

“Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation.” - Walter Cronkite

Parma Mayor Interviewed For State Of City Address

by Daniel P. McCarthy

Parma Mayor Timothy J. DeGeeter chose again to feature his state of the city address in an interview format with local broadcaster Dick Russ. On February 25th he sat down with Russ at the Powers Branch of the Cuyahoga Public Library. Before a fairly

packed room, their discussion ranged over a wide range of topics, including the library, the emerging event center at Ridgewood Golf Course, many new businesses in our community, Tree canopy issues, UH Pamra Mecial Center, Parma Safety Forces, Parma City School District, and espe-

cially projects from NEORS to combat flooding in the city. About the now completed Ridgewood Basin Project, he said " We have won over residents who did not want the redesign, because it looks good, attracts new wildlife, and most importantly, keeps water out of residents base-

ments". The mayor acknowledged many people in the audience, including elected officials, business leaders and institutional professionals, and stressed that the partnerships formed over many years have forged an understanding of how best to proceed in these often uncertain times. One notable example was what happened during and after



Dick Russ interviewing Parma Mayor Timothy J. DeGeeter about the State of the City.

Parma Heights Welcomes Councilman Steven Vanek

by Marie Gallo

The City of Parma Heights is pleased to welcome Steven Vanek as the new Ward 4 City Council member. A resident of Parma Heights since 2017, Councilman Vanek brings a strong background in public service to the Council seat. After earning his Bachelor of Arts degree from Baldwin Wallace University, he went on to complete a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati.



Councilman Vanek

Vanek graduated from the Cleveland Police Academy in 2014 and began his law enforcement career as a patrol officer with the Cleveland Division of Police. In 2016, he joined the Strongsville Police Department, where he currently serves as a detective. He is also the coordinator of the Strongsville Police Drone Unit, overseeing its operations and a dedicated team of seven officers.

dents to address key issues and maintain Parma Heights as a thriving community.

Committed to driving progress, Vanek is eager to work alongside fellow council members to ensure a strong future for the city. Outlining his vision, he stated, "I am thankful for this amazing opportunity to serve the city, and I look forward to a successful 2025."

Vanek aims to leverage his experience and knowledge in public service to benefit the Parma Heights City Council while gaining insight into municipal operations. He looks forward to collaborating with city officials and resi-

<http://www.parmahightsoh.gov/>
<https://www.facebook.com/CityofParmaHeights/>
Parma Heights – Community Grows Here.

Parma Symphony Orchestra Concert March 9

by Joe Germana

Parma Symphony Orchestra will perform a LIVE Classical Music Concert on Sunday, March 9 at 3:00 PM at Valley Forge High School Auditorium located at 9999 Independence Boulevard in Parma Heights featuring: Saxophone solo featuring: Chika Inoue performing John Williams' Escapades from "Catch Me If You Can" also Hindemith's Symphonic Metamorphosis on a Theme by Weber and Shostakovich's Festive Overture

The orchestra, in its 55th season, consists of 80 members of all walks of life from all over the entire Greater Cleveland area. They meet weekly for rehearsals and present at least four concerts annually. For more information can be found on Facebook, web-site www.parmasympphony.org or calling Business Manager Joe Germana 440-882-2012.

Tickets are available at the door beginning at 2:30 PM or from any member of the orchestra. Tickets paid with cash are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and senior citizens. Family passes of \$20 are available for families of up to 2 adults and their children. Advance Sale tickets are available online at Home | PARMA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

the dramatic tornado event in August, where power was out for several days and there was widespread damage to property and infrastructure. The fact that no one was injured or

killed and there was a coordinated effort by everyone in the community during such an unprecedented disaster, served to prove the point about what Parma is made of.

(square.site) Credit card purchases available include \$2 per ticket handling fee.

Parma Symphony Orchestra is a self-supporting community orchestra in cooperation with the Parma City Schools.



Saxophone Soloist Chika Inoue to perform with PSO 3/9 at Valley Forge



Sen. Nickie J. Antonio, Rep. Sean Brennan, and Rep. David Thomas stop by Legal Aid Society.

Script Parma Picture Of The Month



This month's picture was taken by Toni Cherry in warmer weather. It depicts her beloved granddaughters, Selena, Olivia, Layla and Maria. If you have a creative photo with the script Parma sign that you would like to have published, email it, along with your address and phone number, to Sean Patrick Brennan at pierogie5k@gmail.com. You could win a great Parma prize if yours is selected.

COMMUNITY NEWS

The Representative's Corner

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

Like you, my wife and I recently received our Cuyahoga County property tax bill. Also, probably like you, ours went up a lot, much to our chagrin.

During my first term serving you in the Ohio House of Representatives, I served on the Ways and Means Committee, which is the committee tasked with reviewing proposed laws involving taxes. Know that I was very vocal about providing property tax relief before the recent increases went into effect. We knew this was coming and I was hopeful that we could do something at the Statehouse in advance to provide relief to Ohio's property owners and renters, whose rents are rising due to their landlord's property taxes rising.

Unfortunately, most of my colleagues disagreed and, instead, supported a state income tax cut, which primarily helped very high income individuals. I expressed how I hear daily about property tax concerns and literally never



about state income taxes. Unfortunately, House Bill (H.B.) 57 was the only property tax relief bill that passed. It adjust the Homestead Exemption for seniors to inflation, which is a step in the right direction, but not enough.

Below are the other the bills that I co-sponsored that would have provided real property tax relief. Unfortunately,

none of them achieved enough support and died at the end of 2024. I am in talks now with my colleagues to reintroduce them in hopes for success this time.

H.B. 60 - The Homestead Exemption Expansion Act would raise the tax exemption of a property's value from \$25,000 to \$40,000, providing nearly \$250 million in targeted relief to an additional 75,000 seniors.

H.B. 187 - The Ohio Homeowners' Relief Act would modify the way counties calculate property values by weighing property values for the past three years rather than just one. This averaging would help protect homeowners from large tax increases as a result of the property valuation adjustments occurring in one year.

H.B. 263 - The 70/70 Plan would freeze property taxes for residents aged 70 and older whose incomes are less than \$70,000.

H.B. 645 - The Circuit Breaker Act would provide a rebate of up to \$1,000 to homeowners and renters whose property taxes or rent exceeds 5% of their income. This would provide nearly \$1 billion in relief for over 1.3 million middle-class homeowners and renters.

High property taxes are the result of both the choices that the Legislature has made and the ones it has failed to make. Ohioans vote on levies more often than any other state in the country, yet other states boast stronger property tax relief programs. In the last decade alone, Ohio lawmakers have eliminated the 12.5% rollback that used to lower all levies, allowed the homestead exemption to be eroded by

inflation, and cut local government funding in half. When the state decides to pay less, it results in our communities either paying more or having to cut services. It is time for the state to pay its fair share of property tax relief instead of continuing to expand local levy reliance. The most impactful proposals would cost less than 1% of the state's \$95 billion dollar budget.

The state should fund additional, means-tested property tax relief that is targeted to seniors and working people. It breaks my heart when a resident calls my office to tell me that they don't know how they are going to be able to stay in their home or apartment with all of the rising costs. I stand firmly committed to working with my Democratic and Republican colleagues at the Statehouse to provide property tax relief to all homeowners and renters in Ohio.

State Rep. Brennan Sworn In To 2nd Term



On January 6, State Representative Sean Patrick Brennan was sworn into his second term at the Ohio Statehouse by Ohio House Minority Leader Allison Russo. Many family and friends accompanied him in Columbus to witness his solemn taking of his oath.



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HEALTH AND WELLNESS

An Eye To The Future At University Hospitals Parma Medical Center

by Maia Belay-Roberts

Patients in Parma and the surrounding westside suburbs will no longer need a ride to main campus or the eastside for comprehensive eye care. The UH Eye Institute, which has historically had a wide range of offerings in UH's East Market, is doubling its presence at UH Parma Medical Center to complement its already strong scope of care in Westlake.

Three new eye specialists are joining the retinal specialists and optometrists currently onsite in UH Parma, bringing expertise in glaucoma and cataract surgery, corneal transplantation and oculoplastics. Ophthalmologists Haitham Sahawneh, MD, a corneal specialist, and Ahmed



University Hospitals Parma Medical Center

Ahmed, MD, who provides comprehensive care including glaucoma, as well as optometrist Jesal Haribhakti,

MD, join three others already serving patients at this location.

"At UH Parma Medical Center, we are committed to enhancing access to specialized care close to home," said James Hill, MD, Chief Operating Officer of UH Parma. "The expansion of the UH Eye Institute is a testament to our dedication to meeting the needs of our community by providing world-class eye care right here in Parma. This collaboration ensures patients can receive comprehensive care without the need to travel, improving convenience and outcomes for our westside neighbors."

Office expansion and the acquisi-

tion of new equipment has been made possible through the Parma Hospital Health Care Foundation and UH Eye Institute philanthropic support.

"Previously Parma area's eye care was almost exclusively served by independent ophthalmologists," said Douglas Rhee, MD, Director of the UH Eye Institute. "Patients had to go to UH Westlake Health Center or main campus for the majority of eye services. Now even surgery can be done at UH Parma."

The UH Eye Institute is also expanding its footprint at the UH Westlake Health Center. This location, off Clague and Detroit roads near I-90 in Westlake, is adding a provider in an expanded office space for greater access to the full range of clinical and operative services.

Services are growing as well in the UH East and South Markets, expanding coverage in retinal care and adding corneal procedures and oculoplastics. The Eye Institute is aiming to grow its surgical offerings at UH Lake West and double its space, with more clinical services, in the Western Reserve building in Hudson.

"We're the second smallest department in UH Medical Group, but we manage to provide a full range of eye care services throughout metropolitan Cleveland and beyond," Dr. Rhee said.



Wound Care Center located at UH Parma Medical Center

Providing comprehensive care using the latest surgical and nonsurgical treatments for chronic or nonhealing wounds, at a convenient location. Our team of providers, including, Podiatric, Vascular, and Plastic Surgeons, as well as Infectious Disease and Family Medicine providers can develop an effective treatment plan just for you.

Some of the types of ulcers treated are:

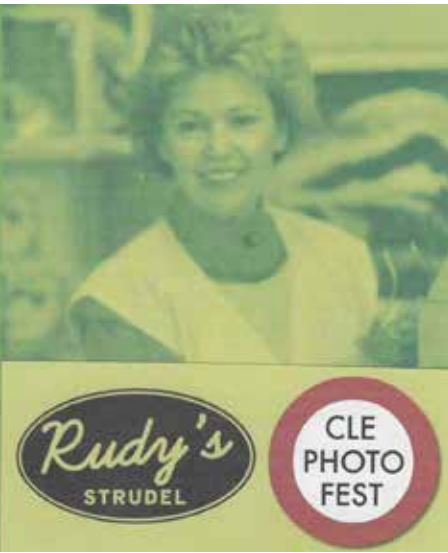
- Diabetic foot ulcers
- Skin tears/Traumatic wounds
- Road rash
- Vascular wounds
- Mild burns
- Pressure ulcers



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PARMA OBSERVER

Rudy's Strudel is collaborating with the Cleveland Photo Fest for a month-long visual and in-store display show to help celebrate Women's History Month throughout the month of March.



Check Out What's New At The Parma-Powers Branch Library

Exciting Programming at the Parma-Powers Branch Library!

The Parma-Powers Branch of the Cuyahoga County Public Library strives to offer high-quality, informative, and entertaining programming, in addition to providing valuable information resources, help with obtaining critical social services, comfortable spaces to study or hold a meeting, and access to a wide variety of literature and media ranging from brand new to classic.

- Harnessing Hoopla** on Tuesday, March 18 at 7 PM. Learn how to Instantly stream music by record smashers like Taylor Swift, and Binge-pass the Hallmark channel - all free, no wait!
- Mary Todd Lincoln** on Wednesday, March 26 at 7 PM. Meet Mary Todd Lincoln when she visits the Parma-Powers Branch. Celebrate Women's History Month with this well-known historical figure.
- The Parma-Powers Branch also has a Gallery Wall, where you can view the fresh and vibrant work of Cleveland-based artists on your way to peruse our shelves. The Spring 2025 show, "The Beauty and Humor of Everyday Life," will explore how one's interpretation of everyday life might change as the textures of life vary, and what threads connect our diverse and unique perspectives. The show will feature the photography of Katsiaryna Lapyhina, quilt portraits by Joanna Ellis, and wood sculpture by Gary Nass.
- We hope that our wide variety of unique offerings will brighten your spirits and inspire you to explore your library and the world at large with greater curiosity, passion, and imagination.
- For more information, drop in and visit the Parma-Powers Branch Library at 6996 Powers Blvd in Parma, OH or contact them by phone at (440) 885-5362.*
- Check out a great Parma-Powers Branch program! They're always free of charge.**
- Grand Bingo Donut Day** on Saturday, March 8 at 11 AM. Grandkids, grandparents and grand friends are invited to join us for Bingo, great prizes and eat delicious donuts on the second Saturday of the month.
- Senior Bingo** on Tuesday, March 25 at 10 AM. It'll be an amazing morning of Bingo and bagels. Prizes will be awarded, and fun will be had!
- The Beatles' 20 Number One Hits** on Monday, March 10 at 6:30 PM. Learn about the Beatles' rise to fame and if you like, sing along to their top hits!
- Green Yards, Healthy Homes** on Monday, March 17 at 7 PM. Join us and learn how to make environmentally safe cleaning products that you can take home with you.

Paczki & Portraits In Parma!

To celebrate Women's History Month throughout the month of March, stop in at Rudy's Strudel, located at 5580 Ridge Rd. Satisfy your paczki cravings with their huge selection of sweet or savory paczki, while viewing portraits of inspiring women accompanied by a story, family recipe, or letter describing why this particular woman is inspiring.

The images will be on display on the entrance hallway at Rudy's prior to the official opening date of March 4th, Fat Tuesday, aka Paczki Day. As always Rudy's has a big celebration planned.

This event is a collaboration between Rudy's Strudel, a female owned business, established in 1948, and Cleveland Photo Fest, whose mission is to strengthen the appreciation of Photography as a major force in today's visually driven culture throughout North Eastern Ohio and beyond. Their motto is Unity Through Photography.

Events like this provide the community to experience something new and a unique way to combine the artistic bakery products with artistic photography. What a great way to celebrate Women's History Month, a feast for the eyes as well as the belly.

To learn more about Rudy's and see what they have to offer visit their website www.rudysstrudel.com, or follow them on Facebook. For more information on Cleveland Photo Fest visit their website www.clevelandphofofest.org, or follow them on Facebook.



St. Columbkille School Hosts First Responders Luncheon

St. Columbkille School invited first responders from Parma and Seven Hills to attend their luncheon on January 31, 2025 in celebration of the Catholic Schools Week. Police Officers and Fire Fighters enjoyed the opportunity to interact with students and staff while enjoying lunch catered by Niko's Gyros. The students provided personal messages and colorings which were heartfelt and inspirational. Thank you St. Coumbkille for the invitation and the continued support of your first responders.

AARP Tax Aide - Free Tax Preparation

The AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program will be getting underway again this year starting the first week in February and ending the 14th of April 2025. This IRS-supported FREE tax service is offered on a non-discriminatory basis without consideration of race, religion, gender, disability, or sexual orientation. We give special attention to those with low or moderate incomes and/or aged 50 and older. Taxpayers do NOT have to be retired or a member of AARP. You may start calling for appointments on January 6, 2025.

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

Strongsville Senior & Recreation Center (new site), 18100 Royalton Rd, Strongsville, OH 44136. Appointments on Wednesdays from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. To make an appointment call Jon at 440-570-5180 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. Do not call the Strongsville Senior Center or Strongsville United Methodist Church for appointments.

Brook Park United Methodist Church, 6220 Smith Road, Brook Park, OH 44142. Appointments on Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Call 216-676-4738 Wednesdays through Fridays from 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM for an appointment.

Middleburg Heights Branch, Cuyahoga County Public Library, 16699 Bagley Road, Middleburg Heights, OH 44130. Appointments on Mondays and Tuesdays from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM. To make an appointment, go to the Middleburg Heights Library and complete sign-up book or call 440-234-3600. Please pick up the Intake-Interview booklet and Information pages at the site. Complete and bring them to your appointment.

North Royalton Branch, Cuyahoga County Public Library, 5071 Wallings Road, North Royalton, OH 44133. Appointments on Thurs-

Broadview Heights Community and Recreation Center

continued on page 9



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www.cityofparmapolice.com
Emergency – 911
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PARMA HEIGHTS

Celebrate Mom And Pop Small Business Owner Day

by Emery Pinter

Our economy couldn't run without small mom and pop businesses. They create economic growth and provide almost 70% of all new jobs in the country. That's why every year on March 29 we acknowledge the more than 27 million small businesses in this country by celebrating National Mom and Pop Business Owners Day! The holiday was established by Rick and Margie Segel in honor of their parents and the successful hat shop they opened in 1939 that grew into a 10,000 square foot, \$2 million dollar clothing shop. It is a special day to appreciate the long hours, hard work and dedication it takes to run a small business. And here are just a few that have made a real impact on the Parma Heights community and beyond.....

Michelle is very dedicated and will encourage you to be your very best at **Diamond Strength Fitness**, 6690 Pearl Rd. An all ladies gym offering personalized guidance, diverse workouts, and a supportive environment! Increasingly women aren't afraid of weights, nor are they afraid of workouts that seriously challenge them. The small but stylish Diamond Strength Fitness studio offers personal training and intimate, unique strength-training classes that are designed to give you rigorous high-intensity workouts.

Frazina's Custom Prints, 6265 Pearl Road, has a full lineup products: shirts, baseball shirts, polos, hoodies, Mugs, Tumblers, Backpacks, Banners, Business cards, Decals, & Posters. Professional quality, fast-turnaround, and budget-friendly prices from a local Parma Heights print shop.

Hair & Stuff Beauty Supply 216, 6277 Pearl Road, has the best beauty, latest name brand wigs, skincare, and self-care gifts. Locally owned since 2017 in Greenbriar Plaza. Customers say this Parma Heights store is "always super friendly and welcoming" and praise the product quality and customer service.



Village Cards & Gifts, 6643 Pearl Road, has been helping customers for over 35 years and curates a selection of greeting cards, stationery, 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! This is where to go for a unique gift for the hard-to-shop-for person on their birthday!

Andy's Hardware, 6658 Pearl Road, has been a fixture of the community for over 83 years! One of Parma Heights best-kept secrets is that it's one of the last independently owned, old-fashioned hardware stores, but also the go-to place when it comes to repair needs. Andy's Hardware offers an array of services; repair services for tools, screens, windows and lamps, locksmithing, small engine repair, and lawnmowers!

Gamers Haven, 6639 Pearl Road, provides board game enthusiasts with venues to experience a sense of community, new games, and campaigns. Gamers Haven is a place to remind you that the thing you are passionate about is loved by millions, so much so that they made a game out of it; and the people who love it aren't in some far-off land, they are in your neighborhood!!

Finding that particular shop where they know you and understand what you need can make any day just

a little brighter. Make sure to follow your favorite Mom and Pop businesses on all their social media platforms and promote them whenever possible. If there's a special Mom and Pop shop

you care about, take a moment to write a note to let the owners and employees know how much you appreciate all the effort and care they put into making your experience wonderful.

Mindfulness: Capturing The Present Moment

by Bridget Lavelle

The Parma Heights Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library will host Mindfulness: Capturing the Present Moment on Saturday, March 22nd, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in Meeting Room A. Using your smartphone and guided by the principles of mindfulness, learn how to look at your photos in a creative, calming, joyful and unique way. Connect and experience the present moment through mindfulness and photography. Registration required. To register, please visit www.cuyahogalibrary.org or call the Parma Heights Branch at 440.884.2313.

Parma Heights Friends And Library Staff March Meeting

by Bridget Lavelle

The Friends of Parma Heights Library and Library Staff would like to invite adults, ages 18 years and older, to its March meeting on Thursday evening, March 27th, 2025 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. in Meeting Room A at the Parma Heights Branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library. Light refreshments will be provided. The Friends of Parma Heights Library are seeking new volunteers to become Friends Officers in leadership roles as President and Treasurer. Thinking about becoming a Friend or an Officer in the Friends? Visit this meeting and explore the opportunities. No registration needed. Join us!

Tuesday Afternoon Virtual (Online) Book Discussion

by Bridget Lavelle

Join the Adult Services Librarian at the Parma Heights Branch Library of Cuyahoga County Public Library for a staff-led virtual (online) book discussion Tuesday afternoon, March 11th, 2025 from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Join us virtually (online) as we discuss *The Blue Hour* by Paula Hawkins.

Registration required. To register, visit www.cuyahogalibrary.org or call the Parma Heights Branch at 440.884.2313.

"On an isolated Scottish island, a present-day discovery intimately connects three people and unveils a web of secrets and lies. By the bestselling author of *The Girl on the Train*." Source: Novelist electronic database.

A meeting link will be emailed to registered participants approximately one hour prior to the start of the program. Staff will be available for help with connecting to Zoom and technical issues beginning 15 minutes prior to the program. You will need a device with audio and/or video and an internet connection to join.

If you have questions about this program, please contact a librarian at the Parma Heights Branch at 440-884-2313.



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Hitting The Trails In An All-Terrain Wheelchair

by Lynn B. Johnson

“If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in.” – Rachel Carson

Parma resident Zac Krale is a very adventurous person who loves being outside. Zac also uses a wheelchair. “It’s a team effort,” said his mom, Chris Markulik. “Outdoor activities keep us inspired mentally and physically to keep growing, exercise, lead a happy life, and foster our sense of wonder.” One thing that has helped them get out on the trail is the Cleveland Metroparks all-terrain (AT) wheelchair at Garfield Reservation. This AT wheelchair was funded by a grant from the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Cuyahoga DD). “The AT wheelchair funded by

Cuyahoga DD provided us with a foundation of support. It empowers me to take Zac. I knew it was meant for people within his community,” Chris said.

Chris was originally interested in adapted hikes. She spoke with a Metroparks staffer during the Cuyahoga DD Family & Provider Resource Fair and took home a flyer. “Zac enjoys driving his wheelchair and the all-purpose trail near our home. I didn’t know about the AT chair till after I went home and researched a bit more and signed up for pie iron cooking. Zac and I attended the outdoor cooking event and spoke with the Metroparks inclusion specialist,” she said. “I told her my story of how we tried to reserve an AT chair at a Georgia State Park. I inquired [at Metroparks] about the AT wheelchair. I was excited for Zac for to have the opportunity,” Chris said. It was a great experience for both Zac



Zac and his mom, Chris, are ready to hit the trails. Zac is using the Cleveland Metroparks all-terrain wheelchair, which was funded by a grant from Cuyahoga DD.

and his mom. “Having the experience to have Zac use the AT wheelchair was fabulous. Just the smile on his face made my day. It was a wonderful learning opportunity for Zac. He was able to

experience his body and mind in a new and different environment not just in a different chair, but a new park, terrain and trail and enjoy a winter activity in a different way,” Chris said.

Zac made the most of the experience. “He was able to socialize with staff and be around people in the community. He even had the chance to work on communication, reading head and arm control, pointing and eye gazing,” Chris said. Perhaps most importantly, “it opened a door to be outside, get some exercise and move, stop and pause, take in the sights of a beautiful, peaceful surrounding for new conversation and reflection, and take time to give thanks,” Chris said.

Zac is also active with 3Trackers, an organization that encourages people with disabilities to participate in adaptive recreational sports, including water skiing, snow skiing, cycling, and kayaking.

Be sure to give Zac a wave if you see him on the trails!

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

St. Paul United Church of Christ

7507 York Rd. Parma, Ohio 44130 440-843-8039
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The Vietnam War

by Robert Stilwell

In January 1973, the Paris Peace Accords officially ended the US involvement in the Vietnam War, although the majority of US troops would not leave until August of that year and the fighting between North and South Vietnam would continue until the fall of Saigon in 1975. This year 3/29/24 is Vietnam Veterans day and we commemorate 50 years since the end of the War. The Vietnam War lasted approximately 20 years from 1955-1975, marking the period of US involvement in the conflict. Because of the Herbicides, (AGENT ORANGE), used to eradicate the vegetation and make it easier to see the enemy created a lot of different diseases among the Vietnamese and Americans. Many of these people are still suffering from long term illnesses. As a gesture of sincere gratitude, please acknowledge these men and women by thanking them for their service. As a result of a lot of different factors that took place during this time period, many Veterans did not receive warm welcomes when they came home. Many Vietnam Veterans that I know do not want the same negative treatment for Wars that occurred after Vietnam, (Desert Storm), (Gulf Wars), (Iraq), (Afghanistan). Anyone that served in the



US Armed Forces should be acknowledged and thanked for their service.

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NEIGHBORHOODS

Start Your Own Garden From Scratch

by Emery Pinter

As food costs rise in 2025, even more pennies are squeezed from our monthly budgets. More and more Americans are turning to their own backyards to offset the cost of eating. Planting a garden can save you hundreds of dollars, and for some families, that adds up to thousands of dollars in savings annually. Start with a sunny windowsill and a few pots of herbs. Basil, parsley, chives, and mint are perfect for beginners. They are hardy little troopers that'll survive a bit of neglect. Plus, you'll feel like a culinary wizard when you snip fresh herbs for your meals. If you have a small space, you can still create a beautiful vertical garden. Try planting succulents, flowering vines, fruits, and vegetables. On fences and walls, use wall pockets, repurposed containers, or trellis to build your garden. If you don't have a fence or wall to build a vertical garden, you can find stack-able vertical planters at garden stores to start your garden. And Perennial native pollinators can be strong additions to gardens, and landscapes because they work with local ecosystems to elevate an area's health while producing beneficial harvests year after year.

=For gardeners, Facebook is a goldmine for nearly anything you are seeking from fellow gardeners. Just put



the question out there to your friends and watch the magic happen. If you're not already a member of an active Facebook gardening group, I suggest you join one now. The Dig, Plant, and Grow Garden Club has over 300 members with 6 contributors and is dedicated to stimulating the knowledge and love of gardening, (365 days a year) the development of home grounds, & to aid in the protection of the quality of the environment. We hope to inspire people young and old to Dig, Plant, and Grow everywhere!

The Power Of "Good"

by Anthony Prusak

A friend came to me recently, frustrated. Something had gone wrong—plans had fallen through, an opportunity had slipped away, and he was looking for sympathy. But before he could finish his sentence, he stopped himself. “I already know what you're gonna say,” he said. I raised an eyebrow. “Oh yeah? What am I gonna say?” He sighed. “You're gonna say good.”

He was right. It's what I always say. Didn't get the job? Good. Failed at something? Good. Lost an opportunity? Good.

Not because I enjoy watching people struggle. But because in every setback, there's something to gain. You didn't get that promotion? Good—now you have time to sharpen your skills. The mission got canceled? Good—now you can focus on another. Twisted your ankle? Good—time to build your upper body.



Life isn't about avoiding obstacles. It's about finding the advantage in every single one. The moment you stop seeing problems as roadblocks and start seeing them as stepping stones, you become unstoppable.

So the next time life throws a curveball, don't whine. Don't dwell. Just look it square in the face and say good.

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PERSPECTIVE

There Is No Such Thing As A "Deep State"

by Lee Kamps

One of the recurring themes of the Trump campaign last year was this thing about a "deep state" that was stifling American's freedom and was overly bureaucratic and "too WOKE." I am here to debunk that lie and tell the truth about our government's civil service.

On Saturday July 2, 1881, newly inaugurated President James A Garfield was at the railroad station in Washington DC to board a train to the shore for the July 4 weekend. Out of the crowd came a deranged disgruntled office seeker named Charles Guiteau. He was upset that he had not been given an audience for a federal office with the new administration. He fired two shots into Garfield from a pistol hidden in his coat.

President Garfield lingered for two and a half months before dying of sepsis caused by his wounds. A contributing factor in his death was the lack of sanitation and sterilization in that period. His presidency was only six and a half months. President Garfield is buried along with his wife in a tomb in Cleveland's Lakeview Cemetery.

He was succeeded by his Vice President Chester A Arthur who had been the Collector of the Port of New York, perhaps the busiest and richest port in the nation. This position was a patronage job that made Chester Arthur very wealthy and influential. He was a product of a corrupt New York political machine that controlled all government positions. At that time government jobs were given out to supporters based on a "spoils system" that went back to Andrew Jackson's saying "to the victor go the spoils" as they can appoint all government officials.

To say that this system was corrupt was an understatement. Many government officials were corrupt criminals who enriched themselves

off the public. Shocked by the assassination of a President by a disgruntled office seeker; the congress enacted the Pendleton Civil Service Act in 1883. President Arthur signed it into law that year. This act became the basis of our career civil service.

Federal employees were permanent hires based on merit rather than political connections. They were prohibited from engaging in any political activity other than voting. They could not be fired when there was a change in the administration. This 1883 act has been strengthened and expanded to the federal civil service and has been copied by all states and cities in the United States for public employees.

I have a close family member who is a retired federal law enforcement official. In his position, he busted child pornographers and those who also trafficked in children for sex. He also investigated fraud on the Chicago Board of Trade. After the events on September 11, 2001, they began investigating money laundering by terrorist organizations and rogue nations as well as organized crime.

These people who work for our government are not part of a "deep state" conspiracy. They keep us safe from terrorists and prevent airplanes from crashing into each other. It is the federal air traffic controllers that make flying across the United States safer than driving a car across town. It is those dedicated people that make sure that social security payments are sent out and contributions are credited. They make sure that people pay their taxes. It was federal postal inspectors that were able to put Chicago gangster Al Capone in Alcatraz prison.

These career civil servants cannot be fired for political reasons and are prohibited from engaging in any political activity other than voting if they

are employed by the government. They also are pledged to be confidential and cannot reveal any sensitive personal information without a warrant.

It is these people that make sure that despite a change in administration government benefits continue to be paid and that the work of the government is not interrupted. Sure, the President can appoint the heads of government departments that are subject to senate confirmation as to their fitness for the position.

However, in the past five weeks Donald Trump has turned all that on its edge. He is on a spree of illegally firing career government employees and has an unelected unconfirmed and unvetted billionaire who has some lucrative contracts with the federal government rooting around in government offices

and agencies firing workers and slashing their budgets under a "Department of Government Efficiency" that has not been created by congress as the constitution allows.

This has been a campaign of "shock and awe" that has caught the nation by storm. But this also defies the constitution and the oath that the President took on January 20 to "protect and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic." Last week Donald Trump had his image on a fake magazine cover wearing a crown with the lettering "all hail the king." We fought a war that started 250 years ago this April to get rid of being ruled by a king. Our founding fathers must be rolling over many times in their graves.



Love Coffee

by Kathryn Mabin

There's a brand new coffee house in Polish Village, located at 5842 Ridge Road in the old Krakow Deli building, next to Brayson's Ice Cream. This takeout or dine in cafe has been beautifully remodeled. It's a spacious, 2,000 square foot, 40 seat establishment, and it's relaxing and entertaining, with a welcoming atmosphere. The menu includes lots of options, coffee, iced coffee, espresso, flavored lattes, teas, hot chocolate, milk options like whole milk, almond & oat. In addition to coffee, Love Coffee also offers baked goods and supports local vendors.

You may have met the owner, Julie Bruno, in the last three years in her coffee truck out in the community. This new permanent establishment is a cozy meeting spot to gather, relax and enjoy. The owner's love of coffee and passion for community is evident. She's brought Friends Trivia, Galentine's Day, Live Music Night and most recently with the assistance of Councilwoman Lime, Coffee with a Cop & Fireman. It's fast becoming a community hub.

Check out their Facebook page Love Coffee, or stop in and see for yourself, and support local.

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VIEWPOINTS

Flashbacks To VHS Tapes

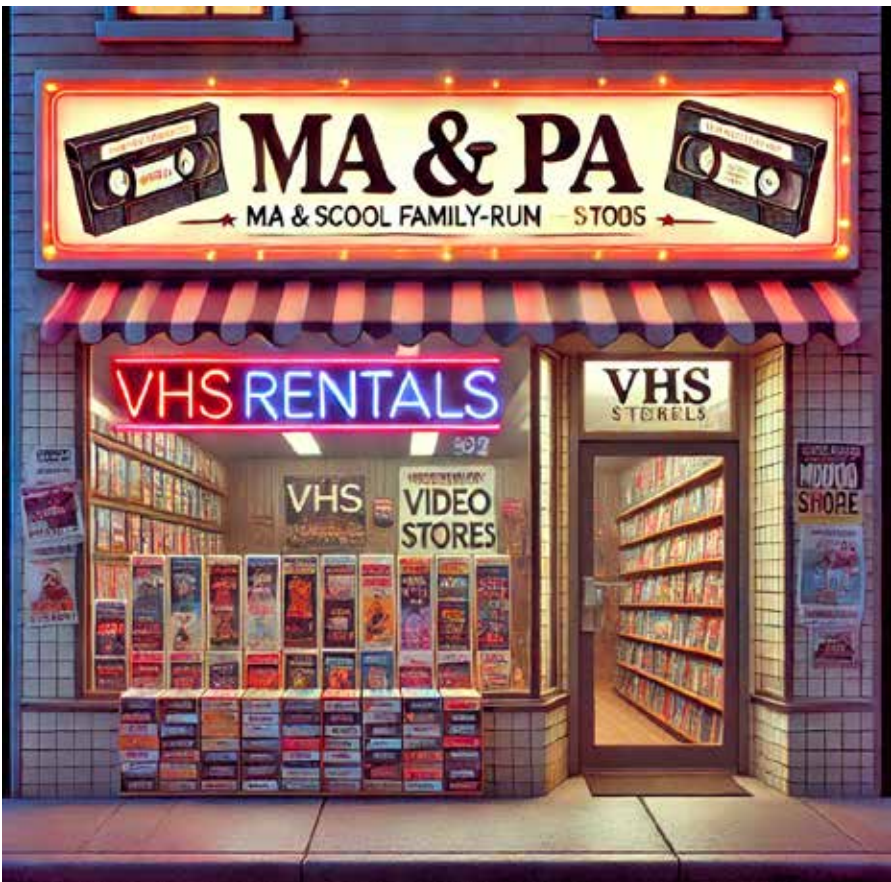
by Kevin Kelly

Remember the VHS/Beta tape era? Back then, one could rent a motion picture from the nearest video store in your neighborhood and watch it in the privacy of your own home without any interruptions. No longer did you have to go to a crowded theater and fight for a good seat to watch the latest movie release. In addition, if you missed the airing of your favorite movie on television, they no longer had to wait until the following year to catch the next airing. You could just go down to your local video store and rent the movie. Even some movie die-hard fans transformed their basements into a miniature theater, along with huge screens and speakers, in order to mimic the effect of their nearest movie house.

The video home system (VHS) was actually a threat to the movie studios. Back then, many movies that major studios produced went right to

video cassette instead of the drive-ins and movie theaters. Then, once video camcorders became available to the consumer, amateur filmmakers tried their hand at producing and directing their own motion pictures. They would be filmed directly onto VHS tapes and sold on the market. This started the trend of producing movies out of the watchful eye of Hollywood executives. These home-made movies were distributed without any censorship from the Motion Picture Association of America. They consisted of over-the-top gore and were referred to as “Video Nasties.”

To catch a flashback of this glorious time in history, make sure to watch the documentary, “VHS: Video Home System” on Cox Cable, Channel 45 on Sundays at 9PM and Cleveland Spectrum, Mondays at 9 PM on Channel 1025. For more information contact Kevin at: Kevin@ShockerEnterprises.com or call; 216-230-1840



The Bittersweet Poetry Of Endings

by Anthony Prusak

I was listening to The End by The Doors the other day. Jim Morrison first wrote it as a breakup song—young heartbreak set to a brooding melody—but over months of live performances at the Whisky a Go-Go, it grew into something much bigger. Something final. A song about endings in every sense of the word.

Lately, I’ve been thinking about endings, too. The kind that sneak up on you, the ones you don’t see coming. The end of a job, a marriage, a school year. The quiet fade of a friendship. The last conversation you didn’t realize was the last.

Recently, I lost a few friends I grew up with in Parma—guys I’d known

since first grade. If I’d known the last time I saw them was the last time, I would’ve hugged them harder, told them what they meant to me. But life doesn’t work that way. We never get a warning label for endings.

The thing is, every story has a final page. Every door eventually closes. But does that make endings something to fear—or something to embrace? Maybe the trick is to recognize them for what they are: the punctuation marks that give meaning to the sentences before them.

Maybe there’s always light at the end of the tunnel. Or maybe, as Morrison sang, this is the end, my only friend, the end.



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continued on page 4

days from 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM. To make an appointment, go to the North Royalton Library and complete sign-up book or call 440-237-3800. Please pick up the Intake-Interview booklet and Information pages at the site. Complete and bring them to your appointment.

Parma Powers Branch, Cuyahoga County Public Library, 6996 Powers Blvd., Parma, OH 44129. Appointments on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:30 AM to 2:00 PM. To make an appointment, go to the Parma Powers Library and complete sign-up book or call 440-885-5362. Please pick up the Intake-Interview booklet and Information pages at the site. Complete and bring them to your appointment.

We are opening fewer sites than prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic due to a reduced number of volunteers. Availability of appointments is subject to the status of the Covid-19 pandemic. We anticipate using the in-person process to prepare returns.

Please bring to your appointments copies of your Federal and Ohio 2023 returns; 2024 forms W-2, 1099, and 1098 (taxpayers with more than 10 forms may be better served by a paid professional); social security cards or statements for all persons on your tax return; a picture ID (i.e., a valid driver’s license) for you and your spouse, and any IRS or Ohio Tax correspondence.

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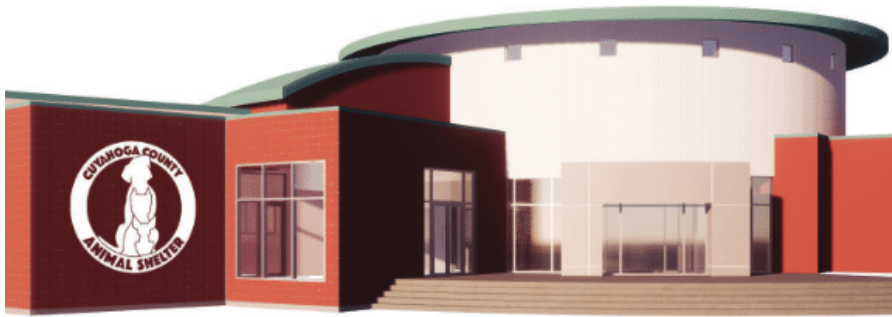
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PARMA OBSERVER



Artist rendition of the new Animal Shelter

Cuyahoga County Celebrates Newly Expanded Animal Shelter

by Jennifer Ciaccia

Cuyahoga County will celebrate the opening of the newly expanded Cuyahoga County Animal Shelter. County leadership, volunteers, and a few of our furry friends will attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony. The \$2.7 million expansion allows the shelter to enhance its services and programming while providing a safe and loving environment for animals. The addition includes space for indoor playgroups, training and meetings, a façade with backlit building sign, new fencing and gates, and new artificial turf for outdoor dog play areas.



Parma Area

Senior Veterans

by Robert Stilwell

Are you a Veteran over 50? Spouse, Caretaker or Supporter of Veterans? We would like to invite you to join our Group.

WHY JOIN OUR GROUP?

- *Community: Our group is a tight-knit community where you'll find friends who understand your journey. We gather to reminisce, support one another, and create new memories.
- * Activities: From coffee mornings to outings, we organize events that cater to your interests. Whether it's a game of cards, a historical talk or a picnic, there's something for everyone.
- * Advocacy: Together we advocate for veterans' rights, ensuring that your voice is heard. We collaborate with local organizations to improve services and support.
- * Legacy: By joining us you continue your legacy of Service. Share your

wisdom, mentor younger Veterans, and inspire the next generation.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

Attend a meeting Join us at our next meeting on March 27 at 1:00pm. We meet at the Donna Smallwood Senior Center.

Spread the Word: Tell your fellow veterans about our group. Encourage them to be part of this vibrant community. Connect: Reach out to us via phone or email. We would love to hear from you.

Remember, you're not alone. Together we Honor the past, celebrate the present and shape the future.

Donna Smallwood Activities Center- 7010 Powers Blvd. Parma Oh 44129 For further info: (440) 263-0507 - Email parmaareaseniorvets@yahoo.com Follow us on Facebook-Parma Area Senior Veterans.

Local Documentary Acknowledged

by Kevin Kelly

After the Parma Settlers documentary began airing last month on Cox Cable, a State Representative contacted the Parma producer, Kevin Kelly, to complement him on the video. The subject matter came to the attention of Sean Patrick Brennan, who represents District 14 in Ohio's House of Representatives. He was intrigued when he saw an article written about the video project in the Parma Sun Post Newspaper. The Ohio State Representative has a strong interest in the history of Parma and appreciated the effort of telling about the history of early Parma in visuals.

For those who are interested in viewing the documentary, they can tune into Cox Cable, Channel 45, Fri-



days at 8:30 pm. For more information, you can call Kevin at (216) 230-1840 or email him at: Kevin@shockerenterprises.com.

Valley Forge Craft Show To Support High School Athletes

by jodi moriarty

Join us Saturday, March 15th from 10am- 3pm for a fun-filled day of shopping and supporting our local high school Swim and Cross Country teams!

Discover unique, handcrafted items from talented local artisans: Jewelry, Art, Home decor, fresh baked goods, and much more!

Don't miss this opportunity to support our athletes and find one-of-a-kind treasures!

The Valley Forge High School Cross Country and Swim Teams will be

hosting a concession stand with breakfast, premium lunch food items, and refreshing Iced Coffee! All proceeds directly benefit the Boys and Girls Cross Country and Swim Teams, helping them purchase necessary training and competition gear.

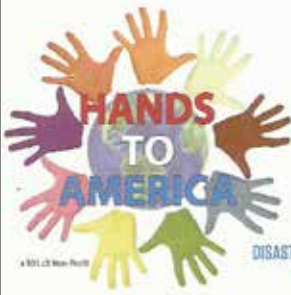
Admission is FREE!!!

There are limited vendor slots still available. If you are interested in reserving a table, or for more information please email vfspringcraftshow@gmail.com or visit <https://www.facebook.com/ValleyForgeSpring-CraftShow/>

Lucky It's A Dog's Life



On the coldest day of the year, at least someone was enjoying time in the backyard- here Lucky the Parma Observer Dog rolls on the ground like it was a beautiful day in July.



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PARMA ARTS DISTRICT

Arts In Parma

by Kathryn Mabin

Three talented local artists on on display at the Cuyahoga County Public Library, Powers Branch, in the spring show, titled The Beautyand Humor of Everyday Life. Gary Nass, Parma Arts member is displaying abstract wood sculptures, Joanna Ellis with her creative art quilts, and Katarina Lapyhina with her photography. Stop in and view the Gallery Wall.

Quilting artist, **Joanna Ellis**, whose work will be one of the featured artists in the Spring Display on the Parma Powers Blvd Gallery Wall will do a presentation titled, Art Quilting: My Journey on Monday, April 14, 2025, from 7 to 8 pm, in meeting room A/B. Learn the creative journey of a local art quilter and discover a new form of art that is making its way from living rooms into fine art museums! Registration begins March 14, 2025.

Gary Nass, is also on display at Frontdoor Gallery, 3838 Brecksville Rd in Richfield.

Michelle Behal, President of

Parma Arts and owner/operator of Bear Tracks Arts will be at Wolf Creek Winery, 2637 S Massilion Rd in Norton, Ohio on March 14th from 5 to 9pm. Selling hand wood burned wine bottle boxes, wine glass charms, mini hand drawn cards and wine bottle tags.

Sue Holick-Bade is on exhibit in the Forest for the Trees appearing in the Peninsula Art Academy's Art through Digital Expression Show running 3/2-4/6. This exhibit showcases 2D and 3D digital art. Her photograph Coming Out of the Dark will be on display in the Cleveland Bouquet Exhibition March 13th through April 26th at Yards Projects Gallery.

FREE Figure Drawing at The Parma Art Center, 7335 Ridge Rd (inside City of Parma Parks & Recreation Center). Ongoing FREE figure drawing the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, 6:30 to 8:30 PM. March 10th and the 24th. No instructor, just a gathering of artists. Welcome beginning or experienced artists to draw or paint. Live models, fully clothed. Each session a different volunteer model from the community will pose in

exchange for a drawing/painting from each artist present. This is a body-positive group, all shapes, sizes, and ages are welcome to pose. Great way for artists to hone your figure drawing skills, meet other artists, in a relaxing atmosphere. For more information, or if you want to volunteer to model, email Lynne Shayko at Lshayko@kent.edu.

Pet Portraits Class - Monday's, March 24, 31, April 7 and 14, from 1 to 3 PM at the Parma Art Center, located in the Parma Parks & Recreation Building, at 7335 Ridge Road. The instructor, Kathy Dregalla, specializes in pet portraits. Class size is limited in order to offer individualized attention, in a relaxing atmosphere. Beginners are very welcome. Register now by emailing kathrynabin@att.net. A fee of \$10 per person is payable first day of class.

Call For Submissions - Cleveland Photo Fest - Through The Lens: A portrait Show, an Exhibition of Portraiture. Photographers are invited to submit up to three portraits for \$30. The exhibition will be held at Brownhoist Gallery, 4403 St Clair Ave, in Cleveland, curated by Cara Gaetano. Opening will be April 5th. For more information, or to submit pieces and payments go to clevelandphotofest.org.



By Gary Nass

Pet Portraits

by Kathryn Mabin

Our pets are our loving and faithful companions. Show your love for them by learning how to draw their portrait. These classes will be held on Monday's, March 24, 31, April 7 and 14, from 1 to 3 PM at the Parma Art Center, located in the Parma Parks & Recreation Building, at 7335 Ridge Road.

The instructor, Kathy Dregalla, has for the past two decades been drawing and painting animals, mostly dogs and cats, and a hippo or two. She will share her techniques, using contour drawing, a grid, or three dimensional idea if you desire, during this, two hour, four week class. Participants can choose which animal they wish to draw and are encouraged to bring a photo to use as a reference material.



By Kathy Dregalla

Class size is limited in order to offer individualized attention, in a relaxing atmosphere. Beginners are very welcome. Claasses fill up fast. Register now by emailing kathrynabin@att.net. A fee of \$10 per person is payable first day of class.

This is one of a series of classes offered throughout the year titled Art For The Fun Of It! It's an opportunity to take instruction in various mediums. It's funded in part by a matching grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, which helps to defray the cost. Parma Area Fine Arts Council, Imc. Is a 501(c)3 non-profit which as served this community for over 60 years. These classes bring enjoyable, affordable art to the community at large, taught by qualified instructors. No residency is required.

For more information on Parma Area Fine Arts follow them on Facebook, or on their web page, www.parmafinearts.org.

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THE BACK PAGE

ADAMHS Board/ The Centers Partnership

A new Behavioral Health Crisis Receiving Center (CRC) planned for Cuyahoga County will soon help strengthen the region’s crisis continuum of care. The ADAMHS Board, The Centers and Cuyahoga County are partnering to create a facility in Cleveland’s Central neighborhood that will support countless individuals experiencing a mental and/or addiction emergency. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2025

A first-of-its kind in Cuyahoga County, the CRC will provide accessible, short-term behavioral health care for people experiencing a mental health crisis or substance use disorder. CRCs can help reduce the need for emergency department visits, jail bookings, and divert individuals from psychiatric hospitalizations by providing a community-based, home-like alternative environment.

When the CRC opens in fall 2026, The Centers will operate a comprehensive 24/7 facility that includes services such as urgent care, medication refills, de-escalation, triage, assessment, observation, treatment, coordination, linkage to services, and the management of both voluntary and involuntary clients, in addition to other services.

The CRC will develop a robust referral network to route patients on discharge to appropriate in-patient,



Scott Osiecki,

out-patient, or community services and will work with local hospital partners to assist them in training physicians in behavioral health crisis treatment.

As proposed, the behavioral health crisis receiving center will employ an estimated 200 caregivers and serve about 17,000 people.

Funding and Investment

The project is made possible through the ongoing collaboration of public and non-profit partners. In summer 2024, The Ohio Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services awarded a capital grant of \$6.8 million in American Rescue Plan Act funds to the ADAMHS Board. The Board –

responsible for the planning, funding and monitoring of mental health services in Cuyahoga County – saw the need for a crisis center and selected The Centers to help bring the project to fruition.

In addition to the initial capital award, the ADAMHS Board is committing \$2.5 million for startup costs. The ADAMHS Board will provide oversight of the capital project and operations of the CRC while continuing to fund the facility. Cuyahoga County is supportive of the project and is currently finalizing its financial commitment from both a capital and operational perspective.

Funding will be used to renovate the first two floors of an existing building at 2322 E. 22nd St., which will become the new CRC.

Statements on the Crisis Receiving Center

“For decades, the ADAMHS Board has worked to create a seamless, integrated system of care that offers quality behavioral health services throughout Cuyahoga County. When we envisioned a new crisis receiving center, we aimed to enhance that system by implementing best practices and health models that ensure each client receives the needed care. We are pleased to partner with The Centers and Cuyahoga County to bring this vision to life and provide safe, accessible crisis care that meets the community’s evolving needs.” – Scott Osiecki, CEO, ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County

“A mental health or substance use crisis can take many forms – self harm, panic attacks, suicidal ideation, getting in trouble with the law, planning or considering hurting oneself or others, or an addiction crisis. It is our vision that the CRC will be a beacon of hope for those who need immediate, crisis respite and stabilization services, as well as ongoing support available through the Centers robust Behavioral Health Department.” – Eric L. Morse, President and CEO, The Centers

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