



Photo by Hope Kinchen

Right: From left, Harriet Culp, Gordona Perhinek, Betty Nelson, Gloria Kormos, Paul Glenn and Joyce Fiala watch an Elvis clip from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame recently at the Solon Senior Center during a distance learning presentation. **Above:** The demonstration included a live video chat with the Rock Hall.



Seniors learn about culture from a distance

By SUE REID

For three consecutive Wednesdays this month, cultural institutions and their exhibits will be before the eyes of Solon residents taking advantage of a distance learning program offered for the first time in their community.

Open to adults, the program is being coordinated by the Solon Senior Center in collaboration with University Circle. It includes real-time videoconferencing with a representative from a cultural organization, such as the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and the Cleveland Museum of Art, followed by a field trip to the cultural institution. During the videoconference, participants will interact with a teacher.

Solon is the first pilot community of independent-living seniors to take part in the program, said Sandy Kreisman, manager of education initiatives for

University Circle. All other programs are held in conjunction with retirement communities.

The program will help provide easy access and the opportunity to receive in-depth knowledge about the plethora of cultural intuitions and their exhibits, as well as performance arts events in metropolitan Cleveland.

"The collaboration with University Circle Inc. provides Solon residents, many of whom have moved out of the suburbs, an avenue to easily reconnect with Cleveland's cultural scene," senior center Director Jill Frankel said. "In the future, the distance learning program has the capability to connect the residents of Solon with topics of interest worldwide."

A demonstration was held last month at the senior center showing how the videoconferencing will work. Future videoconferences will be at the

Solon Center for the Arts.

The program provides an opportunity to bring information to those people who might otherwise not have access to it, Solon resident Lee Cook said. She noted that for some seniors, they may have difficulty traveling.

"It's nice that they have the distance learning and can interact with the speaker," she said. "I think it's nice to be able to go to things that are close to home. I think it's going to be something very good for the community."

Ms. Kreisman said she sees as the program's greatest benefit the fact that it brings "high-quality, life-long learning programs to communities in a convenient and accessible format using this amazing technology."

For the past decade, she has been designing videoconferencing programs in collaboration with University Circle partners, mainly for schools and teach-

ers, "so this audience has been benefiting from the standards-based programs for many years," she said. "At UCI, we have now adapted many of these programs to serve seniors living on their own in communities and in continuing-care retirement communities in Northeast Ohio."

Ms. Kreisman has created monthly themes or topics and works around the collective strengths of University Circle institutions. Examples are a museum collection, a special exhibition, a concert or another type of special event.

To register for the program, contact the senior center at 440-349-6363. Participants are able to attend videoconferences sessions only for \$8 per session or a combination of videoconferences with an associated field trip for \$18 to \$25, depending on the number of videoconference sessions.