

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM CLEVELAND HEIGHTS AND UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

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A MEMBER OF THE OBSERVER
MEDIA GROUP AND AN OFFICIAL
GOOGLE NEWS SOURCE

A PROJECT OF
**Future
Heights**

Why citizen journalism?

Michael Wellman

Turn on the local TV news at 6 p.m. and you won't find it. Flip through the pages of any local "news" paper, free or otherwise, and you won't feel satisfied. Sit down at your computer, search for "Cleveland Heights Local News," then sift through banners and pop-up ads, and you might get lucky. You would probably learn more while sipping a mocha at the local coffee shop, or walking down your sidewalk hoping to encounter a talkative neighbor. All you want to know is what someone (anyone) in your community thinks about the new housing development being built down the street, or when that new restaurant on Lee Road is going to open, or when that pot-hole riddled road around the corner is going to be repaired. None of this news is terribly important on a national or even regional level; but, it is, perhaps, the information that is most relevant to your daily experience. And, it is information that has not been easy to find.

It is hard to select an event or moment-in-time that represents



New technology has democratized the coverage and dissemination of news

the birth of "citizen journalism." At what point did it become possible for an average person, rather than a trained, compensated professional, to routinely spread information beyond their normal circle of influence? One can argue that the invention of the printing press gave everyday citizens the opportunity to disseminate their opinions and ideas to an extended audience. In the modern era, author Dan Gillmor acknowledges the increasing importance of video documentation by nonprofessionals. From JFK, to Rodney King, to YouTube, the steady rise of this form of nonprofessional participation cannot be overestimated (see www.pbs.org/mediashift/2006/09).

The interaction of two primary themes has largely been responsible for the growth of citizen based journalism: dissatisfaction with the

content of traditional media and advancements in technology.

As the number of companies that control traditional sources of news and information continues to shrink, people (consumers) are beginning to grasp the limited and narrow perspective offered by this system. "A common goal of citizen journalists is to recapture journalism as a truly democratic practice that is thoroughly rooted in—and thus directly serves—the real lives and interests of citizens." (see mcgillreport.org/largemouth.htm).

While the origins of citizen journalism can be debated, its real power is becoming evident to almost everyone, largely as a result of the proliferation and success of the internet. In the year 2000, a frustrated South Korean journalist launched a web site called OhMyNews. As one of the first

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Coventry Elementary future studied

Committee to make recommendation May 20

Sarah Wean

The future of the former Coventry Elementary School property is being studied by a nineteen member volunteer committee which has been meeting since March 3rd. With three meetings of a six meeting schedule completed, the Coventry School Study Committee hopes to present one, or several, recommendations for the property's use to the Board of Education on May 20th.

The 61,000 square foot "open school concept" building, designed by Cleveland architect Richard Fleischman in the 1970's, was closed in 2007 due to declining enrollment. The building served students in Kindergarten through 6th grades, and also accommodated early childhood and Heights Youth Center aftercare programming. The adjoining playground, sitting on roughly three acres of the six acre property, was built through volunteer effort in 1992 and continues to be maintained and enhanced through a joint effort of Coventry P.E.A.C.E., Inc. and the District. The Coventry Arch, an iconic public art project that was



sponsored by Heights Arts and Coventry P.E.A.C.E., sits on the school property as well.

The decision to close the school in 2007 was at the epicenter of a lawsuit brought by OPEN (Openly Promoting Enrollment Now), a grassroots group of concerned parents and community advocates who sought an injunction against its closing. The

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Major budget cuts for Cleveland Heights

Council slashing \$2 million in spending this year

Tobias Rittner

Cleveland Heights is no different than many other struggling cities. With both federal and state budgets strained, Cleveland Heights is feeling the pinch. Budget cuts are on the horizon. After soundly defeating Issue 29, a proposed income tax increase, City Council has aggressively begun to address fiscal challenges facing the city.

Heights residents, on March 4, 2008, stuck down Issue 29, a ballot initiative that would have raised the city's income tax rate. The proposed measure would have increased the

city's income tax point four (.4) percent from the current two percent tax to two point four percent.

The initiative, which was placed on the ballot by City Council rather than unilaterally approved without voter referendum, has sent a clear message to council that budget cuts are preferred over tax increases at this time. Voters will now get what they asked for.

City Council member Mark A. Tumeo was not surprised by the defeat of Issue 29. Tumeo and his fellow City Council members believed all along that the voters of Cleveland Heights should be given the deci-

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Dear Readers,

You hold in your hands the inaugural edition of the *Heights Observer*, a project of FutureHeights.

FutureHeights' stakeholders encouraged us to continue to innovate and to find new ways to promote community involvement, public expression, and communication. Study of the increasingly popular concept of "hyperlocal journalism"—and a timely encounter with the publishers of the *Lakewood Observer*—convinced us that our communities need this new voice, the *Heights Observer*.

Note the phrase "our communities." Our masthead says "News and Views from Cleveland Heights and University Heights." While FutureHeights will continue to focus on Cleveland Heights, the *Heights Observer* is dedicated to serving both University Heights and Cleveland Heights—including our shared schools, library system, neighborhoods, friends, students, and unique local businesses. With this project, we embrace both Heights communities, celebrating commonalities which transcend the dotted line marking the political boundary.

The *Heights Observer* will provide a voice for you and all of our neighbors. This is the place to share information, ideas, questions, and opinions. The *Heights Observer* will succeed and grow only if you participate. We encourage you to read and discuss the articles. Talk with your family, friends and neighbors about it. We encourage you to sign up as writers, editors, or photographers. We also need the support of local businesses who can reach their local market directly through this publication. Please contact the FutureHeights office for more information.

We hope that you like the print version of the *Heights Observer*. For those who are digitally inclined, please also see the web-based version at www.heightsobserver.org. Continued development of this web site will provide many features and services for our local governments, public and private schools, business community, local organizations, and worship communities. Current features include the Observatory, an online forum for local discussions; a Community Events Calendar where you can submit your own events to the site; and a Photo Gallery.

Welcome to the *Heights Observer*!

Mark Majewski, President,
FutureHeights

Please recycle this
publication.

Pass it on!

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Beryl E. Rothschild

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Adele H. Zucker, Vice Mayor
Peter R. Bernardo
Steven D. Bullock
Frank Consolo
Frankie B. Goldberg
Kevin Patrick Murphy
Steven Sims

Clerk of Council
Nancy E. English



March 31, 2008

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Law Director
Kenneth J. Fisher

Prosecutor
William T. Doyle

Community Coordinator
Walter Stinson

Superintendent of Service
Christopher S. Vild

Ms. Deanna Bremer Fisher
Executive Director
Future Heights
2163 Lee Rd. #103
Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118

Dear Ms. Fisher:

Thank you for your letter of March 21, 2008, and the announcement about the "Heights Observer," a new citizen-led news project which will incorporate an online news website, online community forum, and a printed newspaper free to residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

A direct outgrowth of your recent strategic planning process, the Heights Observer is expected to report local news objectively, facilitate community debate, support neighborhood business, and promote citizen volunteerism.

We support your initiative in concept and extend our support to the extent possible. We trust the project will provide incentive for the residents of our two cities, Cleveland Heights and University Heights, to fulfill your objectives of preserving, enhancing, and building community. We wish you much success.

Sincerely,

CITY OF UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS

Beryl E. Rothschild
Mayor

BER/sh

2300 Warrensville Center Road, University Heights, Ohio 44118-3895 • Phone: (216) 932-7800 • Fax: (216) 932-8531
Website: www.universityheights.com • E-mail: universityheights@universityheights.com

Welcome!

Welcome *Heights Observer*! May you in the years ahead:

- Report honestly and fairly;
- CELEBRATE the manifold gifts of our community;
- Seek to be a forum of honest give and take;
- Inform us on what really matters;

There is no community quite like Cleveland Heights-University Heights. We are blessed to be here. Do what the press has always done when it is at its best: report the facts, hold those in power accountable, inform the citizens, keep us alert, challenge us to think, spark civil conversation.

With best wishes,

Pastor John C. Lentz, Jr.
Forest Hill Church Presbyterian

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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group's request was denied by the court in August, 2007. The building has been unused since June, 2007.

The building abuts the historic Coventry Village commercial district and residential area of Cleveland Heights. It poses a number of structural challenges for re-use or development according to various experts who have spoken to the committee. Among those challenges is an almost 100 year old deed restriction which restricts the property where the play ground stands, west to the street, to "public school" use. The building area is zoned for single-family housing.

Other challenges facing the re-use of the building are the need for a new roof, HVAC system replacements, ADA compliant renovations, and window replacements, among others, according to CHUH Schools Facilities Manager Steve Shergalis. He estimates the cost of these basic upgrades at approximately \$1.1 million. Shergalis indicated that other modifications for re-use would have an impact on financial scenarios. To date no serious entreaties have been made from developers for the property, according to the District. City of Cleveland Heights Planning Director Richard Wong, who is a member of the committee, said he had shown the property to a small business owner but it was deemed unsuitable due to "lack of windows."

The potential for re-use has spurred local organizations to envision a nonprofit use that would serve community interests as well as the District's priorities for use. Heights Arts will submit its vision for the property at the April 8th meeting. (See accompanying article.)

The ultimate decision about the property rests with the Board of Education. They hope to decide by June whether or not the District will hang on to the property or decide to put it on the market. At the March 18th meeting, District representative Joe Micheller said they have no facilities plan that dovetails with educational priorities for future programming and, as such, there is "no prospect of re-using the building for any District use," he said.

About 20 curious residents have attended each meeting to watch the work of the committee. The meetings do not allow public participation but the committee encourages residents and interested parties to e-mail their comments and suggestions, as well as to access meeting agendas and other information, at the District's web site, chuh.org. William Wendling, the group's facilitator, said in response to an e-mail inquiry that the committee "may want to solicit public reactions during one of the May meetings, once the committee has narrowed some of the considerations."

The next scheduled meeting of the committee is Tuesday, April 22nd, 6:30 p.m. at the Board of Education. For more information, contact the Board of Education at 371-7171 or visit www.chuh.org and click "Coventry Committee" on the left side. To submit comments and questions about the process, send an e-mail to coventrysiteinput@chuh.org. Emails are automatically forwarded to all committee members.

HEIGHTS OBSERVER APRIL 10, 2008

Heights Arts proposes community arts center to Coventry study committee

Sarah Wean

The Heights Arts Collaborative, a Cleveland Heights arts organization, has a vision for re-using the Coventry school building that calls for the creation of a model community arts center incorporating strong partnerships, diverse programming, and the formation of an umbrella organization to oversee it all.

"We want to be as pro-active as possible and we are interested in exploring what an arts and nonprofit center could be," said Heights Arts Director Peggy Spaeth in a recent interview. Heights Arts presented best practices and national models of successful programs, as well as their concept for the arts center, to the Coventry School Committee at its April 8th meeting. "We want to put some vibrant ideas on the table," she said. Ideas include the creation of a flexible performance space, summer arts camps, daytime classes for adults, artist spaces, and early childhood programs in the arts, among others.

Ms. Spaeth, a committee member, said Heights Arts has had a



SARAH WEAN

number of conversations with local organizations that are "confirmed in the concept" and who have expressed an interest in the idea of forming a partnership for use of the building. Interested groups are the Heights Parent Center, Reaching Heights, and The Cleveland Music School Settlement. Ms. Spaeth believes that with a core group of tenants, all of whom run programming that serves the CHUH School District's priorities and interests, the arts center would be a good fit for the District, and for Cleveland Heights. And the location is appropriate. "Coventry Village," she said, "has a history as a place where creative people congregate." Heights Arts believes the re-use of

the Coventry school as an arts center presents an additional opportunity for strong partnerships with residents, businesses, community groups, and the public library to reinforce and continue the holistic growth of Coventry Village as a unique and special neighborhood.

Financial sustainability of the re-use of the property, with the District as landlord, will be integral to the success of any project that the CHUH district decides to back if it retains ownership of the property. To that end, Heights Arts is exploring a diverse revenue stream including grants, large-scale individual gifts, and other resources that could be used to fund the center's upkeep and maintenance. Also under discussion is the creation of a governing organization to manage the facility.

The next step, should the Board of Education decide to pursue the concept, would be to commission a feasibility study that would outline in greater detail what would be required to build and sustain a community arts center at the former Coventry elementary school.



COURTESY REACHING HEIGHTS

Heights Summer Music Camp offers expert instruction and fun!

Susie Kaeser

Reaching Heights is accepting applications to the Heights Summer Music Camp, June 16-21 at Wiley Middle School. Students living in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school district who are currently enrolled in grades 5-8 in their school's instrumental music program are invited to participate in this intensive week of music making. \$130 for the week; scholarships available. More information and applications are available at www.reachingheights.org.

org or by calling camp coordinator, Betsy Neylon at 440-725-6845. Deadline is May 15. Space is limited.

This is the fourth year that Reaching Heights, a citizen support organization for the Heights schools, has partnered with the school district to offer this engaging enrichment opportunity. Heights High Instrumental Music Director Scott Astey is the music director. District music teachers and local professionals, Heights High alumni, and current students work with campers in orchestra and sectional rehearsals, chamber

groups, music theory, recreation time, and in workshops focused on jazz, guitar, and choral music. Camp hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily.

Students perform a finale concert at the end of the week. They display the wonderful growth and musicianship that they've honed during a week of concentrated instruction and practice and exploration.

Susie Kaeser is retired director of Reaching Heights.

Coventry Village Street Arts Fairs fundraiser scheduled

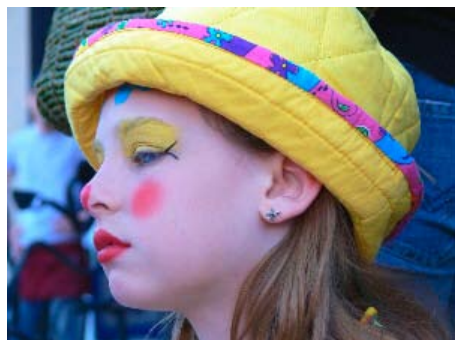
Jane Flaherty

Snow and ice may be covering the ground but the Coventry Village Special Improvement District in Cleveland Heights is already making plans for warmer days ahead.

The increasingly popular Coventry Village Street Arts Fairs are scheduled for June 19 and July 17 from 6:00 until 9:00 p.m. Discussions are underway regarding the feasibility of having an August fair. According to Myra Orenstein, Coventry's Executive Director, "It is totally dependent on the amount of money that we are able to generate over the next few months. If grants, private donations and our fundraiser help, we certainly would love to continue the tradition and have an August fair."

Now entering their fifth year, the Coventry Street Arts Fairs have become family favorites enticing neighborhood residents of all ages, their families, friends, and yes...even their dogs! While the reintroduction of the fairs brought approximately 2,000 attendees to Coventry, police estimates for last year's fair were at 12,000.

Jugglers, balloon clowns, stilt walkers, oversized puppet people and other street performers delight children while adults have their chance to "hang out" and listen to local live music. Cleveland Museum of Art will continue to provide family-friendly art projects. Over 50 vendors and lo-



COURTESY COVENTRY SID

cal farmers will, once again, be invited to participate. Coventry restaurants will feature outdoor dining and merchants will hold sidewalk sales.

Coventry is also planning another incredibly popular fundraiser for May 2 from 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. at the B-Side Liquor Lounge (downstairs from the Grog Shop) at 2785 Euclid Heights Boulevard (the corner of Euclid Heights and Coventry). Attendees recognize this laid back affair as possibly the best deal in town since all of the Coventry restaurants provide food while the cost for attendance is only \$25 (\$30 day of the event). Checks, made payable to CVSID together with the number of tickets requested, should be mailed with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Coventry Village Special Improvement District, 2533 Euclid Heights Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, OH 44106-2709.

Artists, vendors and farmers interested in participating in this summer's fairs should contact Myra Orenstein at 216.932.3322 or catv@earthlink.net.

Rourke wins award

OneCommunity's Scot Rourke of Cleveland Heights named the Intelligent Community Visionary of the Year

Mary Patton

Cleveland Heights resident Scot Rourke, president and chief executive officer of OneCommunity, has been named the Intelligent Community Visionary of the Year for 2008 by the Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) (www.intelligentcommunity.org), a New York-based think tank dedicated to studying economic growth in the broadband economy.

The award was presented at a ceremony in Cleveland on March 25. Rourke will deliver the Intelligent Community Visionary of the Year address at ICF's annual Building the Broadband Economy summit in New York City on May 16.

OneCommunity (www.onecommunity.org) is a Cleveland-based nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering economic development and improving quality of life by leveraging information technologies. ICF selected Rourke based on his groundbreaking work as a social entrepreneur in Northeast Ohio and his willingness to share hard-won lessons in information and communication technologies (ICT)-based economic development with communities around the world. "OneCommunity is proud to be a leader in the movement to ensure the success of Northeast Ohio in the new broadband economy, and I am privileged to accept this honor," Rourke said. "We remain committed to our transformative efforts in education, healthcare, workforce development and government that have helped es-

tablish our region as a model for communities worldwide." ICF Chairman John G. Jung added, "In addition to taking OneCommunity from concept to dynamic reality, Rourke has freely shared its innovative business model and approach."

As OneCommunity's CEO, Rourke led the successful effort to develop an ultra-broadband community network serving first the city of Cleveland and then the entire Northeast Ohio region. The effort began in 2002 when Cleveland's Case Western Reserve University named Lev Gonick as its new chief information officer. Believing that the region's nonprofits should play a more active role in its recovery from industrial decline, Gonick assembled a group of community leaders that founded OneCleveland, OneCommunity's predecessor.

Rourke joined the effort, turning this vision into reality. Under his leadership, OneCommunity forged partnerships with the region's telephone and cable carriers. The OneCommunity network has expanded and will soon connect 1,500 schools, libraries, governments, hospitals, and universities, cost-effectively delivering ultra broadband to enables applications such as distance learning and telemedicine. In recognition of the region's achievements, ICF named Northeast Ohio a 2008 Top Seven Intelligent Community of the Year. ICF will announce the Intelligent Community of the Year winner on May 16.

Meals On Wheels needs volunteers

Sarah Wean

Cleveland Heights Meals On Wheels is an all-volunteer, non-profit, non-subsidized independent program working in cooperation with the Cleveland Heights Office On Aging to deliver meals to elderly and disabled residents of Cleveland Heights.

For as little as two hours of donated time a week you can make a significant difference to a service that enriches the community and the lives of the people in it.

Volunteers are needed to substitute for drivers who are absent due to travel, illness, appointments, etc.

This will require 1 to 2 hours one day (M - F) a week around noon for you to pick up the food at Fairmount Presbyterian Church (Fairmount & Coventry) and drive a delivery route (about 4 - 8 stops) within Cleveland Heights.

You can become a regular driver (same day, same route, once a week), if desired, when openings occur.

We can accommodate your day preferences, vacations, appointments, etc.

If you would like to be added to our list of substitutes, please contact Art Glassman at 216-371-0316 or artmaryg@stratos.net.



PORTRAITS BY ANGELA

ICF's Executive Director Robert Bell (left) presents OneCommunity's Scot Rourke with the Visionary of the Year award.

Faith matters:
prophetic or profane?

Rev. John Lentz

Being a pastor in the Heights (Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian), I have followed the recent brouhaha concerning presidential candidate Barak Obama’s relationship to his pastor, the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, with great interest. For I too have said things from the pulpit that many disagreed with. I too have been caught up in rhetorical flourishes to make a point that later I wished I might have toned down. But then again, the role of a preacher, particularly one who claims the mantle of the prophets, is not to preach an easy, comfortable, or socially acceptable sermon. The role of a prophetic preacher is to agitate, confront, and disturb.

Whether or not Reverend Wright can be called a prophet of our time is open for debate. However, his style,

rhetoric and message have much in common with the historic prophets of Israel of almost 3,000 years ago.

The primary role of the prophet was to hold the secular authority accountable to the justice of God. Amos, one of the first prophets to make his mark, said this: “Hear this word, you cows of Bashan who are on Mount Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy...” (Amos 4:1). Amos’ words were directed against the political leaders of his day.

The harsh language of the prophets made them outcasts. The original Jeremiah was thrown into a pit by the king because his words did not support the government’s foreign policy. Hosea declared: “For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.” (Hosea 8:7) This is another way of saying that the “chickens are coming home to roost.”

Certainly one does not have to agree with Rev. Wright. But his language and style is as old as faith. The

role of the pastor in her or his preaching is to “afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted” and to speak truth to power. This is not an easy role to play. But for those of us who climb into the pulpit the discomforting word is often the word that must be preached.

The pastor’s role model is not only the prophets but Jesus himself. It should be remembered that the “Prince of Peace” was perceived as a political firebrand and therefore executed. The Romans did not crucify him because he wanted his followers only to pay attention to the lilies of the field. Jesus’ first sermon was about God’s priority for the poor and release for the captives. His own hometown, after hearing that sermon, almost lynched him. Furthermore, in Jesus’ sermon on the plain (Luke 6:17-25) Jesus contrasts the blessedness of the poor (v.20) with the rich (v. 24 “Woe to you who are rich for you have received your consolation.”) These words of Jesus are difficult to hear in a nation

that is both rich and powerful. They are still “good news” to many who suffer below the poverty line.

So, here is the rub. Faith will speak to power. The tremor of prophetic images and language will burst forth from pulpits again and again as it should. Most of the time, we will not like it. But, the purpose of prophetic preaching is NOT to tell us what we want to hear, or make us feel good, or support the government. Rather, it is to challenge us to live according to the words of the prophet Micah—doing justice, loving kindness and walking humbly before God. (6:8)

Before Rev. Wright’s words are dismissed as hurtful or un-American, it is important to remember the first prophets and what they spoke out against, what language they used, and to whom they were accountable. And, if in the end, Rev. Wright’s rhetoric forces us as a community and as a nation to look again into the issue of racism, then it may indeed turn out to be a blessing.

Cleveland Heights-
University Heights
library board cancels
program on the
Middle East

Fran Mentch

I was pretty angry when this whole thing started with the Library canceling the program on the Middle East primarily due to the pressure of one individual. Like most public libraries, the CH-UH Public Library is an important and respected part of our community. Many of us have fond memories of taking our children to story hours and other children’s activities, and attending the adult programming ourselves. We love being able to have free use of new books, films, music, and access to computers and the Internet. The CH-UH Library branches help form the fabric of our neighborhoods, and we have a great deal of affection and respect for the library staff, who work to keep the library a valuable part of our community.

When you think about it, public libraries are some of the few public spaces left to exercise free speech. People no longer meet at the public square; our gathering place has become the mall or shopping centers—all private property, so subject to the owners’ restrictions. And, public libraries are touted as bastions of free speech.

Our library planned, according to their calendar, to have a “screening and discussion of Searching for Peace in the Middle East, a film by Landrum Bolling. This film will be followed by a structured public discussion facilitated by diverse representatives of the relevant Jewish, Christian, Muslim and Arabic communities.” However, when our library’s board was called on to defend free speech by running the scheduled Middle East program, they caved. They were threatened with

a protest the Sunday before the election that had the library levy on the ballot. Used was a tactic employed to repress discussion of this issue: equating discussion on the Middle East with anti-Semitism, thus stopping the discussion cold, and denying citizens of our community an opportunity to discuss this important issue. As the situation evolved, the Muslim member of the panel offered to step down, if that would allow the event to go on, but this was not enough.

The American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights states in Article 6, “Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.” It does not say a library should make the meeting rooms available if the program is “balanced” as determined by a single member of the community.

I’m not angry anymore. I’m embarrassed by the behavior of our library board. I hold the board accountable, and the one citizen who started this mess. Regrettably, the library has spun the situation by saying that they did not cancel the program, they only want to review the program for “balance.” The library board slipped. They permitted a single citizen to assume the position of arbiter of what is “balanced” material on the Middle East. All citizens are entitled to free speech, but not if that right shuts off everyone else’s speech in the process.

Who did the library board allow to intimidate them into cancelling the program by leveling unsubstantiated charges that the Middle East Series was anti-Semitic, and that the library director is a bigot? Should one citizen and followers decide for us what we should watch, listen to and be allowed to talk about? I believe this one citizen’s tactics deserve exposure.

According to his own web site, he is the Cleveland District Office vice president of the Zionist Organization of America. If you feel up to it,

you can find more information about the individual who brought about this embarrassment and distress to our community by entering into his Web world. Start at www.frumcleveland.com and then wind your way to www.boycottwatch.org, www.divestmentwatch.org, www.sourcewatch.org, and more to the point, www.fredtaub.com. I couldn’t find any real difference in the content or tone of the last four. If you don’t go to his web sites you will miss out reading such erudite articles as, (these titles are taken directly from his web site) “E-mail titled ‘Microwaved Water - See What It Does To Plants’ is false,” and “Aruba fudging tourism number?” and my personal favorite, “Barry Manilow brings a boycott upon himself.”

Sadly, the Middle East program was only his first target at the library. If you listen to the tape of the March 17th Board Meeting you will hear him criticize and protest about the Library’s Great Books group reading “Mein Kampf.” This particular Great Books discussion has been going on at the Noble branch for 61 years. These two particular attacks on free speech are recent. If he looks carefully at our library’s history he may find that he has got a lot of boycotting to catch up on!

The best things about this whole mess were the voices at the library board meeting, and the letters to the editor on the subject. Most members of our community tried to summon our better selves, referring to the cities’ history of tolerance, the difficulty but importance of the topic and insisting that one citizen does not speak for all members of the Jewish community.

I urge everyone to think for themselves about this issue. Go to the web site of Foundation for Middle East Peace www.fmep.org and watch the movie. Then get together with our friends and neighbors and talk about the film and the library’s decision as a celebration of our right of free speech.

In preparation for this letter to the editor, I contacted the Cuyahoga

County Public Library and asked if anyone has threatened them about their upcoming series of programs, “commemorating the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel.” The person who spoke with me said they frequently partner with the Maltz Museum and have never had any complaints, or threats. I believe they have a right to their program, and they should not have to prove it is “balanced.” I hope the people who attend learn something and enjoy themselves. And, I hope no one does to their library, what was done to our library, i.e.: threatens to protest, suggest they are biased against a group of people in their community, and demand the program be cancelled and that their library director be fired. But, if someone does do this, I hope, unlike ours, their library board has the good sense and courage to stand up to them. Maybe ours will in the future.

But then, why listen to me? Why, I’m such a radical free speaker that I think that if Barry Manilow wants to bring a boycott upon himself, I say go for it Barry!

Become an
Observer!

The Heights Observer is looking for people, ages 16 –100, to become volunteer writers, editors, photographers, designers, illustrators and delivery people (a.k.a. newsies).

Amateurs and professionals alike are welcome!

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Steve Presser and his giant GI Joe aircraft carrier

Big Fun leaves customers smiling

Jeff Bendix

If you grew up anytime from the 1950's through the 1980's, stepping through the doors of Big Fun on Coventry Road will instantly whisk you back to your childhood. The store features a vast array of toys, board games, dolls, action figures, comic books, gag gifts, and other memorabilia from those decades. "For most people, childhood

was a happy time of life," observes Big Fun founder and owner Steve Presser. "This store gives people a chance to recapture that feeling they had when they were children."

Virtually from the day it opened nearly two decades ago, the store has been a destination for shoppers and collectors from all over Greater Cleveland and beyond. The store's original location, on the east side of

the street, was "organized chaos," Presser recalls with a chuckle. "The space was very cramped but organized with a lot of attention to detail."

With its success, Big Fun soon was bursting at the seams. Late in 2003, Presser approached Marcia Polovoi, long-time owner of High Tide/Rock Bottom directly across Coventry, about acquiring her location. Big Fun opened in its new, larger space in the spring of 2005 with twice the floor space of the original store, plus high ceilings and basement space.

The larger space has enabled Big Fun to expand the range of merchandise it sells to include Army/Navy store-style clothing, greeting cards, and children's books. Merchandise is grouped roughly by category. A display case which Presser calls the "girl's cabinet" features Strawberry Shortcake, My Little Pony, and Holly Hobbie dolls. Opposite it, naturally, is the "boy's cabinet" containing Transformer, GI Joe, and Star Wars toys and action figures. The two are separated by a seven-foot-long GI Joe aircraft carrier, complete with helicopters and airplanes suspended from the dome which covers it.

A graduate of Cleveland Heights High School, Presser had long enjoyed collecting old toys and memorabilia. The idea of opening his own store began when he and his girlfriend (now wife), Debbie Apple, were visiting friends in Chicago. Knowing his passion for collecting, they urged Steve to visit Goodie's, a store that

sold old toys. "Visiting Goodie's for me was like the scene in 'The Wizard of Oz' where it changes from black and white to color," he recalls.

Goodie's owner, Ted Frankel, became a friend and mentor and soon was tipping Presser off to warehouse and estate sales. Presser began buying items with a view to opening his own store. While his family supported the idea, he had difficulty explaining it to others. "There just weren't – and aren't – many places around like it, so it was hard to visualize," he notes.

While running a small business is challenging even in the best of times, Presser says the response of his customers makes it worthwhile. "Everyone is so stressed these days, and life is too short for that," he says. "This is like the safe place on the Monopoly board. People come in to shop, and they leave smiling."

Three Stooges watch over Big Fun



Jack's Deli serving favorites after 28 years

David Wasserstrom

If soup merited inclusion in the Smithsonian Institution, Jack's Deli & Restaurant would have the inside track. Regulars call it "Mish-Mosh" soup, and it more than lives up to that billing. Intensely flavored, hued of rich gold and laden with a girth-expanding symphony of noodles, rice, chicken, aromatics and softball-sized matzo balls, it is arguably the defining icon of its genre, not to mention an anti-viral weapon of mass destruction of such force that cold and flu strains tremble in its shadow.

A University Heights institution since 1980, Jack's remains local, humble, accessible and above all, driven by friendliness and quality. Founded by the late Jack Markowitz and son Alvie, Jack's has served countless sandwiches, plus deli standbys such as blintzes, stuffed cabbage, chopped liver, kugel, knishes, potato pancakes and a dizzying array of menu mainstays. Markowitz says all dishes are made from scratch, using only the freshest ingredients —many of which are sourced from key outlets throughout the United States.

Jack's Deli moved in 2005 to 14490 Cedar Road, just around the corner from its original location of 25 years. Markowitz now co-owns the deli with partner Gary Lebowitz.

Based on the frenetic rush of a recent midday lunch service, the

move clearly has worked well for ownership and patrons alike. "We really try to nurture a family feel here," says Markowitz. "We like to think of ourselves as the Jewish 'Cheers' of Cedar-Green, where everybody knows your name."

Indeed, employees at Jack's seem to take a personal interest in the patrons, from the deli mavens behind the counter who make your sandwich to servers working the dining room. "Whatever's happening in our customers' lives, whatever's happening in Cleveland, it usually gets talked about at Jack's," says Markowitz.

Service and ambiance aside, food remains the primary attraction. The expanded digs accommodate 50 percent more customers than the old space. That's plenty of room for a fiercely loyal legion of deli denizens, some hailing from as far away as Ashtabula—room for more people and more waistline.

Consider, for example, the Triple Decker of corned beef, hot pastrami, Muenster cheese, and lettuce and tomato between thick slices of rye bread and served with creamy cole slaw and Thousand Island dressing, or the Fressers Delight — corned beef layered atop two potato pancakes and served with apple sauce or sour cream, or the boiled flanken, a true cult classic. For something truly unique, try Jack's legendary pickled tongue on challah—an otherworldly delicacy sure to leave you



(not to mention the cow) speechless. The towering sandwiches are complemented by the requisite sides of potato salad, farfel and noodle kugel and crisp dill pickles.

Jack's also features nine soups daily, a full range of dinner selections, a surprising variety of salads, and a veritable bounty of the sea that includes Nova lox, sable, smoked whitefish, and creamed and chopped herrings. Breakfast also is available throughout the day, with specials running through 11 a.m.

The restaurant biz will never be easy, and Jack's is no exception. Sixty-hour weeks are the norm for Markowitz, and the challenge of meeting high customer service ex-

pectations remains constant. Clearly, though, he enjoys the payoffs. "I grew up here in University Heights, so I feel at home every day I come to work," he says. "This community has very friendly people, and what really is satisfying is watching families who frequent the restaurant grow — seeing the different generations over time. From grandfather to father to son — we really become very close with our customers. It's special."

Jack's Deli and Restaurant is located at the intersection of Cedar Road and South Green Road, facing Cedar Road. Hours: Monday – Saturday 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The restaurant closes early on Jewish and national holidays.



YASHAR YILDIRIM

Review: Anatolia Café

Anatolia Café brings authentic Turkish cuisine to Cedar-Lee district

Anatolia Café, the Turkish restaurant formerly located at Cedar Center, recently moved into its new home in the Cedar-Lee commercial district of Cleveland Heights. Known for its fine food and attentive service, Anatolia Café now has a larger space and sophisticated new décor to accommodate its growing clientele.

When I made my first visit, the restaurant had been scarcely open a week. I entered into a high ceiling foyer that faces a row of brightly lit display cases filled with Turkish pastries and entrees. Behind the display cases, the open view kitchen is immaculate. I watched cooks busy charring eggplants on a long grill and slicing lamb doner (Anatolia's version of *shavarma*) off of a slowly turning rotisserie.

The hostess led me under high brick arches into the dining halls. The restaurant bustles with activity and happily feasting diners. A blazing fireplace in the back adds a nice touch. The walls are painted a burnt orange hue and covered with beautiful hand woven rugs, Ecru paintings (a traditional Turkish marbling technique), copper urns and other artifacts from Anatolia, the region encompassing the Asian part of Turkey between the Black and Mediterranean seas. You can feast your eyes on the interior of the restaurant at www.anatoliacafe.com.

The menu features traditional Turkish dishes with a smattering of Middle Eastern standards. The

food is prepared with the freshest ingredients, unadorned by heavy sauces or fiery spices. My husband and I ordered the Mixed Appetizer, a sampler of *haydari* (homemade yogurt dip), stuffed grape leaves, *kisir* (cracked wheat salad), eggplant with sauce, *ezma* salad dip, *babagannush* and humus served on a large platter with traditional Turkish bread. Each appetizer had a wonderful distinct flavor. For entrees we chose *karni yarik* (stuffed eggplant with ground lamb) and *kofte* (grilled ground lamb). The stuffed eggplant was exquisite—moist and savory. The Kofte had a robust lamb flavor subtly enhanced with onion, parsley and spices. Anatolia's lamb is USDA Choice #1, locally raised and properly aged in Detroit. You can taste the superior quality. For dessert we couldn't pass up baklava, the crown jewel of Turkish pastry.

We selected a wine from the Anatolia region. The light bodied Karasi Red, Kalecik 2002 complemented our Turkish dishes well. (Note: An intimate merlot-colored wine bar is located on the opposite side of the restaurant. An outdoor patio will open this summer.)

Prices overall are moderate. After sharing an appetizer, two entrees, dessert and a bottle of wine, we paid \$70 including tip. The lunch menu is a bargain with many half-sized dinner entrees and sandwiches priced under \$10.

The most popular dishes on the menu are stuffed eggplant, lamb sauté, shish kabob, *sigara borek* (light pastry dough filled with a blend of feta cheese and parsley) and fresh whole fish grilled with lemon juice and olive oil. Health-conscious eaters and vegetarians will find many suit-

Why buy local?

Trevor Gile

What does it mean to "buy local"? Does it mean to shop within the Heights' borders? Does the size of the business matter? Or does buy local mean refusing to shop at chain retailers and limiting your spending to "mom and pop" stores?

When I've asked Heights residents what they like most about our community, people often mention the unique and charming businesses you find in the Heights. For me, buying local is important to our community for a few key reasons:

1) You can shake hands with the owner. The Heights is one of few places left where you can actually visit a locally owned business and shake the owner's hand. (In the case of Tommy's, the owner will even cook you pancakes!) Locally owned businesses have an intangible quality. Having the proprietor involved with day to day operations ensures exceptional service and a unique shopping experience.

2) Sixty-eight cents of every dollar spent at a locally owned business is reinvested into the community. Compare that to the forty-three cents that is returned to the community when you shop at a chain store. Local businesses are more likely to be owned by residents of the community who by nature are more inclined to buy local. This cycle keeps more money in the community. With chain retail operations, the majority of

every dollar goes back to non-local suppliers and distant corporate offices. You can check out national statistics and further information about the economic benefit of locals vs. chains at The Hometown Advantage, a project of NewRules.org

3) Vacancies scar our community. When we lose a local business it creates a ripple effect throughout the community. Local jobs are lost. Vacant store fronts reduce the desirability of surrounding businesses and reduce the amount of taxes that our local government can collect in order to provide community services. Because starting a small business is difficult and many new businesses fail, local businesses often give way to chain franchises. This in turn causes a little bit the Heights charm to disappear and puts pressure on the City to cut expenses or raise taxes on its remaining residents and businesses.

My father taught me that in order for our business to succeed in Cleveland Heights we need many other successful local businesses. I'm not asking you to spend every dollar in the Heights, but why not make a conscious effort to give local businesses a chance? I guarantee that if you do you'll discover a little bit of what makes the Heights such a great place to live. And, you'll help out the community you live in at the same time.

Got comments? You can e-mail me at Trevorgile@motorcarshonda.com, or post them on the Heights Observer's interactive Observatory.

Trevor Gile is the General Sales Manager—Honda, of Motorcars in Cleveland Heights.

able items on the menu.

Anatolia's conscientious and courteous wait staff comes from Turkey and Russia with a few Cleveland Heights natives in the mix. Most have worked at the restaurant for years. With 22 years of experience as a waiter, owner Yashar Yildirim knows the importance of good service.

Not surprisingly, Anatolia enjoys a large and loyal clientele that includes young professionals, families with children, doctors from the Cleveland Clinic, professors from Case, musicians from the Cleveland Orchestra, and local artists and writers.

Yildirim chose the Cedar-Lee location because he admires Cleveland Heights' sense of community. Cleveland Heights residents, he said, have the sophisticated palates of New Yorkers and appreciate good food and value. He likes the Cleveland Heights' ethos of patronizing locally owned

businesses. When building his new restaurant, Yildirim made a point of using 80% local subcontractors.

Anyone looking for exceptionally good food at reasonable prices and a warm welcoming atmosphere will appreciate this new restaurant. Steeped in culture and culinary art, Anatolia Café offers an authentic Turkish dining experience for Cleveland Heights residents.

—Jessica Schreiber

Anatolia Café is now located at 2270 Lee Road at Kensington, in Cleveland Heights, OH.

Business Hours:
Monday–Thursday 11:00 a.m.–Midnight
Saturday & Sunday 12:00 noon–Midnight

216-321-4400
www.anatoliacafe.com

12th Annual Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation Scholarship Pancake Breakfast

Sunday, April 13th
9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Heights High Cafeteria

Adults \$5
Children (4 to 12) & Seniors (60+) \$4

You don't need to be an alum to enjoy all you can eat pancakes and tours of Cleveland Heights High School. Bring your appetite as well as a few dollars for raffle tickets and a chance to win an Apple iPod Touch.



www.heightsalumni.org
got syrup?

Lakewood Observer co-founder O'Bryan shares observations

G. M. Donley

Four years ago, the near-west-side community of Lakewood was embroiled in controversy over a plan to develop land overlooking the Rocky River—land that would have to be taken by eminent domain because some of the homeowners who lived there weren't interested in selling. As the heated discussion took place on a community web site, three guys—one of them vehemently opposed to the project, another adamantly in favor, and a third remaining neutral—decided it was time to launch a community newspaper in which discussions such as these, as well as other important civic matters, could reach a broader audience than a web site could. The *Lakewood Observer* was born.

Publisher Jim O'Bryan was one of those three (the others being printer Steve Davis and Lakewood Public Library director Ken Warren), recalls how the seeds of the idea took root. "The first web site permitted people to post under fake names. As elec-

printed version. Currently we print 17,000 papers, and there are 21,000 front doors in Lakewood. And we didn't want to have to invest in a lot of office and production space, so we came up with a way to manage the flow of stories and pictures online. To me what really makes the paper work is that everyone who has ever written for the paper lives or has lived in Lakewood. These are your neighbors, just like a true community newspaper in the Old West might have been."

To further the frontier analogy, the paper is, if not exactly a lawless zone, certainly a place where there is no overriding editorial perspective. You know the *Wall Street Journal* leans right and the *Washington Post* veers the other way, but the *Lakewood Observer's* editorial slant is just the sum of the opinions divided by the number of writers. There isn't a conscious slant, in other words. No more than Lakewood itself has an editorial slant.

Media critic Lauren Fine, the featured speaker at the FutureHeights annual meeting this April, refers to

year that a key role of the group was simply to identify important issues and convene citizen discussion. In a strategic planning exercise last year, a major proposed initiative for the coming three years was to establish a community newspaper and web site for the Heights. Within weeks of the completion of that plan, FutureHeights began conversations with the *Lakewood Observer*, which seemed to have just invented what FutureHeights was planning to create on its own. So here we are today.

Our own brand-new *Heights Observer* is a test case for what O'Bryan and the newly formed Observer, Inc. hope will soon be an extensive, interconnected network of hyperlocal news outlets. The model is very simple. Distribution of a hyperlocal paper is cheap because the distances traveled are very small. A healthy volunteer component keeps labor costs low and the internet-based "news room" keeps overhead expenses in check. Advertisers are favorably inclined because the paper is so specifi-



G. M. DONLEY

Jim O'Bryan takes a break on Madison Avenue in Lakewood

tion day approached, we started to see what they call 'spiral dynamics,' as someone would post a comment under one name, then log out and log on again under a different name to second their own opinion, and so on—pretty soon it looked like there was a big swell of opinion trending in a certain direction, because no one could tell that many of the messages were posted by the same person. Meanwhile, the *Plain Dealer* and the local *Sun* paper would show up every once in a while and do a shallow gloss type of story. None of that was helping. We wanted a way to get info to the masses that people could trust."

"The first thing we did is launch a new site where we required that people post comments using their real names. That kept the conversation more civil. And then we planned right from the start to have a printed paper, because the only way you can reach as many people as possible is a

this as a "self-centering" publication, where one opinion is countered by another and eventually the accumulated diversity of opinion corrects bias. If this idea sounds familiar, it's the essential concept of Wikipedia—that if enough opinions are collected then a statistically valid measure of a general consensus will emerge. This "wisdom of the masses" approach may not inspire the same kind of intensely personal trust as hiring a team of crack editors and writers whose job it is to adhere to established standards of objectivity, but if your goal is to engage citizens in discussions about the life of their community, it's hard to beat.

While all this was going on over on the other side of Cuyahoga County, FutureHeights was building its own brand of citizen engagement in Cleveland Heights. As FutureHeights evolved from its founding in 2000, it became clearer every

cally targeted to their local customers. In fact, the *Lakewood Observer* has been in the black since its very first issue. "Granted, there was a lot of volunteer labor and a lot of late nights for a few of us," recalls O'Bryan, "but the fact is I was prepared to bankroll the first year's publication and I never had to do it."

Now the media company that basically started as a way for three guys to take their argument to the street has assumed a whole new identity. "We get 3 million web hits a month, with a quarter from outside Ohio," says O'Bryan. "In what is one of the really surreal moments, the Lakewood Observer has been described as the 'gold standard of community journalism.' We've had people move in from Brooklyn and San Francisco and cite the *Observer* as one of the reasons they chose to come here. It's certainly the most rewarding thing I've ever done."

CITIZEN, from page 1

entities in the world truly dedicated to citizen journalism, anyone with a computer was allowed, and encouraged, to post a story online—this was their content. With only minor fact-checking and filtering by a staff of editors, the site became a popular alternative to the three "conservative" national newspapers and even helped influence the 2002 Korean presidential election (see zapboom.com).

With similar scenarios developing around the globe, traditional newspapers are also starting to realize the potential appeal, and possible financial reward, of hyperlocal reporting. In Ft. Meyers, Florida, the News Press enlisted "the help of dozens of reader experts—retired engineers, accountants, government insiders—to review documents and data to determine why it costs so much to hook up water and sewer service to new homes in the area. The result: an investigative report that resulted in fees lowered by 30 percent and an official ousted." In an effort to increase their visibility, the staff of the *News Press* adhered to one "guiding principle: A constantly updated stream of intensely local, fresh Web content—regardless of its traditional news value—is key to building online and newspaper readership" (*Washington Post*, 12/4/06).

Until relatively recently, disappointed news consumers had few practical options for participation in, or improvement of, this system. Currently in this country, as implied by the examples above, the average citizen with access to a computer has the ability to voice his or her opinions to both a worldwide audience and to peers with similar interests and concerns. The technology and the desire have converged at this point in history, and now, ideally, we are all in a position to benefit.

As noted in an earlier article on heightsobserver.org, the tools for citizen based journalism have also recently become more accessible to residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights. With the launch of *Heights Observer* by the local non-profit FutureHeights, residents now have a citizen-generated source for hyperlocal news. With both on-line and printed forms, content will be submitted, edited (if required), and distributed by local citizens for local citizens.

While FutureHeights is very excited about the *Heights Observer* project, its success is completely dependent upon generation of content by the public. As the Executive Director of FutureHeights, Deanna Bremer Fisher, stated in an earlier interview, "Civic media is the wave of the future for grass-roots civic participation and the *Heights Observer* looks forward to working with anyone who would like to participate in this exciting and important project."

Become an Observer

To read stories and opinions created by your community, and to submit articles, opinions, events, and photographs, visit heightsobserver.org or call 216-320-1423.

From the FutureHeights executive director

As the new executive director of FutureHeights, I am very excited to be leading this organization as we embark upon the exciting project of creating a hyperlocal news resource for our community.

There are many very talented and dedicated people who call the Heights their home – people who have unique perspectives and interesting stories to tell; people who care deeply about this community and want to apply their best effort to develop successful solutions to the challenges we face as an inner ring suburb of a struggling city; people who have the courage to tell it like it is; and people who have the confidence to celebrate our many successes. The *Heights Observer* will give us the means to tell our own story the way that we know it should be told.

I am very much looking forward to working with all of you as we learn how to become citizen journalists. Together we will create a community asset that will deepen our relationships, strengthen our local economy, and ensure that the Heights remains a highly desirable places to live.

It’s great to be working in the community I know and love. Thanks to all of you for your encouragement and support!

—Deanna Bremer Fisher

Banner year for FutureHeights

Mark Majewski

Many readers of this inaugural edition of the *Heights Observer* may not know about its sponsoring organization, FutureHeights. FutureHeights is an eight-year old nonprofit that evolved from a gathering of residents who successfully fought an ill-advised local redevelopment project. As a result of that experience, several farsighted founding members recognized that Cleveland Heights would benefit from an organization dedicated to promoting good development, community amenities, and opportunities for citizen involvement. The group incorporated and set to work.

With the support of individual memberships and gifts, grants from area foundations, and volunteer labor, FutureHeights has sponsored design charettes and prominent speakers, organized cleanups and plantings, promoted local businesses and commercial districts, and encouraged citizen involvement. An award-winning web site provides ideas, information, opinion polls, and other services.

FutureHeights is operated by local residents serving as a board of trustees (see below) with the support of a small but capable and enthusiastic staff. Deanna Bremer Fisher has recently been hired as the new executive director. Jane Flaherty serves as a part-time assistant. A small office is located above the Cedar-Lee Theater.

During 2007, much of the energy of the FutureHeights board was focused on organizing the *Heights Observer*. This first-ever printing is a great accomplishment for the board and staff. Additional accomplishments during 2007 include:

- Completing a strategic plan with input from over eighty-five stakeholder interviews
- Holding an annual meeting featuring the movie *Making Sense of Place: Cleveland, Confronting Decline in an American City*
- Hosting a national speaker Cynthia Nitikin of Project for Public Spaces, addressing *Commercial District Placemaking*
- Holding an Inglewood neighborhood walking tour
- Sponsoring a community forum entitled *New Home on the Heights Revisited*
- Co-sponsoring National Historic Preservation Month events, including a tour of historic Heights High and several presentations
- Sponsoring the 3rd Annual Best of Cleveland Heights Awards honoring local businesses selected by more than 700 citizen ballots

- Sponsoring the State of the City Address by Mayor Ed Kelley
- Receiving a Community Vision Award from Heights Community Congress
- Participating in commercial district street festivals
- Sending monthly eNews emails to over three thousand subscribers
- Publishing an award-winning web site www.FutureHeights.org.

Also during 2007, FutureHeights experienced the departure of the organization’s first executive director, Julie Langan. Julie’s commitment and energy were the driving force for much success, including laying the groundwork for the *Heights Observer*. Best wishes are extended to Julie and her family in their new life in Richmond, Virginia.

The board and community are thankful for the continued support of our members and funders. As always, we welcome ideas and comments about the work FutureHeights will continue to accomplish on behalf of the community in 2008.

Mark Majewski is board president of FutureHeights

FutureHeights Board of Trustees

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CUTS from page 1

sion on raising taxes and they remained steadfast in their desire to take Issue 29 to the voters. Tumeo had, of course, preferred that the initiative pass, but, given the overwhelming defeat, he feels that he now has a mandate from the voters to make the necessary decisions, in lieu of a tax increase, that will improve the fiscal integrity of Cleveland Heights.

What is on the cutting block?

City Council has indicated several initial cuts paired with payment, fee and parking rate increases. The combination is designed to boost the city’s stagnant revenue while slashing spending. An estimated \$2 million will be cut from this year’s budget with an additional \$2 million to be eliminated next year.

Obvious remedies include the freezing of all city hall salaries at their current levels, with the exception of negotiated fire and police union increases. Ten full-time public service positions will be eliminated within the city government and five police officers will not be replaced after expected retirements. Nine seasonally hired public service positions will also not be filled in the fall.

City services will take a big hit with the closing of our real estate programs, student services, after school programs and animal control. Spring leaf cleanup will be suspended, but the city will continue to collect bagged leaves.

The Community Center will be affected as well with both a rate increase and the reduction of operating hours. New rates and shortened hours have not been finalized but are imminent.

Finally, the city will not provide flower baskets this year, a small but important element of Cleveland Heights’ charm.

Council Member Tumeo also indicated that the city will start charging for use at Cain Park, changing the city’s street salting system and eliminating the free dump truck service.

Parking meter rates will be enforced 24 hours with other potential community and permit fees raised. Many of these details are still under examination.

So how did we get here?

In short, the current budget crisis is a combination of factors including a sluggish economy, deep foreclosure rates brought on by the subprime lending crisis, slower than expected property and income tax revenue growth, reduced direct federal funding and continued decline in state funding.

City leaders have watched as the city’s reserves have literally dried up, a potential threat to the city’s decent bond rating. The city’s reserve fund is estimated to be as low as \$20,000 by the end of this year, without immediate cuts.

Council member Tumeo believes that the defeat of Issue 29, coupled with the expected budget cuts, will

impact the elements that really define Cleveland Heights. He does not expect Council to bring the income tax levy back to the voters in the November election, as the city will still be working within the current round of cuts.

However, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that a new income tax levy will be presented to voters next year. It is also possible that the state will further cut local funding shares as it works out of a serious budget deficit.

Going forward

Tumeo indicated that morale at city hall is very low and that the expected round of cuts is a deep blow to city spirits. While the elimination of high-ranking city positions has not been discussed, it is possible that future budget cuts could impact these city positions.

In addition, some on Council have been exploring the potential for merging services with University Heights to save money and eliminate duplicative activities. These talks are in early stages and could lead to a long-term merger of the two cities.

The future of Cleveland Heights has perhaps never been more in question than it is today. Decisive moves and deep budget cuts by City Council will shape the community for years to come, and the outcomes of these efforts will soon be felt by all.



Openings at the Heights Arts Gallery draw enthusiastic crowds.

Heights Arts

Animating the Community

David Budin

Look around Cleveland Heights – all over, outside. It's almost impossible not to notice the proliferation of public art that has been appearing, with increasing frequency, over the past few years. There is the Peace Arch at the Coventry playground; murals on buildings in the Cedar-Lee and Cedar-Fairmount business districts; the whimsical wrought iron fences around the storefront gardens, and the beautiful benches, both on Coventry Road; the colorful knitted “tree cozies” and sculptures on the road circling Severance Center; and more.

This is all the work of Heights Arts, a nonprofit organization founded in 2000 by Peggy Spaeth and a handful of likeminded visionary Cleveland Heights residents. The idea came to Spaeth—who had already served as an arts activist, first in the schools and then in the community at large—when she realized that this city was home to a seemingly large percentage of artists, including visual artists of every genre, musicians of all kinds, dancers and choreographers, actors and directors, writers, filmmakers, and others.

Heights Arts has quickly grown into a major arts force in the area, with a 15-member board of trustees and two public locations—Heights Arts Gallery near the Cedar Lee Theater and Heights Arts Studio in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library's recent addition on the west side of Lee Road. The Gallery offers six annual exhibitions of regional art including a year-end holiday store featuring works for sale by dozens of area artists. The Studio also presents exhibitions, plus

musical concerts and art classes and workshops for all ages after school, evenings and weekends.

Heights Arts presents house concerts as well, often featuring Cleveland Orchestra and other top classical musicians, playing chamber music in an intimate setting, offering a unique and thrilling opportunity to experience the music as it was originally heard. The organization also presents poetry slams and other written-word events, and, in fact, sponsors a Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate position, which it created—one of only a tiny number in the country.

The concept for Heights Arts was and is to “realize the potential of the arts to animate our community,” with goals including inspiring all Heights citizens to participate in the arts; supporting the arts in K-12 education; expanding exhibition and performance opportunities; and fostering public appreciation for the arts in Cleveland Heights, thus enriching the quality of life in the Heights by cultivating a strong, diverse, and collaborative arts community.

Recently Heights Arts has initiated the discussion of the potential of the former Coventry School building—or another building—to become an arts center. “Our dream,” the organization wrote in an open letter to community leaders, “is a vibrant, multi-disciplinary arts center with galleries, theater, music, dance, community outreach activities, classes and more. This center would be a wonderful cultural, educational and economic asset for the neighborhood, the community and, indeed, the region.”

To learn more, visit Heights Arts' web site at www.heightsarts.org, or call the Heights Arts office at 216-371-3457.



PTA Young Artists Exhibition at the Heights Arts Studio

Interfaith Arts Collaborative

Katherine Chilcote

Building Bridges Mural Program and The Rumi Foundation have recently joined efforts to create the Interfaith Arts Collaborative. The Interfaith Arts Collaborative is a joint effort to support visual and performing artists who are exploring the relationships between art and spirituality.

The purpose of the Interfaith Arts Collaborative is to allow the arts to be a vehicle for peace between our faith communities, by seeking to learn and understand each other's traditions as they are expressed through the arts.

Musicians will perform various forms of spiritual music on Sunday

explore the expression of reconciliation. In reflection of the collaborative work, Hasu Patel speaks of her music as “creating the story of our souls.”

Each of the musicians, dancers, and visual artists who have been engaged in the Interfaith Arts Collaborative share a common sensibility, that their work has a spiritual purpose in service of others and is a tool for interfaith understanding and dialog.

The Interfaith Arts Collaborative is hosting a performance of Sufi Music, Christian Spirituals, and Hindu meditation music, following a brief introduction on the importance of the arts in interfaith dialog. Traditional Turkish tea and dessert will be



“Journeys of Faith- 90 years in the making” Created to celebrate the 90th anniversary of Fairmount Presbyterian Church.

April 27th from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Fairmount Presbyterian Church. Emrah Gursoy, a renowned Nay Reed Flute player is in Cleveland as part of a conference on Islamic Art being held at John Carroll University. Emrah Gursoy will be performing on the reed flute, and sharing the Sufi traditions of Turkish music. Metin Aytekin and Hakan Aydin, who are also from Turkey, will perform on the Bendir and Saz instruments.

From two other local traditions we have pianist and composer Don Chilcote, performing modern interpretations of Christian spirituals. His work is inspired by traditional hymns and spiritual praise music, but is transformed into contemporary classical jazz.

The final performer for the evening, sitar player Hasu Patel, will collaborate with visual artist Katherine Chilcote to create a new original work exploring reconciliation as it can be expressed through the interrelations of visual arts and music. Hasu is internationally renowned for her Sitar performances, recently having debuted concertos with orchestras in Austin and Detroit. Hasu Patel performed at Building Bridges's unveiling of the Interfaith Mural at Case Western Reserve University this past November in collaboration with Katherine Chilcote.

This new work will be an expression of the synesthetic energy between art and music, as they both

served as artists come together for interfaith dialog.

Author Katherine Chilcote is Director of Building Bridges Mural Program and can be reached at 216.374.9339 or by e-mail kechilcote@aol.com. Fairmount Presbyterian Church is located at 2757 Fairmount Blvd, at Coventry Road, in Cleveland Heights, OH.

To reach other sources in the article, please visit www.hasupatel.com and www.clevelandmurals.org

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A new historic district for Cleveland Heights

Michael Wellman

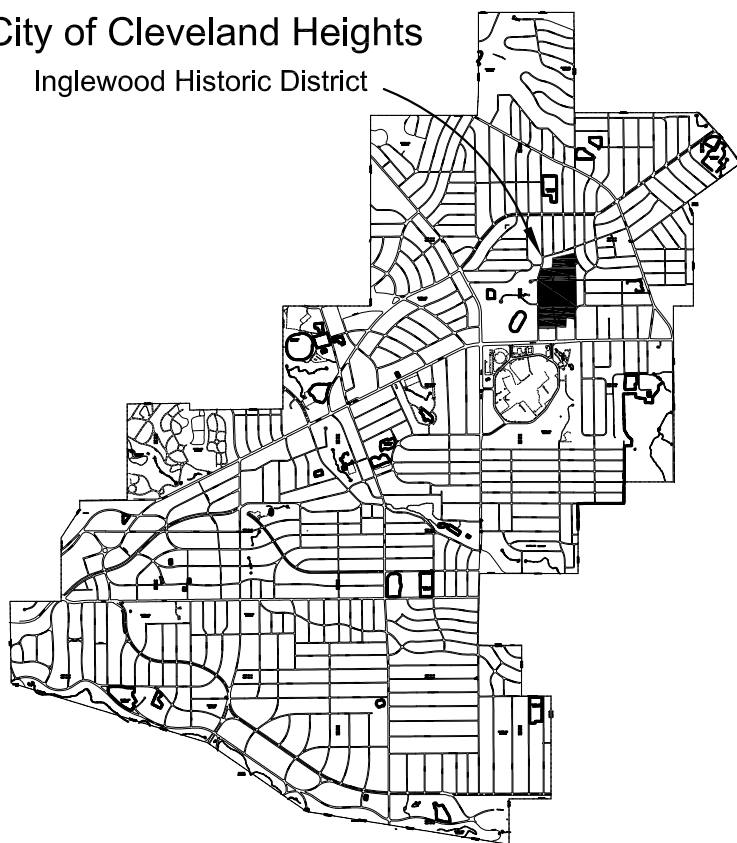
The City of Cleveland Heights will soon boast a new National Register Historic District. According to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, the new district will be the eighth nationally listed district that is in whole or in part located within the city boundaries. It will join Ambler Heights, Euclid Golf Allotment, Fairmount Boulevard, Overlook Road Carriage House, Fairhill Road Village, Forest Hill, and Forest Hill Park historic districts. Sometimes referred to as “Pill Hill,” because of the abundance of doctors that once lived there, the Inglewood Historic District will include houses on Inglewood, Yellowstone, Oakridge, Quilliams, Glenwood and Cleveland Heights Boulevard. Originally developed by the Van Sweringen brothers as part of the Shaker Heights Improvement Company’s subdivisions number four and six, the district is centered around Inglewood Drive, North of Mayfield and East of Taylor Road, behind Lutheran East High School.

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of properties recognized by the federal government as worthy of preservation for their

local, state, or national significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. To qualify for the National Register, a property must meet one of four broad criteria, it must be associated with an important historic context and it must retain the integrity of the historic features that convey its significance. The Inglewood Neighborhood meets three of these criteria: Criterion A, relating to historic events; Criterion B, regarding association with individuals that have made a significant contribution to society; and Criterion C, architecture. In accordance with the National Register’s fifty year rule, the period of significance for the district begins in 1920, when the land was purchased by the Shaker Heights Development Company, and ends fifty years ago, in 1958.

The district showcases prominent residential architectural styles popular during Cleveland Heights’ period of tremendous growth and transition from a rural landscape to a suburb of Cleveland. The homes encompass Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, Mediterranean Style, Shingle Style and other popular styles and includes significant homes designed by prominent Cleveland architects.

City of Cleveland Heights
Inglewood Historic District



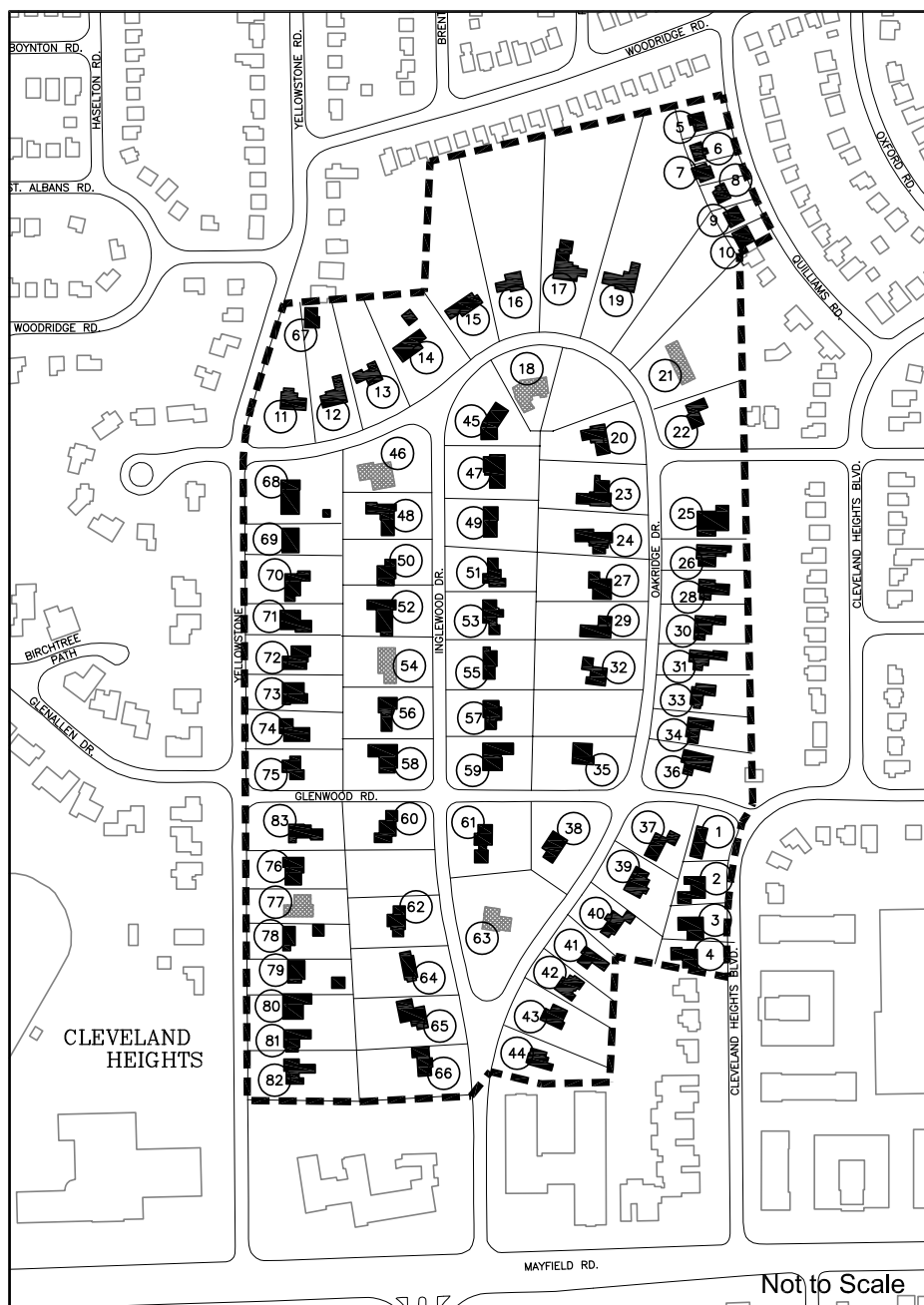
Not to Scale

Commercial architects, such as Walker and Weeks, Howell and Thomas, Bloodgood Tuttle, Abram Garfield, Charles S. Schneider, and John Graham, along with residential architects, such as Best and Hoefler, George Johnston, William D. MacIvor, M.P. Halperin, and H.O. Fullerton, designed the homes built in the early years of the Van Sweringen development. Later architects include Ray Moulthrop, George H. Burrows, Maxwell Norcross, Munroe Walker Copper Jr., Walter Harris Smith, and Chester Lowe.

The Pill Hill area of Cleveland Heights includes two other non-Van Sweringen developments. The 25 acres that make up Oakridge Circle, previously known as Oakridge Park or the Oakridge Drive cul-de-sac, was purchased and developed by the architect Francis Wragg. Beginning in 1956, the homes along the west side of Yellowstone were built on land previously occupied by the Glen Allen Estate and became known as Prentiss Park. While at least one of the two developments may be eligible for listing in the National Register, neither one was included in the Inglewood nomination.

Diana Wellman of Inglewood Drive drafted the nomination and submitted it to the State Historic Preservation Office in early April. The Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board review the nomination at their August meeting. The Advisory Board will review and recommends nominations to the Secretary of the Interior at the National Parks Service, who then places properties in the National Register. Residents expect the Inglewood Historic District to officially appear in the National Register of Historic Places by the end of 2008.

Once the district is listed, residents hope the City of Cleveland Heights will post a Historic Landmark sign in a prominent location in the neighborhood. Listing in the National Register will not prohibit residents from making changes to their homes, nor will it require them to do so. As are all property owners in Cleveland Heights, residents will still be required to meet permitting and construction requirements enforced by the City. For more information about the National Register of Historic Places visit: www.ohiohistory.org.



More than 80 houses are identified in the new Inglewood Historic District



1284 Inglewood Drive - designed by Howell and Thomas 1924

DIANA WELLMAN

A strong foundation for Kindergarten

Michael Dougherty

CH-UH City School District's Early Childhood Center offers excellence in a diverse learning environment.

Amy Mangano's twin girls, Grace and Sophie, are eager to start kindergarten next fall and aren't shy about sharing their new passion for "playing school" at home. Their mother sees the improvement in their academic and social skills and marvels at the progress both girls have made. The two are currently enrolled in the CH-UH Early Childhood Center and are thriving thanks to the strong programs offered by the preschool.

The Early Childhood Center is part of an elementary school community located in a wing of the Gearity Professional Development School in University Heights. Mangano feels that expectations for kindergarten are easier to grasp because her daughters see other kindergartners and teachers in the building. It's part of a special learning community at Gearity that encompasses the preschool through fifth grade student population.

The co-teaching environment consists of 10 lead teachers and 11 teaching aides. They are meticulous in their approach to educating preschoolers, and their passion for teaching radiates from every class-

room. "The teachers really care about the children," Mangano said. "It does not seem as though they are just doing their job, but are part of a team, working with my husband and me to bring out the best in our daughters."

Full- and part-time preschool, including programs for children with special needs, are available. "We recognize that education is a developmental process and that children learn at different rates," Program Specialist for Early Childhood Lorene Varley said.

A developmentally appropriate curriculum is implemented for all children within a safe and welcoming environment where children learn and grow through exploration and play. "We are helping to build a foundation to support life-long learners," Varley said. "We approach our early learners with lessons rooted in the required learning objectives from the Ohio Department of Education and chart a course at the beginning of the year so that each of our students enter kindergarten prepared and excited."

A weekly classroom theme is incorporated into every lesson of the full-day program and provides meaningful and comprehensive activities. For example, Monday's theme is art and history. Students explore music and motion on Tuesday. Literacy



skills are developed on Wednesday. Science and math discovery encompass Thursday. Students end the week with cooking and an integration of various subjects.

Mangano recalled "some of the other parents and I have joked that the lesson plans are more organized than some of our college courses were." It is this organization and focus on all aspects of early childhood learning that sets the school apart from other preschools, earning it accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the pre-eminent standard of excellence in preschools.

Multi-faceted and innovative approaches to learning make the preschool an exciting place for students. The Early Childhood Center is also one of a handful of preschools in the country partnering with the

Children's Television Workshop and Sesame Street to develop a pilot program to teach Mandarin Chinese to preschoolers.

"Gearity has everything you could want in a school," Mangano said. "It has diversity, dedicated teachers, excellent academics and, most of all, a real sense that you are part of a family working toward the education and growth of our children in a safe and nurturing environment. I could not be happier with the entire program."

To register or for more information, please contact the Early Childhood Center at 216-371-7356. Child care vouchers are accepted for both half-day and full-day tuition programs.

Michael Dougherty is the Coordinator of Communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. A longer version of this article appears online.

Taming the elephant in the room

Lita Gonzalez

What's a parent to do when a child comes home in tears because her best friend is moving? I asked my middle-schooler why. She managed to choke out between sobs, "I don't know." So I went and asked her best friend's mother, "Why?" The response that came back was "because the high school isn't a good school; the students are out of control; nobody learns there."

There it was, the proverbial "elephant in the room." The Perception (with a capital "P") "elephant" that: tramples on one's decision to send one's child to a majority minority school; that questions whether it was the right choice to make; that casts doubt on your standing as a "good parent" even though your child is happily blossoming before your eyes. Stand around at any local social gathering and inevitably the conversation will turn to what school

your child attends. "Heights High" is my answer as I prepare myself for a possible look of disdain, a gasp of disbelief, or a disapproving "Oh" followed by one raised eyebrow that sends me into righteous mode and unleashes my arsenal of defensive phrases: "Heights High is an excellent school...wonderful education...lots of opportunities...exceptional courses...I'm a good parent...I CHOSE to use Heights High...AP classes...strong instrumental music program" -and on and on.

This time I took a breath and asked this mother to come up to the high school with me and see for herself what was going on there. The next morning we stood in the middle of the main hallway as the bell rang. Classroom doors flew open. Students spilled out and began making their way to their next class. The decibel level rose as students loudly greeted friends, laughing, making plans for later in the day. Another bell pierced

the air and just as suddenly the crowded hallway emptied. "Well?" I asked. "This isn't anything like I was told," she answered. Then the two of us sat down and talked about her concerns, what I was experiencing as a parent of a Heights High School student, and the classes my older daughter was taking.

That was eight years ago. Three years ago my youngest daughter graduated from Heights High. Her friend graduated too. Both girls were taller, wiser, still friends and headed off to college in the fall. They had spent their high school years learning how to juggle a full load of classes and extracurricular offerings; learning how to date, how to dress, how to dance; making some unwise decisions; hating their parents one minute, loving us the next; and experiencing what most high school students experience—the highs and lows, the laughter and tears, and the challenges of maturing into young adults. I've shared that story many times over the years because it was the reason why, in 2003, I started PATH (Parent Ambassadors To Heights). PATH is a volunteer, parent led initiative that offers prospective parents the opportunity to visit Heights High when school is in session, sit in on a class, discuss their concerns and have their questions answered by a parent of a Heights High student.

PATH is a parent-to-parent mentoring program; a way of building positive relationships with prospective high school parents; those presently in the CH-UH middle schools as well as those whose children attend many of the area's private schools. By sharing their knowledge and experience of Heights High School, PATH volunteers help to counter the "Perceptions" of Heights that are present in the CH-UH community—perceptions that often don't match the reality of the quality of education our own children are receiving. PATH doesn't get rid of the "elephant." It does seem to shrink it and make it more manageable.

Last year my older daughter graduated from college with two degrees. Next year my younger daughter will graduate from college. I have no doubt in my mind that the education they received at Heights High prepared them well for the next phase of their educational adventure. The other day I thought of these facts and reminded myself once again that I did just fine with the schools I chose for my children. I then left to take another prospective parent on a tour of the high school, challenging the elephant once again.

For more information about taking a PATH led tour of Heights High School call 216-410-4577.

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Scholarship honors Officer West

Lita Gonzalez

New scholarship to honor Officer West's memory

On May 26, 2007, Officer Jason West, a member of the Cleveland Heights Police Department, lost his life while responding to a disturbance call. This tragedy touched so many people—his family, friends, fellow officers and the entire Cleveland Heights community.

A scholarship has been set up as a way of honoring Officer West's memory and his dedicated work as a police officer. The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship will be awarded to a graduating senior from the Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement Program at Cleveland Heights High School.

The scholarship selection committee which includes members of the community and a fellow police officer who is representing Officer West's family, have been meeting to develop the scope of the scholarship fund, the criteria that will be used in selecting recipients and to actually select the recipient. The first Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship will be awarded at this year's Senior Scholarship Awards Ceremony on Wednesday, May 28, 2008.

Jason always wanted to be a police officer. A close friend of Jason's and a fellow police officer said that "Jason embodied all of the qualities that we strive to achieve in life and as a law enforcement officer—he was honest, sincere, dedicated and loyal to himself, his family, his friends, and to the police department." That officer went on to say that "protecting and serving the City of Cleveland Heights was something that Jason did willingly each and every day he put his uniform on."

Jason made the ultimate sacrifice when responding to the call last May and many in this community miss him. The members of the Officer Jason D. West Scholarship selection committee feel that this scholarship is a fitting tribute to Officer West's memory. This scholarship, can keep Jason's name and legacy alive by assisting a student who wants to pursue a profession in law enforcement or criminal justice. Jason's life, commitment, and work will serve as a role model to young adults.

The Cleveland Heights and University Heights communities are invited to help honor the memory of Officer Jason West by contributing to his memorial scholarship fund. Anyone wishing to make a contribution can make checks payable to "Cleveland Heights - University Heights City School District," and include the words "Jason D. West Scholarship" on the memo line. Contributions can be mailed to:

The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o The Treasurer's Office, Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, 2155 Miramar Boulevard, University Heights, Ohio 44118

For more information about the scholarship contact Lita Gonzalez at 216-410-4577

Fund raising raffle

Phoenix Coffee on Lee Road is helping to raise money for the Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund. The popular locally owned coffee shop began selling \$2 raffle tickets Saturday, March 15. A drawing will be held on April 30 and the lucky winner will receive a Phoenix Coffee travel mug and 6 months of free coffee—a \$287 value!

Volunteers needed for tutoring pilot project at Heights High

Lita Gonzalez

The Mosaic Experience, one of the five small schools at Heights High School, is launching a new community-based volunteer tutoring program.

The Mosaic Experience's Shared Governance Team (SGT) has been working closely with Reaching Heights to develop a tutoring pilot program that will match volunteer tutors with freshman and their teachers.

"We want to recruit about 15 community and parent volunteers interested in working with Mosaic core subject teachers after school to tutor some of our freshman," said Mosaic Principal Nick Petty. "This is an excellent way for the community to interact with our students in a positive way," he added.

Students will be tutored in Math, Science, and English/Reading.

For a commitment of as little as one hour per week, volunteers can make a positive difference in the lives of our students. Community members interested in volunteering can contact Lita Gonzalez at 216-410-4577 for more information.

Heights-based Kulture Kids receives \$25K grant

Tom Kerr

The Eugene M. Adler Foundation has renewed its \$25,000 annual operating support for Kulture Kids, a nonprofit organization based in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

"Kulture Kids is the poster child for what we like to help," says Constance Adler, President of the Adler Foundation, which is based in Silver City, New Mexico. "The work they do throughout Ohio is critical in helping children gain access to (and learn from and about) the many cultures of the world. Now, more than ever, that is a key aspect of any child's development."

To learn more visit www.kulturekids.org

Event listings online

To see a full listing of events in the Heights, see www.heightsobserver.org

- Are you looking for a church that is vibrant, socially active, intellectually engaging, joyful, inclusive and even fun?
- Are you not quite sure what you believe, but you would like to find a welcoming place to dig deeper?
- Are you looking for a congregation that doesn't leave its faith in the pew on Sunday?

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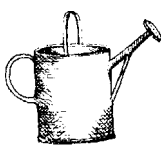


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Featured Heights Libraries Programs

Don't miss out on these exciting Heights Libraries Programs:

Coventry Village Library
1925 Coventry Road 216.321.3400
Thursdays on the Stage:
Thursdays, April 3–24, 4 p.m.
Black Deaf Advocates:
Saturday, April 12, 1 p.m.
Deaf Gatherings:
Monday, April 28, 6 p.m.
Rhyme Pajama Storytime:
Monday, April, 14, 7 p.m.
Go Green at Coventry Library:
Saturday, April 19, 12 p.m.–4 p.m.

Lee Road Library
2345 Lee Road 216.932.3600
African American Authors Book Discussion:
Tuesday, April 29, 6:30 p.m.
Waddlers Storytime:
Thursdays, April 3–May 8, 9:30 a.m.
Young Storytime:
Thursdays, April 3–May 8, 10:30 a.m.
Cuentos Y Cosas (Introduction to Spanish):
Fridays, April 4–May 9, 10:30 a.m.
How Does Your Garden Grow?:
Wednesday, April 16, 3 p.m.
Babysitting Clinic:
Wednesday, April 23–25, 3:30 p.m.

Noble Neighborhood Library
2800 Noble Road 216.291.5665
Great Book Discussion Group:
Tuesday, April 15, 7:30 p.m.
Knitting Circle:
April 17, 7 p.m.
Young and the Restless Storytime:
Fridays, April 3–May 9, 10:30 a.m.
Story Stop:
Fridays, April 4–25, 11:15 a.m.

University Heights Library
13866 Cedar Road 216.321.4700
Young and the Restless:
Fridays, April 4– May 9, 10:30 a.m.
Mother Goose Tells a Story:
Tuesdays, April 1–May 6, 1 p.m.
Feeling Lucky?:
Sunday, April 13, 2:30 p.m.
The Senior Spot:
Wednesdays, April 2–30, 12:30–2:30 p.m.

For more information, visit
www.heightslibrary.org or call us at
216.932.3600

Celebrate National Poetry Month with children

Serena Olson

April is National Poetry Month and it is the perfect time to introduce (or reintroduce) your child to poetry. Children's poetry is similar to poetry for adults, except that it attempts to observe life in a manner that will resonate with children. A great deal of children's poetry is intended to be shared orally and encourages participation. You can find shelf upon shelf of poetry in the Children's Services Department. There is something for every age group and a wide array of subject matter ranging from the absurdly hilarious to serious reflection. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

Anthologies:
A Family of Poems: My Favorite Poetry for Children edited by Caroline Kennedy
A Poke in the I: A Collection of Concrete Poems edited by Paul B. Janeczko
Here's A Little Poem: A Very First Book of Poetry selected by Jane Yolen
Poetry Speaks to Children edited by

Ridiculous Rose

Her mama said, "Don't eat with your fingers."

"OK," said Ridiculous Rose,

So she ate with her toes!

—Shel Silverstein
Where the Sidewalk Ends

Elise Paschen
The 20th Century Children's Poetry Treasury selected by Jack Prelutsky

Collections by Individual Authors:
Almost Late to School and More School Poems by Carol Diggory Shields
Casey at the Bat by Ernest L. Thayer
Ellington Was Not a Street by Ntozake Shange
Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich by Adam Rex
Handsprings by Douglas Florian
If Not For the Cat: Haiku by Jack Prelutsky
Moon, Have You Met My Mother? by Karla Kuskin
Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein
You Read to Me, I'll Read to You edited by Mary Ann Hoberman

To find these books of poetry along with many more, stop in to any of the Heights Libraries and ask a librarian for help! For more information about sharing poetry with children, visit The Children's Book Council at www.cbcbooks.org.

Michael Is Afraid OfThe Storm

Lightning is angry in the night.

Thunder spansks our house.

Rain is hating our old elm—

It punishes the boughs.

Now, I am next to nine years old,

And crying's not for me.

But if I touch my mother's hand,

Perhaps no one will see.

And if I keep herself in sight—

Follow her busy dress—

No one will notice my wild eye.

No one will laugh, I guess.

—Gwendolyn Brooks

A Family of Poems: My Favorite Poetry for Children
edited by Caroline Kennedy

What's in your future?

Kevin Ortner and Steve Wood

As a "bastion of free speech," it is hard to think of anything a library finds more important than communication. That is certainly the view of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library, its staff and board. And what could make better sense in this day and age than a local newspaper that has its genesis truly in the community.

When the library first heard of FutureHeights' plans to create a community newspaper, modeled after the successful *Lakewood Observer*, we were thrilled to be a part of the planning process. We recognized that the time had come, especially in communities such as Cleveland Heights and University Heights where the citizenry is more involved than you find elsewhere, for local residents to take responsibility for their own news efforts, rather than leaving that entirely to the for-profit sector.

The *Heights Observer* gives all of us the opportunity to prepare our own stories about what we feel is important in our community. It also provides the opportunity to bring issues and programs to the awareness of our friends and neighbors in ways that cannot be found in commercial journals. This is our chance to bring to people's attention those good things that are happening around us—that are important to all of us—but that wouldn't be considered worthwhile for "selling" newspapers.

Because it is both online and, now, in print, it has an immediacy that isn't found in other newspapers, even those coming out daily. But more importantly, the online version, with its various pieces-parts, gives us the opportunity to comment, discuss and debate the vital issues happening in our community. What power that gives us!

What is most interesting to contemplate is how the *Heights Observer* will grow and change over time. To be honest, we don't know. Through the power of the Internet we see around us a movement away from hardcopy newspapers and the leaning toward information online. That is clearly a way for the *Heights Observer* to move—and it is prepared to do so. But are we "there" yet? We think not. We believe that, just as with libraries and their propensity for the written word in hard copy, the paper version of the *Heights Observer* will be with us for some years to come. How fun that will be!

Kevin Ortner is a member of the board of library trustees. Steve Wood is director of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library



Get poetic at the Heights Main Library

Spend less time and grow a healthy, sustainable lawn

Vicki Mentrek

Can you be an environmentally responsible gardener even when yard work is only one of the many tasks to fit into your already busy schedule? Yes, you can. Here are some simple tips for a safer, more environmentally sound lawn.

- **Start with the right grasses.** Yes, grasses, plural. A mixture of grasses adapted to our region will be able to withstand problems better than if you have just one kind of grass. A mixture of perennial rye, fescue and Kentucky blue is great for North-east Ohio.
- **Focus on your site.** Almost all grasses prefer full sun; but, a few, such as fine fescues, tolerate some shade. Sometimes the best grass is no grass. Groundcovers or planting beds might make the most sense.
- **Mow with a sharp blade.** A dull lawn mower blade tears the grass instead of cutting it. Frayed grass is more susceptible to disease. Sharpen your mower blades at least once at the beginning of the season and when the grass looks ragged after mowing.
- **Raise your mower blades.** Tall grass grows longer roots which can access more water and nutrients. Tall grass has more leaf area so it is more vigorous than closely cut grass, and it shades out weeds. No matter what height you let your grass grow, remove no more than one-third of the grass with a single mowing.
- **Leave the clippings.** Grass clippings left on the lawn decompose and add nitrogen and organic matter to the soil. (And, you don't have to rake as often.) Clippings do not contribute to thatch buildup. Using a mulching mower to finely mince blades that will decompose quickly is a good option.
- **Remove thatch.** Thatch is an impenetrable mat of grass blades, roots and rhizomes that forms over the soil. A thick layer of thatch can prevent water from draining and



This is how your lawn will look in early April if you don't do anything at all to it.

invites disease and insects. If thatch isn't severe, aeration may solve the problem or raking the ground with a hard garden rake. Don't worry; raking will pull up only the ugly brown patches. Anything green and healthy will stay.

- **Aerate when the lawn is actively growing.** Aeration is a process that removes plugs of soil and leaves them on the lawn to break down. Aeration improves drainage, breaks up thatch, stimulates lawn growth and improves lawn health, without pesticides and fertilizers. So, if your ground is hard, if it has dry spots where grass fails to grow, or if a pencil can't be poked four to six inches into a moist lawn, it needs to be aerated.
- **Water your lawn only when needed.** When grass takes on a dull green or bluish color, when leaf blades begin

to roll or fold, or when footprints remain in the grass after you've walked on it, it's time to water. Water deeply and infrequently; you want roots to grow deep into the soil. Healthy roots extend six inches or more. Take into account weekly rainfall before setting out the sprinkler. Do not stand with your hose in your hand and "sprinkle" your grass. You are doing more harm than good. This only encourages short surface roots that can't survive any problems. One inch per week is the general rule of thumb. So if Mother Nature already did the job, turn off the timer and don't set out the sprinkler.

- **Use a balanced, natural fertilizer to feed your lawn.** Most natural fertilizers are slow-acting, remain available over time in the soil and rarely damage the grass by burning. Apply fertilizer once or twice each year. Be

careful not to use too much. More is not better. Follow the directions on the packaging.

- **Try a natural weed killer.** Healthy lawns naturally defeat weeds, so weeds may indicate a different problem. Corn gluten is proving effective in preventing crabgrass and other grasses from sprouting in the spring. It is also a natural, slow release nitrogen filter.

Don't waste time pursuing the perfect lawn. Artificial turf looks perfect because it isn't real. Lawns are living, growing and dying things. They aren't supposed to look perfect. Enjoy your healthy, sustainable lawn.

Mentrek works at Heights Garden Center on Cedar Road in Cleveland Heights.

Michael J. Madorsky

MJM

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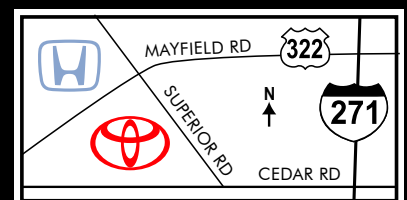
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(Located at the corner of Superior and Mayfield Rds.)



EARTH DAY STYRO-FAST



Phoenix Coffee is dedicated to creating a **sustainable coffee community** by increasing our use of **reusable mugs**.

During the week of APRIL 20th, we are asking customers to join us in a fast from disposable cups.

Fill out the Pledge and return it to any Phoenix cafe to show your support.

And don't forget your mug!



I, _____,
 Pledge to forsake the use of disposable cups for the consumption of my Phoenix Coffee beverages during the week of Earth Day, April 21-27.
 I will tote my reusable beverage container with pride and consider every sip an example of how altering our habits can change the world.
 I support Phoenix Coffee's dedication to creating a sustainable coffee community by reducing our use of disposable cups.

you & your mug
 photo or illustration

keeping the heights caffeinated
 Coventry ♥ Lee Road



Future Heights

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 Zagara's Marketplace, 1940 Lee Road,
 and the FutureHeights office, 2163 Lee Road #103

HOLLIS AUTOMOTIVE

2857 Noble Road
 Cleveland Heights, OH 44121
 (216) 472-6443

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 + a FREE oil change.

Please call for an appointment.

Expires May 5th