

MENTOR

WINTER 2020

SPECIAL EDITION

Community Newsletter for the Residents of Mentor



OUR HIDDEN HEROES

While the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect us all, we are grateful for the many heroes among us. We are familiar with our first responders who are on the front lines each and every day, along with healthcare professionals and teachers who deserve our gratitude. But, there have also been a number of hidden heroes that have stepped up and continued to quietly provide essential services to some of our most vulnerable citizens. This includes the employees and volunteers who have worked throughout the crisis to provide curbside meals at the Mentor Senior Center.

Senior Centers across the state closed in March in order to slow the spread of the disease, but with that decision came concern over the impact it would have on the Center's low-cost hot lunch program.

For many seniors this was the one hot nutritious meal they had all day. As we all know, the senior population is the most affected by the deadly disease and were told to isolate, refrain from gathering in crowds to lessen the risk of exposure. Even trips to the grocery store were discouraged, and in March delivery options were just beginning to become available, so continuing the meal program was critical.

City Manager Kenneth J. Filipiak quickly determined that it was essential to safely continue the lunch program and plans were put in place for seniors to be able to order meals and pick them up with minimal

contact curbside at the Senior Center. These meals filled the gap during the early stages of Ohio's shutdown and for the first few months, the 100 available daily meals sold out quickly.

In the beginning, Senior Center staff (with help from other agencies and staff from other area senior centers) took on the task of packaging and distributing the meals. A special thanks to the Lake County Senior Services Levy, the Senior Center Board, Little Annie's Hope Train, the United Way Emergency Food and Shelter Program, Howard's Jewelry Center, as well as a generous Senior Center member who donated money to help subsidize the cost for seniors.

As we learned more about the virus and transmission, healthy low-risk senior volunteers stepped up to help operate the program. In all 13 senior volunteers now help Kitchen Coordinator Terry Rogers, cook Molly Sebring, and Senior Center Director Renee Ochaya, prepare, package, and safely distribute the curbside meals. Volunteers wear masks and gloves and place meals in the car trunk to avoid contact.

"The volunteers are key to the program. We couldn't do it without them. Not only are they providing an essential service to fellow seniors, their help allows the cost for meals to remain affordable," says Ochaya.

Cost for meals remains at just \$4.50. All meals are made from scratch and are

designed to provide balanced nutrition. Typical menu items include chicken piccata, breaded pork chop, pasta with meat sauce, cabbage rolls and even roast turkey.

Demand has somewhat decreased over the last several month to about 60 meals per day now that Ohio's economy has reopened and grocery and delivery services firmly established, but the program remains in place and ready to serve.

When the Senior Center does finally reopen, Ochaya anticipates that normal pre-Covid programs will be phased in, and that the curbside meal program will continue for several months to accommodate those more-vulnerable seniors who are not quite ready to return.

To date, over 12,000 thousand Curbside Meals have been ordered and distributed. We extend our gratitude to these hidden heroes - the Senior Center staff and volunteers that continue to provide this essential service to area seniors.

The Weekly Curbside Meal menu is listed on the Senior Center's Facebook page as well as mentorseniorcenter.com. Meals may be ordered beginning the Thursday prior to the upcoming week. Lunch reservations are \$4.50 per meal and can be made online or by phone at 440-974-5725 and paid for with a credit card. Seniors are encouraged to order online if possible.

SPACE HEATER SAFETY

The cold weather is back and chances are good that those with space heaters have taken them out of storage and put them back to work for the season.

While a space heater can make a colder room more comfortable, they can also be dangerous if not used properly. Heating equipment is a leading cause of home fires in the United States. More than 65,000 home fires are attributed to heating equipment each year – and space heaters factor into 43% of those home heating fires.

The Mentor Fire Department wants you to remain safe this winter. Follow these safety tips if you plan to use a space heater.

- Never leave a space heater unattended. Turn it off when leaving the room and before going to sleep.
- Plug the space heater directly into a wall outlet. Never use a power strip or an extension cord. Space heaters draw a high amount of electricity that can overload a circuit and cause an extension cord to overheat and cause a fire.

- Keep your space heater flat on the floor, preferably on a smooth surface to avoid it accidentally tipping over. Many space heaters now come with a feature that will shut them off when tipped over. When selecting a space heater be sure to look for safety features that minimize the risk of fire.
- Avoid using a space heater near flammable objects. Place your space heater well away from curtains, pillows, blankets, paper, furniture or anything that may overheat and cause a fire.
- Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away from a space heater in use to avoid the unit being accidentally tipped over or burning a child or pet.

Space heaters are great for adding a little extra warmth on a cold night, but please follow the manufactures guidelines and use extreme caution if you plan on using a space heater this winter.



INSIDE

Shopping Local Makes Sense

Shovel Smarter

Winter Birding

Residential Lock Box Program

...and more!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

FACILITY CLOSURES

Due to the recent increase in COVID-19 cases in Lake County, the Mentor Ice Arena and the Wildwood Cultural Center will be closed to the public effective Monday, November 23, 2020 through the remainder of the calendar year. All activities and events at these facilities are cancelled. Refunds will be made available to those who have registered for an activity. A decision will be made at a later date on when these facilities will reopen. Additional information will be provided at that time. If you have an questions, contact the Mentor Parks & Recreation Department at (440) 974-5720 or email parks@cityofmentor.com.

CHRISTMAS TREE DROP-OFF SITES

Recycle your live Christmas tree at:

Edward R. Walsh Park

7221 Bellflower Road

Eleanor B. Garfield Park

7967 Mentor Avenue

Donald E. Krueger Park

7556 Chillicothe Road

Morton Park

9325 Rosemary Lane

Please remove all decorations and plastic bags. Drop-off locations will be open through January 31st.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Mentor City Offices will be closed on Christmas Day, New Years Day, and Martin Luther King Day.

HOLIDAY TRASH COLLECTION

If a holiday falls on a weekday, service will be conducted the day after your regular pick-up day. If the holiday falls on a weekend, your service will NOT be delayed. Applicable holidays are: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

NO PARKING DURING SNOW EMERGENCY

A Snow Emergency is defined as that time when there has been an accumulation of snow, sleet, hail, or ice on any streets or roads. No parking is permitted on any city street during a Snow Emergency. Snow Emergency alerts are posted on City of Mentor Facebook, Twitter, as well as through the Mentor App.

JUST DIAL 211

Lifeline is your resource for health and human services available in Mentor. Just call 211 or visit lclifeline.org to find out about available programs.

SUPPORT WILDWOOD

Built in 1908, the Wildwood Estate served as a summer home for Cleveland Industrialist John G. Oliver and his family. The City of Mentor purchased the property in 1980 to serve as a cultural center. Since then, Wildwood has become the centerpiece of arts and culture in our community. Music lessons, art instruction, cooking lessons, concerts, workshops, summer camps and holiday events fill the house with activity throughout the year.

Situated on 34-acres the grounds feature a community garden space,

hiking trails, a picnic area and lush flower gardens that enhance the beautiful grounds. With only minor renovations over the years, the Manor House is much the way it was when first constructed with original woodwork, fireplaces, windows and cabinetry.

You can help preserve this historic gem and promote cultural opportunities by becoming a member of Wildwood Cultural Center. A one-year membership is just \$15 and entitles you to a 10% discount on one Wildwood rental per calendar year, 10% discount on

Wildwood classes (off resident rate), free admission to the Fine Arts, Wine and Flea and the Holiday Craft Show, as well as newsletters throughout the year to keep members informed of future events and new classes being held at Wildwood.

If you are interested in joining or would like to give a membership as a gift, you may download the application at cityofmentor.com or call Wildwood at 440-974-5735.

SHOVEL SMART

Winter is on the way and that means snow. Many of us hire a plow company to clear the snow from the driveway while others still those who do it the old-fashioned way with a shovel. While shoveling is great exercise, it can also pose serious health risks like muscle strain, back issues and heart attacks. Approach shoveling as exercise and preparing for it as you would prepare for a workout at the gym can help to avoid injury while getting the job done.

Make sure to warm up. Stretching, brisk walking or marching in place will warm up your body and your muscles making it less likely to strain and injure them.

Be sure to take breaks. Shoveling is aerobic exercise so pace yourself. Also make sure you dress for the job. Moisture wicking clothes under warm layers will make sure you stay warm without

becoming overheated. Wearing gloves thick enough to prevent blisters from forming is also recommended.

The average shovelful of snow weighs approximately 20 pounds. Make sure to hold the shovel correctly to distribute the weight and if you must lift the shovel, do it with your knees bent and your back straight. A safer alternative to lifting the snow is to push it and then throw it forward off the drive or sidewalk.

Watch for warning signs of a serious issue. If you experience persistent shortness of breath, chest pain, weakness or excessive sweating – stop and get help immediately.

City of Mentor Ordinances require that homeowners and businesses keep their sidewalks clear of ice and snow. This helps protect pedestrians and school children who walk to school or a bus stop. If you have elderly neighbors consider lending a helping hand to keep our sidewalks clear.

WINTER BIRDING

Just because it's winter doesn't mean have to put away your binoculars and bird book. In fact, winter is an excellent time to go birding. Birds are easier to spot without leaves on the trees or vegetation in the underbrush as you take a winter bird walk. Besides our common year-round birds, there are some species that can only be seen during the winter in Northeast Ohio.

On your next visit to the Mentor Marsh or Mentor Lagoons Nature Preserve, be on the lookout for the Snowy Owl. A native of the Arctic, the bird is known to migrate south, especially when they have had a good nesting season and many young are hatched. Over the last several years there have been several sightings of this beautiful bird right here in Mentor. Other birds to look for include northern gulls and winter finches.

You don't even need leave your house to participate in winter birding. They will come to you as long as you provide some encouragement - like a feeder and a birdbath. During colder months when insects and seeds are

scarce, providing a reliable source of food and water will draw many of the overwintering birds right to your window. Stock your feeder with high-fat content food like sunflower seed, thistle and suet. Common overwintering natives include cardinals, blue jays, nuthatches, goldfinches and juncos.

The placement of your feeder will also make a difference in what birds will visit. Selected a protected location that offers a shield from wind and snow. Also, our feathered friends prefer nearby places to perch including branches of evergreen shrubs and trees.

Adding a heated plastic birdbath nearby will ensure that your feeder is a popular stop for your backyard birds. During Ohio cold snaps, unfrozen sources of water are hard to come by, so providing a reliable water source will draw birds of all kinds.

Be sure that you routinely clean your bird feeder before filling it with new seed. Birds can catch and spread disease when eating from a dirty

feeder. When the feeder is nearly empty, dump out whatever remains in the bottom then wash it with a mild dish soap in a bucket. You may want to purchase a small brush to make sure all traces of leftover seed and dirt come off. Thoroughly rinse and dry the feeder before refilling. Cleaning the birdbath also is a must to maintain a healthy bird population.

So whether you put on your parka, grab your binoculars and head out to the Lagoons...or watch your birdfeeder from the warmth of your living room, take time to enjoy the winter birds of Northeast Ohio.



LETTERS TO SANTA

We could all use a little Christmas magic this year so Mentor Recreation is offering direct access to the big guy at the North Pole. A special "Letters to Santa" mailbox is available in front of the Mentor Municipal Center for your little one's important mail – just drop them in the box, no stamp is necessary!

If you'd like to surprise your child with a reply – either a personal letter or a phone call from Santa himself – you may register (\$3 for a Santa letter or \$5 for a Santa phone call) online at cityofmentor.com or call the Mentor Recreation Department at 440-974-5720 through December 18th.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Due to continued uncertainty over the status of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's impossible to determine which events will be able to be held at the time of this printing. Events and activities will be posted to the City of Mentor website as that information becomes available.

Visit cityofmentor.com/events for the latest information.



CITY OF MENTOR

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	DIAL 911
CITY HALL MAIN SWITCHBOARD	255-1100
CITY COUNCIL OFFICE	974-5755
CODE ENFORCEMENT	974-5792
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT	974-5740
ENGINEERING/BUILDING	974-5785
FIRE NON-EMERGENCY	255-1212
ICE ARENA	974-5730
MUNICIPAL COURT	974-5744
PARKS & RECREATION	974-5720
POLICE NON-EMERGENCY	255-1234
PUBLIC INFORMATION	974-5794
PUBLIC WORKS	974-5781
RITA REGIONAL INCOME TAX AGENCY	526-0900
SENIOR CENTER	974-5725
WILDWOOD CULTURAL CENTER	974-5735



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SHOPPING LOCAL MAKES SENSE

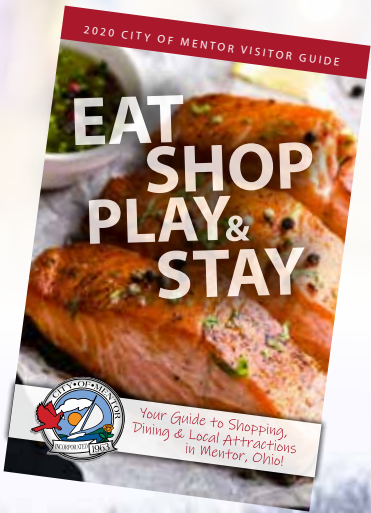
With the holidays nearly upon us, we're all checking gifts off our lists and looking for the best deals we can find. We'd like to remind you to please shop local when you can. Why? Because 68 cents of every dollar spent local, stays local. And, with the impact that the COVID pandemic has had on the global economy, it's more important than ever to support our local businesses.

It's no secret that shopping and dining is a big deal in the City of Mentor. Over 300 retailers and 170 eateries generate over \$1.6 billion in annual sales and employ over 9,500 people in our city.

The direct impact is evident, but the indirect benefit is that income tax dollars generated through these jobs help pay for safety forces, road construction, parks and facilities, senior programs, and many of the other things that make Mentor such a great place to live.

Municipal income taxes account for over 66% of the City's annual budget which is why shopping local makes so much sense. Although, you may save a few bucks when ordering gifts online, you support the local economy and help enhance the quality of life for everyone in our community every single time you purchase from a Mentor business.

Visit shopintmentor.com and download a copy of the newly updated Mentor Visitor Guide which contains information on shopping and dining options in our City.



LAKE COUNTY CHILI OPEN

It's the biggest winter golf event in Lake County, that helps the most people. Bundle up and get ready for fun. The Lake County Chili Open returns to Black Brook Golf Course on Saturday, January 23rd. This awesome event benefits the United Way of Lake County and includes nine snowy holes of golf, followed by a steaming hot bowl of chili. Register your foursome for winter fun by calling the Mentor Recreation Department at 440-974-5720. Tee times begin at 9 AM. Cost to participate is just \$20 and the deadline to register is January 20th.

LET IT SNOW!

The Old Farmer's Almanac is predicting "snowy, icy, and icky" conditions that will stretch well into March here in Northeast Ohio. But, whatever the forecast, our Public Works Snowplow crews are ready to keep Mentor roads passable and drivers safe.

The Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining approximately 500 lane miles of roadway, utilizing 15 – 20 plows for a routine snowfall, and as many as 40 trucks during a major snow event.

During a snowstorm, plows focus on the main roads to benefit the greatest number of motorists. Once the main roads are cleared and salted, side streets and cul-de-sacs are plowed.

During the winter months, motorists should give themselves extra time to reach their destination and slow down when snow is falling.

The Mentor Public Works Department takes pride in keeping our roads clear of ice and snow, please help them get the job done by slowing down and giving them room to operate.

Here's some more tips to get ready for winter driving:

- Do a pre-winter check-up on our car. Check the battery, wipers and tires to make sure they are winter road ready.
- Keep a winter emergency kit in your trunk with extra warm clothing, a flashlight, water, blankets that you can use if you get stranded
- Fill up your gas tank so you'll be prepared if you are on the road longer than expected.

If you are following a Mentor snowplow, please remember to keep a safe distance behind them. If you must pass, please use extreme caution. Blowing snow can cause reduced visibility and usually the unplowed road in front of the plow is worse than what is behind it.



WE LOVE OUR LAKE

Stormwater pollution is not just a summer concern; there can be issues in the winter in the forms of ice and snow. Snowmelt can carry pollutants into storm drains and streams just like the rain. We've all seen that black dirty water from the accumulated piles of snow in parking lots and along roadways; as it melts, that dirty water carries pollutants into our waterways and streams and eventually out to our drinking water recourse, Lake Erie. This contaminant filled water can be harmful to the wildlife too!

Why not do your part this winter season to protect our streams and Lake Erie from unnecessary stormwater pollution? The City of Mentor offers the following tips to managing ice and snow on driveways and walkways around your homes:

- **Shovel early and often if possible.**
The more snow you remove early, the less compacted and ice forming it becomes, resulting in less salt use to remove it.

- **Dispose of shoveled snow in vegetated areas.**
Never dump snow into the streets and streams. We want to decrease the amount of run off which carries pollutants to our streams. Planted areas or rain gardens are a good place for shoveled snow.
- **Use environmentally safe and effective alternatives to salt.**
Consider using a salt-free deicer to remove the ice from your walkways and driveways. When the temperature reaches 15°F, salt does not melt ice. Sand or gravel can be used for traction. Remember to remove the excess salt or other materials used from the pavement surfaces left behind once the snow melts. This will prevent the materials from washing into the nearby storm sewers and streams.
- Have a safe and fun winter, and thank you for your efforts in keeping our watershed and Lake Erie healthy! For more information, contact the Building and Engineering Department at (440) 974-5785.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

- continued*
- **POWER OUTAGE - WHO DO I CALL?**
If your power goes out call the Illuminating Company's Automated Outage Reporting Line at (888) 544-4877. Doing so will allow the Illuminating Company to restore service that much quicker. Please do NOT call 911. Only call 911 to report a crime in progress, or a fire, or if an ambulance is needed.
 - **ELECTRIC UTILITY CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**
There are many programs available to Ohio customers who are having difficulty paying their electric utility bills. First Energy has information on different programs which you may qualify for. Contact The Illuminating Company at (800) 589-3101 or visit cityofmentor.com and click on the Resident Info menu for details.
 - **GARFIELD SITE VIRTUAL TOURS**
Plan a virtual trip to James A. Garfield National Historic Site for your group! Ranger-led activities include a PowerPoint on Ohio's eight national parks, and a Google 360 tour through the Garfield home. Reservations are required. Call 440-255-8722
 - **CONSTRUCTION UPDATES**
Visit cityofmentor.com/construction for updates on current and upcoming road and stormwater projects. If you have questions regarding any project, please contact our Engineering Department at (440) 974-5785 or email building@cityofmentor.com.
 - **SENIOR SERVICES**
The Lake County Council on Aging of Ohio offers a wide array of programs for those 60 and older including information and referral, support services, nutrition services, case management, in-home safety, homemaker services, and much more. For additional information, call (440) 205-8111 or visit lcco.org.
 - **NO ICE IS SAFE ICE**
Mentor has 241 ponds, Lake Erie, and the Lagoons. They are beautiful in the winter but if you walk on the ice, one misstep can be the difference between enjoying the view and fighting for your life. Please stay off the ice this winter.
 - **HELP PREVENT SEWER BACKUPS**
Dispose of FOGs (fats, oils and greases) by allowing them cool and then placing in the trash instead of pouring down your sink. Hardened FOG can build up, causing unwanted clogs. Contact the Lake County Department of Utilities at (440) 350-2645 or visit lakecountyohio.gov/utilities for more info.
 - **KEEP FIRE HYDRANTS CLEAR**
Residents and business owners are urged to assist the Fire Department by keeping clear access to their fire hydrants during heavy snowfalls. Shovel around your hydrant and be ready if an emergency occurs.
 - **STAY UP TO DATE**
Download the City of Mentor App and receive timely alerts involving road closures and other emergencies.

Did you cut the cord? You can now watch the Mentor Channel live on ROKU, Apple and Android devices on our Mentor Channel App.

Download links available at cityofmentor.com/connect





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MENTOR

WINTER 2020 SPECIAL EDITION

WELCOME!

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Let us know and we'll send
you a New Resident Packet.
Call (440) 974-5794 or email
pubinfo@cityofmentor.com.

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8500 Civic Center Boulevard
Mentor, Ohio 44060
Ante Logarusic, Editor
(440) 974-5794
logarusic@cityofmentor.com
www.cityofmentor.com

/cityofmentor



"All free governments are managed by
the combined wisdom and folly of the
people."

-James A. Garfield



MENTOR CITY COUNCIL

FRONT (left to right): Janet A. Dowling – Councilperson-at-Large; Bruce R. Landeg - President of Council, Councilperson, Ward 3; Scott J. Marn – Councilperson -at-Large

REAR (left to right): Matthew E. Donovan - Vice-President of Council, Councilperson, Ward 2; Ray Kirchner – Councilperson-at-Large; Sean P. Blake – Councilperson, Ward 1; John A. Krueger – Councilperson, Ward 4

Council meetings are held the first and third Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Mentor Municipal Center. Meetings are open to the public via Webex - details available at cityofmentor.com. To reach a member of City Council call 440-974-5755 or email citycouncil@cityofmentor.com.

MEETING INFORMATION

Mentor City Council*
Mentor Municipal Center, 7 PM
December 1
January 5, 19
February 2, 16

Municipal Planning Commission*
Mentor Municipal Center, 7 PM
December 10
January 21
February 11

Board of Building & Zoning Appeals
Mentor Municipal Center, 7 PM
December 8
January 12
February 9

Tree Commission
Mentor Municipal Center, 4 PM
December 9
January 7
February 4

Community Arts Commission
Wildwood Cultural Center, 3 PM
December 3
January 7
February 4

**These meetings are broadcast live on Spectrum Channel 1024, U-Verse Channel 99, online at thementorchannel.com, YouTube, and our app.*

RESIDENTIAL LOCK BOX PROGRAM



Mentor residents who are disabled, older, have health issues, or those that live alone can provide safety forces easy access to their home by installing a lock box. The Residential Lock Box Program enables Fire/EMS/Police to gain access to your home in the event that you are unable to open the door. Mentor Emergency Dispatch (911) maintains a database of all lockbox owners and can inform fire, emergency medical technicians and police if they are able to access a lock box to gain entry. A special security key ensures that only public safety personnel will be able to gain access to the lock box and your home. Two models are available – one which mounts over the door and another which is bolted to your home.

The Mentor Fire Department will install the lock box for you for a one-time fee of \$35 cash or check (made payable to the City of Mentor).

Over 200 boxes have been installed since the program began. It's just another way Mentor Safety forces work to help keep residents safe. For additional information, call the Mentor Fire Department (440) 974-5768

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON SHOP IN MENTOR

With over 325 stores to choose from,
you'll find everything on your list.

You probably already know that Mentor is one of Northeast Ohio's leading shopping destinations. But, it may surprise you to learn that Mentor is also home to over 135 *independent* retailers and restaurants.

68¢ of every dollar spent local stays local.

Shop small. Shop local. Shop Mentor.

Learn more about what Mentor has to offer at www.shopinmentor.com

AVOID SENIOR SCAMS

Every year millions of seniors fall victim to scams. They are targeted because they are trusting, usually have financial savings, own a home, and have good credit. The elderly population is often reluctant to report being scammed for many reasons including not knowing how or who to contact, they are embarrassed, or think their relatives may take control of their finances away from them.

Senior fraud alone accounts for more than 3 billion dollars in losses each year. Some common senior fraud schemes include:

Romantic Scam – Criminals pose as possible romantic partners.

Tech Support Scam – Usually a call that alleges the victim has a computer problem.

IRS Scam – Criminals call posing as an IRS agent and demands immediate payments

Sweepstakes / Charity Scam – Call soliciting money for either claiming a prize or donating to a so-called charity.

Grandparent Scam – A call alleging that a grandchild is in trouble and needs money.

Home Repair Scam – Scammer shows up at the victim's home proposing to do home repairs.

Family / Caregiver – Relatives or those taking care of a senior take advantage of their trust.

Seniors can avoid scams by being cautious; questioning what is sent via mail or email; not answering calls from unrecognized numbers; making sure computer anti-virus software is installed and up to date, and never giving personal information over the phone or to door-to-door solicitors.

If you or someone you know has been a victim of elder fraud, contact the Mentor Police Department at 440-255-1234. When you call please have as many details about the scam as possible.

