



2022-23

Chardon

magazine

Presented by the Chardon Chamber of Commerce, The Good News and The Geauga Times Courier



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Dear Readers,

Welcome back! After taking a year off to wade through the COVID-19 pandemic, we're proud to present the seventh installment of our Chardon Magazine.

For the last several years, we have partnered with our friends at the Geauga Times Courier and The Good News to present this valuable tool to assist in achieving the Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce's mission to promote, protect and serve the general business interests of the City of Chardon and the surrounding area.

As always, this magazine will reiterate to those who live here and promote to those who are visiting what a wonderful community we have.

Our mission is to support economic development and showcase Chardon as a vibrant business community.

Whether you are a lifelong resident of the city, one of the thousands of employees that work for a Chardon-based company or just happened to stumble upon one of our fine shops, eating establishments or events held on the historic Chardon Square, we are glad you have become part of our community in some way.

For more information on upcoming events, visit chardonchamber.com or chardon.cc, and don't forget to like our Facebook pages.

We appreciate your continued support.



Christopher Grau
Chardon Mayor



Catherine Peters
President of the Chardon Area
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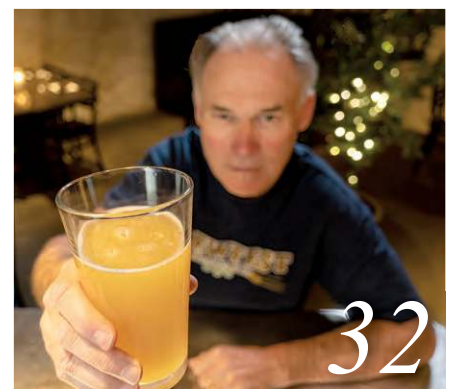
Chardon Lakes Golf Course



Canfield House



Worthington Fabric & Drapery



Chardon BrewFest

2022 CALENDAR of EVENTS

April

April 3rd – 9th
Chardon Restaurant Week
April 16th Breakfast with the
Easter Bunny & Easter Egg Hunt
on the Square
April 21st - 24th Geauga Maple
Festival (Square)

May

May 1st 20 Mile Drop Race
May 7th – September 3rd
(Saturdays) Yoga on the Square
May 13th-15th & 20th – 22nd
Cinderella – Geauga Theatre
May 27th Opening Day Chardon
Municipal Pool



June

June 3rd – August 26th (Fridays)
Concerts in the Park (Square)
June 4th Chardon Square Assoc.
Flea Market (Square)
June 11th August 27th (Saturdays)
Chardon Square Assoc. Farmer's
Market (Square)
June 11th Movies on the Square:
Spiderman No Way Home
Amphitheater Concert – Long Time
Gone (Big Creek Park)
June 12th Caveman Crawl 5K Run
(The West Woods)
June 18th Movie Night at
Observatory Park – *Captain America*
June 25th Love Fest (Square)
July 2nd (Rain Date July
3rd)**Chardon Area Fireworks
Tentative

July

July 4th Old Glory Day (Square)
July 9th Amphitheater Concert
– Big North Band (Big Creek)
July 9th – 11th & 16th – 17th
Jukebox Jam! – Geauga Theatre
July 10th (Rain date July 17th)
Chardon Chamber Classic Car
& Bike Show (Square)
July 16th Dog Day of Summer
(Square)
July 23rd Movie Night at
Observatory Park – *Jurassic Park*



August

August 2nd National Night Out
(Square)
August 4th Chardon Square Assoc.
Kids Fest & Kid's Flea Market
(Square)
August 7th Chardon Square Assoc.
Arts Festival (Square)
August 12th Chardon Chamber Golf
Outing (Chardon Lakes Golf Course)
August 13th Chardon BrewFest
(Square) – 9th Annual
Movie Night at Observatory Park –
Raya and the Last Dragon
August 16th Red Key Network –
Annual Membership Rally
August 20th
LiveWell on the Square
Amphitheater Concert – Eric Heights
Brass Ensemble (Big Creek)

September

September 9th – 11th & 16th – 18th *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* –
Gauga Theatre
September 18th Chardon Square
Assoc. Harvest Handmade Market
(Square)
Kiwanis Cornroast (Square)

October

October 1st (Rain Date Oct 2nd)
Fall Fest (Square)
October 22nd & 29th
The Monster Bash – Geauga Theatre
October 31st
Halloween on the Square

November

November 15th
Red Key Network - Friendsgiving
November 24th 5K Turkey Trot/
Walk to Stop Trafficking (Square)
November 26th
Small Business Saturday



December

December 1st Chardon Square
Christmas Lighting
December 9th- 10th & 16th – 17th
Thrive's Annual Holiday Spectacular
– Geauga Theatre
December 10th Home for the
Holidays & Mistletoe Market
December 13th Red Key Network
Holiday Party

For complete listings go to www.chardonchamber.com



Downtown shopping has always been popular in the Chardon Square. In this historical file photo, cars can be seen lined the street with shoppers crowding the many retail establishments.

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Maplefestival.com

Chardon's history rich with character

Chardon's origins can be traced back to 1812 when the land now encompassing Chardon Township and the City of Chardon became one of 24 official townships in Geauga County, which then included what is now Lake County.

In 1851, the community of Chardon formally separated from the Township and became incorporated as an official Ohio village, which it remained as such until 2000 when the population surpassed 5,000, making it a bonafide city.

According to a brochure created by the Chardon Library during its Sesquicentennial celebration, pioneers first came to the area as early as 1795 travelling in horse-drawn covered wagons, ox carts, sleighs, and makeshift sleds.

"Cached among such material necessities were the hopes, dreams, and cultural baggage that even today mark Chardon's New England roots. Cultural baggage items included the town name, town planning, religious beliefs, architecture, and a commitment to education and libraries." Two major trails led to the Western Reserve from the east. Both the northern Lake Trail and the southern Pennsylvania State Road re-

Continued on page 8



The original gazebo in Chardon Square was built around 1875, but was torn down in the late 1930s and replaced with a new structure. The gazebo was rebuilt again in 1981 to closely replicate the original, pictured here.

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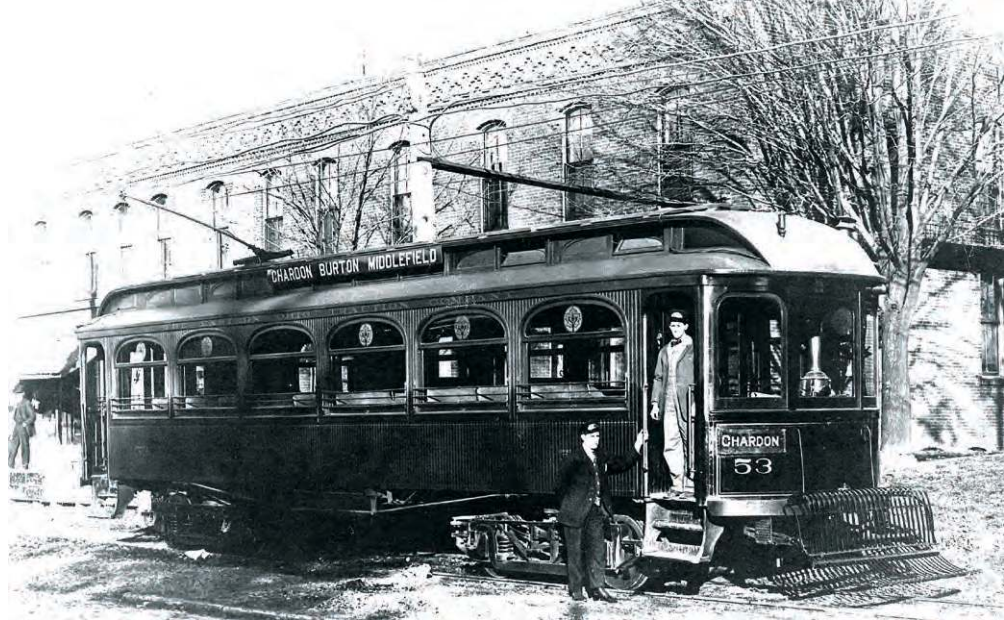
quired a journey of 8 to 10 weeks. In 1812, Captain Edward Paine, Jr., moved into the log cabin that would be his temporary home and the first courthouse on Chardon Square.

As one of the community's earliest pioneers, he is considered the founder of Chardon. He also served as Recorder from 1811 to 1835, Chardon postmaster, and county auditor from 1820 until 1822.

In 1808, representatives from the Ohio General Assembly chose an unpopulated wilderness on a hill for the county seat. With several fledgling towns under consideration, "nearly every man in Geauga County was thunderstruck" when Chardon was chosen, according to a historical news article published in *The Painesville Telegraph*. Land for the town plat was purchased for \$400 from absentee owner and Boston entrepreneur Peter Chardon Brooks. By 1810, the wilderness on the hill had a name, Chardon (French for thistle). Other names considered included Brookfield, Brookville, Marshall, and Chardonnia.

"Chardon Square was a quintessential example of New England town planning with its focus on a central green or common surrounded by the most important community institutions, including the courthouse and town hall, churches, and schools," according to accounts.

Early inns and stores as well as the homes of prominent residents also surrounded the green.



The Maple Leaf extension of the Eastern Ohio Traction Company was part of a large interurban electric railway system in the early twentieth century.

By 1848, a large columned courthouse and a simple, white clapboard Methodist Church graced the north half of Main Street, attesting to the cultural importance of government and religion in a transplanted New England town.

The New England commitment to education included making books available to the

entire community, even one as tiny as Chardon with its population of 446 in 1840.

On Aug. 26, 1858, community members met in the courthouse to organize a public library. County Recorder John French was chosen the first librarian and the books were kept in the Recorder's Office. The membership fee was \$1 per year or the donation of one good book.

On July 24, 1868, a fire broke out on Chardon's Main Street. The fire destroyed the Courthouse and with it the library. Many county records were saved but the fate of the library books is unknown. While the 1868 fire was Chardon's most devastating, it was not the only blaze residents battled. In 1876 a factory on North Hambden and an extensive flour mill at Washington and Water Streets burned. As a result a fire department was organized on March 21, 1877.

Two days following the 1868 fire, the Geauga County Commissioners and the citizens of Chardon led by Mayor E.V. Canfield gathered in the Chardon Town Hall on East Park Street. They discussed rebuilding the Courthouse and Main Street, resolving to "work unitedly and make every personal sacrifice that a renewal of our general prosperity may require."

Chardon's town hall was built 10 years after the town was incorporated. It stood on the site of the former high school, the current site of the Park Elementary playground just north of the auditorium.

According to early documents, L.J. Randall spearheaded construction of the Randall block. Soon thereafter, the Chardon Building Company contracted with Herrick and Simmons of Cleveland to build the Union block.

"Reading, writing, and arithmetic were necessary skills for transplanted New Englanders committed to the Yankee work ethic and entrepreneurial success. Sending talented sons east to Yale College was an accepted practice until institutions of higher learning could be founded in the wilderness. But first, children needed educational opportunities in their home community." Chardon's first school was likely housed in the rebuilt courthouse on Water Street. Its

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first teacher was Miss Mehitable Hall followed by Mrs. Orrin Spencer of Claridon. Pioneer schools, open for short sessions, also met in private homes and the basement of the Methodist Episcopal Church, then located on Main Street.

The Brick Academy was built in the Main Street business row in 1826 and operated into 1840. Instructor Dr. O.W. Ludlow boarded nearby in Aaron Canfield's tavern and called his pupils to class each morning with a bugle. Growth and change in the public schools was reflected in literary needs.

In 1879, Chardon teacher C.W. Carroll organized the school's library with books provided by the State of Ohio.

In 1882, the Chardon Public Library moved from the Recorder's Office in the courthouse to the dental rooms of Dr. A.P. Nichols over the bank.

In 1886, Carroll and members of the Union Temperance Meeting opened a room "as a place of resort for young people for reading and general improvement." In six short months, the collection grew to nearly 600 volumes and 30 periodicals.

Chardon's transportation networks have been vital to community growth, beginning in 1798 when the Connecticut Land Company paid for the clearing of what became Girdled Road just north of Chardon.

Increased transportation networks connected Chardon to the world outside Geauga



County, offering Clevelanders and others a glimpse of the country and small town life and attracting new residents.

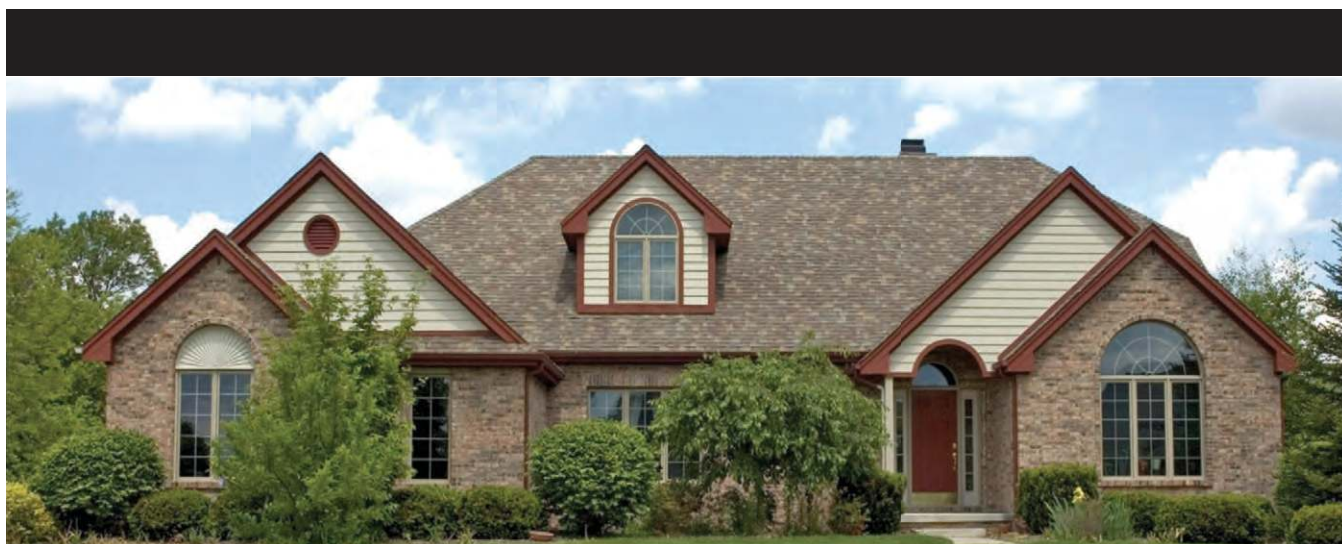
Rumors of an electric road from Cleveland to Chardon circulated for several years before commitments were secured in 1898. South Street property owners even petitioned Village Council to grant a franchise for use of their street.

The livery stables, once so popular on Chardon Square, were replaced in the 20th

century by automobile garages and service stations.

Today, Chardon remains to many, a town rich in history and culture.

Its public square is surrounded by government offices and quaint shops and many activities and events are still held there throughout the year including the always-popular MapleFest held each spring. ■



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Chardon artist Pat Ingram in her art studio.

Art with a passion

Chardon artist uses her talent to tell an important story

By PARIS WOLFE

A snowy Thursday in February 2022 finds Pat Ingram in a light-flooded studio behind her century home just blocks from Chardon Square. Under three skylights, she's painting a precisionist interpretation of public square buildings in matte acrylic on a 4-foot by 5-foot canvas. Its final destination is the lobby at 75 Public Square, an office building owned by The Millenia Companies.

You may not know her name, but you will encounter Ingram's art in various downtown Cleveland buildings. In January 2022, she finished a 75-foot-wide, bright color-blocked mural at the indoor dog park on the lower level of 75 Public Square.

Around the corner, one of her drawings

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of downtown buildings has been enlarged to nearly 11 feet tall and hangs behind the concierge desk in the Cleveland Marriott Downtown.

She has also painted decorative and marbled finishes at the luxury Marble Room restaurant on Euclid Avenue. Seven of her cityscape murals hang in the residential Garfield Building on East 6th Street.

Ingram wanted to be an artist since she was a young child. She was always drawing and creating works from an early age. To pursue her passion, she earned a degree in Commercial Art from Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts.

Ingram moved from New Hampshire to Chardon in 1992 to be closer to family in Northeast Ohio. Once here she made fine art paintings and won respect and accolades at juried art shows.

Among her more prestigious shows is the annual exhibition at the Butler Museum of American Art in Youngstown. She is planning to submit work for 2022. She has also been a favorite artist at the Chardon Square Arts Festival.

To generate cash flow while pursuing her passion, Ingram shared her skills as a decorative arts specialist. For example, she created faux finishes, trompe l'oeil, murals, painted furniture and the like for area residents and regional organizations.

Now in her 70s, Ingram has established a reputation for her fine art and spends time creating commissions for corporate clients and collectors. After painting the wall at the dog park earlier this year, she has considered creating fine art pet portraits as a side gig.

Her cozy studio is filled with the tools of her trade from brushes and canvases to art books that she uses for inspiration. Among her favorite artists is Charles Sheeler an American painter and commercial photographer from the mid-twentieth century. He's considered a founder of American modernism. Influenced by cubism and futurism he developed the somewhat photographic painting style known as precisionism.

That is worthy of note because the influence of his style can be found in Ingram's most current works for hire. Like his work, her current painting – A City Mosaic – includes sharply defined architectural forms.

A tour through Ingram's backyard studio shows that she is talented in many forms of painted expression. She has a faux-finished wall and painted furniture. On a frigid winter day, her traditional, floral watercolors are a promise of her gardens in summer. ■



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Annual Maple Festival has long, unique history

By GLEN MILLER

The Geauga County Maple Festival was the idea of Art Carlson, a local merchant on Chardon Square. Carlson wanted to increase awareness of maple syrup production as well as the price, which at that time, was sold for 50 cents a gallon.

Speaking to fellow businessmen, Carlson, a hardware store owner, proposed that the Maple Festival would be good publicity for Chardon and Geauga County, as well as a shot-in-the-arm to the area's maple sugaring industry.

When Carlson told some friends about his idea, they started planning the first Geauga County Maple Festival on April 9-10, 1926.

According to one news report, "he badgered the Chamber of Commerce into acquiescence," begged for samples of syrup from skeptical maple farmers and personally lost \$28 on the 1926 festival.

Yet, over the 87 years it has been held, the Maple Festival has become a symbol of the arrival of spring.

The first one was a great success, according to newspaper articles of yesteryear published in "A Scrapbook of the Geauga County Maple Festival."

The news stories appeared in the Cleveland Plain Dealer and Cleveland News.

The first festival was held on a Friday and Saturday on Chardon Square, as it is today, but also at the old Chardon City Hall on S.

Hambden Street, now the Chardon Fire Department. It was there where a big display of maple products was housed and warm sugar was served free to thousands of out-of-town-ers.

One story states the first county maple festival also was the first event of the kind ever held in America, and as such, was "a distinct innovation."

"Behind it was the pride that the people of this region justly feel in the maple industry, which has caused Geauga County to be known the country over. This pride was the propelling force which carried the project to a successful finish," a reporter wrote.

But opening day foreshadowed things to come. There was a Friday morning ice storm,

although skies cleared and the sun came out in the afternoon. Still, attendance was low until evening, when hundreds of people drove into Chardon.

Visitors were given a saucer of hot thick syrup and a wooden spoon.

They “stood around and stirred the syrup into sugar, and devoured it while their eyes glistened with satisfaction.”

Exclamations like, “Great!” or “Best stuff on earth!” were reportedly heard from adults, while the children expressed similar appreciation by frequent outbursts...

“All in all, it was a big and glorious weekend in the old town on the hill, which never saw anything like it before,” a news article stated.

The second day, Saturday, a reported “thousands” of visitors came to Chardon “in a steady stream,” mostly from Greater Cleveland. One by one, they sampled free maple stirs or ate free buckwheat cakes and covered with syrup served at city hall.

A check of attendance registration done during the first and other early Maple Festivals revealed many U.S. visitors came from 22 states and from as far west as Washington. Still a few others some visitors came from as far away as London, England.

Some visitors “bought a gallon or two of the ‘real stuff,’ and then rolled out of town

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in their limousines with the look of sweet remembrance on their faces,” a news story reported.

There was no shortage of maple syrup. Nearly 100 sugar makers contributed cans of syrup.

It seems volunteers manning the city maple product booths had to work hard to keep up with demand. Dozens of people were among those recruited to help fill maple stir containers, while the Ladies Civic Association assisted by serving visitors lunch and dinner meals in what was described as a community-wide endeavor.

“There was a liberal response to the committee’s request for a gallon of syrup from producers. Many sugar makers living off from improved roads were unable to get the syrup here, and being overworked in their sugar camps, could not attend the festival,” a news story stated.

On the square, old and new ways of making maple syrup were shown using a modern evaporator in a sugar house, while elsewhere maple syrup makers boiled sap using a 100-gallon iron kettle suspended over a log fire, the same way Geauga County settlers once did.

People crowded around both displays, marveling at what they saw, according to the news report.

Throughout the festival, Carlson, festival chairman, was reported as being “the busiest man in town,” scurrying everywhere and spending much of time answering questions from volunteers and guests.

He was assisted by members of various festival committees, “who also labored ‘indefatigably’ from start to finish to make the Festival a success,” according to a news report.

The first maple product contest and festival parades were held that inaugural year.

On Friday evening, a group of community singers lead by a fiddler performed upstairs in city hall as people danced.

The first festival parade occurred Saturday afternoon. A 20-member band from Burton lead by a drum major marched along Main Street at 3 p.m., the same time parades are now held Saturdays and Sundays during each



Massachusetts Sen. John F. Kennedy and his wife, Jackie, attended the 1959 Maple Festival during his presidential campaign.

Maple Festival.

The parade included 13 ponies ridden by youths and a team of oxen.

The first maple product contest occurred that Saturday evening and consisted of entries from 19 counties, not just Geauga County. This was because of the statewide interest in the first Maple Festival spread by newspaper stories and the efforts of Carlson and his helpers.

There were first, second and third place awards, and an honorable mention for the best gallon of maple syrup. Other prizes were awarded included the largest display of maple syrup fixtures, the oldest maple syrup fixture, the best pound cake made with maple sugar, the best two pounds of maple sugar and the

most unique or out of the ordinary maple sugar cake weighing 3-5 pounds.

A news story reported, “There was sugar in many unique designs, also fancy syrup in glass cans, such an imposing array that it seemed difficult to pass upon.”

There also was an oldest antique contest and other events.

The festival was the first of its kind in the United States, so Carlson and the Chardon people involved in it took special pride in making sure it would be a plumb-event for the city and Geauga County.

Even President Calvin Coolidge was apparently invited. In reply, the president wrote he would like to attend, although his executive duties didn’t make it possible. ■

Highlights of the long history

1927 One newspaper article recalls how traffic backed up at least a mile on the Route 6 hill approaching Chardon during the early days of the Maple Festival.



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As they did, a B&O Railroad watchman reported counting nearly 3,000 cars cross over what used to be a Water Street railroad crossing. The railroad and crossings have long since disappeared from Chardon, although the old railroad right-of-way is now makes up most of the Maple Highlands Trail.

In contrast to the numerous rides and concessions seen nowadays, the festival consisted of one make-shift sugar house where people could try free samples of syrup and maple stirs.

1928 This year's Maple Festival was the first time Maple Festival Queen's Contest was reported to be held, according to newspaper reports.

Among the contestants was Geraldine Young, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E.L. Young of Chardon, who was sponsored by the local I.O.O.F (Independent Order of Odd Fellows) lodge.

Entrants were from Geauga, Lake, Ashtabula, Trumbull, Summit, Cuyahoga and Portage counties.

The winner was from Portage County, while the second and third place winners also were from Portage County. Sadly, Chardon and Burton girls got as far as the semi-finals. A Chardon girl, Gladys Strong, was chosen "Miss Popularity," however.

Even though it was held April 13-14, a newspaper headline reveals the Maple Festival was again the victim of bad weather. It read: "Thousands Brave Wintry Gale in Front of Stand," mostly likely a grandstand.

Yet, another headline reported: Festival Attendance Records Smashed As 15,000 Elbow Way Thru Sugar House."

The huge attendance, 5,000 more than originally anticipated, was determined Saturday, April 14 at midnight on the close of

Maple Festival. This indicates a lot of people may have partied into the late hours.

1937 An evening storm destroyed a large wooden sugar house on Chardon Square that is 160 feet long the week before before the Maple Festival. The storm is described by a newspaper report as a "cyclone-like gale" with winds up to 52-miles per hour.

About 30 carpenters started rebuilding the sugar house on a Friday of the event and completed it on the Saturday during the festival.

1939 As word of the Maple Festival spreads nationally, Aunt Jemima came to the Festival where she demonstrated how to make and bake griddle cakes.

1943-45 No festival was held during World War II. An estimated 46,000 people attend in 1942 prior to the announcement of the Maple Festival's war-time cancellation.

1947 The Maple Festival resumes with 120,000 people attending a three-day festival, as maple syrup prices rises to \$10 a gallon. Along with resumption of traditional ceremonies, thousands of people turn out to see captured Japanese and German military equipment displayed by the U.S. Army

1959 Massachusetts Senator John F. Kennedy and his wife, Jackie, attend the Maple Festival as part of his presidential campaign.

1964 For the first time, an oil-fired evaporator is used in the Maple Festival sugar house. Wood was used prior to fuel the evaporator. Roy Grant was the sugar house operator

1975 High winter winds blow down a portion of a large tent assembled on Court Street for the Maple Festival.

1979 The festival is snowed out and rescheduled the following week.

1994 CBS TV network broadcasts live from Chardon Square when it featured the Maple Festival on "CBS This Morning" anchored by newsman Harry Smith. In other years, the festival was been featured in national newspapers like the New York Times, Christian Science Monitor and others.

1995 The Maple Festival almost comes to an end on Chardon Square after Chardon City Council votes not to allow it to be held there because it is unwilling to continuing paying for security by Chardon police.

The council felt it should stop using taxpayer money to help support the festival.

There was talk about moving it to the Geauga County Fairgrounds. After several public rallies and other discussions, however, the Maple Festival's Board of Directors agrees to pay for all costs, including security and restoration of the square caused by damage to it during the festival. ■



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Hewitt sets milestones for hometown Hilltoppers

By DANIEL SHERRIFF

Mitch Hewitt has laid the foundation of something special for his alma mater.

It was always important for the 1999 Chardon alum to come back after he graduated from college.

Little did he know he'd usher in a new era of football for the Chardon Hilltoppers by leading the team to back-to-back Division III state titles.

"It means a lot to me," he said. "There's something to be said about your hometown. It's a place I care a lot about and have raised my kids in. It's a city and community that has been very good to my family and I'm glad to give back in both the classroom aspect and the coaching aspect."

When Hewitt graduated, he left behind a lasting impression his senior year by helping lead the Hilltoppers to the 1998 Division II state title game against Lebanon. It was the first time Chardon made the state finals since the 1994 season.

Hewitt, 41, still has fond memories from that game despite Chardon losing 28-21 to the Warriors.

"Looking back on it now, it's neat to know that the same exact things I did as a player we implement now as coaches," he said. "The stuff that we all do today is all part of what we did when I was a kid."



A week after the Division II state title, the former Chardon fullback/linebacker visited Bowling Green State University and committed on the spot. He explained that it was the players there that let him know this is where he needed to be.

According to the 11-year coach, coaches come and go but it was the players he'd be

Chardon High grad and current Hilltopper Coach Mitch Hewitt has been an integral part of the team's recent successes – including back-to-back state championships in 2020 and 2021.

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stuck with. He said he had great experiences with his teammates and they are still some of his closest friends today.

During his time with the Falcons, Hewitt played under some notable coaches such as Urban Meyer, Dan Mullen, Greg Studrawa and Tim Beckman. He said it was invaluable learning from those coaches.

"There's no substitute for experience," Hewitt noted. "Ultimately I think that's the goal in life which is to expose yourself to people who have done that. According to Picasso, good artists copy and great artists steal. That's really what coaching is."

After his freshman season, Hewitt changed his major to education because he wanted to have the same impact on players that his coaches had on him.

He said two of the biggest influences on his coaching style were Meyer and former Hilltoppers' coach Bob Doyle.

He explained that Doyle's coaching style resembled that of a Godfather, he never raised his voice but always made his presence felt.

With Meyer, it was the exact opposite. Hewitt said the former Ohio State University coach was intense and always in his face. Having experienced two sides of the spectrum, he blended the two coaching styles together.

Upon graduating in 2003, Hewitt came home and became a volunteer coach with the linebackers. When he wasn't working as a

Continued on page 18



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volunteer coach, he was busy flipping houses. He wanted to wait for the right teaching spot.

That right position soon became available in 2008 when he was hired as a history teacher at his alma mater. Hewitt said it was a dream come true to teach at his old stomping grounds.

"I'm a hometown guy," he said. "I wouldn't rather be anywhere else. I'm glad it worked out and the job opened up when it did."

Upon beginning as a teacher at Chardon, Hewitt spent three years working as the defensive coordinator for West Geauga and then followed Dave Bors to Riverside when he was hired as the Beavers' head coach.

When the Hilltoppers' coaching job opened up in 2011, he put his name forward for consideration and soon was hired.

When he took over, Chardon's football program had seen better days after experiencing three straight losing seasons.

In his second year, there was a dramatic improvement with the Hilltoppers going 10-3 and advancing to the Elite Eight. Hewitt's changes to the program were already making a difference.

"We created a gridiron program which has allowed us to generate some funds and allowed us get nicer things for our program," he explained. "We really revamped the weight room which used to be the old shop class. We put a great deal of emphasis on that. We went out and got some great coaches, and retained some great coaches."

The following seasons saw the Hilltoppers make deep postseason pushes but fall short. Witnessing Western Reserve Conference foe Kenston win the Division III state title in 2018, sparked their desire to go the distance.

All it took was a pandemic-plagued 2020 season where Chardon finally won a state title by beating St. Francis DeSales.

The 2021 season proved that the 2020 state title was no fluke as the Hilltoppers became the first team in OHSAA history to go 16-0 and also eclipse the school record for the longest winning streak, paving the way for Chardon to repeat as Division III champs.

"Our work here isn't done," Hewitt explained. "The program is headed in a good direction. Our youth numbers are great. We've got a lot of kids working really hard. We have a lot of kids invested. It's a special place." ■

Chardon Lakes has played host to legends

By ALEC SAPOLIN

From the outside, Chardon Lakes Golf Club appears unassuming, lodged in on the side of Ravenna Road (Route 44) in Chardon. Upon further inspection, golf enthusiasts can witness the beauty and the history behind the course that was established nearly a century ago.

The course was originally built in 1931 featuring a nine-hole design by Bert Way, who also designed Firestone North and Mayfield Country Club. Nine additional holes were added in 1963 by Don Tinchler, making it a full 18-hole course.

The course has four tee locations for each hole, with blue being the easiest and black being the most difficult.

Prior to being established, the land was used as farmland until Mr. Way designed the course.

The name, Chardon Lakes, stemmed from a mix of the course neighboring Bass Lake, also in Chardon, and being the only course in the area.

Apart from the history, six-year general manager Bob Acquaviva said the club is a “public golf course with a private club atmosphere.”

“It’s quaint,” he said. “We have a modest clubhouse and we are best known for its [putting] greens.”

The course is also known for hosting two of the biggest names in the history of golf – Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus, the latter of whom holds the course’s stroke record at 67 when hitting from the black tees at the course.

While some have come close, Mr. Nicklaus’ record stands firm today.

“We have had many good players come through here and haven’t been able to tie or break [Mr. Nicklaus’ record],” Mr. Acquaviva said.

Both men came to the course in the early seventies as a part of American Cancer Society Benefits, hosted by Mr. Tinchler.

While Chardon Lakes hasn’t been known for hosting big events such as the cancer benefit in the last 20 years, Mr. Acquaviva said the course is known for the product offered for interested golfers.

“The course is in great shape,” he said. “My staff is very friendly and people just enjoy playing here. A lot of people return as pass-holders year-in and year-out because of how they’re treated and the shape of the course,” he said.

The shape of the putting greens on each hole is also a significant point that Mr. Acquaviva mentioned.

“It’s not to say that other golf courses in the area don’t have good greens,” he clarified. “It just has to do with the quality and the speed of our greens. The balls roll pretty true.”

To measure the “speed” of a green means how consistent the ball will roll in a given

amount of feet or distance– a standard practice for PGA level courses.

“A lot of the good players play here because of the speed and the trueness of the greens. The condition we strive for is that the greens promote a good, pure and consistent speed, true roll and break that golfers have come to appreciate here.”

Chardon Lakes also had an unexpected, but welcomed, aid in the form of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We’ve seen an uptick in play overall,” Mr. Acquaviva said. “We’ve had a lot of people that have never played before, those who thought about it a couple of times that started to come out more and more.”

“There’s your tech generation, where you have people on the computer and stuff more often than getting outside that have taken to

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Continued from page 19

golf like earlier generations,” he continued. “But, the last few years we’ve seen a lot of people getting outside because that was the only thing to do with COVID. So, hopefully it’s improving the whole game. Overall, new people coming out trying the sport are getting addicted to it.”

Mr. Acquaviva said he hopes that with 2022 being considered a more “normal” year, there will be an increase of the number of people visiting the course to play.

The course also provided a challenge based on the layout of the holes.

“The course layout and playability is conducive or favorable for all levels of players,” Mr. Acquaviva said. “But, the better players

especially appreciate the challenge from the back tees. The last three holes [holes 16-18] still offer a challenging finish for all players.”

Mr. Acquaviva said the popularity of the course is a testament to a consistent focus on making each golfer’s visit enjoyable – from its modest clubhouse to its course condition to interacting with the staff. ■



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Historic Geauga Theater sees new life

By BRIAN DOERING

The historic Geauga Theater on Chardon Square has a long and storied history since its inception some 83 years ago surviving many ups and downs which includes navigating through a world-wide pandemic.

After being closed for more than a year, the theater reopened in September 2021 under new management, which came courtesy of Thrive Performing & Visual Arts, selected by the city in December of 2020 for programming and management of the theater.

"I am hoping Chardon residents and the surrounding community will be excited for the return of the arts and the updates to the theater," said Thrive Managing Director Brett Boardwine at the time. "Of course, our programming and offerings will be different from what people have come to expect, and for some this will come with some hesitancy and questions. For others, these changes will be exciting and engaging, so we have a lot to offer and we hope people will come check us out."

Known for its artistic merit and commitment to excellence, Thrive Performing and Visual Arts immerses its participants in a one-of-a-kind experience and brings their brand to wider audi-



ences at its new home in the Geauga Theater.

Formerly known as the Geauga Cinema, the Art Deco theater built in 1939 ran successfully for 57 years as a theater until it closed in 1996 and two years later, owner Larry Dolan donated it to

the City of Chardon who leased it to the Geauga Lyric Theater Guild which was formed in 1954.

The facility was transformed into a traditional

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community theater with updates to the lobby and exterior which began in 2001 from a \$300,000 grant from the Geauga Department of Community and Economic Development and then in 2019, additional updates were made to the women's restroom, lobby, roof and electrical improvements utilizing a \$200,000 grant from the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission.

Unfortunately, in April of 2020 the Geauga Lyric Theater Guild was forced to shut down due to financial issues at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The City of Chardon then began the search for a new organization to take over management and programming of the theater forming an ad hoc theater committee who interviewed several groups expressing interest in using the space, but ultimately the committee unanimously recommended Thrive in November of 2020 as the new operator of the theater.

"First and foremost, it is truly humbling to be granted this opportunity to increase and extend opportunities and join a community so dedicated to the arts," said Mr. Boardwine. "I feel grateful to be in a position to create these opportunities. The arts are unique in their ability to bring people together and I look forward to growing the Thrive family in Chardon."

Thrive produces high-quality music, theater, film, dance, spoken-word and comedy in-house.

"We consider ourselves to be much more than a theater group," said Mr. Boardwine. "We also have a successful track record of partnering with local, regional, and professional artists, businesses and educational institutions."

Mr. Boardwine, 26, is one of the co-founders and was recently appointed as managing director to lead day-to-day activities for the



Brett Boardwine, managing director of Thrive Performing and Visual Arts.

organization in Chardon.

"The program that became Thrive was the result of my family's love of music and the performing arts," he said.

Thrive was birthed in the summer of 2015 when Mr. Boardwine's father, Jim, who as the theater director for the Streetsboro Theater and his creative team, joined forces with Streetsboro Theatre Booster Club President Michelle Madden, and decided to take the work being done with their unique high school and community performing arts programs to the next level.

The group has transitioned over the years from a school program to community program and now professional program.

Thrive's specialty is crafting and staging original adaptations of beloved classics, including original songs in multiple genres, a perfect blend of familiar and fresh putting an

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emphasis on originality and reinvention.

"You won't see Thrive licensing and producing run-of-the-mill shows that can be found at most community theaters," said Mr. Boardwine. "Theater-goers simply cannot find this anywhere else in northeast Ohio."

Under Thrive's direction, the theater underwent renovations and the process has been both equally stressful and exciting.

"To be cost effective and stretch our dollar as far as possible, we tackled most projects ourselves and we had support from a number of volunteers, friends and, of course, those who donated to our capital campaign in which we raised over \$10,000," he said "The city was absolutely wonderful throughout the process. We received financial and physical support on a number of items including new carpeting, the fire escape, stage floor, compliance issues, amongst other things."

Mr. Boardwine said Thrive has so much more it wants to accomplish with only limited resources.

"We are an ambitious group and have found ourselves needing to be reminded that we are running a marathon and not a sprint," he said. "More renovations can be expected as we continue to transform the use of the space."

Thrive's first themed show opened in September 2021 with a ribbon cutting ceremony and plenty of fanfare with "Back to the '80s," capturing the sights, sounds and spirit of America's most colorful decade.

After that, Mr. Boardwine said they hadn't performed live for an audience as a group in well over a year.

"It is gratifying and encouraging to know that we managed to move the organization forward even in the midst of a global pandemic; however, at the end of the day we are most excited to get back to doing what we do best, produce entertaining shows and performing live."

After being virtual last year, the group held its annual Art Knows No Boundaries variety show and fundraiser in February 2022.

The popular variety show lived up to its title as actors, comedians, musicians, vocalists, visual arts and others came together for an evening of spirited entertainment.

"Art Knows No Boundaries is an event to showcase talent of all kinds that does not need to adhere to a theme or script like other productions," said Mr. Boardwine. "We approach this show much more casually with the talent preparing and presenting acts for us to approve."

Mr. Boardwine said the annual fundraiser has been a tradition within Thrive that has been produced since before they officially became an organization.

"This was the eighth iteration of the event," he said. "Last year we produced a virtual rendition as to not break tradition and let it pass by. It is a wonderful way for our existing talent and new talent to show their skills without many limitations."

Mr. Boardwine said that this year's event went well as the theatre was able to garner

similar attendance for the years it was held in Streetsboro.

"Everyone seemed to have a great time with so much variety in the show," he said. "It was interesting hearing what was each patron's favorite part because it was rarely the same answer."

Mr. Boardwine said Thrive will be diving head first into the second half of their season and other events at the Geauga Theater.

In March, the theater will host a comedian, show a movie and finish with a full-blown musical revue: Thrive Loves Broadway.

In May, Thrive will stage an original musical adaptation of Cinderella featuring an

original script and original music written by Thrive personnel, including Mr. Boardwine.

"This will be the first musical we stage at the Geauga Theater," he said. "We are excited to show the community this side of Thrive and our wheelhouse is writing modern, original adaptations of public domain stories, this will be a truly magical, entertaining, and family friendly production."

Mr. Boardwine also said that Thrive will finish the season with Jukebox Jam in July featuring some 60 songs from the 1950s and 60s. The event will be held in conjunction with the Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce's Annual Classic Car & Bike Show. ■



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Canfield House owners Michael and Lisa Orlandi

Canfield House family continues rich tradition of hosting Chardon visitors

By DAVID GUSTAFSON

For nearly 200 years, the Canfield House has been a port in the storm for visitors and residents of this historic Geauga County community

Now a premier guest house owned and operated by Michael and Lisa Orlandi, the 2,000-square-foot home was built in 1824 by Norman Canfield, a veteran of the War of 1812 who served as Chardon's first justice of the peace.

Mr. Canfield and his wife, Susannah, were born and raised in Massachusetts, but came to Ohio in 1806 to start their life together. After serving with distinction in the war, Canfield returned to his family in Ohio and opened an inn on the same property where the Canfield House is now located.

The inn, a large, double-log house, was a

popular destination point for people passing through the area, according to historical records.

Mr. Canfield and his wife raised four children together – including a set of twins – but sadly both died young. Susannah passed away in 1821 at the age of 36. Norman died three years later at the age of 41, just 10 short months after completing the building of the house for his family.

Over the years, the property has served in a variety of functions, but remained an inn and hotel for much of the 1800s.

The Orlandi family purchased the property in 2008 and had early thoughts of utilizing a portion of the home as a guest house.

“Lisa is a great decorator, and she always liked the idea of returning the property to its original use,” explained Mr. Orlandi. “We always knew that was something we wanted to do.”



Both natives of Mayfield, Lisa's family moved to Chardon when she was in the ninth grade. She's a 1982 graduate of Chardon High.

The couple met in 1995 through a mutual friend and married in 1997. They purchased the original Canfield House property in 2008 as business offices.

Although they moved to nearby Thompson in 2013, the couple has always kept a close connection to the Chardon community and in 2019 began discussions with city lead-



ers about what it would take to transition the property to a guest house.

After years of working in various technology-related companies, the Orlandis were ready for a new adventure.

"I knew I did not need all of the office space we had at our property," said Mrs. Orlandi. "And it made a lot of sense to turn this beautiful home into a guest house."

With that in mind they set out to create something unique to the Chardon community.

"We really wanted to create, not just a home away from home, but an oasis away from home," she said. "A place that you want to come back to again and again. So that's what we did. We created a game room with a pool table, a small sitting room off of the living room, even a small business center for those that need to get work done."

Working with the city's zoning director as well as the city's law department, fire department, and a number of other divisions, Mr. Orlandi said it was uncharted territory for everyone, and they wanted to make sure we did things by the book.

"This home has an incredible history and we wanted to ensure it would continue to play an important role in the Chardon community," he said.

After months of work, the couple welcomed their first official guest in the fall of 2020 in the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It certainly affected the process of opening our doors," said Mr. Orlandi. "But we persisted and continued to move forward with our plans."

In the months since, guests have found their way to the Canfield House for a variety of reasons – not only as a vacation spot, but also as a place to recover after medical procedures

at the nearby UH Geauga Medical Center, for school- and sports-related events, and much more.

"Being centrally located in the United States, I'm always surprised at the number of people who make plans to stop here as a mid-way point in their travels," he said. "Regardless of the reason, we're always happy to welcome them to Chardon."

Mr. Orlandi said the location of the guest house in Chardon makes it a convenient place for visitors to stay.

"We're a short walk to the Square as well as a number of shops and area restaurants.

Having travelled extensively for her work, Mrs. Orlandi said they try to make the guest house as comfortable as possible for visitors.

"I had become accustomed to some small luxuries during my travels that I also wanted to incorporate into our guest's experience," she said. "As a result, our guests will find nice fluffy robes to snuggle up in at night with slippers, tooth brushes, tooth paste in addition to the standard sundries you will find at a hotel."

But the couple doesn't stop there.

"It was also important to us that we provide the guests with a special gift each time they visit," she explained. "So Michael also puts together a gift basket that usually includes a bottle of wine and other edible gifts he purchases locally."

With that kind of hospitality, it's no wonder guests continue to flock to Chardon to stay at the guest house.

"It's such a treat for us to play host to so many wonderful visitors," said Mr. Orlandi. "Every guest brings with them a new story and it has been an amazing opportunity to let them continue to tell the story of The Canfield House." ■

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Hundreds of century homes define tradition in City of Chardon

By JOHN HORTON

A farmer clad in well-worn overalls stands at the center of the black-and-white photo from a long-ago Geauga County Maple Festival on Chardon Square. Cows, logs and a sap-filled barrel on a wooden sled fill the scene from yesteryear.

But Andy Blackley's eyes dart past those sights and land elsewhere on the picture. "There," he said, pointing at a rooftop poking out in the background. "That's our house."

The observation wouldn't be noteworthy except for this: That's not where the house stands today.

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Photographs by Alana Clark

Leaded glass windows remain in Andy Blackley's home that date back to the late 1800s.

its walls, but few of those yarns include a roll down a hill and a change of address. That's exactly what happened to Mr. Blackley's home in 1968 when crews relocated it to make way for the Chardon Public Library.

Mr. Blackley and his wife, Debby, tell the tale like they're talking about a family member. Their deep connection to the home seems stronger with every word spoken.

A person doesn't just live in a century home, you see. They become part of it and its history.

"You feel a responsibility to the house," Mr. Blackley said. "You're its caretaker."

Caretakers like the Blackleys can be found throughout Chardon. Nearly 200 homes along the city's streets saw the 1800s. More than 300

homes – or nearly one out of four residences – qualify as Century Homes with building dates of 1922 or earlier with more homes being added every year.

The inventory of vintage homes help define Chardon, said Dan McCaskey, a Realtor with RE/MAX Traditions. His office sits along Main Street within a district listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

"History and tradition are important here," Mr. McCaskey said. "You see it and you feel it as soon as you come into town. The century homes play a big part in that."

The Blackley house along North Hambden

Street qualifies as one of the gems. The history of the home begins sometime in the late 1800s. When exactly? Well, that depends on where you look or who you ask.

County records list the construction year as 1898. The Blackleys put it two years earlier, in 1896. There's also a possibility it went up as early as 1889.

Whatever the year, there's no question as to who first turned the front door key. The home was built for C.W. Canfield, a prominent civic leader, auctioneer and businessman who served as a senior member of an insurance

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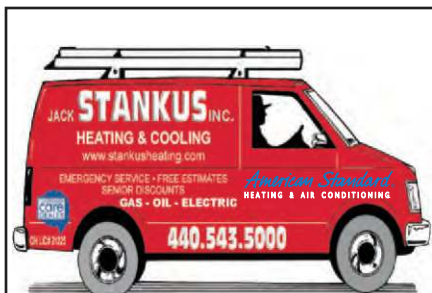
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Continued from page 27

agency that bore his name.

Mr. Canfield and his wife, Caroline (Fowler) Canfield, raised their only child – a son, Claude – while living in the home. They both claimed the address on Chardon Square until their deaths in the mid-1900s.

The residence then stayed in the family as Claude and his wife, Mamie, took the keys.

The home's time on East Park Street expired in the late 1960s as Geauga County Public Library purchased the property and readied construction plans. Mr. Blackley said the library offered to sell the building for \$1 to

anyone willing to move it.

Georgiana (Shaw) Richards took the deal. "She saved this house," Mrs. Blackley said.

Crews lifted the structure off its original foundation and relocated the 2,100-square-foot home on a snowy day in 1968. Pictures given to the Blackleys show the building being trucked across the frozen landscape to its new address on North Hambden Street.

Mrs. Richards moved the house to the lot where she grew up, picking a spot in the yard behind her childhood home. (That structure was torn down to make way for the new residence.)

The moving crew plopped the traveling house atop a waiting basement foundation



Andy Blackley modified the exterior of his late 1800s home from a Victorian look to a more Craftsman design.

built to accommodate the structure. So while the home is now about 120 years old, the basement it sits on is a mere youngster at 69.

That's one of the perks that attracted the Blackleys to the home when they bought it in 1985.

"Basically, it was a century home with some modern comforts," Mr. Blackley said.

That's a description that remains fitting today. The work of past artisans continues to highlight the home, with a forest of original woodwork branching out room by room, doors swinging on ornate hinges and leaded glass windows offering views of a changed world.

But there's new mixed in amongst the old to accommodate today's lifestyle and the realities of raising four children. The Blackleys added a master bedroom and bathroom, for instance, and absorbed a porch into a downstairs addition.

The couple made changes to reflect their tastes, too. They modified the exterior from a Victorian look to a more Craftsman design.

"It's different," Mr. Blackley said, "but it's appropriate to the era it was built."

The Blackleys said they approach every project and change with the idea of honoring the history of the residence. Their beautifully restored home has been featured on several century home tours in Chardon.

Both said they're smitten with the old-time charm of the town they call home. Mr. Blackley serves on Chardon City Council and is co-owner of an engineering firm. Mrs. Blackley is a lab assistant at Ursuline College.

"Living in Chardon means living with history, and we're proud our house is part of that," Mr. Blackley said. "There's a beauty to those old homes and a quality you just don't see today. That's what makes them so special." ■

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YOUR RURAL PROPERTY SPECIALIST

Amateur historian knows Chardon's past inside and out

By KRISTA S. KANO

Has Larry Joseph "Joe" Spear lived in Chardon his whole life? "Not yet," said the Chardon native and amateur historian.

Since he was born in Chardon in 1939, Mr. Spear has made Chardon his life, raising his four children in the city, working to improve life in the city and ensuring that everyone knows the history of Chardon.

After graduating from Chardon High School in 1957 and Baldwin-Wallace College in 1961, Mr. Spear started doing presentations on the history of Chardon in 1965.

"I was interested in Chardon's history and did a lot of research: a lot of reading the history books and talking with people in Chardon," Mr. Spear said.

After collecting old photographs from people around town, Mr. Spear developed an hour-long presentation that he shared annually at the elementary schools and middle school, churches, service organizations and adult evening classes.

"It's important for children to learn the history of their own town. The children were full of questions and after the presentation I would sit down and we'd have a discussion. They ask me questions and it's very rewarding to teach them," he said.

Mr. Spear continued to preserve Chardon's history in 1974 when he started the Chardon Historical Society with Anderson Allyn and Beatrice Van Gorder. They met at Village Hall once a month and 40 to 50 people would come to share photographs. The club eventually had to disband after 5 or 6 years because the meetings were moved to a room on the third floor of the high school.

"Older people didn't want to climb three flights of stairs," he said.

During that time, Mr. Spear found an old photograph of the bandstand on Chardon Square that was built in 1875. In 1927, it was taken down and the village built an octagon concrete bandstand in the 1970s.

Mr. Spear got together with Bob Majka and Stephen Gibson from the Chardon Square Association to recreate the original bandstand, soliciting funds and having an architect draw a new bandstand using the old pictures.

"I would guess because of the donation of labor, it was a \$50,000 project. A lot of people donated time and their expertise to build it and didn't charge for it," Mr. Spear recalled. The new bandstand that stands in Chardon Square was dedicated in 1981.

But Mr. Spear still wasn't done.

In 1990, he got together with Mr. Majka again and Ron Thompson to create the commemorative walkway from around the band-

stand to Short Court Street by selling bricks to people that would have their names engraved on them.

Even City Hall has evidence of Mr. Spear's dedication to the city, as the upstairs walls are lined with historical photographs he donated that he had originally given to the Chardon Library when Chardon celebrated the 150th anniversary of its founding.

For the city's bicentennial, Mr. Spear was a member of the Bicentennial Steering Committee and contributed the majority of the historical photographs for the Bicentennial

Pictorial History Book.

Now retired, Mr. Spear spends the majority of his time focusing on his two favorite hobbies, skiing and traveling and spends the winters in Florida. But for him, Chardon is still home.

"I like the small town atmosphere and Chardon is a really great town. It was voted the best little city to start a business and raise a family, and its true," he said. "It's small town American, and I've been blessed to live in this little town and raise my children here." ■

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More than meets the eye

A look inside Chardon's impressive fabric and upholstery shop

By **PARIS WOLFE**

Cindy White grew up in Tamale, Gold Coast (now Ghana), moved to Canada in 1977, then to Northeast Ohio five years later. That is when she met David White, who then lived in Chagrin Falls. Put simply, they fell in love, got married, and bought a house in Chardon.

In case you are wondering, yes, White, who grew up near the hot Sahara Desert, loves Chardon's snowfall.

When she had two small children, White wanted to start a sewing business. She grew up in the industry as her father owned the

largest fabric shop in Africa. And her mother sewed for visiting missionaries. Because of that, her mom insisted that White and her two sisters learn to sew ... and do it well.

In 1988 she brought her tailoring talents to Chardon residents. She eventually opened a small shop on Chardon Square, where her business grew. As upholstery and drapery became her focus, her business and fabric inventory exploded. Eventually, she moved Worthington Fabric & Drapery to Washington Street and Center Street in Chardon. That's where you'll find her today ... sitting behind the counter feeding fabric under a presser foot while the television spits out true crime and 700 Club.

Make no mistake, her choice of small-screen shows does not capture the breadth of her personality. White can be smart and sassy in seven languages, including English, Arabic, and several African dialects.

Like its owner, the single-story, grey building undersells its strength. Outside it hosts simple signage, including an ever-present promise of low prices and sale fabrics. Those who haven't walked through the door have no idea of the treasures inside. Fabriholics should plan at least an hour to visit because there's so much to see.

Much of the fabric represents current designers, including the latest colors and designs. It includes drapery, upholstery, vinyl, sheers/silks and indoor/outdoor. Because of her long-time business relationships, White scores special, limited-edition fabrics unavailable elsewhere.

White's daughter Rasha can be heard pounding away at reupholstery projects in a separate space. Rasha left her business job 10 years ago to help her mom when she was ill. When White recovered, Rasha stayed with the family business. Today the two women tackle an ever-changing array of couches, chairs and more lined up around the front room.

In 2021, White made 600 cushions for indoor and outdoor furniture and boats as well as pillows, slipcovers, drapes, and more. In 2022, she's on track to sew 200 cushions before March. And, the busy season hasn't even started.

If you haven't had them work for you, you may have seen the shop's upholstery work at Geauga Hospital, Redhawk Grill, Mangia Mangia, Quail Hollow Resort, Guido's Pizza, and other local restaurants and golf courses.

For more information visit cwfabric.com. ■

Cindy White, owner of Worthington Fabric and Drapery, located on Washington and Center streets in Chardon.

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BrewFest returns after two-year hiatus

By ANASTASIA NICHOLAS

Steve Turpin will tell you America is the greatest country with some of the friendliest people on earth.

As it turns out, the Chardon resident might know what he is talking about.

Born in the United Kingdom, outside of London, he found his way to Northeast Ohio via Canada. He holds citizenship in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States.

Having experienced those three countries, he said, there is none better than the USA. "There's just something about this country," Mr. Turpin said. "The friendliest, most outgoing people are here."

And while it may be the best, Mr. Turpin knows it can be better and he is doing his part to bring about a better world in his little corner of it.

After retiring nine years ago as an automation engineer, Mr. Turpin has been busy volunteering his time to promote his new found home in Chardon, heading special events for the city and giving his time to help causes that are dear to the city. But, for all his work, he said, he could not do it without the help of others.

"Whenever someone wants to give me credit, I say, 'Yeah, well there's this army behind me. It doesn't happen without a bunch of nice, hard-working people.'"

In 2010, a friend asked Mr. Turpin to join Chardon Tomorrow. From there, he took on managing new events in the city, including BrewFest, which is returning to Chardon in 2022 after a two-year hiatus caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year, the popular festival will return this year to Chardon Square on Aug. 13 to build on its legacy. At least 25 brewers from Ohio will provide samples of more than 50 beers.

"The community as a whole has been extremely supportive and helpful," BrewFest Manager and founder Steve Turpin said, adding that he appreciates the support of the police and fire departments and City Council.

Late last year, Mr. Turpin was contacted by Chardon Tomorrow, then sponsor of the event, to consider managing the event under new ownership. He secured a commitment from Great Lakes Race Timing, who has been conducting and running events in Chardon since 2015 and has been active in fundraising for Chardon Living Memorial Park.

"Working with Great Lakes Race Timing has been a dream," Mr. Turpin said. "We've got a really good team."

This year's event will be conducted essentially the same as in 2016-2019, Mr. Turpin said, which would entail assistance from city personnel for delivery and retrieval of fencing, posts, trash cans, rubber mats, traffic cones and barriers, cornhole game placement, underground electrical wiring and plumbing identification, and approval of a liquor permit.

The beer-focused event will feature a 50/50 raffle and food from a number of local vendors. It boasts all local sponsors and is made possible by about 80 to 100 volunteers.

The event is family-friendly and often a whole family arrives while only one partakes of the beer. Those who choose not to drink are permitted free admission. Register for the

event on [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).

"Because of pent-up demand, I can easily see a guest number of 1,500 people," Mr. Turpin said. "In 2017 we were right up against 1,400 so I do not see 1,500 being a stretch at all."

As a board member of Chardon Tomorrow, Mr. Turpin was instrumental in creating Chardon BrewFest in 2012, which featured live music, onsite food vendors and craft brews from Ohio breweries and neighboring states.

Since its inception, the daylong beer-tasting event has been held at the Eltech building on Seventh Avenue, but in 2016 the city granted approval to move the event to Chardon Square where it was held through 2019.

With goals of moving the event closer to the city, the event being held on Chardon Square was the dream of Chardon Tomorrow.

In 2014, a 5K called Run for Suds took place before the event for the first time and there may be plans for the run to return in coming years.

After 2022, the intention is for Mr. Turpin to step back and allow Great Lakes Race Timing to operate the event.

Officials clarified that Mr. Turpin and Great Lakes will act as partners on an operational level only, and Mr. Turpin will have no financial stake with GLRT assuming full event ownership.

When he is not busy promoting the city he has called home since 1990, Mr. Turpin and his wife, Ann, are on the go, having taken part in several backpacking trips to Australia, New Zealand, and Peru. Travel is a retirement goal for the couple, Mr. Turpin said. ■



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From Boiardi to Boyardee

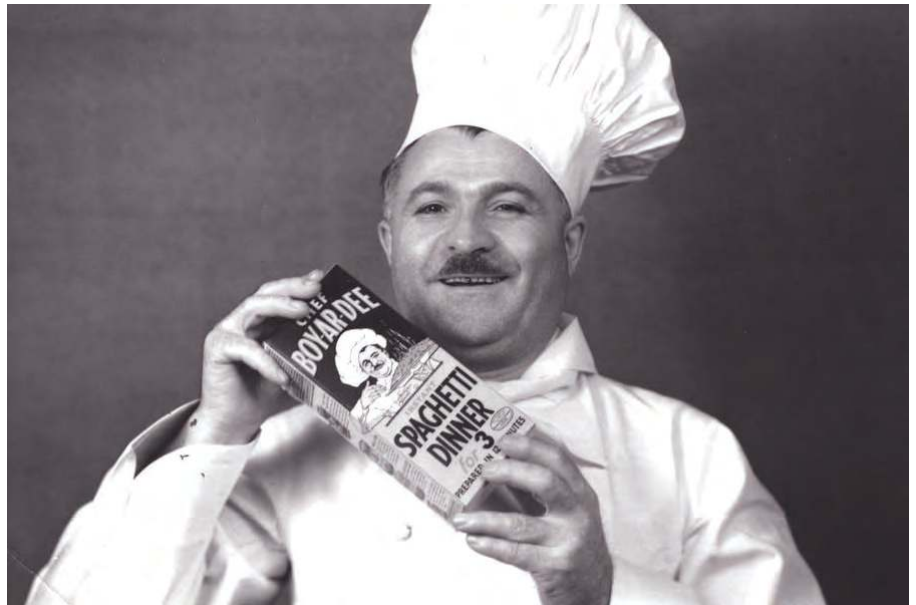
World-famous chef
with a familiar name is
laid to rest in Chardon

By **DAVID GUSTAFSON**

Unlike fictional product icons such as Mrs. Butterworth, Aunt Jemima, and Betty Crocker, whose recognizable names – and faces – were all invented for marketing purposes, Chef Boyardee, whose real name was Hector Boiardi, was an actual person who is laid to rest in Chardon's All Souls Cemetery.

Ettore Boiardi was born Oct. 22, 1897 in Piacenza, Italy and developed a love for cooking as a child. At the age of 11, he began working as an apprentice chef at the local "La Croce Bianca" restaurant, although his duties were confined to non-cooking odd jobs such as potato peeling and dealing with the trash.

In 1914 at the age of 16, after working in restaurants in Italy, France, and England, he made his way to the United States to join his



brother, Paolo, who was also a chef and already making a name for himself in the hotel kitchen scene in America.

With his brother's introductions, Boiardi found his way into the kitchens of multiple

Italian immigrant Chef Boyardee, whose real name was Ettore Boiardi, is buried in Chardon.

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hotels including the Plaza Hotel in New York City where he worked his way up to head chef. There, he supervised the preparation of the homecoming meal served by Woodrow Wilson at the White House for 2,000 returning World War I soldiers.

Around 1923, he was hired as the executive chef at the Hotel Winton in Cleveland, which brought him – and his recipes – to Ohio.

And according to all accounts, Boiardi was a hit in the local kitchen from the very start.

After grinding away for three years in Ohio, he and his wife, Helen, opened their own restaurant, Il Giardino d'Italia, whose name translates as "The Garden of Italy," at East 9th Street and Woodland Avenue in Cleveland. There, his spaghetti sauce was so popular that he soon began selling it in milk bottles for his customers to take home.

Later, he began soon producing the sauce in an adjacent building and expanded to include dry pasta and packets of cheese to go with the sauce. The make-it-at-home-yourself business model exploded with popularity.

In 1927, Boiardi met Maurice and Eva Weiner who were regular patrons of his restaurant and owners of a local self-service grocery store chain. The Weiners helped the Boiardi brothers develop a process for canning the food at scale and procured distribution across the United States through their grocery's wholesale partners.

To meet the growing demand, Boiardi and his brothers, Mario and Paul, built a small processing plant and launched the Chef Boiardi Food Company in 1928. The company's first product was a pre-packaged spaghetti dinner in a carton that included a canister of grated parmesan cheese, a box of spaghetti and a large jar of spaghetti sauce.

With American consumers having trouble pronouncing Boiardi's name, he decided to rename the brand Chef Boy-Ar-Dee, so it would be easier to pronounce by non-Italians.

"Everyone is proud of his own family name, but sacrifices are necessary for progress," he said.

The new brand, along with an aggressive regional cross-over marketing effort to multi-ethnic consumers proved to be a winning combination.

By the late 1930s, Boiardi was successfully selling canned spaghetti to A&P stores and reaching a national market.

The company was able to expand production even more during World War II, when they were forced to produce Army rations. Not only did their efforts assist with the American

war effort, but they created a built-in audience of consumers among returning soldiers.

For his efforts, Boiardi was awarded a Gold Star Order of Excellence from the United States War Department.

After struggling with cash flow, compounded by internal family struggles over the ownership and direction of the company in managing rapid internal growth, he sold his brand to American Home Foods, later International Home Foods, for about \$6 million.

Over the years, Boiardi appeared in numerous print advertisements and television com-

mercials for his brand in the 1940s through the 1960s. His last appearance in a television commercial promoting the brand aired in 1979.

Boiardi continued developing new Italian food products for the American market until his death in 1985, at which time the Chef Boyardee line was grossing \$500 million per year for International Home Foods.

After a lifetime of serving up his famous dishes, Boiardi died of natural causes on June 21, 1985, at age 87 in his home in Parma and was buried at All Souls Cemetery in Chardon. ■

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A number of outstanding scenic trails and parks are located in Chardon and the surrounding area. Managed by the Geauga Park District, the trails and parks provide area residents with miles of trails and acres of green space for a variety of outdoor activities.

Big Creek Park

9160 Robinson Road, Chardon Township

This 644-acre park is bisected south to north by the scenic Big Creek, creating a landscape of varied relief. Nine trails total 3.8 miles, plus a 2.8-mile mountain bike trail through the woods.

Recreation areas include a campground, Nature-based playground, activity field backstop, sand volleyball court and tetherball. And recently added features include a reservable lodge, a Nature-based playground, and a unique "tree house" camping opportunity.

Accessible by two separate entrances, Tupelo Pond/Bridle Trails in Big Creek Park adds an additional two trails totaling 2.9 miles. A section of the statewide Buckeye Trail also passes through Big Creek Park.

Most of this park is forested with rich beech-maple woods, carpeted with colorful



Big Creek Park in Chardon Township includes a popular 2.8-mile mountain bike trail.

wildflowers each spring. Numerous species of songbirds migrate from the tropics to nest in this mature forest, which also shelters many kinds of woodland animals among the trees.

The uplands are divided by small streams, exposing the glacial deposits and bedrock in their ravines. In the area where the valley of Big Creek narrows, hemlock trees line the cool steep slopes. Distinctive plant species are found on the clay slumps and among flood plain areas.

A certified Monarch Waystation butterfly garden is also located at the Meyer Center pergola. The species of plants in the garden bloom during every month of the summer and attract a variety of pollinators.



Whitlam Woods in nearby Hambden Township is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts.

Whitlam Woods

12500 Pearl Road, Hambden Township

This 187-acre park, part of which is leased from the Geauga County Commissioners, is bisected by deep ravines of two streams that flow into Big Creek. Three trails total 1.1 miles.

Hemlock trees provide year-round greenery in ravines surrounded by a mature beech-maple forest, which cloaks most of the park. Lush growths of spring wildflowers carpet the woods, and a variety of birds and animals can be found each season.

Along the woodland margins, dense thickets and grapevine tangles provide cover to a variety of wildlife, including Ruffed Grouse,



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deer, turkey and fox. An old field is now covered with a second-growth red maple woods, and soft mosses and club mosses cover the ground.

In the shrubby meadow at the front of the park, Eastern Towhees, Indigo Buntings and Goldfinches nest, and American Woodcocks return each spring to perform their aerial courtship flights.

Bass Lake Preserve

11445 Lakeview Road, Munson Township

This 606-acre park features the 160-acre Bass Lake, a treasured natural resource for many generations, and Spring Brook Sanctuary, a State Nature Preserve protecting Ohio's last known indigenous population of brook trout. Boating is allowed by permit; visit our

website to request a permit. There is not a trail here, but the view from a bench near Bass Lake Lodge shouldn't be missed.

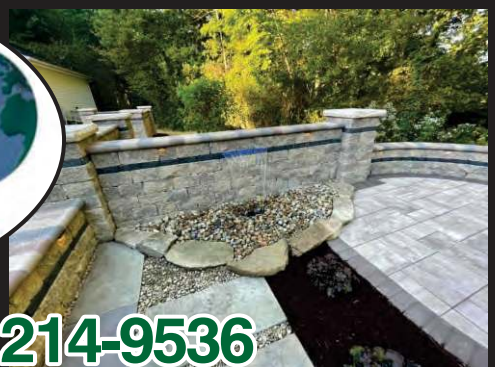
Bass Lake is a natural lake on the Chagrin River. The water level is maintained by a low dam on the Chagrin a short distance downstream of the outlet. The shallow lake lies in

Continued on page 38

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Continued from page 37

an ancient glacial flat and is largely surrounded by extensive wetlands. The sheltering wetlands have protected the lake from shoreline development, resulting in a multitude of exceptional ecological communities.

Today, parts of the lake remain as they must have appeared to early inhabitants of the region. About 90 percent of the shoreline is mantled in trees, shrubs and marsh vegetation.

Bass Lake is an important stopover during the great spring and fall migrations of waterfowl and neotropical songbirds. Bald Eagles nest in the lowland woods near the lake. Beavers ply the swampy tributaries. Native brook trout still swim in small streams that flow into the lake. Wild rice grows in the marshy margins.

The lakeshore forest is characterized by red maple, silver maple, swamp white oak, pin oak and American elm. It is home to wild turkey, Ruffed Grouse, White-tailed Deer, Masked Shrew and Northern Long-eared Bat – species that illustrate a mature, complex ecosystem with significant diversity. Rare nesting birds in Ohio such as the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Dark-eyed Junco also habitually appear here.

Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve

11620 Ravenna Road, Munson Township

This 101-acre park, donated in memory of



The Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve boasts three different hiking trails.

Walter C. Best, founder of the nearby Best Sand Corporation, who built its 30-acre lake because of his interest in waterfowl, is home to a rich diversity of plant and animal life. Three trails total 1.6 miles.

Animals such as woodchucks, chipmunks and squirrels are readily seen, while deer, raccoon, Red Fox, mink and voles leave signs of their secretive presence. Muskrat and beaver are often seen in and around Best Lake.



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More than 100 kinds of birds have been sighted here. While many are migratory visitors, the marshy meadows, thickets and wooded stream corridor harbor an outstanding variety of nesting songbirds. Nest boxes shelter bluebirds, tree swallows and wood ducks. The aerial courtship display of the male American Woodcock can be observed at dusk on early spring evenings.

In the water, aquatic plants provide a soggy “salad bar” for ducks and geese. Fish-eating birds such as grebes, mergansers, gulls, loons, terns and herons frequent. Keen observers may spot an osprey or bald eagle.

A patch of tall-grass prairie, using Ohio seed sources, offers an attractive nectar source for hummingbirds, many kinds of butterflies and other insects.

The Maple Highlands Trail

If you’re in Chardon, you can access this awesome trail from Mountain Run Station at 12601 Chardon Windsor Road or Big Creek Spur at 9280 Ravenna Road. Three sections of this trail, connected through the City of Chardon and the Village of Middlefield, stretch a total 21.1 miles across the entire county fea-

Continued on page 41



Three different sections of the Maple Highlands Trail connect the City of Chardon and Village of Middlefield.



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Continued from page 39

turing two award-winning covered bridges to the south. Three links to this trail add another 1.08 miles. Horseback riding is only permitted along the south section.

With more than 20 miles covered, a wide variety of natural habitats are home to varying ecosystems where wildlife encounters happens all the time.

Depending on which way you're headed, The Maple Highlands Trail travels through a variety of habitats, including woodlands, wetlands, farm fields and Amish neighborhoods.

Opportunities abound to spot Wild Turkeys and White-tail Deer, as well as turtles and snakes crossing the trail.

Observatory Park

10610 Clay Street, Montville Township

This 1,100-acre park encourages visitors to explore Nature from the ground to the galaxies. Six trails total 3.97 miles.

Numerous site features include a trail with interactive pods representing each trail proportionate to the sun, a trail with interactive stations representing ways to study weather, life-sized cornerstones of the Great Pyramid

of Giza, earthen mounds, henge stones and, via a woodland trail, access to the Nassau Astronomical Station.

Rare and endangered flora and fauna live and play here in the shadows of observatories.

Observatory Park protects the watershed of the Cuyahoga River, and holds a diversity of habitats, such as old growth forest, wetlands and open fields.

An important species that has been found is the endangered Red Swamp Current. An abundance of wildlife here includes the rare Five-lined Skink. ■

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Chardon area Realtors giving back to veterans

By **DAVID GUSTAFSON**

Veterans have long played an important role in the development and growth of communities in Northeast Ohio, including Chardon.

To help make the transition a bit easier for veterans of all ages, local real estate professionals Dave Fabig, Wayne Gould, and Traci Hissam have teamed up to give back a portion of their commissions to qualifying buyers and sellers.

The trio, which is affiliated with Howard Hanna Real Estate in Chardon, have joined a nationwide movement to give back to the men and women who so bravely have served in the military.

Under the program, the agents and their brokerage are giving back 20% of commission dollars to any veteran who buys – or sells – a home. Veterans receive the cash reward based on the actual sales price of the home being purchased or sold, which is paid after the settlement.

“There is no dollar limit on the amount of the cash reward,” said Mr. Fabig. “We are blessed to offer this program for all veterans who qualify. It’s a great opportunity for them, and one that I feel is under-promoted. It’s



Fabig



Hissam



Gould

this for a living,” said Mr. Fabig. “Helping people find and sell their homes is a special opportunity we don’t take for granted. How-

something every veteran should know about.”

When members of the military relocate, the services of a real estate professional who understands those unique needs of a veteran, explained Mr. Fabig. Having some extra money in their pocket after closing can make the sale easier, faster, and certainly less stressful.

Mr. Gould and Mr. Fabig both served in the Navy themselves, and Ms. Hissam has a heart for veterans and has supported various veteran organizations for the past 20 years.

Between the three of them, they have a combined 60 years worth of experience in real estate.

“We’re fortunate to do this for a living,” said Mr. Fabig. “Helping people find and sell their homes is a special opportunity we don’t take for granted. How-

ard Hanna has been very supportive in our efforts to get this program off the ground.”

For their efforts, the three professionals were recently awarded the nationally-recognized “Military Relocation Professional” certification from the National Association of Realtors.

Given to real estate professionals who specifically help veterans, the distinction is considered a testament to their commitment to help former and current military personnel find housing that makes best use of their benefits and “serves the unique needs of military life.”

Howard Hanna is a family-owned, full-service real estate services company committed to professionalism for all colleagues, clients, and communities. Their mission is to help navigate the complex real estate transaction; as well as introduce clients to services and opportunities some might not otherwise know about – including the veterans give-back program.

“I don’t think anyone will disagree that they deserve all the support we can give,” said Mr. Fabig. “Veterans have long played an important role to keep this country safe and secure and I’m proud to give something back when they need it the most.” ■



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