class fees in over 20 years. It's funded in part with a small matching grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, the cigarette tax, and through donations. Their goal is to offer encouragement, not discourage people to create. The City of Parma has graciously offered space for this orga-

Cassidy Theatre Is Awarded Grant

by Marie Gallo

In 2022, the city of Parma Heights was awarded a 2023 Cuyahoga County Supplemental Grant for \$50,000 to refurbish the lobby of the Cassidy Theatre/Community Center lobby. The money for these grants comes from casino tax funds collected by the county that are distributed yearly on a competitive basis.

"After we dug into the work to be done and the bids came in, we quickly realized that this was going to have to be a multi-phase project instead of the one phase we had originally hoped," explained Grant Coordinator Joseph E. Sebes.

This year, the city replaced the rotted decking off the lobby with TimberTech by Azek, a premium composite material that is durable, sustainable and guaranteed to outlast any wood product.

According to interior designer Christine Hnat, executive assistant to the Grant Department, "In the lobby itself, Mayor Gallo wanted to embrace the beautiful setting of the building and bring the outdoors in, while incorporating the Parma Heights wayfinding colors. A tiered paint scheme emphasizes the volume of the space, paired with the patterned curtains to the house gives the city's wayfinding theme three-dimensional life."

Patrons coming to see the Theatre's Christmas presentation "Shrek" will only see part of the transformation however: the full effect will not be evident until the Cassidy Theatre's 50th Anniversary Season kicks off with "Ragtime" in February, 2024.

The twenty-year-old carpeting will be replaced with modular carpet tiles by Interface in early 2024. Interface's carbon neutral carpeting is made for long-lasing performance and is easy to replace if necessary. The carpet tiles are up to 85% recycled content, making it very eco-friendly. The pattern selected for the Theatre, which comes in eight separate designs to be mixed and matched, is called Beaumont Range and resembles a field of stone.

A custom Cassidy Theatre logo is being designed and crafted for the lobby by artist Kim Colarik. The logo will echo the design style of the city logo, in which Kim created and installed the "Community Grows Here" mural that graces the W. 130th and Pearl Road intersection to the city.

To further bring the outside in, wood slat panels will be installed beneath the new logo and also at the main entrance to the house and new large fans with chandelier-type lighting will brighten the lobby area and increase air circulation.

The grant department is currently working on a 2024 CDSG application for Phase II. If awarded, this will encompass renovation of the lobby bathrooms and will include the addition of a fully-accessible unisex family

Facebook: https://www.facebook. com/CityofParmaHeights

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/parmahts/

http://www.parmaheightsoh.gov/ Parma Heights - Community nization in their building, without their support they could offer the low cost classes and exhibits.

Through the end of 2023, they are offering a free open art session. Bring your own supplies, drawing, paints, pastels, sewing, whatever your medium is, set aside some time to relax, socialize, and create Take inspiration from the paintings in the permanent collection or just stop by, say Hi, on Mondays and Thursdays from 10 am to 3 pm. Stay an hour or stay the full session.

Follow them on Facebook or visit their website at www.parmafinearts.org.

2023 Gratitude And Success



continued from page 1

the level they were designed, thereby relieving a lot of the overland flooding that occurs when they are not.

This fall we began construction on a new climate-controlled storage garage adjacent to our current Service Garage. This new 7,592-square-foot facility will extend the service life of our equipment, and in doing so, protect your tax dollars!

The Cuyahoga Land Bank demolished two city-owned homes at the southeastern corner of the inter-section of Rockside and Crossview Roads. With this most recent partnership with the Cuyahoga Land Bank, our partnership, awards, grants, and sponsorship total is now just shy of \$7,000,000 since the start of 2020.

I want to make it clear that these accomplishments would not be possible without everyone's contributions. Your support, along with the dedication of a wonderful team, is what has made a real difference, and I cannot thank you enough.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for helping make Seven Hills a success story.

Best wishes for a wonderful holiday season, blessed Christmas and Happy New Year.

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