***DESTINATION LODI***

*Lodi has a lot of events this year by several organizations and the village, mark your calendars. On April 19th the village is having an Easter Egg Hunt. The Easter egg tree will be on display on the 20th. On May 24th we have the Lodi-Harrisville Historical Annual Rhododendron Concert at the First Lodi Congregational Church. On June 7th we have a Village Arts and Craft Show in the Lodi Central Park along with the village wide garage sale. Call me for details… the show is free! 330-635-7294. On August 10th we will have our ice cream social, music, food with a poker run sponsored by the Police Advisory Board. On August 29th we will have my son’s CCR Tribute Band and on August 30th the Annual Antique Fest. If we received more funding, I would like to add another concert. I will keep you posted.*

*Parker and Son Funeral Homes*

*The Parker Family has been an important fixture to the Lodi community for many years.*  *I have found the Parkers to be the most compassionate, caring and generous family I know. Thanks Patty for the family information.*

*The present business actually dates back 163 years ago when one of Lodi’s pioneer settlers, Henry Weaver, manufactured and sold furniture on the Public Square. In 1895 he sold his business to M.E. Mowery who continued the business until 1902. The furniture and funeral business was then purchased by Sidney R. Auble until in 1921, Mr. Auble was fatally injured in a railroad accident. It was in 1921 that Howard F. and Roy B. Parker purchased the funeral business from his heirs. The mortuary was located at 112 Medina Street, across the alley from the I.O.O.F Hall. Howard bought out his brother’s interest in the partnership in 1925 and in 1928 opened a funeral home in Spencer, Ohio. He and his wife Jennie continued the business under the name of H.F. Parker Furniture and Mortician. Howard’s wife played a vital supporting role in the operation of the business, as well as raising their two sons, Richard and Paul.*

*In 1927 Howard opened a furniture store on the Buffman Block on Wooster Street. In 1933 he moved the Mortuary to the present location at 210 Medina Street and a year later the furniture business. In 1936 Howard’s son Richard joined the firm and son Paul joined in 1939, both sons graduating from the Cincinnati College of Embalming. In the years that followed many new lines of furniture, floor coverings and appliances were added. Around the same time the family purchased the Elliot Funeral Home on Wooster Street. The business also included an ambulance and invalid car service.*

*Howard F. Parker was a graduate of Wooster Business College and the Cincinnati College of Embalming. Howard was involved in Lodi through many organizations that included Rotary, Masons, Boy Scouts and was on the Board of Education. It was H.F. Parker that donated the land for the Lodi Community Park.*

*After the death of Howard in 1953, his sons formed a partnership. They continued to operate the Lodi and Spencer funeral homes and the ambulance service and the furniture home. In 1963, fire destroyed the furniture store and it was moved to the former property of Dr. Ernest Crum in downtown Lodi, where it remained until its closing in 1980.*

*I remember the fire that destroyed the furniture store, I was in third grade at Lodi School. I remember the class watching the smoke from our class window. I, as well as Nancy Pittman (an old friend of mine) was concerned because the store was close to our homes.*

*In 1972, Paul and his wife bought his Brother Richard’s share of the business and operated it until their son Bill joined them upon his graduation from Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science in 1976.*

*In 2003, Paul passed away unexpectedly following 64 years of faithful dedication to the family business.*

*Today the funeral home in Lodi and Spencer are operated by Bill, his mother Jean and his sister Patty Ramey. Assisting them are longtime employee Dennis Chapman, Ken Grieve, Ramona Mabry, Bob Lorrah, Parker Ramey (fourth generation) and Funeral Director Reid Firestone. The Parker family along with its associates are proud to call the Lodi and Spencer community home. This year, 2014, marks its 93 anniversary of serving families with compassion and dignity.*

*My community concern today is the state of our Woodlawn Cemetery. The Woodlawn Cemetery is a self-funded association. We need to keep our finest landmark beautiful for the past, present and future of Lodi citizens. Our local Rotary Club schedules work days each year to prune the rhododendrons. I am asking for donations for Woodlawn Cemetery to help with upkeep. Please send donations to Woodlawn Cemetery Association c/o Edna Kindig 8329 Kennard Road Lodi, Ohio 44254.*