Mayor delivers State of the City report

City revenue has been steady over the past decade, and despite the increasing costs of doing business, “We try to manage year to year with what we have,” Mayor Cyril Kleem told residents during his annual State of the City report.

The Mayor spoke to about 120 residents at the monthly senior luncheon at St. Paul Lutheran Church on Feb. 11. He was accompanied by members of his administration, who answered questions and met with residents following his remarks.

This was the Mayor’s 13th annual State of the City report. He noted that there has been no increase in taxes during that time. He credited the 140 city employees for making services and programs possible.

“If you add up all the salaries and benefits for those workers for a year, it still falls a couple of million dollars short of the signing bonus for one professional football player,” he said.

Here is what the City accomplished in 2019 by department.

Public Safety

A new police chief, Dan Clark, was appointed last year. Under his leadership, the six-man bike patrol will continue to patrol during the spring and summer. Safe Passages, the drug interdiction program, remains a role model for similar programs in the area. Berea is one of the first cities to assign School Resource Officers to schools. The Community Engagement Unit took part in 220 events last year. They read to children, taught classes, supported Boys2Men, among other activities.

“They have been very active with BW,” the Mayor said, “and will be reaching out more to businesses.”

Fire Chief Mark Kaufhold, who has been with the Fire Department for 33 years, plans to retire in January 2021. The City has made some improvements to the fire station, installing new HVAC and redoing the chief’s office, for example.

Planning, Engineering & Development

The Browns lease was extended until 2039. The team is the City’s largest taxpayer, the Mayor said, contributing 25 percent of the total income taxes paid to the City.

Exterior Maintenance

Inspectors patrol the City on specified routes, looking for possible violations, such as peeling paint, uncut grass or trash cans left out. Last year, they made 410 visits and responded to 178 citizen complaints. The goal is “to maintain property values by making sure people take care of their properties,” the Mayor said. Very few cases end up in municipal court. “We try to resolve these issues,” he said.

Community Outreach

The Community Outreach office offers a wide range of services from the food pantry and senior programs to grass cutting and snow removal for seniors and disabled residents. Last year, the City received a $14,000 grant from the county to help support senior programming. This year, the City is eligible for a $20,000 county grant. The food pantry partners with the Cleveland Food Bank and feeds around 300 people last year. The Active Senior Network has 417 members and Senior Wheels provides transportation for 500 people – around 180 rides a week. Dinner to Your Door is delivered to 35-40 seniors every week. Community Outreach also fills backpacks with food for students who need help with meals over the weekends. It provides Christmas gifts and Easter baskets to the children of food pantry clients. Many of these projects are made possible by volunteers and donations.

Veterans Outreach Office

The Berea Veterans Outreach Office is the only one of its kind in northeast Ohio and the only city program in Ohio recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as a “We Honor Veterans” city. The office and its 23 volunteers served 1,200 veterans and their families in 2019, visiting homes, nursing homes and patients in hospice care. The Veterans Security Team works with police to help at city events and provide crossing guard services at Grindstone Elementary School.

Recreation Department

There are 1,600 seniors enrolled in Silver Sneakers and another 230 signed up via United Health Care’s Renew Option. Renewations were completed at Jason Malone Park and Tyler Field and new equipment was installed at the Recreation Center. The City is looking at long-range plans on the Rec Center, which is a converted skating rink and bowling alley dating from the 1950s. The Mayor said an architectural firm has been consulted. “We know we have to do something,” he said. “Either knock it down and build a new one or fix this up. It all depends on cost.”

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Our Facebook, Twitter & Instagram page name is: City of Berea, Ohio

www.cityofberea.org

Parks and Recreation Program Guide printed quarterly

The Parks and Recreation Program Guide will be print-ed on a quarterly basis starting in April. Some high-lighted programs offered by the Berea Recreation Cen-ter, Active Senior Network, Youth Sports Commission and Family and Youth Initiative can be found in the monthly Berean.

For more information about all the programs we offer, please visit the Berea Recreation Center or our website at www.cityofberea.org. Programs and events will also be posted on our social me-dia platforms.

Message from Mayor Cyril Kleem

For the 13th year in a row, Moody’s has awarded Berea an Aa2 credit rating. A city’s rating is equivalent to your consumer credit score, which may be given by one of the major credit rating ser-vices such as Equifax, Experian or TransUnion. It comes into play when you apply for a credit card or buy a house or car.

Moody’s Investors Services is the rating service for cities and other government entities. It’s our Equifax. An Aa2 rating is considered high prime. It means that Moody’s has looked at the City’s financial state-ments, assets, fund balances and projects and con-cluded that Berea is in excellent financial shape. The high rating makes Berea competitive for excellent bond and note interest rates.

Our general fund balance has hovered around $3 mil-lion for the past several years. When I took office, the balance was at $1 million, so we’ve tripled that.

Revenue has been consistent. The big revenue years were 2005-2006, but we’ve never gotten back to that level. We have done no additional borrowing, al-though that may change in the future. We try very hard to manage year to year with what we have.

That says it all. At the end of the day, we have the money in the bank to pay our bills.

In 2019, we went another year without raising taxes or water rates. I don’t know if we can continue to do that but we’ll certainly try. Sure, we have Equifax, but during some years, we don’t want to put a burden on tax payers, but at some point, water plant expenses keep rising. EPA mandates are issued al-most yearly and it costs money to implement those. The City is conducting a study to see how we can im-prove our distribution system, for example.

Bottom line, the City’s bottom line is very healthy. There have been no new taxes since I was hired and city employees have been laid off. Services have remained steady, and in many cases, have increased.

March 2020

Mayor Cyril Kleem delivers his annual State of the City Report.

The City is completing a water distribution study to see how to improve water service. The Mayor reminded residents that they can now pay their water bills online at the City’s web site.
Berea will collect hazardous waste, electronics
The City of Berea is collecting household hazardous waste, tires and unusable or outdated electronics from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Friday, April 10 and Saturday, April 11.
Material can be dropped off at the Berea Service Garage, 400 Barrett Road.
A Shred Fest will be from 9 a.m. to noon on April 11 only, or until the truck is filled.
This service is for Berea residents only. Proof of residency is required. It is not open to businesses.

These household materials will be accepted:
- Oil or solvent-based paint, sealers, primers or coatings (aerosol or liquid), varnishes, polyurethanes, shellacs, paint thinner, mineral spirits, turpentine, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, caustic household cleaners, pool chemicals, automotive fluids, motor oil, adhesives, roof tar, roadway sealer, kerosene, gasoline, lighter fluid.

These materials will NOT be accepted:
- Latex paint, all batteries, explosives, propane tanks, gun powder, ammunition, flares, medical waste, pharmaceuticals, medicine, radioactive waste (smoke detectors), mercury vapor light bulbs or appliances.
- Latex paint is comprised mainly of water. It can be solidified by placing cat litter in the can. Once the litter is absorbed, the can may be placed in the blue rubbish container for disposal.

These electronics will be accepted:
- Desktops, towers, laptops, computer monitors, keyboards and peripherals, printers, tablets, cell phones, game systems.

NO TELEVISIONS. Residents can put televisions out on the curb for the scheduled monthly bulk trash collection day.

For more information, call the Berea Service Garage at (440) 826-5853 or go to www.cityofberea.org.

Beware of coyotes
There has been an increase in coyote sightings lately, according to Berea’s animal control officer.
This is because it is currently coyote mating season, which runs from January through March. The Berea Police does not respond to coyote sighting calls, unless the animal is injured, and it does not keep track of the sightings.
Here are a few tips to keep your animals safe from coyotes:
1. Do not leave pet food and water out in your yard.
2. Make sure your trash cans are secured, and trash is not left out in bags.
3. Do not leave your animals outside unattended, especially in areas where coyotes have been sighted. Coyotes have the ability to dig under fences and get over smaller ones.
4. Never let your dog interact or play with coyotes.
For more information, visit the Ohio Department of Natural Resources web site - wildlife.ohio.dnr.gov.
MEET YOUR POLICE OFFICERS

The Officers you will meet in this monthly feature worked hard to get this opportunity to serve you. They continue to work every day to deserve the honor and responsibility you have given them.

Rev. Dr. Patrick F. Hunt is the husband of Linda Hunt to whom he has been married for 49 years and will enjoy their 50th anniversary in June 2020. They have three children (Tony, Bill and Terri), four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Chaplain Patrick Hunt

Since 2007, he has been the senior pastor at Heritage Congregational Church of Berea. Prior to this assignment, he spent time in many different ministries over the lifetime of his career. Beginning in 1969, he served churches in Chicago, Ill.; Davenport, Iowa; and Berea. While in Davenport, Rev. Hunt worked as a church planning missionary with the Mennonite Church, as a radio announcer with Radio Station WDLM, and received referrals from the North County Juvenile Court ministering with Youth for Christ International. After coming to Berea, his ministries included 26 years as an associate pastor at People’s Community Church serving alongside Rev. Leroy McCrary and a ministry director with Greater Cleveland Youth for Christ in Glenside, Cleveland’s westside communities, Olmsted Falls and Berea. Rev. Hunt spent 15 years, 1992 – 2007, in the capacity of the athletic director at Berea High School.

Educationally, Rev. Hunt studied in a pre-med major at Youngstown State University, pastoral studies and Christian Education at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, sociology at Liberty University in Virginia, and Master’s International University of Divinity where he was able to earn his doctorate in biblical studies.

Patrick Hunt is one of two chaplains currently serving the Berea Police Department. As a chaplain, the pastor regularly rides with police officers on a weeknight patrol as well as assisting officers to make death notifications and assisting with the Community Engagement Unit.

One of the hobbies that the pastor enjoys is genealogy research. He traced his family roots to the Rev. Robert Hunt, who was the first vicar of the Church of England serving Jamestown in 1607. He is, also, descended from Rev. Patrick Henry Thompson, who escaped the Underground Railroad just prior to the Civil War and founded the Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Uniontown, Pa. Pastor Hunt’s father, William Thomas Hunt, was a member of the Tuskegee Airmen during World War II.

City studies

trash hauling options

The City’s trash and recycling contract with Republic Services expires on Aug. 31 and Mayor Cyril Kleem has formed an ad hoc committee to study the options.

Service Director Paul Anzalone has put together a package that includes 16 options for contractors to bid on. All of the options include curbside recycling. Other variables include yard waste pickup, weekly bulk pickup, monthly bulk pickup and automated vs. manual pickup.

The Ad Hoc Committee met on Jan. 31 to discuss the options and City Council on Feb. 3 fast-tracked an ordinance authorizing the City to go ahead and request bids.

The City requested the extra time to allow all three trash companies in this area the opportunity to put together competitive bid packages. Expected to bid are Republic, Kibble and Rumpke.

Mayor Kleem said the City had looked at joining a consortium of other cities and at possibly piggybacking onto another community’s trash contract. Both of those plans proved unfeasible when contract expiration dates did not coincide.

Anzalone said the City paid Republic $1.04 million last year for trash and recycling pickup. He said that was average for this area.

The original five-year contract with Republic is dat ed 2012 with three options for one-year extensions.

The Ad Hoc Trash and Recycling Committee members are Mayor Kleem, Anzalone, City Council President Jeff Dettmer, Ward 2 Council Representative Chris McMains, Ward 3 Council Representative Jim Maxwell and Ward 4 Council Representative Kim Smith.

News from the Pews

(A monthly feature highlighting local churches. Send items to bereanewsletter@gmail.com by the 10th of the month)

Learning to affirm your faith story

“T’D Love to Tell the Story…But” is the topic for this special program hosted by St. Paul Lutheran Church and the Northeast Ohio Synod. It is part of the Cleveland-West Conference Gathering from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, March 14. The program will explore how affirming it is to share faith stories in everyday life. For more information, contact St. Paul’s, 276 Bagley Road, (440) 243-1144.

Rise in Love serves free meals every month

Rise in Love is offering free hot meals once a month at the Keller Center, St. Adalbert Catholic Church, 66 Adalbert St. The meals are served on the third Sunday of every month from 2-4 p.m. with doors opening at 1 p.m. The next meal is set for March 15.

Coast-to-coast bike trip is topic for lunch

Ron Isgro of Berea bicycled from Washington state to Maine last summer in memory of his late wife and to raise money for Southwest General Health Center’s hospice program. Isgro will recount his journey at a United Methodist Women’s luncheon at 12:30 p.m. on March 21. Also, mark your calendars for the spring garage sale April 22-24. The United Methodist Church of Berea is at 170 Seminary St.
Great Lakes, Great Beer, Great Stories
Join Michael Williams of the Great Lakes Brewing Co. on Monday, March 9 as he tells the history of GLBC and shares stories about the people, places and phenomena behind the local brewery. The program begins at 7 p.m.

Reservations are requested for all programs except weekly children’s storytimes. Visit cuyahogalibrary.org or call (440) 234-5475. Other programs in March at the Berea Branch are:

For Adults

Social Media and Isolation: Dr. Philip D. Manning, professor of Sociology from Cleveland State University, will explore the connection between social media and isolation in our communities. Part of the One Community Reads Series of programs. 7 p.m., Wednesday, March 4.

Plan Your Walt Disney World Vacation: Karli Keene, ET Family Travel Concierge, will teach you everything you need to know to book a Disney vacation that you will never forget. 7 p.m., Monday, March 16.

Pruning and Deadheading: When, Why and How? Interested in improving the appearance and increasing the vigor of your plants? The Cuyahoga County Master Gardeners will discuss appropriate time and proper technique for pruning and deadheading. Sponsored by the Friends of Berea Branch Library. 7 p.m., Monday, March 30.

For Teens and Teens

NASA Young Innovators Mechatronics (Grades 6-12): Are you a tinkerer? Want to learn how to put together a drone? Join our NASA engineers on an adventure to explore the multidisciplinary world of mechatronics! All supplies provided. Registration required. 2 p.m., Saturday, March 14.

STEAM Team: Make a Robotic Hand (Grades 4-8): Explore the way a hand moves, then build your own robotic hand and test how it functions. 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 17.

Teen Space (Grades 6-12): Join us for quick and easy crafts, fan activities, and mini service projects. Share your ideas of how to make the library a better place. 4 p.m., Wednesday, March 18.

Arduino Basics (Grades 6-12): Learn how to build and code electronic circuits using Arduino Uno in this introductory class. 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 18.

For Children

Weekly Children’s Storytimes run throughout the month of March. Call (440) 234-5475 or visit cuyahogalibrary.org for specific times and ages. Storytimes are available for children from birth through age five. Registration is not required for weekly storytimes.

Family Literacy Night (Grades K-3 with a caregiver): Join us for hands-on literacy activities designed by teacher candidates in the School of Education at Baldwin Wallace University. Activities will be geared for students in grades K-3. 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 3.

Young Explorers: Candy, Chemistry and Confections (Grades K-5 with a caregiver): Enjoy a high-energy session of music and movement using shakers, bean bags, scarves and more. Registration required. 3:30 p.m., Monday, March 9.

Music & Movement (Ages 19 months – 5 years with a caregiver): Enjoy a high-energy session of music and movement using shakers, bean bags, scarves and more. Registration required. 3:30 p.m., Monday, March 9.

Fabulous Fridays: Down on the Farm (Ages 2 to 5 with a caregiver): Stories, songs & crafts featuring farm animals. Stay after storytime to enjoy a variety of farm-inspired games, toys and activities. 10:30 a.m., Friday, March 20.
Sprague Road rezoning OK’d by Planning Commission

A request to rezone two vacant parcels of land on Sprague Road from residential single-family to multi-family residential was approved unanimously by Planning Commission on Feb. 6. The property owner, Van Kirkendall, plans to build a six-unit apartment complex on the site. The size of the combined parcels is less than ¼ acre. A study by Jay Stewart, the City’s zoning consultant, and an inspection by Michael McCourt, the City’s zoning administrator, found the change to be consistent with the Master Plan. The rezoning request was originally heard by Planning Commission in December but because notices of the request were not delivered by the Post Office to nearby homeowners before the meeting, City Council sent the issue back to Planning Commission. The matter now returns to City Council, which will make the final decision on the rezoning.

Nick Haschka appointed to Planning Commission

Former Ward 2 Councilman Nick Haschka has been appointed to the Planning Commission by Mayor Cyril Kleem. Haschka served on Council from 2008-2020. He also was a member of the Shade Tree Commission and the Southwest Suburban Council of Governments. He chaired the Berea Board of Adjustment and the Building Committee and founded and runs the Berea Car Show, which meets in the Municipal Park. Lot behind City Hall during the month. Haschka was a truck driver for 28 years and a union official for 16 years. He is trained in media- tion. Haschka replaces Planning Commission member Leon Dozier, who was elected to City Council in November. The appointment is for five years.

Southwest nursing care receives award

Southwest Community Health System, parent organization of Southwest General Health Center, has received the Pathway to Excellence designation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Southwest is one of only seven locations in Ohio to be awarded this designation. According to a news release, the Pathway designation is a global credential that highlights the hospital’s commitment to creating a healthy work environment for nurses with high job satisfaction, reduced turnover, improved safety and better patient outcomes.

LEGAL LINES

Information in Legal Lines is supplied by the City of Berea Law Department

Supreme Court sets legal tone for country

Is this the time of year that you think about the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS)? Or do you pay zero attention when the Court comes up? The Supreme Court Justices were attendees at the State of the Union address at the beginning of February, and they have been in the news with hearings scheduled at the end of March. In addition, due to recent events, Chief Justice Roberts has notably been in the news for his role in the Impeachment Trial of President Donald Trump.

As the decisions from the highest court in the land impact all citizenry, directly or indirectly, many may not know or understand the ins and outs of the Court. While there is much interesting information one can learn, the High Court may seem like quite the bore to some. However, for those interested in learning more about SCOTUS, their official website is at https://www.supremecourt.gov/. The rich history of the Court, its unique traditions that continue through today, information on oral arguments, opinions, visiting the court and much more can be found at that link.

If you prefer more editorialized information, check out https://www.scotusblog.com/ for daily blog updates, podcast, statistics, podcasts and other information. This blog has an editorial staff, as well as regular contributors who not only blog about SCOTUS hearings, but they present calendar information, and academic pieces.

Regardless of their political leanings, the nine Supreme Court Justices are the influential legal minds who have and will set the court of justice in our country for decades. “We have a complex system of government. You have to teach it to every generation.” — Sandra Day O’Connor, Supreme Court Justice

SCHOOL NEWS

District students win Elks essay contest

Four Berea-Midpark Middle School students have placed in the Berea Elks Lodge’s annual essay contest. The theme this year was “What Does Freedom of Speech Mean to Me?” The Lodge received more than 750 essays from students in grades 8-12 in school districts. Winners will move on to the northeast Ohio district contest.

Berea-Midpark Middle School winners were Lacey Milhoane, grade 6; Anna Cavanaugh, grade 8; Mackenzie Roth, grade 6; and Katherine Errington, grade 7.

Lunch Heroes help students pay for meals

The Berea City School District’s Lunch Heroes program allows donors to provide funds to offset students’ negative balances for school breakfasts and lunches. The funds will be applied at the end of the school year and dispersed evenly to each school unless donors have indicated the funds for a specific school. To donate, download a donation form from the district’s web site, www.berea.k12.oh.us and mail or drop off to Berea City School District, attn. Treasurer’s Department, 390 Fair St., Berea, 44017. Make checks payable to the Berea City School District. Donations can be made anonymously.

Reservations needed for Polaris’ Savour restaurant

Diners hoping to eat at Savour, Polaris Career Center’s student-run restaurant, should plan ahead. The popular eatery takes reservations weeks ahead of time. During March, Savour will be open March 3-6, March 17-20 and March 31-April 3. There is limited availability in April. Savour will be open April 21 and in May only during May 5-8. Call (440) 891-7685. Seatings are at 11:30 a.m., noon and 12:45 p.m.

Berea Arts Festival

Now accepting applications from artists

Deadline is April 18
Fee: $20

Download application form at www.bereaartsfest.org

For more information, call (440) 891-1102

The 30th Berea Arts Fest will be:
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 13
Front Street in Downtown Berea

Berea Historical Society

Old World Pasta & Meatball Dinner
4:30-7:30 p.m.
Saturday, March 28
Catered by Santo’s Restaurant
Tickets $12 adults, $10 seniors
6 children 6-12
Tickets at Mahler Museum, 118 E. Bridge St.
Or call (440) 665-1715

All proceeds support the Berea Historical Society’s programs preserving Berea history.

OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, March 29
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Berea Recreation Center
451 Front St., Berea

Free admission all day

This event will be a great time to get membership information, try-out equipment, learn about our adult, senior, and youth programs (including classes), ask general questions about the recreation center, rentals, insurance programs (Silver Sneakers, Renew Active, and PRIME), and our Berea Municipal Outdoor Pool!

We hope you will stop up and see all the Berea Recreation Center has to offer!
Bryan Knepper’s generation garage is filled with woodworking equipment and stacks of pine. He fashions those pieces of wood into decorative U.S. Flags designed specifically for American Flags Over Berea.

An Army veteran of the Vietnam War, Knepper said his unit (he served with Delta Company, 1st Bn 6th Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division) gets together every year for a reunion. “There’s a brotherhood there,” he said. Knepper recalls running incoming fire along Highway One outside Chu Lai. “It was chaotic,” he said. “I asked the lieutenant if I could handle the radio so at least I’d know what was going on.” From then on, Knepper was the RTO for his unit.

In a way, his wartime service led to the flag project. He has said he has always needed to keep busy. He retired from American Airlines in 2005 after 25 years and then worked another 19 years for Professional Travel. In between, he and a friend operated a snow plowing business, and Knepper also sold shoes at JC Penney. His wife, Linda, is a retired program director for the Lupus Foundation.

In his 40s, he met his birth father, who was a woodworker, creating doll houses. That interested him so he started making swings for his three daughters. He then started making out swings for the grandkids and said he has always needed to keep busy. He retired from American Airlines in 2005 after 25 years and then worked another 19 years for Professional Travel. In between, he and a friend operated a snow plowing business, and Knepper also sold shoes at JC Penney. His wife, Linda, is a retired program director for the Lupus Foundation.

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VETERANS’ CORNER

Veterans Outreach to staff information table
The Veterans Outreach Office will staff an information table at the Berea Recreation Center, 451 Front St., from 10 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, March 4 and Wednesday, March 18. Information will be available for veterans and their families.

Cole named Officer of the Year
Air Force Capt. Jason Cole, a 1996 graduate of Berea High School and son of Gary Cole of Berea, has been named Company Grade Officer of the Year for the Eastern Air Defense Sector and the New York Air National Guard’s 224th Air Defense Group. Cole was rated “exceptional in all areas.” He played a key role in planning and conducting air defense operations for the 2019 Super Bowl, United Nations General Assembly and presidential travel.

Lady vets invited to lunch
Medina County Women of the Military invites all women veterans to lunch at 11 a.m. March 14 at Cafe Ah Roma, 1661 Pearl Road, Brunswick. MCWM includes lady vets from all ranks and services. The group meets monthly at restaurants throughout Cuyahoga and Medina counties. Members live in a five-county Greater Cleveland area. For more information, check out the Medina County Women of the Military Facebook page or email mcwomilitary@yahoo.com.

Veterans Hall of Fame accepting nominations
The Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame is accepting nominations to recognize those vets who continue to serve communities through volunteerism, professional distinction, advocacy, public service or philanthropy. Nomination deadline is June 1. Guidelines, a sample nomination and more information are at dvs.ohio.gov.

VA announces banking program
The Veterans Administration is partnering with the Association of Military Banks of America to make it easier for vets to receive and manage VA benefits. The new Veterans Benefits Banking Program offers direct deposit as well as long-term financial advice. To enroll or find a bank that takes part in VBBP, go to benefits.va.gov/banking or veteransbenefitsbanking.org. Vets also can call (800) 827-1000.

Law/tax office offers free services for vets, safety forces
Mark Dent opened his tax and law offices on Feb. 1 in downtown Berea and will dedicate three days every quarter to community service. On March 12-14, Dent will prepare wills for veterans, police and firefighters at no charge. He also will provide strategies to avoid probate and reduce taxes.

Take a soldier home
Residents are invited to Take a Soldier Home – even if it’s just symbolic. Boxes of toy plastic soldiers have been placed at the Berea Recreation Center, Parkway Barber Shop, Cafe Ah Roma and St. Paul Lutheran Church with an invitation to take one in remembrance of those who are serving in our armed forces.

Veterans Outreach Office asks residents to place the soldier in a place that will remind you to pray for all the men and women who are serving and have served our country.

Businesses and organizations that would like to take a Soldier Home box can contact the Veterans Outreach Office at veterans@cityofberea.org or call (440) 973-4567.

Family donates gift card to veteran
Carol Keydash of Berea presented a $180 Eddie Bauer gift card to Richard “Doc” Schaedler, a Navy medical corpsman assigned to the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. Keydash said she turned in to Eddie Bauer an old coat that belonged to her brother-in-law, Delmer Glenn Savage of Maryland. Savage was a Marine in Vietnam in 1964. Eddie Bauer in turn sent her the gift certificate. She said she wanted the gift card to go to another veteran and asked Berea’s Veterans Outreach Office to select one of its veteran volunteers. Schaedler served as a medical corpsman from 1962-66.

VETERAN SPOTLIGHT

Army Veteran Dale Eckert of Berea served in Vietnam from July 1966 to July 1967. He was assigned to the 94th Maintenance Detachment out of Bien Hua but spent some time with the Fleet Marine Force providing field repair and maintenance for radio equipment for 175mm howitzers. That four-month duty took him to Dong Ha, about 16 miles from the North Vietnamese lines.

“I was all over that country,” Eckert said. After his discharge from the Army in 1968, Eckert worked for Lear-Siegler in Maple Heights, testing parts for military aircraft. He then worked for AT&T for 20 years followed by 20 years with Southwest General Health Center in the data department and as a unit secretary. Retired now, he volunteers at SouthWest.

He also volunteers with the Veterans Outreach Office, visiting nursing homes and veterans in hospice care with Chaplain Willie Springer. Eckert is the Veterans Office resident musician. He plays guitar at many of the veterans’ functions. Eckert also is a member of Veterans Security Team and works several days a week as a crossing guard at Grindstone Elementary School. He is active with his church, Christ the King in North Olmsted as an usher and with several ministries.

During the summer, you’ll see him staffing the concession stand at Jason Malone Park during baseball games. A native of Maple Heights, Eckert and his family moved to Berea in 1976. He and his wife have three adult sons.
**UPCOMING ACTIVE SENIOR NETWORK PROGRAMS & EVENTS**

**Monthly luncheon**
Tuesday, March 10 at noon
St. Paul Lutheran Church | Cost: $5
Registration and payment due: March 6
March roars in like a lion and spring is just around the corner. It’s time for another luncheon. Entertainment sponsored by Riverview Pointe Care Center.

**Estimated Senior Wheels pickup time:** 1:30 p.m.

**Spring’s Eve Celebration**
Wednesday, March 18
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Active Senior Network | Cost: $2
Registration required: March 12
Enjoy 2 slices of pepperoni pizza, pop, and chips followed by multiple games of Bingo, where non-cash prizes will be awarded. Event sponsored by Northwestern Healthcare Center.

**Estimated Senior Wheels pickup time:** 1 p.m.

**Pizza Bingo**
Wednesday, March 25
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Active Senior Network | Cost: $2
Registration required: March 19

**Estimated Senior Wheels pickup time:** 1 p.m.

**Brown Bag Buddies**
Wednesday, March 4
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Active Senior Network | Free
Bring your lunch and join your friends for an afternoon of games.

**Estimated Senior Wheels pickup time:** 1:30 p.m.

**April Fool’s Brown Bag Buddies**
Wednesday, April 1
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Active Senior Network | Free
Registration required

No foolin’ if you register for Brown Bag Buddies on April Fools you won’t get a trick you will get a sweet treat! Remember to pack a lunch.

**Estimated Senior Wheels pickup time:** 1:30 p.m.