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## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Northeast Ohio Senior Adult Spelling Bee will have fabulous prizes, “Earth Week” theme

*January 27, 2009* – The buzz is building for the **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Northeast Ohio Senior Adult Spelling Bee**, set for Sunday, April 26, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. at Laurel Lake Retirement Community in Hudson.



Sponsored by Laurel Lake, Summa Health System and the Center for Healthy Aging, this year’s Bee for adults 55 and older will have a fun “Earth Week” theme. Great prizes will be awarded to top spellers, with the winner receiving a grand prize round trip for two to the **2009 AARP National Senior Spelling Bee** on Saturday, June 20 in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Now in its fifth year, the Northeast Ohio Senior Adult Spelling Bee draws contestants from all over Northeast Ohio. The event is moving from its original home, Coleman Adult Day Services in Ravenna, to a larger, more centrally located venue within the Laurel Lake campus in Hudson.

Last year’s winner was Tony Suschil, 63, a resident of Hudson. After taking first place in the local competition, the retired marketing manager and magazine editor successfully spelled his way into the final rounds of the National Spelling Bee. There he ran afoul of the word “abecedarian,” an adjective that means “arranged alphabetically.”

The eventual first-place winner of the National Bee was 56-year-old Larry Grossman of Northwood, North Dakota. CBS Evening News and ABC’s “Good Morning America” covered the win.

### **A Workout for the Brain**

Spelling bees have enjoyed a nationwide comeback, as evidenced by the hit documentary *Spellbound*, the Broadway play *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and the recent movie *Akeelah and the Bee*.

The Northeast Ohio bee was the brainchild of clinical psychologist Dr. Paula Hartman-Stein, who advocates spelling as a way for older adults to keep socially active and mentally alert. Hartman-Stein is the founder of the Center for Healthy Aging in Kent.

“Our bee is the only one for seniors in the immediate area,” said Hartman-Stein. “Sharpening your spelling skills, whether for competition or just for the fun of learning new words, is a great way to stay mentally and cognitively alert.”

“Laurel Lake is proud to host the 2009 competition,” said David Oster, Executive Director of Laurel Lake. “We love the spirit of curiosity and competition that motivates adults to get involved in this event. Lifelong learning is key to a successful aging experience.”

## **How to Get Involved**

Registration will begin at 2:00 p.m., with the Bee starting at 2:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. The Bee consists of a written preliminary round followed by an oral round.

Optional practice sessions for Bee contenders will also be held at Laurel Lake on Thursday, February 26 at 3 p.m. and Thursday, March 26 at 2 p.m.

Laurel Lake is located at 200 Laurel Lake Drive in Hudson, just off of Boston Mills Road. No fee is required to compete, but advance registration is recommended. To pre-register, call (330) 678-9210 or e-mail [cha@en.com](mailto:cha@en.com).

For more information about the national bee and additional study suggestions and resources, visit [www.seniorsspellingbee.org](http://www.seniorsspellingbee.org) . For details about the local bee, visit [www.centerforhealthaging.com](http://www.centerforhealthaging.com)

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Now celebrating its 20th Anniversary, **Laurel Lake Retirement Community** is the smart choice for adults 62+ who wish to continue leading active lives filled with a variety of interests, including work, travel, fitness, environmentalism, cultural and lifelong learning pursuits. This not-for-profit continuing care retirement community offers multiple home styles within a scenic 150-acre campus. Call 1-866-650-2100 or visit [www.laurellake.org](http://www.laurellake.org) for information. Laurel Lake is part of the Catholic Healthcare Partners family of healthcare and senior housing providers.