

OPINION

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A tale of three superintendents

EDITORIAL

The three public school districts that lie within the *Sun Messenger* coverage area will all have new superintendents at the helm at some point this year. And to paraphrase Charles Dickens, "It has been the best of times and the worst of times" in the three districts as all three departing superintendents are doing so under remarkably different circumstances.

In the Mayfield Schools, superintendent Dr. Phillip Price has led the district for 13 years. He announced in October he will be retiring effective July 31. He has provided top-notch leadership to the district, and his peers have taken notice, as the Buckeye Association of School Administrators named him Ohio Superintendent of the Year last year. In each of the past three years, the district has received the Ohio Department of Education's highest rating of "Excellent with Distinction." In addition, Mayfield High School was recently named by *Newsweek Magazine* as one of the top high schools in the country.

Price is retiring after an illustrious 43-year career in education, including 33 years as a superintendent, to spend more time with his wife, children and grandchildren. To say Price is going out on top would be a huge understatement.

In the South Euclid-Lyndhurst Schools, superintendent William Zelei departed in November after a 13-year stint to accept a position with the Ohio Department of Education as associate superintendent for accountability and quality schools. He has been replaced on an interim basis by James Costanza and the firm Finding Leaders is working with the district to find a permanent superintendent, preferably by the end of the school year. Finding Leaders is also working with Mayfield in its superintendent search.

Like Price, Zelei has been bestowed with numerous honors and awards. In 2006, Zelei was honored by the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation as Ohio Superintendent of the Year. The district maintained an Effective rating on the state report card for 10 years before slipping to Continuous Improvement in the latest report card. SE-L was also named one of the best school districts in the nation in a 2007 *Business Week* article.

Zelei also was the subject of controversy when the SE-L school board approved a \$30,000 raise for him in 2009. District

residents were outraged over the decision.

Board members justified the raise by saying Zelei had accepted a \$30,000 salary reduction in 2005 as part of a retire-rehire deal and this was simply restoring his salary to the level it would have been at without the reduction. Zelei made a huge impact on the district during his tenure and he will not be easily replaced.

In the Richmond Heights Schools, the school board this week is likely to approve initiating termination proceedings against superintendent Linda Hardwick, whose two years at the helm have been marred by controversy. Hardwick has been on paid administrative leave since November, stemming from an investigation that she misappropriated district records and documents pertaining to the firing of a school clerk.

Hardwick came to the district highly regarded, having earned numerous awards such as being named a Fulbright Scholar by the U.S. Department of Education in 2005 and receiving the Legacy Award from the Metropolitan Cleveland Alliance of Black School Educators in 2003. Her biography on the district's website touts that she is a "much sought after lecturer and conference presenter."

Unfortunately, her illustrious background has not translated into a stellar reign in Richmond Heights. The ouster of boys' basketball coach Jason Popp due to allegations he used racist language against several players was easily the most visible controversy in the district, but there have been several other issues that have arisen over her tenure as well.

Her contract, like Price's, expires July 31 and will not be renewed. But while Price's departure is cause for sadness in Mayfield, Hardwick's ultimate departure will signal the dawning of a new day in Richmond Heights, an opportunity for the school board to get it right with a new superintendent. Let's hope they don't squander that chance again.

That's what we think. Share your opinion on this editorial or other topics by sending a letter to the editor to rjablonski@sun-news.com, faxing your letter to (216) 986-2340 or mailing it to Ray Jablonski, Sun News East Group editor, 5510 Cloverleaf Parkway, Cleveland, 44125. All letters must include the author's name, city and a daytime phone number for verification.

Sun
1/5/12

Police Blotter

SUN
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MAYFIELD VILLAGE

TRAFFIC STOP, INTERSTATE 271: A Kent man, 62, was arrested at 1:16 a.m. Dec. 30 for operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol. He was also cited for speeding and issued a misdemeanor citation for possession of marijuana.

DISTURBANCE, SOM CENTER

ROAD: Police received a report Dec. 31 from an employee at a dentist's office, who believed a fired employee was at the office banging on the doors and windows. The suspect had left before officers arrived but turned out to be a patient who forgot something.

FIREARM DISCHARGE, HICKORY HILL DRIVE:

A postal employee said while he was at a residence, someone came out of the home and shot a firearm in his direction. Officers learned the weapon was a paintball gun. Officers noticed the house and fence across the street had been hit several times with paint balls. Those involved were instructed to clean the paint off the house.

FIREWORKS COMPLAINT, BEECH HILL ROAD:

Just after midnight Jan. 1, officers responded to a home where a large fireworks display was being shot off. The residents were told to stop.

TRAFFIC STOP, INTERSTATE 271:

A Gates Mills boy, 16, was pulled over on the entrance ramp from Wilson Mills Road at 1 a.m. Jan. 1 when an officer saw him driving without headlights on. He was ar-

rested for operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol and underage possession of alcohol. He was returned to the station and released to his guardian. He will be filed on in juvenile court.

TRAFFIC STOP, SOM CENTER

ROAD: A driver was stopped for driving under suspension Jan. 1. The man fled in his vehicle before officers were able to issue him a citation. He was pulled over in Mayfield Heights and taken into custody. The Painesville man, 56, was charged with driving under suspension, fleeing and eluding, and felonious assault of a police officer after he punched an officer in the face.

PROPERTY DAMAGE, GLENVIEW

ROAD: A man said Dec. 31 his brother's girlfriend drove her vehicle onto his lawn, leaving a 10-foot long tire mark. He was told she drove on the lawn to get around another vehicle in the driveway.

See more Mayfield Village news at cleveland.com/hillcrest

Messen'

A QUAD CONSORTIUM: The Tri-City Consortium on Aging will officially be known as the Community Partnership on Aging.

The commission, whose mission has been to serve adults age 60 and over, by See **MESSEN', B6**

Mayfield classes help in relaxation efforts

Two stress-reducing classes sponsored by Mayfield Village Human Services will start Jan. 10 at the Mayfield Village Community Room, 6621 Wilson Mills Road.

A six-week class in Basic Yoga is offered for ages 16 and older, from 6:15-7:15 p.m. Tuesdays. Participants will learn guided relaxation and techniques to strengthen and stretch all major muscle groups. The fee is \$54.

Also for six weeks on Tuesdays, from 7:30-8:30 p.m., will be a Meditation class for adults. Simple warm-ups and breathing exercises for relaxation will be taught. Fee for the course is \$54.

Call (440) 919-2332 for information or to register.

MESSEN'

From B3

promoting independence, healthy lifestyle and community involvement through a variety of programs, has served those in Highland Heights, Lyndhurst and South Euclid since 1978.

This past year, the city of Mayfield Heights joined the consortium, which was great news but left a problem with the name.

With the addition, four cities were involved so something had to change. And, so with the new year and a new city in the mix, the consortium has done just that.

The Community Partnership on Aging will continue to offer a variety of programs for seniors including daily lunches Monday through Friday.

A full schedule of all the activities and their locations, which are spread throughout the four communities, can be found on its website at communitypartnershiponaging.org or in this newspaper's calendar.

CALENDAR

THURSDAY

National Council of Jewish Women Thriftique Showroom is open in a new location at 5055 Richmond Road, Bedford Heights. The theme is "Happy New Year." The hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. today, Jan. 6 and Jan. 7.

Gates Mills Library, 1491 Chagrin River Road. Toddler Storytime, 10 a.m. For birth through 35 months old. (440) 423-4808.

Mayfield Village-Human Services Department, Mayfield Village Community Room, 6621 Wilson Mills Road. Card games,

50 cents. 1-4 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday. (440) 919-2332.

Community Partnership on Aging, South Euclid Community Center (SE), 1370 Victory Drive, or DeJohn Community Center (MH), 6306 Marsol Drive, Mayfield Heights. Arthritis exercise (\$3), 9:30 a.m.; open studio, 10 a.m.; senior exercise (\$2), 10:30 a.m.; library, 11 a.m.; creative paper recycling, 1 p.m.

Business Alliance Chapter - Business Network International, Mayfield Village Civic Center, 6622 Wilson Mills Road.

Meeting time Thursdays is 7:30 a.m. Bring business cards. (440) 442-8030.

FRIDAY

Community Partnership on Aging, Highland Heights Community Center (HH), 5827 Highland Road, or DeJohn Community Center, 6306 Marsol Drive, Mayfield Heights. Arthritis exercise (\$2) (HH), 9:30 a.m.; woodcarving (HH), 9:30 a.m.; intermediate line dancing (fee) (MH), 9:30 a.m.; Wii bowling league (HH), 9:45 a.m.; Nimble Needlers (MH), 10 a.m.; Zumba

Gold (HH), 10:30 a.m.; advanced fitness (MH), 10:45 a.m.; gentle yoga (fee)(MH), noon; cards (HH), 12:30 p.m.; Wii bowling league (HH), 12:30 p.m.

SATURDAY

Lyndhurst Community Presbyterian Church, 5312 Mayfield Road. The Saturday Tutoring Program is in its third year with students in grades 1-6 assisted from 10 a.m. to noon. For students from South Euclid, Lyndhurst, Mayfield Heights and Richmond Heights.

See CALENDAR, B6

SUN 1/5/12

CALENDAR

From B4

SUNDAY

Jewish Genealogy Society will meet at Park Synagogue East, 27500 Shaker Blvd., Pepper Pike. The featured speaker at the 1:30 p.m. meeting will be Richard Spector, who will present "Doing Genealogy with DNA: How Useful is It?"

MONDAY

Mayfield Village-Human Services Department, Mayfield Village Community Room, 6621 Wilson Mills Road. Seniorcize/Chair exercise for adults of all ages who want to increase heart rate and help tone and strengthen muscles. Participants may attend classes on Mondays, Wednesdays and/or Fridays, 9-9:45 a.m. The fee for three classes per week is \$49; for two classes per week is \$39. Drop-in rate is \$4 per class. (440) 919-2332.

ALSO: Games, including mah jong, Scrabble and jigsaw puzzles, 1-4 p.m.

Rotary Club of Hillcrest Sunrise meets at 7 a.m. at Hilton Garden

Inn, 700 Beta Drive, Mayfield Village.

Rotary Club of Hillcrest meets at Hilton Garden Inn, 700 Beta Drive, Mayfield Village. Meeting at noon every Monday. (440) 386-8208.

Community Partnership on Aging, Lyndhurst Community Center, 1341 Parkview Drive. Mah Jong, 9 a.m.; stamp collecting, 10 a.m.; tai chi (fee), 10:30 a.m.; library, 11 a.m.; bridge, 12:30 p.m.; gi gong for balance (fee), 1 p.m.

Nicotine Anonymous South Euclid United Methodist Church, 1534 South Green Road, Room 18, South Euclid, 7:30-8:30 p.m. (216) 382-5769.

TUESDAY

Community Partnership on Aging Lyndhurst Community Center 1341 Parkview Drive. Arthritis exercise (\$2), 10:30 a.m.; library, 11 a.m.; pinochle and Scrabble, 12:30 p.m. (216) 650-4029.

Mayfield Village-Human Services Department, Mayfield Village Community Room, 6621 Wilson Mills Road. Card games, 50 cents. 1-4 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday. (440) 919-2332.

ALSO: Watercolor classes, 9 a.m. to noon. The fee for the four-week series is \$35, plus a \$5 non-resident fee (if applicable) and a \$3 material fee.

WEDNESDAY

Mayfield Village-Human Services Department, Mayfield Village Community Room, 6621 Wilson Mills Road. Tai Chi Fan for Health and Balance, 1-2 p.m. Students may also drop in at any time at a cost of \$8 per session. (440) 919-2332.

Gates Mills Library, 1491 Chagrin River Road. Family Storytime, 10 a.m. This is a program of rhymes, songs, fingerplays and stories for children not yet in kindergarten. (440) 423-4808.

Hillcrest Community Church, 5631 Ridgebury Blvd., Highland Heights. Bible study, 7 p.m. (440) 442-6230.

Business Network International, Mayfield Village Community Room, 6622 Wilson Mills Road. Meeting at 7:30 a.m. every Wednesday. RSVP: (440) 460-3838.

Community Partnership on Aging South Euclid Community Center (SE), 1370 Victory Drive, or DeJohn Community Center

(MH), 6306 Marsol Drive, Mayfield Heights. Advanced car making (MH)-call for information, 9 a.m.; Senior exercise (\$2) (SE), 10:30 a.m.; news and your views and library (SE), 11 a.m.; pinochle (MH), noon; bridge (SE), 12:30 p.m.; Clay Sculpting 101 (SE), 12:30 p.m.; Busy Hands Knitters (SE), 1 p.m.; poetry workshop (SE), 1 p.m.

RED CROSS

American Red Cross

Bloodmobiles:

- **Thursday:** Lyndhurst Community Presbyterian Church, 5312 Mayfield Road, 2-7 p.m.
- **Friday:** Mayfield Village, 6621 Wilson Mills Road, Lyndhurst, 1-7 p.m.

- **Monday:** Mayfield Library, 6080 Wilson Mills Road. 1-5 p.m.

- **Wednesday:** Materion Corp., 6070 Parkland Blvd., Mayfield 8-10:45 a.m.

Send items to "Calendar," c/o Sun News, 5510 Cloverleaf Pkwy., Cleveland 44125. Fax to (216) 986-2340. Deadline for listings is at noon the Friday before publication.