



# The Highland HIGHLIGHT

ISSUE 1 ■ OCTOBER 2010

*Published by Highland Local Schools to promote our students, staff and programs.*

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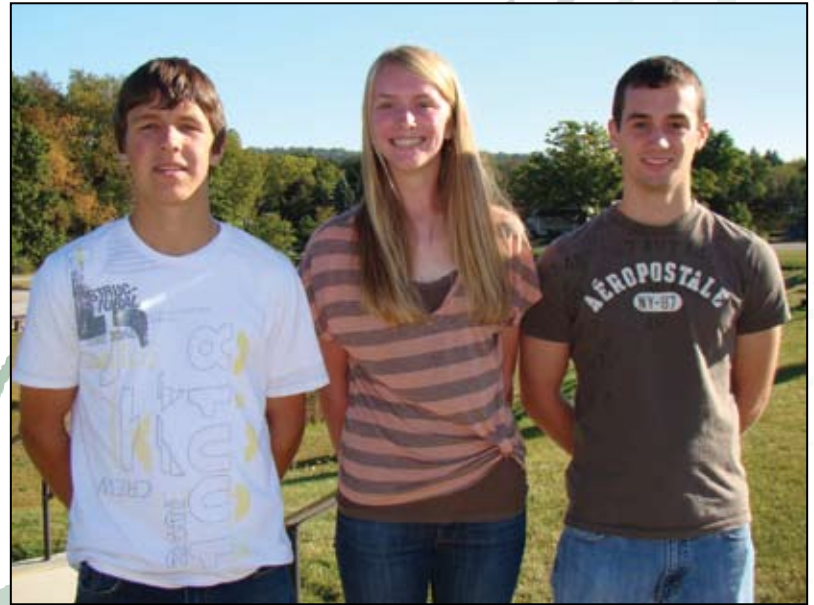
**MEET:** Liam Kerr, 8th Grade, Highland Middle

## Three chosen as National Merit Semifinalists

Congratulations to Highland High School seniors Scott Fink, Matthew Guzik and Ellen Wiencek who have qualified as semifinalists for the National Merit® Scholarship Program, an academic competition for recognition and scholarships that began in 1955.

High school students enter the National Merit Program by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®)—a test which serves as an initial screen of approximately 1.5 million entrants each year—and by meeting published program entry requirements.

Each September, about 16,000 students, or approximately one-third of the 50,000 high scorers, are notified that they have qualified as Semifinalists. To be considered for a National Merit® Scholarship, Semifinalists must advance to Finalist standing in the competition by meeting high academic standards and all other requirements outlined by the program. In February, some 15,000 Semifinalists will be notified that they have advanced to Finalist standing; and beginning in March, approximately 8,200 Finalists will be selected to receive a Merit Scholarship® award. **BEST OF LUCK TO SCOTT, MATTHEW and ELLEN!**



**Matthew Guzik, Ellen Wiencek and Scott Fink.**

## District rated **Excellent** for 11<sup>th</sup> year

Highland Local School District has again been rated “Excellent” by the Ohio Department of Education for the 2009-10 school year. This marks the 11th consecutive year that Highland has earned an Excellent rating.

“We have met 100 percent of our state indicators (26 out of 26), met Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) as a District for all of our subgroups, and our Performance Index Score is higher than it has ever been at 104.6,” stated Superintendent Catherine Aukerman.

The highest attainable number on the Performance Index is 120. This measure rewards the achievement of every student, not just those who score proficient or higher. Districts and schools earn points based on how well each student does on all tested subjects in grades 3-8 and the 10th grade Ohio Graduation Test, according to ODE.

“However, because we did not exceed expectations on the Value-Added component,” Aukerman continued, “we did not receive the Excellent with Distinction rating we have been awarded the past two years.”

The “Value-Added” measure reflects how much progress was made since the prior year. “In order to receive the Excellent with Distinction rating,

a district must not just meet, but they must exceed expected growth for their students over the past year. Our students’ achievement scores did not ‘exceed’ expectations,” she said.

While this is disappointing, it is not totally unexpected given the year that Highland faced last year. “Due to three failed levies, we reduced over 40 positions throughout the course of last year. When a district cuts classroom aides, tutors and teachers — everything that ‘adds value’ to a basic education — one would not expect achievement to exceed expectations or exceed the results that we were able to obtain with those supports and services in place.”

Mrs. Aukerman explained that Highland cannot be restored to the Excellent with Distinction rating until we have had two consecutive years of exceeding expectations on the Value-Added calculation. “The soonest that we could return to the Excellent with Distinction rating would be the 2012-13 school year,” she said.

Highland Schools also fared well on an individual basis. **Granger Elementary, Hinckley Elementary, Sharon Elementary, Highland Middle School and Highland High School** received Excellent ratings.

# MAKING HEADLINES...

## HIGHLAND AWARDED 'RACE TO THE TOP' FUNDS!

Highland Schools will receive \$100,000 from the State's "Race to the Top" stimulus dollars. Race to the Top is intended to accelerate the rate of academic improvement in order to prepare more students for college and careers. The funds will be distributed in equal payments of \$25,000 per year over the next four years. The funds must be used according to the U.S. Department of Education's guidelines and the Ohio Department of Education guidelines. Some of the funds, according to guidelines, will be used for implementing a longitudinal data system that tracks progress, professional development for teachers and administrators, developing and implementing high quality assessments and improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance. Following the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) guideline, a team of teachers and administrators will work on our District plan, which has to be submitted to the ODE by November 30, 2010.



*Sophie, Andreas and Marie*

## WELCOME TO HIGHLAND!

Highland Local School District and Highland High School welcome our three newest exchange students this year and they are all from Germany. Please extend a warm Highland welcome to:

- **Andreas Hey, who is residing with Terry & Barb Killeen;**
- **Sophie Huber, who is residing with Todd & Shelley Lutz; and**
- **Marie Winter, who is residing with Dale & Lynn VanDuesen**

## HMS SUPPLY SALE A HUGE SUCCESS

The PTO Supply Sale and Registration Days held at Highland Middle School on August 18-19 was a huge success with over 700 students attending. This event allowed students to stop by the school to pick up schedules, smile for their school photo, get locker and lock combinations and purchase school supplies. Thank you to the members of the HMS PTO for volunteering their time, as well as to Lori Bowers and Kathy Hoose for coordinating the event. The PTO hopes to make this an annual event.

## BUCKEYE BEST HEALTHY SCHOOL AWARD

Healthy students make better learners! The Buckeye Best Healthy Schools Awards recognize schools that demonstrate a commitment to the health and wellness of their students and staff through the establishment of programs and policies that foster such goals. These include improving nutrition, increasing physical activity and stopping or preventing the use of tobacco. Each fall, the Buckeye Best Healthy School Awards Program accepts applications and rank schools based upon their progress to achieve a "gold," "silver" or "bronze" standard in the areas of tobacco, nutrition and physical activity. The program is sponsored by the Ohio Department of Health in partnership with the American Cancer Society – Ohio Division as part of the Ohio Department of Health's Healthy Ohioans campaign.

2009-10 Awards for Highland Schools are as follows:

- **Highland High School — Silver**
- **Granger Elementary — Bronze**
- **Hinckley Elementary — Bronze**
- **Highland Middle — Recognition**
- **Sharon Elementary — Recognition**

## HIGHLAND BROTHERS RAISE FUNDS FOR ACS

Kudos to **C.J.** and **Caleb Haberny** who spent their time and energy this summer planning and hosting their very own "Relay For Life, Junior" event. **C.J.**, a freshman, and **Caleb**, a 7th grader, have been touched by cancer in their lives. With the support of their cousin, Taylor, and their grandmother, they obtained donations for prizes, games, food, etc., for the event. Their goal was to earn \$500 to donate to the American Cancer Society, but they exceeded that goal by raising \$700! These Highland siblings are role models for people of all ages!

## 100 HINCKLEY STUDENTS EARN FITNESS AWARDS

For the 2009-10 school year, Hinckley Elementary School had 100 of its 455 students earn fitness awards; 32 of those earned the Presidential Physical Fitness Award, while another 68 achieved National Fitness Award status. Hinckley set a goal of 100 fitness award winners for the school year and achieved it! Kudos to Hinckley students and staff! Parents, please remind your children about the importance of regular exercise. Congratulations to the following Presidential Physical Fitness Award Winners: Sonya Hartman, Taylor Levine, Madeline Lutzko, Amanda Orban, Blake Molnar, Makayla Grecenuk, Elizabeth Van Gelder, Brianne Jenkins, Samuel Zeleznik, Rob Guba, Victoria Pashkovskaya, Maria Votko, Hunter Theus, Cassidy Angus, Joseph Borsuk, Quade Mainzer, Eli Fragnoli, Olivia Sauer, Isabella Adams, Wyatt Chagin, Jack McGinty, Alexa Sposit, Alexandra Mazzaro, Cecilia Mainzer, Jackson Carriero, Abby Lewicki, Amelia Mainzer, Adam Borsuk, Frank Zamlan, Veronica Peterlin, Luke Vitko and Alicia Porvasnik.



# You are invited to hear an incredible story of courage and hope on October 11



Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for one of the most life-changing school programs in America. Her brother, Craig, was in the library that day and lost two close friends and narrowly escaped death himself. He was the only student at Columbine who was in the library, the worst of the killing zone, and also lost a sibling.

On Monday, October 11, Highland students in grades 5-8 will be spellbound as they watch a powerful video with audio footage of Rachel's life and the Columbine tragedy during a one-hour school presentation that motivates them to create positive change in the way they treat others. This is followed by an interactive 45-minute training session involving both adult and student leaders that shows how to sustain the momentum created by the assembly. The assembly creates the "want to" or desire for positive change. The training session teaches the "how to" and ensures that the positive impact will continue. These student leaders will be instrumental in developing the "Chain Links Club." The Chain Links Club provides the opportunity for Highland Schools to partner with Rachel's Challenge to continue the chain reaction of kindness and compassion in our schools and community. The main goal of the Chain Links Club is to help create a permanent cultural change in our schools.



The Highland community is then invited to hear this incredible story of hope from 7-8 p.m. at Highland Middle School (West Gym) as a speaker from Rachel's Challenge conducts a powerful session with parents, community leaders and interested students. This session is similar to the assembly program for middle school students and ends with a specific challenge to attendees.

Entertainers, politicians, sports celebrities, educators and even two Presidents of the United States have been impacted by Rachel's Challenge. However, students are the target audience and they have proven that they will respond with positive words, attitudes and actions.

The universal message of kindness and compassion told by Rachel's story has been heard by students in several other countries. Since its beginning in 2000, the number of requests to present Rachel's Challenge to students, parents and educators continues to increase. The Scott family and certified presenters have spoken to over 11 million people in live settings, and have reached millions more through television media outlets.

This event made possible through a grant from the Highland Foundation.  
[www.highlandfoundation.org](http://www.highlandfoundation.org).

**Please plan to attend this very moving event.**

## Parenting Skills Course: Building relationships, strengthening families

The Highland Local School District is offering a course in identifying and strengthening parent effectiveness techniques. With six weekly sessions, this course is intended for new parents, as well as for families with children, who are preschool and elementary school age. The course will offer a better understanding of parenting styles, increased knowledge of child development, improved communication strategies and effective problem solving techniques.

The program will be held from 6:30-8 p.m. on Monday, October 18, 25, November 1, 8, 15 and 22 at Granger Elementary School. Child care will be provided.

The Highland Local School District is committed to working with families in the community and partnering with parents to enhance the potential of all children in the school district. **This program is offered at no cost to its participants through an American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) grant.**

District families will have priority in registration; however, families of other districts are welcome based on available openings. To register, please call 330-239-1901, ext.1256.

# Highland

## Elementary students celebrate Summer Reading

Well over 200 students from Granger, Hinckley and Sharon elementary schools combined participated in the Highland Public Library Reading Program this summer and on September 10, those students celebrated their reading success with an ice cream party.

Highland's three elementary schools have continued to have the highest participation rate in Medina County! The District is very fortunate to have a library that supports our schools. A special thank you is extended to the staff at the Highland Public Library and to Mrs. Diane Dermody, manager, for creating opportunities for summer reading enjoyment.



Granger Principal Linda Collins serves up some whipped cream to Jack Hoynes.



Hinckley students Jaelyn Hooke and Isabella Adams.



Sharon students Armin Gasser and Justin Barr.



## Welcome to our new kindergarten students

A warm welcome to our new kindergarten students this school year! Kindergarten orientation was held August 25-26 and Highland's three elementary schools welcomed a total of 187 students with open arms. Teachers prepared a multitude of activities, including a scavenger hunt, to help get students acquainted with the school building, as well as with teachers and staff.

Pictured at left, Granger kindergarten student Tyler Steinbrink was excited to join the festivities during orientation with his mom, Christine (left), and his new teacher, Kim Dominak.

# Happenings



## Packed house for annual pig roast, home opener



Superintendent Cathy Aukerman with Bethany Vikowski, Caleb Rayner (aka the Hornet), Mikayla Sisti and Allison Bujorian.

### Hornets rip Rocky River, 35-18

The Highland Athletic Boosters held their 2nd Annual Pig Roast prior to the Highland home opener on August 27.

Thousands turned out to support the Boosters and the Highland Hornets, as well as other sports teams such as the girls soccer, girls basketball and boys wrestling.

The weather was picture perfect and everyone had a great time as they enjoyed the delicious food! Children also enjoyed added features this year – sno-cones and face painting!



#3 Trey Edwards, Team Captain, and #82 Ricky Esker

At 7:30 p.m., the Highland Hornets took to the field to face off against Rocky River. They fought back from a two-touchdown deficit to beat Rocky River, 35-18.

The Hornets rushed for 296 yards and passed for another 118.

Hornet standouts for the night included quarterback Jerry Scholle, Jacob Suran, Alex Koran, Ben Leohr, Chris Justik, David Christopher, Collin Butler and Jacob Justik.

**GO HORNETS!**



Dan Mirman, Jacob Nauman and Paul Alex show their Hornet pride!



Dynamic Duo: Jim Florian and Ginny Schneider of the Highland Athletic Boosters.

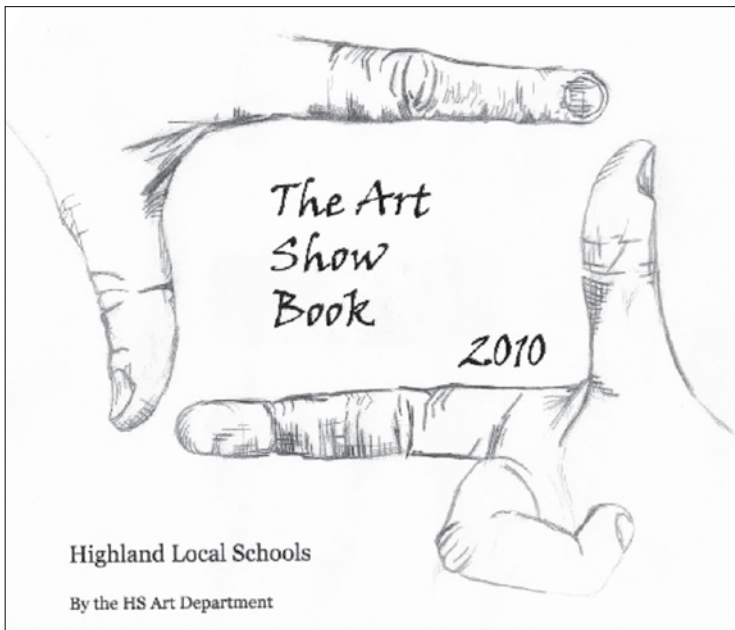


Highland Marching Band members Julia Holmberg and Sarah McCollough.



Middle School teacher Andy Gopp with McKenzie Koch and Jessica Clark, both members of the Highland girls soccer team.

# UP and COMING



Cover design by Gianni Chesnick

## Now Available

**THE ART SHOW BOOK | THE HS ART DEPARTMENT |  
ARTS & PHOTOGRAPHY | HIGHLAND LOCAL SCHOOLS**

This book contains 100 pages of photographs of the artwork from the 2010 Highland District Art Show held May 25, 2010. Please visit <http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/1381076>. Cost is \$24.94 for soft cover, \$34.95 for hardcover (dust jacket) and \$38.95 for hardcover (image wrap). For more information, please contact Bonnie Kubilus, high school art teacher, at 330-239-1901, ext. 5257.

## Sign up for Community Education Classes

The newest Highland Community Education Course Catalog offers many new classes for students as well as adults. After school enrichment classes in art and science are available as are a variety of Saturday enrichment classes including jazzercise, robotics, engineering, introduction to Spanish and Tae Kwon Do. Technology classes on Saturday include web design with animation, 2-D video game design and stop action animation.

Adult evening classes offer CPR, photography, babysitting, astrology, Reiki, yoga, Pilates and a variety of baking seminars. Technology classes include computer basics and the Internet, including what your kids maybe looking at on the web. College prep courses in understanding college options and writing college entrance essays are also available. Courses in ACT and SAT preparation will be offered in February and March.

Class sizes are limited. For questions or concerns, please contact Highland Community Education Director Mary Fran Kudla at 330-239-1901, ext. 4245, or visit the District web site to view the course catalog in its entirety at [www.highlandschools.org](http://www.highlandschools.org).

### OCTOBER 2010

- **OCTOBER 11:** Rachel's Challenge at 7-8 p.m., Middle School (West Gym).
- **OCTOBER 12:** All High School Choirs Concert at 7 p.m., High School Auditorium. Five choirs will perform concluding with all singers combined (nearly 200) on Mozart's "Laudate Pueri."
- **OCTOBER 13:** High School Conferences from 4-7:30 p.m.; Red Cross Bloodmobile from 1-7:30 p.m., Highland Middle (West Gym).
- **OCTOBER 15:** NEOEA Day / No School.
- **OCTOBER 20:** 7th Grade Choir performs with High School Chorale in concert at 7 p.m., High School Auditorium.

### NOVEMBER 2010

- **NOVEMBER 11-13:** High School mystery comedy production of "It's A Scream!" at 7 p.m., High School Black Box Studio Theater.
- **NOVEMBER 12:** Hinckley Elementary Veteran's Day Assembly at 9:30 a.m., Hinckley Gym.
- **NOVEMBER 13:** Highland Foundation Annual Dinner and Auction at 6 p.m., Weymouth Country Club.
- **NOVEMBER 15:** Board of Education meeting at 7 p.m., High School Media Center.
- **NOVEMBER 16:** 3rd & 4th Grade Concert "Go West" at 7 p.m. This is a musical celebration of America's Westward Expansion.
- **NOVEMBER 17:** National Honor Society Induction at 7 p.m., High School Auditorium.
- **NOVEMBER 18:** Middle School Conferences from 4-7:30 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 19:** Granger Elementary 1st Grade Thanksgiving Program at 1:30 p.m.
- **NOVEMBER 23:** Meet the Coaches Night at 7 p.m., High School.
- **NOVEMBER 25-29:** Thanksgiving Break / No School.

### DECEMBER 2010

- **DECEMBER 3:** Middle School Activity Night from 7-9 p.m.
- **DECEMBER 8:** Sharon Elementary Music Program at 7 p.m., Middle School.
- **DECEMBER 9-11:** High School musical production of "My Favorite Year" at 7 p.m., High School Auditorium.
- **DECEMBER 13:** Board of Education meeting at 7 p.m., Granger Elementary.
- **DECEMBER 14:** Combined Band and Orchestra Concert, 7 p.m., High School Auditorium.
- **DECEMBER 15:** Holiday Choir Concert at 7 p.m., High School Auditorium.
- **DECEMBER 16:** Choir Combination Concert at 7 p.m., High School Auditorium.
- **DECEMBER 17:** Sharon Elementary Holiday Assembly at 9:30 a.m.
- **DECEMBER 20-JANUARY 3:** Winter Break / No School.

### JANUARY 2011

- **JANUARY 4:** Students return.

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION

Dr. Norman Christopher, M.D. Mike Houska  
Robert Kelly Dan Petek

#### CONTACT US

Administration Office 330-239-1901  
3880 Ridge Road, Medina, Ohio 44256



# YOUR MONEY MATTERS\$

Published quarterly by the Financial Advisory Panel

## Members of the Financial Advisory Panel:

### Granger Township

- Bob Businger
- Richard Pace

### Hinckley Township

- Diane Dermody
- Rob Smykal

### Montville Township

- John Gresock
- Christopher Schaefer

### Sharon Township

- Dan Fousek
- Paul Kelly

### Administration

- Catherine Aukerman  
Superintendent
- Neil Barnes  
Treasurer

## Online

Each issue of "Your Money Matter\$" is posted on our District web site at [highlandschools.org](http://highlandschools.org), click on the "Administration" link then click on the "Treasurer" tab.

## Feedback

If you have comments to share, questions about Highland's finances or inquiries about District operations, please contact Dawn Marzano, Director of Communications, via email at [marzano@highlandschools.org](mailto:marzano@highlandschools.org), or 330-239-1901, ext. 1261. You can also contact any Financial Advisory Panel member. We will try to address all questions in the next edition.

# HIGHLAND TO RECEIVE FEDERAL FUNDS

The Highland Local School District recently received word of two new federal funding sources from which it will benefit.

## • EDUCATION JOBS FUND

On August 10, 2010, federal legislation passed that included provisions for an Education Jobs Fund aimed at saving or creating education jobs. Of the total \$10 billion earmarked by the federal government for this purpose, the State of Ohio is scheduled to receive approximately \$361 million. Highland Local Schools is currently projected to receive a total of \$227,660. Consistent with the State's school funding formula, because Highland Locals Schools is considered to be a high wealth district, the District will receive a less than proportionate share of this funding in relation to its student enrollment. The funds can be used to retain, rehire and/or hire school level employees such as teachers, principals, classroom aides, counselors, nurses, custodians, bus drivers and cafeteria workers. The funds must be expended by the District by September 30, 2012.

## • RACE TO THE TOP

On August 24, 2010, the United States Department of Education announced that the State of Ohio was selected as a recipient of Race to the Top Stimulus funding. As a participant in this educational reform initiative, Highland will receive installment payments from the Ohio Department of Education over the next four years totaling \$100,000. This money is not available for general operating expenses. This money is restricted to specific purposes stipulated by the United States Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Education. Funds may be used for implementing a longitudinal data system that tracks progress, professional development for teachers and administrators, developing and implementing high quality assessments and improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance.

Although the Education Jobs Fund and the Race to the Top dollars were additional revenue sources for Highland Schools, they will not postpone or delay the need for new operating dollars (i.e. levy).

Both of these federal grants represent a short-term infusion of funding to the District and do not represent a long-term solution to Highland's future financial stability.

As we have stated in the past, the State of Ohio is faced with an unprecedented budget shortfall that will certainly have a negative impact on districts across the state, including Highland.

**Highland maintains the LOWEST cost per pupil in the County. This statistic continues to demonstrate Highland's fiscal integrity.**

### MEDINA COUNTY EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL (FISCAL YEAR 2009)

Black River	\$9,379
Brunswick	\$8,943
Buckeye	\$9,246
Cloverleaf	\$9,163
<b>Highland</b>	<b>\$8,523</b>
Medina	\$10,428
Wadsworth	\$8,742
<b>State Average</b>	<b>\$10,254</b>

(FY 2010 data not currently available)

6TH ANNUAL BENEFIT  
DINNER-AUCTION

# Great Gifts

Saturday, November 13, 2010

Weymouth Country Club  
3946 Weymouth Road, Medina

Doors open at 6 p.m. Seating is limited.

Cost is \$75.00 per person. Adults only please.

Dinner & Cocktails

Entertainment

Silent Auction & Reverse Raffle

RSVP by November 1<sup>st</sup> to Carrie Milkovich at [mmilkov3@aol.com](mailto:mmilkov3@aol.com).

Also contact Carrie at 330.388.7949 with questions or  
for sponsorship information.

## THE HIGHLAND FOUNDATION

WWW.HIGHLANDFOUNDATION.ORG

Proceeds benefit The Highland Foundation. Tax-deductible \$30 per ticket.

### RESERVATION FORM

YES, WE WILL BE ATTENDING!

NAMES OF THOSE ATTENDING:

ENTREE#

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

TOTAL ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT ENCLOSED \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate entree # for each person attending:

1. Marinated Flank Steak with Whole Grain Mustard Demi Glaze
2. Panko Crusted Chicken with Bacon & Scallion Sauce
3. Salmon with Lemon Dill Sauce
4. Pasta Primavera in Alfredo Sauce

RSVP by November 1, 2010. Please make checks payable to:  
**The Highland Foundation**

Mail reservation form to: Carrie Milkovich  
655 Messina Drive, Wadsworth, OH 44281