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Ho Ho Ho...Santa is doing his Christmas shopping as all the stores are filled with holiday gifts. This Santa was the creation of Nina Zdravecky and was on display at the recent Copper Moon Arts at the Center Event by Parma Hospital Auxiliary. Photo by Joyce McFadden



Parma City School District students Amy Butterfield, Brittany Hertelendy and Justin Bacon accept the Grand Prize Scholarship award at the 2007 Cleveland Invention Convention.



Highland Drive kindergartener Conor Rafferty (5) and a Biker Scout (Mike Ziemer) from the 501<sup>st</sup> Legion of Star Wars enthusiasts enjoy resting on a bench outside the school at the Highland Drive Fall Festival. The Fall Festival is the primary fundraiser of the PSO and includes games, activities, dinner, and raffle prizes galore. Conor is wearing a t-shirt that is an additional fundraiser designed specifically for the festival. Photo by Kay Kerezy

## “Hey, I’ve got a great idea...” as students create inventions

April Miller, a ninth grader at Parma High School and Justin Molnar, a ninth grader at Normandy High School, were among a mixture of 10,000 students, school board members and school administrators gathered at the Greater Columbus Convention Center last month for the annual Ohio School Board Association Capital Conference and Trade Show.

The Parma students were there to talk about their experiences with the 2007 Cleveland Invention Convention, a middle school science program which motivates students to become problem solvers while having fun along the way.

Introduced to Ohio in 1997, the Invention Convention program differs from a typical science fair in that the focus is on the solution to everyday problems faced by everyday people.

April said the program “was a lot of fun and I’m glad I chose to take part in it. Several of my friends and I decided to sign up and we all invented some pretty neat things.”

The winner of a savings bond for her “E-Z Haul Tarp System,” April described her labor-saving device.

“It consisted of a standard blue tarp with wooden 2x4s sewn into the side.”

she said. “It also had handles that could be carried by either one or two people. The system makes life easier because when the user applies pressure to the 2x4, it helps them to effectively rake leaves without the wind blowing the tarp away or the rake snagging on the end of the tarp causing leaves to be swept underneath. Carrying the tarp, normally a two person job, turns into something that could easily be done by one person.”

Justin’s “Self-Extinguishing Candle” earned him a college scholarship award and respect from the judges for the sensibility of his idea. During an interview done for the PACT Network on Cox Channel 74, he talked about his idea.

“The wicks are staggered in layers so that when one layer burns down the wick, it will expose the other wick but will not ignite it,” said Justin. “Therefore, if you accidentally left a candle burning while you were away from home, it would pretty much extinguish itself.”

Making its Cleveland debut at the Great Lakes Science Center in 2007, the Invention Convention was well-supported by the Parma City School District. 53 awards were presented to Parma

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