

AVON

A LITTLE DETERMINATION GOES A LONG WAY

Local senior gives back to community, fellow seniors

By Kelsey Leyva
kleyva@morningjournal.com
[@MJ_KLeyva](https://twitter.com/MJ_KLeyva) on Twitter

An active Avon resident nearing 90 years of age wants to show others with special needs or unforeseen difficulties that anything is possible with a little determination.

Andy Monda, 89, of Avon, joined the Avon Senior Center, 36786 Detroit Road, roughly 14 to 15 years ago with the encouragement of his wife, Iris. A few years later, Monda said he was asked to serve as the health and welfare chairman and he has been doing so for the last 12 years.

Prior to joining the senior center, Monda suffered a heart attack in 1980 and wasn't able to return to work. He said after going through rehab he began to feel a bit depressed because he wasn't able to some of the activities he once could.

"It dawned on me somewhere along the line that there was a reason I survived," Monda said. "In trying to seek out that reason, I determined that maybe there was a job here that I had to do."

While acting as health and welfare chairman, Monda has helped start



KELSEY LEYVA — THE MORNING JOURNAL

Andy Monda, 89, of Avon, serves as the health and wellness chairman at the Avon Senior Center, 36786 Detroit Road. On Jan. 12, Monda sits with a few artifacts from the many projects he's help initiate at the center. Some of the projects include a lock box program and a walker/cane loaner program.

several initiatives that remain ongoing at the center and through other agencies in the county. One program

Monda assisted in establishing involves unwanted medication and needles. Monda said he was ap-

proached by several members at the senior center who were looking to dispose of unneeded or un-

wanted medication and needles. Through working with local healthcare professionals and law en-

forcement officers, boxes for pills and needles are in place at about 15 different police departments around the county, including Avon, Avon Lake, North Ridgeville, Sheffield Lake, Kipton, LaGrange and Wellington.

Transportation also proved to be an issue for senior citizens, Monda said. He and senior center coordinator Carmelina Barbera then worked together with city administrators to get a bus to be able to take seniors to places such as doctors' appointments and the grocery store.

Monda said the center now has three vehicles and four drivers for the transportation program.

Caryn Tovtin, the transportation coordinator, said 4,480 transports were made in 2016.

"We have done a fantastic job with transporting our people," Monda said, noting the center has vehicles that are handicap accessible.

Monda has also worked with local fire departments to ensure the needs of seniors and fire officials are met in the instance of an emergency. For example, Avon, Avon Lake, Sheffield

WAY » PAGE 3

You don't live in a nursing home...why Rehab in one?



Our Transitional Care Unit is specifically designed for the short term rehab or skilled nursing stay right after a hospitalization.

Choose St. Mary of the Woods. We'll get you back home where you belong.



ST. MARY
OF THE WOODS

Independent Living Assisted Living Skilled Nursing

Call Laura Eddy at
440-309-7229

to schedule a personal visit

35755 Detroit Road
Avon, OH 44011

www.stmaryofthewoods.com

AVON

BUILDING A LEGACY OF SERVICE

Lorain native now has deep roots in Avon

By **Richard Payerchin**
 rpayerchin@morningjournal.com
 @MJ_JournalRick on Twitter

An Avon resident has built a reputation for quiet service that started in business in Lorain and continued with his family and church in his adopted hometown.

Tom Czarney, 72, of Avon spent 35 years working at First Federal Savings of Lorain before retiring as bank vice president of operations. A father of four, he witnessed changes to the region around Lorain, the county's industrial powerhouse, and Avon, its neighboring town to the east.

"Tom was very willing to return to the community, expecting no recognition," said John Malanowski, president and chairman of First Federal Savings of Lorain.

"We have a lot of people in our community that readily volunteer their time, their efforts, their skills to help our nonprofit organizations and expect nothing in return," he said. "I believe it's one of those items that, it's our community and we all benefit by helping our community."

"Over the years I saw Tom do a lot of that," Malanowski said.



ERIC BONZAR — THE MORNING JOURNAL

Tom Czarney of Avon has built a reputation on quiet service.

Life in Lorain

Czarney grew up in cen-

tral Lorain and left for the Army in 1965, specializing in armor reconnaissance.

The war in Vietnam was growing, but Czarney credited his mother's prayers

for helping him land a 19-month assignment at 8th Infantry Division head-

quarters in Germany. Czarney went to work for American Ship Building

Co. in Lorain, where he followed in the footsteps of his

SERVICE » PAGE 3

BOB ALLEN INSURANCE AGENCY, INC
 Since 1952

1st Agency in Lorain County to offer Insurance

Mary Ellen Says...
 "Be sure to include Rental Reimbursement coverage on your Policy."

"Don't Wind Up Like This"

Hastings Mutual, StateAuto Insurance Companies, Trusted Choice, BBB ACCREDITED BUSINESS, PROGRESSIVE, TRAVELERS Insurance, In-synch, Safeco Insurance.

933-5223 33399 Walker Rd. Suite B, Avon Lake

Bill BAKERS
 15 East Ave., Elyria
 "Serving Elyria Since 1950"

WE SERVICE & REPAIR MAJOR APPLIANCES, LARGE SCREEN TVs

WE SELL PARTS OVER THE COUNTER

Reconditioned Appliances great Savings on Washers, Dryers, Refrigerators & Ranges

322-2325
 Lorain 245-3420
 www.billbakersinc.com

BILL BAKER'S
 DEPOT STREET
 EAST AVE. Fifth Third Bank
 BROAD STREET

Jan Jewelers
 "Sensational Jewelry • Beautifully Priced"

CITIZEN, Stackable expressions, The Dancing Diamond

Beautiful Estate Jewelry
 We now have 100's of like new pre-owned estate jewelry pieces at less than wholesale prices!

We Buy GOLD

Phone: (440) 933-3159
 In "The Landings" 445 Avon Belden Road, Suite B-2 Avon lake, OH 44012

Store Hours
 Mon, Tue, Fri 11 am - 6pm
 Thurs 12 pm - 7 pm
 Closed Wed, Sat, Sun

Avon Oaks

Day Care Center Stands Up To Mother Nature!

Despite treacherous conditions, the Avon Oaks Acorn Childcare Center remained open.

"Due to staff dedication, the Child care Center never closes."

A child care center for infants, toddlers and preschool children.
 Avon Oaks Acorn Childcare Center is open 6am - 6pm

A Caring Community.
 For more information, please call (440) 934-5709
 37800 French Creek Rd • Avon, Ohio 44011

Service

FROM PAGE 2

grandfather and his father, a 42-year-worker at AMSHIP. They had met company owner George Steinbrenner, the Ohio businessman who would go on to become famous as the owner of the New York Yankees.

Czarney was there in 1971 when the ore freighter "Roger Blough" caught fire, claiming the lives of four men. At the time the ship was to be the largest ever built entirely on the Great Lakes; it and the blaze made headlines in Lorain for years.

The shipyard workers were at the mercy of the weather, Czarney said.

"It was cold down there in the winter," Czarney said. "You come down there off of Colorado Avenue, you go down by the river down there it seemed like it went down 20 degrees. You couldn't put enough clothes on. You work outside, put on two pair of gloves and you try to swing a hammer and write things on steel. And you're crawling around on steel all day."

"Summertime it wasn't bad," he said. "Wintertime, it was terrible."

Czarney also worked at B.F. Goodrich, but a layoff was coming, so he began hunting for another job.

Going to the bank

As a youth, Czarney lived on Lexington Avenue in Lorain and went to school with the late Bob Brosky, who grew up to become an attorney and vice president of First Federal Savings of Lorain. Later he would serve as president and chairman of the board of the bank.

Historically it was Lorain's "Polish bank" on Broadway, earning the nickname based on the heritage of its founding members in 1921.

In 1972, Czarney began as a teller and stayed until he "worked pretty much every job at First Federal." Eventu-

"It was cold down there in the winter. You come down there off of Colorado Avenue, you go down by the river down there it seemed like it went down 20 degrees. You couldn't put enough clothes on."

— Tom Czarney, on working at the American Ship Building Co.

ally he oversaw everything from the bank branches to lending to maintenance to information technology to accounting to corporate security, Czarney and Malanowski said.

"Anything nobody knew what to do with, just give it to Tom, he'll take care of it," Czarney recalled.

Czarney said he could relate well to tellers and managers because he came up through those jobs. He also met numerous customers, builders and elected officials, including judges when Czarney had to testify about financial issues in court.

Interacting with the customers was the best part of the job, Czarney said.

"It was interesting to go down there and meet a lot of them," he said. "Some of them just came up to your office up there on the second floor when we were up there, just to talk, renew old times."

"I knew quite a few of them," Czarney said. "I still see quite a few of them now that retired here in Avon."

Avon back then

Before Avon's boom days, the community had just one bank, so a number of customers headed to First Federal Savings of Lorain for their bank accounts and mortgages.

Czarney and his wife, Mary Ann, lived in Sheffield Lake, but her parents built their home in Avon in 1967. The young couple bought it from their estate and in 1972 moved into their home on Stoney Ridge Road.

Avon in 1972 had far fewer people than Avon in 2017. "A lot of farmland, a lot of greenhouses. No traffic," Czarney said with a laugh.

The couple has four daughters, so Czarney took on dad and volunteer duties as needed when they attended school at St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception and Avon High School.

Still serving

A member of the Knights of Columbus since 1967, Czarney worked with the K of C Fr. Ragan Council 3269, with membership from Avon, Avon Lake, Sheffield Village and Sheffield Lake.

Church duties ranged from serving as Eucharistic minister and parish council member to counting donations in the collection plate. Czarney also was a grill master for steak fries and other fundraisers.

Over the years the beneficiaries included the Lucy Idol Center of Vermilion, which serves people with developmental disabilities; the Shriners burn hospital for children; and the Lorain County Free Clinic.

Czarney's four daughters all worked at the bank at one time. Now three of them live outside Ohio, so every two years he plans family vacations, usually somewhere coastal because his 11 grandchildren like to be near water.

Czarney also has two great-granddaughters, ages 5 and 3, in Elyria. His mother, Helen Czarney, 97, still lives in Avon.

He has added two more jobs to his resume: driver to get them together and referee for basic card games the girls play with their great-great-grandmother.

"I don't mind helping people," Czarney said. "I figure that's what we're put on this earth for."



SUBMITTED

The Avon Senior Center's sing-a-long group is shown.

Way

FROM PAGE 1

Lake and Sheffield Village fire departments now provide "File of Life" forms.

"File of Life" provides emergency medical personnel with a patient's medical history and information in the event they cannot relay the information themselves.

Monda said a sticker is put on a front window or main entryway so firefighters or EMS know the "File of Life" is likely hung on the refrigerator by a magnet.

About a year ago, Monda said he was trying to find a way to better assist local veterans.

The idea he came up with is a lock box program where the Avon Fire Department installs a small box near the front door that contains a spare key to the home.

Monda said firefighters are able access the lock box in the event they are called to a home where the homeowner can't answer the door. First responders can use the spare key instead of breaking down the door or damaging a window.

While Monda focuses a lot on health and wellness initiatives at the center, he also participates in the sing-a-long group that

"It dawned on me somewhere along the line that there was a reason I survived. In trying to seek out that reason, I determined that maybe there was a job here that I had to do."

— Avon resident Andy Monda

visits local nursing homes to play music and sing for the residents. He said the group has been visiting nursing homes roughly once a week for about eight years.

In the three-year period between 2014 and 2016, the group had almost 2,000 participants and sang to roughly 3,000 patients.

"We go as ambassadors to music therapy," Monda said.

"The whole idea is that we try to be therapy for the people that want to come and sing."

Other activities Monda assists with at the senior center include canned food drives, the walker/cane loaner program and the reflective house numbers sign program. He also participates in the American Heart Association's annual Lorain County Heart Walk.

"He does a lot of start-

ups that tug at his heart strings," Barbera said. "We would be missing out if we didn't have him. It's nice having him around and you can't put a price tag on that."

Monda said he was blessed when the senior center asked him to be the health and wellness chair because he likes to help people and the community.

He said he also hopes to be an example for other who suffer with heart and health issues.

"I thought if I could demonstrate that people with this condition can do things, it might encourage people that would normally sit home," he said. "I do feel that we are all given gifts that sometimes stay dormant. If we can wake (the gifts) up and put them to use, they can benefit not only the individual but the communities those people live in."

Avon Oaks

A CARING COMMUNITY

Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation • Outpatient Therapy Services
Porter Pavilion - Alzheimer's Care and Memory Support
Acorn Childcare Center • The Gardens of French Creek Assisted Living

As we celebrate our 50th year, the Reidy family and the wonderful caregivers of Avon Oaks Caring Community are proud to say we have

"Aged To Perfection"

with our Perfect Ohio Department of Health Surveys, and we continue to be a 5-Star Medicare rated facility.

"Avon Oaks is a place of help, hope and healing."
P. Hoag
- Rehab Client



5 Out of 5 Stars
Highest Quality Rating
from Medicare

No deficiencies
As rated by the
Ohio Department of Health

37800 French Creek Rd. • Avon, Ohio 44011 • (440) 934-5204 • www.avonoaks.net

It's a new year, start it off right by taking care of your hearing!

Want To Be Happier In 2017 ? Try A Hearing Test.

That's right . Research showed that when people address hearing loss it improves their quality of life.

And it's no wonder. Ignoring a hearing loss and leaving it unaddressed can be exhausting, lead to isolation , and has been tied to an assortment of health conditions, including depression , diminished cognitive function, and an increased risk of falling.

When people get a hearing test a and use professionally fitted and individually programmed hearing instruments - when recommend by a hearing care professional - most say they're happy with the improvements they see in multiple areas of their lives.

Here are just a few potential perks of treating hearing loss that may surprise you.

1. Your spirits may brighten.
2. Your relationships may benefit.
3. You may start to see life's sunny side a little more.
4. Taking the reins on life might become easier.
5. It may lighten your cognitive load.

Call now to schedule your appointment, it's simple, free, and painless.

Call 1-800-960-6707 Today for your FREE hearing evaluation

“We fit the finest barely noticeable hearing instruments in the world right here in Lorain County”



Peter Catri, BC-HIS

Board Certified in Hearing Instrument Sciences

Member:

- Hearing Health Care Alliance of Ohio
- International Hearing Society
- American Tinnitus Association

DRY & STORE

Normal price \$9.90

\$4.95

while supplies last



MENTION THIS AD AND RECEIVE A SPECIAL DISCOUNT

ON A SET OF PREMIUM HEARING INSTRUMENTS!

Can't be combined with other offers.
Limit one coupon per patient.
Offer expires 1/31/17



Low Monthly Payments through



WOW!!!

What a Deal!

Box of Premium Batteries. Reg. \$50, Now \$15. January Special



1954 Kresge Drive, Amherst
(across from Giant Eagle)

440-960-0757 or 1-800-960-6707

At Catri Hearing Instruments, Your Ears Will Love What They Hear! I Guarantee It!