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## Parma Community General Hospital Becomes Part Of University Hospitals On January 1

by CJ Sheppard

University Hospitals (UH) has received final approval from state and federal government regulators for the integration of Parma Community General Hospital and EMH Healthcare into the UH health system. Each hospital conducted a thorough and rigorous process to evaluate the benefits of joining the UH system to better serve their respective commu-

nities and arrived at unanimous decisions for integration. The organizations announced separately last summer that they were exploring partnerships with UH and anticipated closure by end of 2013.

"Their approval, after a close examination of our strengths, affirms our shared conviction that our patients, and all of Northeast Ohio, will be better served through

this unification, and by our vision for providing the highest-quality care in the most patient-focused, coordinated and cost-efficient ways," said Thomas F. Zenty III, CEO of University Hospitals. "Together, we have new and exciting opportunities to provide better health care. Our plans to invest in Parma Community General Hospital and EMH Healthcare will allow

both organizations to continue to provide superior care to their communities and we are eager to reward their trust as we advance our mission: To Heal. To Teach. To Discover."

As part of the integration into the UH system, the two hospitals will undergo name changes to University Hospitals Elyria Medical Center (UH Elyria) and University Hospitals Parma Medical Cen-

ter (UH Parma).

UH will work closely with their boards of directors, the physician community, leadership, employees and volunteers to bring investments and cost efficiencies that will benefit the communities that we serve including upgrades to facilities, equipment, services and technologies at both entities.

UH, with its nationally recognized academic medical center – UH Case Medical Center – will also provide strong clinical research, leading-edge technology, innovative practices and initiatives that will complement and grow the two hospitals' highly regarded medical programs. Additional commitments will bring programs from internationally recognized centers of excellence such as UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital and UH Seidman Cancer Center to UH Elyria making it their flagship hospital based in Lorain County and continued expansion of their presence at UH Parma.

"Meeting our community's health care needs has been an unwavering commitment of University Hospitals since our founding in 1866," said Mr. Zenty. "Joining with these hospitals will provide western Cuyahoga and Lorain counties

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## Parma Supports Euromaidan Protests In Ukraine

by Stefan P. Stefaniuk

"Parma is with the Ukrainians!" So said Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter, who, on a cold, snowy day in December, enthusiastically offered words of inspiration and support at the most recent Euromaidan demonstration in Ohio's seventh largest city and heart of the Cleveland area's growing Ukrainian community. At Parma's City Hall and Ukrainian Heritage Park in Ukrainian Village, hundreds have turned out for several organized demonstrations in a show of solidarity with the ongoing Euromaidan protests in Ukraine – a Texas-size country of 45 million located east of Poland and west of Russia in what some have referred to as the geographic center of Europe.

Much like the pro-Western Orange Revolution in 2004 that challenged a fraud-

ulent presidential election victory while seeking to enact democratic reforms, reduce corruption, and integrate Ukraine more closely with the European Union, Ukrainians are once again demanding that their voices be heard. The Euromaidan protests in Ukraine, sparked in late November when the Ukrainian government suspended the signing of a landmark European Union Association Agreement, represent the latest opportunity for Ukraine to move toward Europe and re-emerge within the greater European community as an equal partner. In recent history, the movement away from Russia and toward closer European integration was set in motion with Ukraine's historic vote for independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. The movement toward Europe continued with Ukraine's Orange Revolution



Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter offers words of inspiration and support at the Euromaidan demonstration. Photo © 2014 Stefan P. Stefaniuk

in 2004 and continues today with the Euromaidan protests that have seen hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian citizens throughout the country demand that their government move toward a more prosperous future that represents respect for liberty, the right of assembly, the rule of law, and free speech.

The most recent Euromaidan demonstration in Parma featured many prominent representatives who voiced their support for the ongoing Euromaidan protests in Ukraine and have called on President Yanukovich of Ukraine to stop the violence and uphold the right of all Ukrainians to speak freely without fear of intimidation or oppression. In addition to Mayor DeGeeter, other representatives who spoke at the event included Congresswoman Marcy Kap-

tur, State Representative Nicholas Celebrezze, Parma Council President Sean Brennan, Parma Clerk of Courts Marty Vittardi, and United

**continued on page 2**

## A Step In The Right Direction

by Jim Renacci

For too long, the United States government has operated on short-term spending measures. Not only has this prevented Congress from doing its job, but it has also created uncertainty, which has proven detrimental to our stagnant economy.

Lurching from crisis to crisis is business as usual in Washington, and changing the status quo is exactly why I came to Washington. We cannot and will not continue down the path of short-term fixes in order to keep our government open.

This past week, the Budget Conference Committee led by Rep. Paul Ryan and Sen. Patty Murray introduced a two-year budget proposal to Congress and the American people. Later in the week, the House of Representatives voted to approve the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 by a vote of 332-94. The agreement is the first bipartisan budget deal in a divided government since 1986.

Though the agreement is far from perfect, it is certainly a step in the right direction because it will bring stability to the budget process. It restores

**continued on page 2**



US Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur speaks with her constituents at Ukrainian Heritage Park in Parma's Ukrainian Village.



# Community News

## The President's Corner

by Sean Brennan,  
Parma City Council President

Happy 2014! Recently, a resident e-mailed me inquiring about when Parma City Council meets, as well as how to best go about contacting her Council representative. This call provided me with the inspiration for this month's piece. I came to the conclusion that it was time to update you on the current makeup of Parma City Council, as several changes have taken place

since the last time I reported about this topic. For instance, we welcome our newly elected colleagues, Vito DiPierro (no relation to former mayor Dean DePiero) and Jeff Crossman.

Parma City Council represents the legislative branch of your local government. Thus, this body of elected representatives is empowered to make laws for the city of Parma. Council consists of 10 members who are elected to two-year terms in odd-numbered years.

Ward#	Name Council	Phone	Email
President of Council	Sean Brennan	(440) 884-0489	councilmanbrennan@sbcglobal.net
Ward 1	Vito DiPierro	(216) 215-8877	parmaward1@gmail.com
Ward 2	Debbie Lime	(440) 845-1714	limeward2@gmail.com
Ward 3	Mark Casselberry	(440) 842-6710	casselberryward3@att.net
Ward 4	Brian Day	(216) 351-2909	councilmanday@cox.net
Ward 5	Allan Divis	(440) 888-7213	allandivis@yahoo.com
Ward 6	Larry Napoli	(440) 845-4547	deblaryn@aol.com
Ward 7	Brian Brochetti	(440) 345-5239	parmaward7@gmail.com
Ward 8	Scott Tuma	(440) 842-8068	councilmantuma@cox.net
Ward 9	Jeff Crossman	(216) 373-6926	jeffcrossman@outlook.com

To find out the ward in which you live, simply call the Council office or visit <http://www.cityofparma-oh.gov/citycouncil/index.aspx>

The President of City Council is elected at-large, meaning he or she is elected by the voters from throughout the city and, therefore, represents the city as a whole. Next, there are nine members elected by their respective wards or districts and, therefore, represent the interests of the residents of his or her ward.

Members of Parma City Council pride themselves in their accessibility and may be reached by phone at home or at the City Council office, e-mail, or letter. The Council office number is (440) 885-8091. To reach a member by mail, simply address your envelope to your member of Council, c/o Parma City Council, 6611 Ridge Road, Parma, Ohio 44129. Below I have taken the liberty of sharing contact information for each member of Council.

**See sidebar**

Besides a current map of all nine wards, the site also contains links to the minutes and agendas of Council meetings, meeting dates and times, the codified ordinances (laws) of the City of Parma, biographical information about the members of Council, etc. Please note that, due to slight shifts in population, Ward boundaries changed slightly on January 1, so you may live in a different ward and may, therefore, have a different Council representative

than you did in the past.

Meetings of Parma City Council are held at City Hall in Council Chambers. Members of the public are always invited and encouraged to attend and participate. Generally, City Council meets on the first and third Mondays of the month at 7:00 pm, while committee meetings are held on the first and second Mondays of the month. Special meetings are also called when necessary. I hope that one of your New Year's resolutions will be to attend at least one City Council meeting in 2014.



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## Parma Supports Euromaidan Protests In Ukraine

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Ukrainian Organizations of Ohio (UZO) President Marta Liscynsky-Kelleher.

Congresswoman Kaptur, having made over 20 trips to Ukraine and wearing a coat that was given to her in Kyiv during one of her trips, offered her full support stating "we care about Ukraine, we care about her people, we care about her future." She also mentioned Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, a former U.S. National Security Advisor to Jimmy Carter, who said that "it is only a matter of time before Ukraine orients west and orients to Europe." Kaptur added that she believes "Ukraine to be the most important borderland in the heart of Europe. She will connect not just to Europe. She will connect to Turkey. She will connect to points north and south on every level; academically, commercially, militarily, from a trade

standpoint. By standing here today, we help her move in all directions. She will be one of the greatest nations in that part of the world."

The Euromaidan protests continue as the rest of the world is



Parma Council President Sean Brennan speaks in Ukrainian to demonstrators. Photo © 2014 Stefan P. Stefaniuk

watching. Ukrainians once again have an exciting opportunity to transform Ukraine, embrace her European identity, improve her economy, and forge a better tomorrow not only for Ukraine, but for all of Europe. With the former Presidents of Ukraine all recently voicing their support for the Euromaidan protests and upcoming presidential contenders who view Ukraine's future firmly rooted in Europe, it appears history will likely prove that Brzezinski was right about Ukraine's orientation toward Europe – it is only a matter of time.

## Thank You !

by Andy Schofield

I just wanted to take a moment to say thank you, first to my beautiful girlfriend Katy Russell and my family and friends and the residents of ward 9 here in Parma. This year was amazing to say the least and I am so happy I was able to be your councilman. I hope I helped a lot of residents and gained a lot of friends in the ward. It has been a great learning experience and I have loved every moment.

As of January 1st 2014, Mr. Jeff Crossman will be your ward 9 councilman. I am not going anywhere and I still will stay active with the city and helping the Mayor and our Councilman whenever they need my assistance.


Thank you for your kindness and respect and I hope I was compassionate in assisting you all with your needs in a timely manner.

Thanks again!

Respectfully, Andy Schofield

**Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter's Family**

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Larry Lika, DO, with surgery team beside the innovative surgical table.

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Parma  
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Health/Culture

Resolve To Lose Weight, Guided By Experts

by CJ Sheppard

If your previous weight loss attempts have fallen short of success, let Parma Hospital's Metabolic Clinic help you look forward to a new you in 2014. The latest weight loss options are presented in free monthly programs that outline the hospital's comprehensive approach, with a strong educational support foundation to help individuals succeed in regaining control of their lives.

Bariatric Surgery Educational Seminars take place on the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in Parma Hospital's Auditorium. A bariatric surgeon will discuss the surgical options for weight loss surgery, including gastric bypass and alternative restrictive procedures. Patients begin making changes with dietary counseling and support sessions in advance of surgery.

The next sessions will be held January 21, February 18 and March 18. Call 440-743-2900 to register.

For those who prefer medically supervised weight loss rather than surgery, the Metabolic Clinic offers a phased program called New Direction. Patients utilize meal replacements and gradually reintroduce store-bought food, with guidance from a registered dietitian. Weekly meetings with others in the program keep participants motivated and focused on success.

Medical Weight Loss Educational Seminars take place on the first Wednesday of each month at 6 p.m. The next sessions at the Metabolic Clinic, located on the Parma Hospital campus in Medical Arts Center 2, Suite 303, will be on January 8, February 5 and March 5. Call 440-743-2995 to register.

Free Eye Exams For Qualifying Seniors!

by Janet Delventhal

National Non-profit Offers Eye Exams at No Cost to Ohio Seniors. Telling someone about EyeCare America may be the greatest gift to give during the holiday season. The national non-profit organization encourages friends and family in Ohio to visit [www.eyecareamerica.org](http://www.eyecareamerica.org) and connect the seniors in their lives with a no out-of-pocket cost eye exam. This national campaign makes it easy for everyone to Give the Gift of Sight!

"Unfortunately, older Americans living on fixed incomes are hurt the most when their healthcare falls by the wayside," said David G. Miller, MD, a local ophthalmologist at Retina Associates of Cleveland who participates in the EyeCare America program. "I want to make sure that their eye health is not neglected."

Those interested may visit [www.EyeCareAmerica.org](http://www.EyeCareAmerica.org) to see if someone they know qualifies for medical eye care at no out-of-pocket cost. Connecting friends and family members with an eye exam may be the most lasting gift you can give... the Gift of Sight!

Since 1985, over 19,460 have been helped by 288 ophthalmologists across Ohio through EyeCare America, a public service program of the Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

This year-round program provides eye exams at no out-of-pocket cost to people age 65 and older and offers free educational materials. The eye exams are provided by a corps of nearly 6,500 volunteer ophthalmologists across the U.S. Those interested in the program can visit [www.eyecareamerica.org](http://www.eyecareamerica.org) to see if they are eligible. The organization's online referral center also enables friends and family members to find out instantly if their loved ones are eligible to be matched with an EyeCare America volunteer ophthalmologist.

EyeCare America is designed for people who:

- Are U.S. citizens or legal residents
- Are age 65 and older
- Have not seen an ophthalmologist in three or more years
- Do not receive eye care services through an HMO or the VA



Seniors exercise and stay fit for the new year.

Seniors Welcome All Ages Into Their Exercise Programs

by Judy Martins

Seniors at the Smallwood Activities Center in Parma and the Brook Park Recreation Center are exercising with Instructor Olga Wise, working together to music to improve their health and fitness for the new year. These muscle, strength and range of motion (MSROM), Yoga Stretch and Zumba Gold classes are designed for both secondary exercise enthusiasts and seniors, and will welcome you into any of their groups. If you're looking for an inexpensive, non-judgmental and friendly atmosphere that offers encouragement to everyone who wants to improve their health and well-being, these are the classes for you.

Instructor Olga Wise, a certified group exercise instructor, personal trainer and nutrition specialist for many years, has class participants with ages ranging from 35 to seniors. She's even had her 15-year-old daughter and friends join these classes as part of their conditioning regimen for seasonal sports. The classes are open to all, and

the cost is minimal—averaging anywhere from \$1.00 to \$3.00 a class.

Both locations also offer Silver Sneakers or Silver Sneakers inspired classes, which are free to those with insurance covering this Medicare-eligible program. They are easy to follow with no mat work. All exercises are performed standing or seated, and may be easily modified to suit your personal needs or limitations and/or your doctor's instructions.

If your budget does not allow for a workout club membership or personal trainer but you still want to improve your health and fitness—join us! You will improve your strength, flexibility, coordination and balance in a friendly, comfortable environment at a minimal cost. There is no need for a fancy outfit—just wear comfortable fitness clothing and footwear. Give it a try!! The New Year is here, and it's the perfect time to get out and get fit at a location close to your home.

The Smallwood Activities Center is located at 7001 West Ridgewood Drive in Parma (the first traffic light east of Ridge Road, up the hill behind Parma Hall), contact Sandy at (440) 885-8800. The Brook Park Recreation Center is located at 17400 Holland Road in Brook Park, contact Gary at (216) 433-1545. You need not be a member to join these classes. Put an affordable, enjoyable fitness program into your new year, and stop in or call either Center for more information and a list of class schedules which will best fit into your life.

To see immediately if you, a loved one or a friend, 65 and older, is eligible to receive a referral for an eye exam and care, visit [www.eyecareamerica.org](http://www.eyecareamerica.org).

EyeCare America is co-sponsored by the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc., with additional support provided by Alcon. The program is endorsed by state and sub-specialty ophthalmological societies.

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What All Kids Need to Succeed 40 Developmental Assets



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## Asset Corner #49

by Gene Lovasy

**January's Asset Category:** *Positive Identity Help young people bring out their best....*The way people feel about themselves can fluctuate with circumstances. Depending on what's happening, you may feel confident or unsure, optimistic or pessimistic, in control or not in control. What's important is what a person's identity is like most of the time. People who have a strong, positive sense of self maintain these qualities even when difficulties arise. They continue to be hopeful and optimistic, and believe they can make a difference.

- Positive Identity Assets Include:**
- #37 **Personal Power** – Young person feels he/she has control over “things that happen to me.” (42%\*)
  - #38 **Self-esteem** – Young person reports having high self-esteem. (48%\*)
  - #39 **Sense of Purpose** – Young person reports that “my life has purpose.” (57%\*)
  - #40 **Positive View of Personal Future** – Young person is optimistic about his/her personal future. (72%\*)

(\* The percent of youth who experience or have this asset in their lives. Data based on an aggregate Search Institute sample of 148,189 students surveyed in 2003. The sample included students in 202 cities in 27 states.)

This column's focus will be on.....Asset #38 - Self-Esteem

**Where does high self-esteem come from?**

High self-esteem doesn't necessarily come naturally. Adults, by the way they act and interact, teach young people to believe in themselves and like themselves. Telling and showing young people that they love and accept them for who they are, what they value, and the people they want to become helps build self-esteem. It's also important to teach young people the values and actions that will build genuine self-esteem, including caring, giving, treating others with kindness and tolerance, and always doing your best in school and other activities.

**Here are the facts**

Research shows that young people who feel good about themselves have positive relationships with parents and peers, increased academic achievement, and a decreased susceptibility to negative

peer pressure. Loving yourself is as important as loving other people. About 48 percent of young people, ages 11–18, report having high self-esteem, according to Search Institute surveys. Telling and showing young people you accept and value who they are helps them to feel good about themselves.

**Tips for building this asset**

A young person's self-esteem can be affected by many people and situations. Notice how what you say and do affects the young people around you. Young people's self-esteem increases when they feel loved, respected, and accepted; taken seriously; and listened to. Feeling safe and secure, and able to make choices and do good deeds also boosts self-esteem. The most important key to building other's self-esteem is to let them know they matter and are an important part of society.

**Also try this**

**In your home and family:** Compliment your child and let her or him hear you saying positive things about her or him to someone else.

**In your neighborhood and community:** Take the time to learn about what the young people in your community think and feel about current events. Ask them not only about school and hobbies, but also their opinions on important issues. Let them know you value what they think and how they feel.

**In your school or youth program:** Publicly congratulate young people's successes with written notes, calls home, or verbal praise. If some students or group members are having a problem, talk to them (or their parents or guardians) privately.

**It's important to cultivate a positive personal identity and self-esteem in your child.** If your child has low self-esteem he will be much more susceptible to negative peer pressure, and it may cause problems in the future. Address this problem before it starts by building self-esteem early and continuing throughout your child's life.

**ASSET RELATED NEWS**

- Congratulations to Pastor Gene Carey & Jessica Kordupel on being recognized at the annual MyCom meeting held recently at Windows on the River. Jessica was recognized w/a Youth Voice Award and Gene Carey, Pastor, Parma Christian Church was recognized

as a Civic Leader winner. A special thank you to Kathy Hall, MyCom Grant Project Assistant & Jean Micklewright, Shiloh Café Coordinator for their work developing the projects, promoting the events and coordinating resources and activities for the initiative. Great job everyone!

- It's just come to my attention that Dentzler Elementary is looking for a new business partner to, among other things, host/sponsor a quarterly Sundae Bar for their high-achieving students. This is a fun, hands-on, relatively inexpensive volunteer opportunity for any business or organization, with the potential for significant recognition. Don't miss this opportunity to get involved. Call Erin Gadd, PCS D Director of Public Relations & CBS Co-Facilitator and let her know you're interested.

- If you have not yet heard, a new six session Family Literacy Training Program for pre-kindergarten children called Teach Me To Read At Home is coming to the Parma Area Family Collaborative beginning January 29th. Contact Megan Drozda at 440.887.4873 / drozdam@parmacityschools.org for information on how to sign up..
- Is your child attending Green-

briar Middle School? Has s/he mentioned the Greenbriar Discovery Center? If not, inquire about the program and/or visit the Greenbriar M.S. web site. Click on the Greenbriar Discovery Center link on the left hand menu bar to learn more about this effective, popular, federally funded after-school program. And, a special thank you to Yorktown Lanes and Brookpark Skate, just two of the many local business partners Supporting The Program.

*Share Your Asset Building Ideas And/Or Thoughts About The Developmental Asset Concept By Visiting The "Asset Corner" Facebook Page. I'm Looking Forward To Hearing From You.*

Visit [www.search-institute.org/assets](http://www.search-institute.org/assets) for more information about the 40 Developmental Assets and ideas for helping young people build them. Or go here <http://www.parentfurther.com/> for great asset-based parenting tips, tricks, activities and ideas.

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Perspective

Retirement Insecurity - Part One

by Lee Kamps

In 1980, when my father turned 62 and became eligible to collect social security, he decided to retire from his job with a large tool manufacturer. In addition to his social security, he also had a very good company pension that paid him for the remainder of his life and to my mother as long as she was alive. My mother retired a few years later from her job as a nurse at a non profit hospital. She also was able to draw social security from her own account and had some retirement savings through a tax

deferred annuity program that is still available to employees of non profit organizations. This afforded my parents to have a comfortable, active and secure retirement.

The old model for retirement security had been a three legged stool. The first leg was social security, guaranteed by the government and available to every worker who has more than forty quarters in covered employment. The second leg of that stool was a company pension that was the reward for a career with one's employer. This was the ulti-

mate reward for putting up with your boss and the company for all those years. The third leg of that stool was from personal savings that one made on their own.

But for many people in my generation and those younger, the idea of a secure comfortable retirement is just that – a dream. Company pensions have gone the way of leaded gasoline with very few companies now offering the kind of defined benefit guaranteed pensions like my father had for his retirement. Since the inflation ragged 1970s, the rate of personal savings has steadily declined until 2007 when the national savings rate was in the negative numbers. That meant that most people were actually drawing more from savings than they were actually saving. That leaves for most workers, the only remaining leg of that stool – social security as the source for retirement income. That makes for a very wobbly stool.

So how did we get this in this dilemma? For most workers, the company pension has been replaced by the 401(K) plan where it is up to the individual employee to decide how much to contribute and the employee shoulders the investment risk. There are no guarantees as to the benefits one can draw from a 401(K) plan. But 401(K) plans were never designed to be a primary source of retirement income.

401(K) plans were created in 1978 by congress as a means for employees of companies that had pension plans to be able to save on a tax favored basis for their retirement. But they were quickly abused by wealthier business owners and affluent people to dodge taxes. Ordinary working people were largely unaware of this new method for retirement savings. Then in 1984, new rules were established to curb those abuses and make 401(K) plans more available to everyone as a means for retirement savings. “Highly

compensated employees” were limited to their tax deduction based on the participation and contributions of “non highly compensated employees”. So in order for the top managers, owners and executives of a company to get the favorable tax treatment of their 401(K) contributions, there had to be widespread participation among the “non highly compensated” employees.

401(K) plans do have many advantages over the traditional pension plans like the one my father had. First, they are portable so someone can take a 401(K) plan to another company should they change jobs. Second, most companies to encourage participation among the “non highly compensated” employees will match employee contributions. Third, a participant is always 100% vested in their own contributions and there is a maximum seven year vesting limit on employer contributions which makes them much more portable. Fourth, if an individual begins contributing to a 401(K) plan at a young age and continues the same percentage of contribution throughout their working career while investing prudently; they can build up a significant nest egg that could provide a much larger income than any company pension.

There are many pitfalls to a 401(K) plan which I will discuss in part two next month.

Although I have written extensively about health insurance and health care and most of my career has been in that area, I also have experience with retirement plans. I once conducted employee 401(K) plan meetings for companies on behalf of the plan administrator and I also implemented 401(K) plans for many companies. I also have held a series 7 general securities registration, the kind that stock brokers are required to obtain. I have had post graduate courses in retirement plans as well as asset management. So although I gave up my securities registration more than a decade ago, I still know a thing or two about retirement plans and how they work.

A Step In The Right Direction

continued from page 1

regular order by allowing Congress to move forward with the appropriations process instead of relying on continuing resolutions. It reduces the deficit by \$23 billion without raising taxes. It provides \$63 billion in relief from the sequester, the President's automatic, across-the-board spending cuts, in exchange for \$85 billion in savings elsewhere in the budget.

Additionally, it will cut spending a smarter way, though it does not go as far as I would like. First, the budget finds savings by eliminating waste. For example, we will stop sending unemployment checks to criminals and government checks to dead people. Second, it will cut corporate welfare. For instance, we repeal a government research program for private energy companies—a prosperous industry should not rely on taxpayer money for its research. Next, and most importantly, this plan addresses our excessive spending spree by making commonsense reforms to federal employee programs. Lastly, taxpayers should not be on the hook to bail out private com-

panies' pension benefits, so this plan asks companies to cover more of the cost of guaranteeing their benefits.

In the past, I voiced concerns about the budget process itself and I stand by my comments in that the process it broken, and it must change. In the future, I am hopeful that comprehensive transparency reforms will be implemented. With that said, I applaud Rep. Ryan and Sen. Murray for their efforts to reach this agreement. It is important now more than ever that we find common ground and act to move America forward.

Throughout my time serving the people of Ohio's 16th district, I have remain committed to reining in excessive federal spending, reducing unnecessary government mandates, and keeping taxes low in order to help create an economic environment that will allow our small businesses, the backbone of our economy, to flourish and create the jobs that we need. We face challenging times ahead, and it is critical that we make the tough but necessary choices to advance policies that hold the promise of a brighter future for those that will come after us.

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Join the Discussion at: [www.parmaobserver.com](http://www.parmaobserver.com)

Parma Area

New Athletics Conference Formed For 2015

by Erin Gadd

A new athletics conference is being formed by Parma Senior, Valley Forge, Normandy, Holy Name, Elyria Catholic, Bay Village, and Rocky River high schools for competition in the 2015-2016 school year.

The new conference was formed in response to the dissolution of the Northeast Ohio Conference (N.O.C.) and the West Shore Conference in September. At that time, several teams unexpectedly notified members they were leaving the conference, spurring

the creation of new leagues, and movement of the remaining teams to new leagues.

Parma, Valley Forge, and Normandy are currently members of the Northeast Ohio Conference. Rocky River, Bay Village, and Elyria Catholic are members of the West Shore Conference. Holy Name is a member of the North Coast Conference. Factors considered by the member schools in the creation of the newly formed conference included competitive balance, geography, and community support.

Serena Shroge, Miss Seven Hills 2013, Creates A "Beary Merry Holiday"

by Kathy Holland

It is the time of year again when the holidays fill us with anticipation and excitement. It is also a time when some are barely getting by and need a helping hand. Serena Shroge, Miss Seven Hills 2013, a National Honor Society member at Normandy High School, wanted to do something that would make a difference for the 2013 season. So, she created "A Beary Merry Holiday" to bring others some holiday cheer. Working with the NHS, the students at Normandy High School, Diamond Dance Canter, The City of Seven Hills, and Kay Jewelers, Serena collected many brand new teddy bears and helped to raise over \$700.00. The money went to purchase new teddy bears from Kay Jewelers, who gave the profits received from the sale of the bears to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. In this way, two charities were the beneficiaries of a "Beary Merry Holiday." On December 12th, the bears purchased were delivered by Serena to OhioGuidestone, a comprehensive



Serena Shroge, Miss Seven Hills 2013

non-profit organization that provides solutions for children, families and communities across Ohio. Seven Hills Mayor Richard Dell'Aquila said, "The City of Seven Hills is very fortunate to have such caring and involved young people in our community."

Local Business Supports Student-To-Work Transitions

by Erin Gadd

On December 9th, students from Parma Sr. High School practiced skills learned in the classroom when they visited Just-A-Buck Parma located in the Midtown Plaza. Just A-Buck, a joint venture between the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities and SAW, Inc., provides employment opportunities for adults with disabilities. Many graduates of the Parma City School District are current employees of Just-A-Buck.

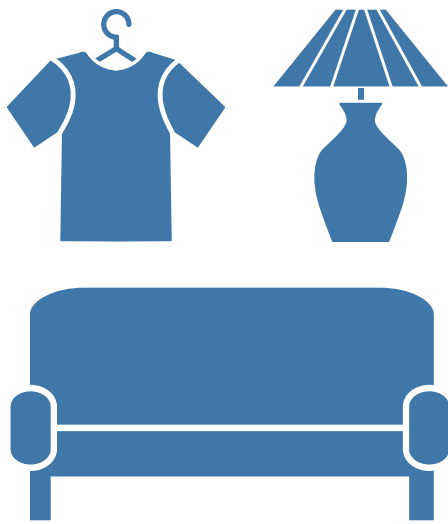
The field trip was coordinated by Michelle Schneider, Transition Coordinator, Diana Woznak, Speech/Language Pathologist and Jeanne Sabol, Intervention Specialist with the cooperation of Kim Pritchard, manager of Just-A-Buck.

Parma Senior High students implemented math and independent

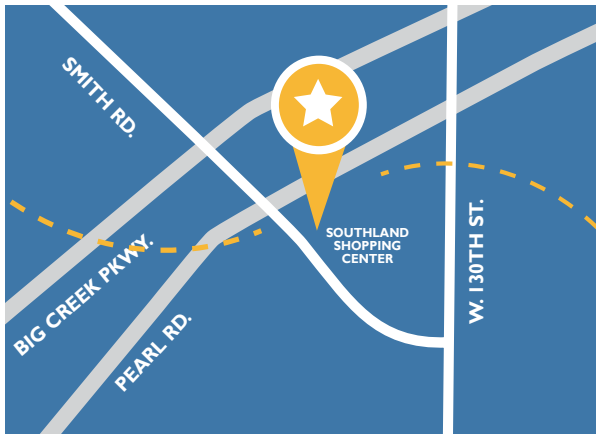


Parma Senior High students visit Just-a-Buck to practice math and independent living skills on community-based field trips

living skills in a retail environment. The field trip also included the opportunity for students to job shadow employees in order to experience the jobs available when transitioning from high school to adulthood. Youths with disabilities benefit from community-based field trips, as it better prepares students for adulthood.



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Our selection changes constantly, so come back often. You never know what you'll find and your purchases go to support the needy of Northeast Ohio.



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Perspective

# Healthcare.gov - Where To Get Help?

by Gene Lovasy

Confused about the new health insurance program? Is it a good deal for you? What about this Medicaid expansion? How can you find out if you're eligible? How do you enroll in these programs? Where can you go to get help?

The NEO Outreach & Enrollment Council is a consortium of organizations that do outreach & have staff specifically trained as in-person assisters, i.e.: Navigators and/or Certified Application Councilors, who can answer these questions and aid you in the enrollment process.

How to get started? It'll help to know what to expect.

Here are the basic steps you can expect to take in the Health Insurance Marketplace:

Step 1. There are four ways you can sign up through the Health Insurance Marketplace: online – go to [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov); by phone – call 1-800-318-2596 TTY 1-855-889-4925; by mailing in a paper application – to download a copy go to [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov) & click on the “4 Ways to Apply” link and scroll down to “Apply with a Paper Application”; or with an in-person assister.

Step 2. A bit about you You'll need to answer some questions about you and your family, including your income, the number of people in your

family, and more. Having at your finger tips the following information would be helpful: the Social Security numbers of everyone who will be on your plan, income information....a recent W-2 pay stub would do it and information about any health insurance you currently have (if you have any).... something that has the policy number on it is all you need. Step 3. Time to shop You will be able to compare your options side-by-side and choose a plan that meets your needs and your budget. Financial help is available for many. In fact, more than half of all uninsured people could qualify for plans that are less than \$100 a month.

Step 4. Sign up for a plan

Once you've reviewed the plans available, you can pick the one that's right for you and sign up.

If you have questions and/or would like to make an appointment for help enrolling, here are just some of the Council member organizations in our local area. Note that the services provided by in-person assisters are completely free.

Additional organizations providing assistance may be found by clicking on the “Find Local Help” tab on the home page of [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov). To see if you're now eligible for Medicaid go to [www.benefits.ohio.gov](http://www.benefits.ohio.gov) and click on the red “Find Out Now” link.

## Where to go for help

**Parma Health Ministry**  
7000 Ridge Rd  
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(440) 843-8087  
[contact@parmahealthministry.org](mailto:contact@parmahealthministry.org)  
[www.parmahealthministry.org](http://www.parmahealthministry.org)

**Reppa + Associates, Inc.**  
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**The Metrohealth System**  
2500 Metrohealth Drive  
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[www.metrohealth.org/](http://www.metrohealth.org/)

**Cleveland Marketplace Enrollment Team – Cognosante**  
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Independence, OH 44131  
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**Enrollment Assistance Center-SRA International, Inc.**  
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**North Coast Health Ministry**  
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[www.nchealthministry.org](http://www.nchealthministry.org)

*Additional organizations providing assistance may be found by clicking on the “Find Local Help” tab on the home page of [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov). To see if you're now eligible for Medicaid go to [www.benefits.ohio.gov](http://www.benefits.ohio.gov) and click on the red “Find Out Now” link.*

# Worldstock's Beat New Year = New Opportunities

by Wayne Mesker

As 2013 comes to a close we are proud of some accomplishments from the past year, while awaiting results on others. As 2014 approaches we're looking forward to future opportunities to be of service to our community, to fellow citizens, our environment & our furry /feathered friends. During the past year we have engaged in or participated in fundraising activities for Friends Of Parma Theater, Malachi House, Autism Speaks, the 4th Angel Mentoring Network, the All Faiths Food Pantry, the Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center among others. We have connected with other organizations in hopes of helping to promote their missions & foster col-

laborative partnerships with them. We continue to reach out to local, state & federal government officials along with members of the educational community on behalf of our children. Our recent involvement in a major political campaign has allowed us to connect with politicians, members of the media, community, business & labor leaders, activists / advocates of all types & concerned citizens. It is our sincere hope in the coming year, we can build partnerships with those connections to help address major social issues & encourage cooperation & collaboration wherever it makes sense to do so. We wish you all a safe, happy, productive New Year & hope you will join us in our work.

## Cleveland Furniture Bank: Furnishing Hope Since 2006

ADVERTORIAL

Since opening its doors in 2006, The Cleveland Furniture Bank has been providing basic home furnishings to Northeast Ohioans in need, and as of the end of last year, has given away 72,975 pieces of furniture. In addition, their special Beds for Kids program, started in 2012, has provided 1,853 beds to children. “We started the Cleveland Furniture Bank because we saw a need for individuals working so hard to get back on their feet to not have the added burden of buying furniture,” said Tom Gaghan, executive director, Cleveland Furniture Bank. “Since our first year of operation we’ve only seen need for furnishings continue to grow and recently moved to a larger facility in Middleburg Heights to meet that need.”

Now headquartered in the Southland Shopping Center, today over 3,000 individuals are referred to the organization each year by more than 300 agencies and organizations in the region. Each person referred gets to visit the Furniture Bank to select a gently-used couch, chair, dining room set, dresser, bed and lamps from its client-only showroom. Individuals with children also get to select new beds for

their children as part of the Beds for Kids program.

Along with the client-only showroom, the organization's headquarters also includes a donation intake, sorting and sanitation zone, and a 20,000-square-foot retail thrift store that sells new and gently used furniture, clothing, household goods and other items. All proceeds from thrift store sales make it possible for the Furniture Bank to continue providing to those in need. “Furniture donations from community members and thrift store sales are what enable us to continue providing furniture to those in need. Without community support in these ways we wouldn't exist,” Gaghan said. “No matter how small, every donation and thrift store sale really makes a difference.”

Northeast Ohioans are encouraged to visit the Furniture Bank's thrift store at the Southland Shopping Center, or call (216) 459-2265 to donate furniture and schedule a pick-up. To learn more about donating furniture, thrift store hours and opportunities to get involved, visit [www.clevelandfurniturebank.org](http://www.clevelandfurniturebank.org).



# Parma Observer

## "Buh-Bye, 2013"

Kathryn Yates

Buh-Bye, 2013! How would you describe 2013 with only one word? Anti-climactic, ho-hum, gray, and melodramatic were words that instantly came to mind until I wondered if I wasn't just describing the weather or my waning middle-aged years. Desiring more input I posted the question on a few on-line sites and 95 area residents responded as follows:

- "A-blur"
- "Fast"
- "Rebuilding"
- "Alive"
- "Flabbergasted"
- "Redonkulous"
- "Average"
- "Good-Byes"
- "Reevaluate"
- "Better"
- "Gridlock"
- "Roller-Coaster"
- "Bittersweet" – (2)
- "Happy"
- "Rough" – (2)
- "Blessed" – (2)
- "Humbling"
- "Sad" – (3)
- "Body-aches"
- "Interesting"
- "Scary" – ( 2)
- "Boring"
- "Buh-Bye"
- "Isolating"
- "SOS"
- "Boring"
- "Static"
- "Breathable"
- "Later"
- "Stressful" – (2)
- "Challenging" - (6)
- "Lies"
- "Struggle"
- "Changes" – (3)
- "Life-changing"
- "Sucked" – (3)
- "Complete"
- "Loooooong"
- "Terrible" – (2)
- "Confusing"
- "Monotonous"
- "Traveling"
- "Corndog"
- "Obama"
- "Twerk"
- "Crazy"
- "Okay"
- "Unbelievable"
- "Deployed"
- "Ominous"
- "Unconvincing"
- "Dictatorial"
- "Optimistic"
- "Unexpected"
- "Disappointing" – (3)
- "Overwhelming"
- "Unremarkable"
- "Disenchanted"
- "Painful"
- "Weird"
- "Dis-heartening"
- "Poli-failure"
- "Whirlwind"
- "Divorce"
- "Polka"
- "Wild"

- "Educational"
- "Predictable"
- "Wonderful" – (2)
- "Exciting"
- "Pressure"
- "Worst"
- "Exhausting"
- "Prolific"

Although it's difficult to affix an emotive value to responses such as "corndog", "polka", and "twerk"(for some), it is apparent that more responses reflected a negative back glance of this past year (about 44), while only a dozen or so were definably positive. The other 38 were either neutral about 2013 or too "redonkulous" to categorize. According to these area residents, 2013 was neither "...the best of times..." or "...the worst of times..." as Dickens ("A Tale Of Two Cities", 1859) affixed to the years leading up to the French Revolution. It was more like the "meh" of times – a term my teen-aged daughter would use when asked how her meatloaf was, or how her math test went. Negative, but not screamingly so.

This past year saw the passing of many good people, some very close, some eminent, all respected. "Sad" and "Good-Byes" reflected farewell tributes to loved ones and remind us of Hemingway's words: "...any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind..." ("For Whom The Bell Tolls", Ernest Hemingway, 1940). This survey was never intended to trivialize with one word all that have gone before us in 2013.

It's a little discouraging not to see "healthy", "safe", or "prosperous" on that list – common wishes scripted to our friends and family on the bottom of our Christmas cards, though "happy" did get a mention. "Fun" did not, and so not to neglect one of my favorite words I will end 2013 with this thought:

"It was the...most prolific of fast, change-ing times that were better than average but complete-ly confusing and later isolating in boring, sad, monotonous, and challenging ways that made us polka here in Parma. Complete-ly rough in loooooong educational pressures that were a poli-failure. It was life-changing and crazy, wild, but breathable, bittersweet and terrible, traveling down predictable, dis-heartening roads leading to the worst...the end of this disenchanting year, and the beginning of yet another, scary, ominous, year. With overwhelming, unbelievable, static we emerge from this past...and look forward with humbling optimism to happy corndogs and painful roller coaster rides that give us weird body-aches experienced in the exhausting traffic gridlock as we exit the wonderful parks in the whirlwind summer ahead. Okay, this unremarkable dictatorial deployed most (but not all) educational responses as I still struggle with twerk. Buh-Bye, 2013!" Happy New Year in 2014!

## Friends Of Parma Theater/UAW Observe 50th Anniversary Of British Invasion

by Daniel P. McCarthy

Friends of Parma Theater have maintained their focus on acquiring the Parma Theater for the purpose of transforming the historic Parma Landmark in the heart of Polish Village into a multi-use Arts-centered facility unparalleled in this region. With that in mind, they have teamed up with UAW Local 1005 in Parma to host what is the largest fundraising event to date held by the group. The occasion for this celebration is the 50th anniversary of the British Invasion, which most people agree started on February 9th, 1964 as the Beatles made their first American television appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show. One could argue that the invasion really began in December 1963 when a Washington D.C. radio deejay introduced the Beatle's first number one hit "I want to hold your hand": when fans inundated local record stores the next day with requests for the single, the stores did not have the record to sell them, so sudden was this invasion. In 1964 the Beatles had 19 of their songs on the top 40 List, 6 as number one hits! This success in the states led to an immense wave of British bands, including of course another notable band in their own right, the Rolling Stones.

On Saturday February 8th. at the UAW Hall at 5615 Chevrolet Blvd. in Parma, there will be a Battle of the Bands Show, featuring a song-for-song rock off between Liverpool Lads, a Beatles tribute band, and the Jumpin' Jack Flash Rolling Stones Tribute Band, from PA. Doors open at 7:00 and the music will be played from 8:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. The price of admission for this event is \$12.00 in advance and \$15.00 on the day of the show. For ticket information contact Friends of Parma Theater at 440-532-1823 or email at FriendsOfParmaTheater@gmail.com. More information about this fundraiser to benefit Friends of Parma Theater will be forthcoming but was not available at press time. For now, mark your calendars with this date and make sure not to miss what will be a splendid time for all.

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Inspiration

I Believe

by Daniel Taddeo

Attitude can make the difference between acceptance and rejection.

Avoid blaming because it makes matters worse; rather, explore solutions.

Bad government is better than no government.

Do not stand up for a bad cause.

Everyone’s behavior impacts other people in a positive or negative way.

Everything is permissible, but not everything is beneficial.

Expect four out of five traffic lights to be red; devote waiting time to introspection and prayer.

God will judge everyone’s deeds, including every hidden thing, whether good or evil.

God’s love for us is unconditional and our love for others should be the same.

Here is the conclusion of the matter: fear (revere) God and keep His Commandments.

It is better not to vow than to make a vow and not fulfill it.

Let go of what we cannot keep or alter.

Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier.

Life not centered in God is without purpose and meaning.

Loving our enemies does not mean thinking them to be nice, when it is quite plain they are not.

Often people vainly pursue hopes and expectations that, in reality, are meaningless.

People who revere God will avoid worldly extremes.

Since all husbands and wives are far from perfect, they should not expect perfection in each other.

Sinning destroys much good.

The more one has, the more one worries.

There is not one person on this earth who is without sin.

Things go better when people live God-fearing (reverent) lives.

Viewing trying circumstances as character-building opportunities is tough.

Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all of your might.

Whoever digs a pit often ends up in it.

Wisdom preserves the life of its possessor.

Self-reflection is always a good exercise. What I believe is a work in progress, not limited to these statements and subject to change. What do YOU believe?

Whispering Winds

by Ruth Revecky

Where does the wind begin and where does it really end?  
One minute the air is silent, and suddenly the trees begin  
To sway and bend and the excited leaves exchange friendly  
Gossip.

In winter the north wind sends chills throughout the land,  
Bringing swirling snow, slippery ice, and stinging sleet,  
Covering us like a patch-quilt which was sewed by nature.

Then the north wind becomes kinder in the soon-arriving spring,  
And we can feel a warmer hand on our plump cheeks and oval face.  
Before too long the scenery is bathed in a soothing splash of  
Emerald green.

The south wind welcomes in our summer by warming the  
Motionless, stagnant air, sending children scampering to  
Sparkling sandy beaches and warm, blue, enticing water.

Autumn winds sometimes play nasty games, because they  
Oft-times create massive destruction with ferocious,  
Howling storms.  
The crashing thunder shakes the air and the lightning flashes  
Illuminate the velvet-black sky.

Then without warning, winter winds, once again, chill the  
Autumn air, sending older folks scurrying to warmer climbs,  
While young people throw snowballs and belly-slam on brightly  
Painted red sleds.

The four winds have created an ongoing mystery, a mystery  
Never explained by man.  
Even a genius can’t distinguish where the whispering winds  
Begin or where they ultimately end.

Life Without Honor Is Life In Vain

by Bryan N Griffin Jr

As I get older, I seem to be constantly re-organizing my priorities. My memories keep coming and going. My body has taken a lot of hits from being diabetic my whole life. The one true thing that still remains strong to this day is my immortal spirit. Why? It is because of my sense of honor. There are other things that help keep my soul strong – love, compassion, charity, courage. I am trying to work on forgiveness. That part has always been tough for me, but that is a different article for another time. I like honor. I always took it dead seriously. It comes from so many different places, and it transcends beyond every other facet in life. There is family honor, military honor, personal honor ... it goes on and on. My honor comes from three places: my time in the martial arts, my experiences with my health, and with my family and friends.

Let’s start with the martial arts. In my early 20s, my heart was filled with anger and frustration. I needed a vessel to get it out. The martial arts taught me three things: disciplining the mind, body, and spirit. The moves disciplined my body. Keeping focused on the moves disciplined my mind. Knowing when to use those moves on someone disciplined my spirit, also, teaching me honor at the same time.

My health problems also taught me honor. If the reader remembers a few articles back, I survived two diabetic comas in my late 20s. For those who never experienced it, it is like you are dreaming, but you cannot wake up. You are on that bridge between life and death. You are scared at first, but then a sense of calm surrounds you, because you know your time may be coming. Luckily, I came back twice. This is my third chance at life, and this time, I do not want to screw it up.

It was at that point that I made a goal to be a better person, which leads me to the hat trick (#3): How you treat your friends reflects how you treat other people. That is taught by your family. Being loyal to them and keeping your promises starts with your family which is handed down to you to share with your friends. Being there for them when they are down to bring them back up is an act of honor. Giving them something from your heart, because you can and you want to, is an act of honor. Telling them how much they mean to you, and learning to value it, is an act of honor.

LIFE WITHOUT HONOR IS LIFE LIVED IN VAIN. Wherever you learned honor from in your life, hold onto it. Don't let anyone or anything take it away from you.

**"Correct the Cause and the Pain goes away Naturally!"**

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# Reflections

## Caregiver's Kitchen: Surviving Loss

by Patty Knox

Loss is something we all suffer at one time or another; or many times over. It is a universal part of the human condition. Yet that doesn't make it any easier to bear.

Moving through the days, months and years after a devastating loss are an arduous journey. It may be a cared-for family member who has passed away; often, it may be the caregiver who has died.

Losses come in many forms. It may be the loss of an ability, such as walking, which has confined an active person to a wheelchair. Loss of health, which could cause chronic pain, intermittent symptoms, loss of appetite, or to be bedridden. Loss of balance, which can be very disconcerting. Little losses as we age, like the ability to ride a bike, or play tennis, or sew, knit or crochet due to arthritis, or play an instrument, or ride a roller coaster, that one day we look back and realize those are things we have needed to leave behind because of an injury or a medical condition. Loss of mind and memory, which not only affect the ability to do things, but result in a loss of self, as affected persons lose the sense of who they were and are, and lose the ability to recognize loved ones around them. For dear friends of mine who are foster parents, the loss of foster children who go back to their original family with uncertain circumstances and an inability to maintain contact to see how their foster child is now doing. "It's like a little death, each time one we have grown to love leaves us," said the foster mother.

Such loss can lead to introspection, depression, lack of energy, sometimes anger, the inability to muster any

enthusiasm to do anything. The usual stages of grief, not always occurring in order, include denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance, and other emotions, weigh heavy on our soul. There is little to do but to slog through it, like Christian in Pilgrim's Progress, and to rest along the way when it gets to be too much. The journey seems too long and too hard to be able to complete.

The only comfort is that the LORD is there with you. You are not alone. Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." The Son of God who endured everything on earth that we endure knows firsthand how it feels, and how we feel. There are no secrets. "Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it already," Psalm 139 declares. As my husband, Doug, who lost his father, mother and first wife to death all within two years, tells me, it's okay to complain to God, to let it out. "Awake, LORD! Why do you sleep? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever. Why do you hide your face and forget our misery and oppression?" says the Psalmist in Psalm 44. As reluctant as I am to yell at God, given my religious upbringing, I have to concede that God's a big, boy; He can take anything I have to dish out. He's big enough. And I'm not surprising Him by voicing the thoughts I'm thinking. Let the poisons out, or they will eat away inside of you. Clear the air. God understands.

As lonely and alone as you may feel, you are in the presence of the Almighty who watches tenderly as you go through these somber moments, hours, days. He is touched by your tears. I have to think that God cries tears, too. "Precious in the sight of the

Lord is the death of His saints," proclaims Psalm 116. Jesus wept at the death of his dear friend, Lazarus. It is part of coming to terms with the difficulty of loss. You need this "down time" to recover. Allow yourself to draw close to God, even in your anger, to express your feelings, to ask the unanswered questions, to approach that perfect peace, the peace that passes understanding promised to us in Philippians 4:7, so that you can honor your loved one who watches on from the cloud of witnesses of Hebrews 12:1, praying for you to keep the faith, run the race with perseverance and finish the race well, as Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 4:7. Your loved one watches from heavenly heights, cheering you onward until you have fulfilled your purpose on earth and are called home to your Saviour, Jesus, to receive your eternal reward in that place where there will be no more death, no more suffering, no more tears. Be encouraged.

Now for a simple, warming meal to sustain you through such difficult days.

Cornmeal makes a satisfying, filling, economical breakfast, lunch, or even light supper when cooking does not look inviting. It can be served warm as polenta (think farina or grits) with maple syrup and butter, or chilled in a loaf pan or square plastic leftover container the refrigerator and cut into ½ inch slices and pan-fried or baked as a base for vegetables, meat or other stackables, like bacon, lettuce and tomato, in place of bread for the gluten-intolerant. Serve with a salad, a breakfast meat, or a fruit, if you like.

Stir one cup of water and one cup of corn meal with a good pinch of salt, or dill or other favorite herb. Boil three cups of water, then add mixture while stirring constantly. Polenta will thicken. Turn heat to low, lid and stand by for 3 to 5 minutes until thick enough to one's liking. Serve hot with milk or syrup, salt or pepper, butter if desired. Enjoy.

Thank you for reading the Parma Observer, and know that my prayers are with you through the holidays. I can be reached at editorparmaobserver@yahoo.com

## Parma Community General Hospital

continued from page 1

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## Now That's Funny? by Julia Cindric



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