

## UH Charter Reform will top election news; so what's at the heart of the issue?

Kaitlin Bushinski

This year's election will bring big change to University Heights.

Not only will UH residents elect a new mayor for the first time in 32 years, they also will decide whether to change the structure of their government by amending the city charter to create the position of city administrator.

The UH Charter Review Commission recommended the addition of a city administrator—one that comes with a salary of about \$100,000—and the proposed amendment has sparked controversy among residents and politicians.

Both sides of the issue make strong arguments. Here they are:

### Against

Beryl Rothschild has been mayor for 32 years, and is not allowed to seek re-election due to term limits that were imposed during her tenure.

Rothschild opposes the addition of a

city administrator, saying it will harm the city's accountability to citizens by replacing the city's top manager—the directly elected mayor—with an administrator who is appointed by council and, therefore, a step removed from the electorate.

"There's no need for an administrator who is really a city manager in disguise," said Rothschild. "I've been against this since day one."

Rothschild also said she sees the addition of a city administrator who would manage the police, fire and service departments as an "irresponsible" effort to decrease the power of the mayor's office while increasing the power of city council. Currently, department directors are appointed by the mayor with council approval. Under the new charter, they would be appointed by the administrator—with approval by the mayor and the council. Her concern is that, because the council itself appoints the administrator, it will tend to rubber stamp any departmental candidates the administrator chooses.

Vice Mayor Adele Zucker agrees with Rothschild. "They want the power but they don't want the responsibility," said Zucker of those council members who support the administrator position.

Rothschild and Zucker both named



DEANNA BREMER FISHER

University Heights City Hall appears peaceful prior to administrative changes this fall.

council members Frankie Goldberg, Steven Bullock, Steven Sims, Kevin Patrick Murphy and Frank Consolo—he is the only current council member running for mayor—as those who have "combined to do what they want."

### For

Councilman Kevin Patrick Murphy disagrees with Zucker and Rothschild. "It's not a power grab, it's actually a balance of power," he said.

Murphy supports the city administrator position because he believes it will lead to a better distribution of power, it

will be more efficient and there will be a trained professional dealing with the day-to-day management of the city.

"Before, the mayor had all of the executive authority and could hire and fire every director except the law director, which is more power in one position than there should be," Murphy said. "The city has changed, the way the city has operated has changed and we need to modernize our government."

Murphy also believes the salary is a nonissue. It represents less than 1 percent of the city's \$12 million-plus

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## City of Cleveland Heights battles foreclosure burdens

Kaitlin Bushinski

As the home foreclosure crisis continues to shake communities nationwide, the City of Cleveland Heights, like many other small cities, is left with the burden of vacant or foreclosed homes.

"As the economy started to turn, and because of the unscrupulous lending practices, like every other community we started to see that things were just not in balance for homeowners here in Cleveland Heights," said Susanna Niermann O'Neil, the vice manager

and director of community relations for Cleveland Heights.

Starting five or six years ago, the city began seeing sharp rises in foreclosures, even as they mailed pamphlets warning renters and homeowners to beware of predatory lending practices, including the now notorious subprime loans.

"It was like this thing was coming at you and you couldn't stop it," said O'Neil of the sudden wave of foreclosures. Richard Wagner, manager of housing programs for the Heights, said that "at one point I could name the

*continued on page 5*

## Heights Community Congress postpones annual home tour

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Heights Community Congress has decided to postpone the 2009 Heights Heritage Home and Garden Tour that



COURTESY OF HEIGHTS COMMUNITY CONGRESS

The 2008 Heights Heritage Home and Garden tour showcased the City of Cleveland Heights' diversity of homes and lifestyles.

was scheduled for September. This would have been the 34th annual tour and had been the organization's largest fundraiser.

"It was one of the hardest decisions we've had to make," said Executive Director Kasey Greer, "but it's the right thing to do." Greer said increased costs and anticipated lower revenues due to the weak economy drove the board's decision.

The annual home tour engaged hundreds of community volunteers, drew approximately 1,500 people each year from throughout the region and show-

*continued on page 4*

## Where to find information for Heights area election races

Maryann Barnes

An especially interesting election season is coming up in Cleveland Heights and University Heights. As of this writing the final lists of candidates for all races were not yet complete, but it appears likely that all of the local races will be contested.

### Races include:

- Cleveland Heights City Council: Four seats with three incumbents up for reelection.
- University Heights City Council: Three seats, two incumbents up for reelection.
- University Heights Mayor: With long-time Mayor Beryl Rothschild stepping down, this race is complicated by a city charter reform issue that could change the character of the mayor's job.
- Cleveland Heights–University Heights

*continued on page 2*

## Free feature-writing workshop hosted by Observer, FutureHeights

Heights Observer Staff

"Feature Writing 101," a free workshop for citizen journalists, will be held 9:30–11:30 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 26 at the Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road.

The workshop, hosted by the *Heights Observer* and FutureHeights, is the third in a series designed to help people who want to foster discussion of community issues by writing for the *Heights Observer* or any other citizen journalism project. The previous sessions focused on news writing

*continued on page 7*

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# HEIGHTS OBSERVER

The Heights Observer is a citizen-based news source published monthly by FutureHeights, a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to civic engagement and quality of life.

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## Parent centers need our support

To the Editor:

Heights Parent Center in Cleveland Heights and Family Connections at Shaker Family Center in Shaker Heights need our help. In this economy, their traditional sources of support are being cut. They must depend more and more on individual support.

As a new parent, I have found these centers to be a great resource. As an early childhood educator, I am impressed by the services they provide. Families with young children gain education, resources and support to help them be the best parents they can be!

I would like to stress that high quality early childhood experiences have an influence that reaches far beyond the child alone. Nobel Laureate economist James Heckman points out that every dollar invested in quality early childhood education has an annualized yield of up to 17 percent. Let's step up to invest in the future success of our young children at [www.heightsparentcenter.org](http://www.heightsparentcenter.org) and [www.familyconnections1.org](http://www.familyconnections1.org).

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# Saving Ohio's economy

Ivan Gelfand

No matter how hard we try to reinvent ourselves, right now the Heights' economic health is still tied to the automobile industry. Like dominoes falling, with each passing week our economic downturn continues to affect our local businesses. Familiar greater-Cleveland family names such as Spitzer, Ganley, Axelrod, Serpentine, and others are struggling to make ends meet.

Stimulus dollars, the failure of many banking institutions (including our own National City Bank), the bankruptcy of General Motors and Chrysler and our federal government's buy-in to the tune of trillions of dollars will lead to super inflation or hyperinflation.

Quoting from a Financial Intelligence Report: "Everything Barack Obama, the Federal Reserve, and Congress are doing was predicted in startling detail almost two decades ago by a famous Nobel Prize-winning economist. His name was Milton Friedman. Though he passed away in 2006, in his prophetic writings, Friedman showed how facing massive deficits, the U. S. government would dramatically increase the money supply, why foreign countries would stop buying our debt, how the Fed would start buying our Treasury Bills and why this would cause massive inflation. He even predicted that our officials would claim inflation was no problem at all. Amazingly, all of this is coming to pass. In just 100 days, Barack Obama has doubled the U.S. money



Ivan Gelfand

supply, committed the government to at least \$7 trillion in new spending and warned the American people to expect trillion-dollar deficits for the foreseeable future."

Not to beat a dead horse, but quoting from a recent Kiplinger's Report, "The bigger concern: Inflation next year, as the economy starts to pick up some steam and the ballooning federal deficit and its potential to stoke long term interest rates move to the forefront. In fact, the latest run-up in long term interest rates was driven by worried bond investors. They are not convinced by Federal Reserve chief Ben Bernanke's vow not to tolerate higher inflation in 2010."

We need to be thinking 10 to 20 years ahead. Although many "experts" throughout the area have talked about the medical industry and the green industry as our economic saviors, we should look to our universities for the next great industrial revolution replacement.

Hyperinflation will certainly take our eye off the prize, but we still need to remember our roots and sow the seeds of change. Who knows, with our greatest resource, Lake Erie, maybe turning water into wine isn't such a bad idea.

*Ivan Gelfand is an author and speaker. Gelfand has built successful money management businesses in Northeast Ohio and produces a monthly economic newsletter: [www.ivangelfand.com](http://www.ivangelfand.com).*

ELECTION RACES continued from page 1

Board of Education: Three seats, two incumbents up for reelection.

Learn about the candidates with:

- The League of Women Voters' Voters Guide, produced by the Heights Chapter of LWV Cuyahoga Area, and posted by late September at [www.LWVCuyahogaArea.org](http://www.LWVCuyahogaArea.org).
- Candidates Night, Thursday, Oct. 8 at 7 p.m. at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, presented by the Heights League Chapter and FutureHeights.
- *Heights Observer*: The October print issue will profile every candidate. Online, at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org), these profiles will also provide in-depth answers to all of the questions asked by FutureHeights, as well as links to other information sources that have prepared candidate profiles or questionnaires.
- Online Heights Observatory Forum: Post your questions at [www.heightsobserver.org/deck](http://www.heightsobserver.org/deck) and candidates will respond online.

*Maryann Barnes is cochair of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area.*

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# CH-UH Public Library Board

## Meeting highlights

MONDAY JULY 20, 2009  
All members present.

### Budget concerns

Board discussion focused on expected cuts in state funding although final information hasn't yet been received. Board Member Steve Ortnier pointed out that the property tax collection rate has fallen from 96 percent to 92 percent. Board Member Eric Silverman also noted the impact of the demolition of the north side of Cedar Center on tax revenue.

On a positive note, Board Member Glenn Billington noted that a recent Dobama fundraiser drew 125 donors.

Director Nancy Levin said that \$800,000 could be saved in the 2009-2010 biennium, but there would have to be five layoffs. Because a number of the libraries have flat roof areas, Levin hopes that solar and wind power could be used to help with utility bills. She stated that the next challenge would be negotiating health care benefits; so far all the news from insurers has been negative.

Minor changes for budget savings will be stopping the mailing of overdue book notices, opening story times without reservations and holding fewer computer classes.



### Retirements

Alice Palda, children's librarian and storyteller, retires after 18 years. Judith Soppel, public relations coordinator, retires Aug. 7 after 23 years with the library. The board prepared a resolution in honor of her service, with special mention of her work on levy campaigns.

### Bylaw changes

The board approved changes to its bylaws relating to the fiscal officer and the amount of money that can be spent without board approval, which increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

### Public meetings set

Public meetings have been set for Aug. 10 at 7 p.m. and Aug. 16 at 2 p.m. for a look at the models and visuals representing suggested changes to the Activities Center.

### Library use

Board Member Ortnier's examination of circulation figures showed that the branch circulation was not increasing. He also found that while visitor counts at the Lee Road Library went up, those counts went down at the branches. Board Member Silverman noted that circulation gains

were in audio-visual materials as opposed to the book collection. Director Levin is still studying the best ways to measure computer usage. Meeting room usage is also an important figure, and telephone reference questions are up 30 percent more than last year. Advertising text on the FlashScan checkout receipts is also a revenue stream and has provided a free Flash-Scan machine for Coventry.

LWV observer: Anne S. McFarland.

These meeting summaries are abstracted from LWV observers' written reports. The summaries have been edited and prepared by Anne McFarland, Marilyn McLaughlin and Maryann Barnes. To receive e-mail postings of full reports, send an e-mail to mbarnes9515@gmail.com or join through Google groups using "lwv-chuh observer reports" as a search phrase.

These reports contain member observation and selected highlights of public meetings and are not official statements of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribution of these reports.

## Big book sale to be held in library basement

Tonya Gibson

The friends of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Libraries are making new friends and inviting support at the Fall Book Sale on Oct. 15 and 16 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The friends are saying, "Basement prices in the basement!"

All items are "buy one get one free!" Hardbacks are two for \$1. Paperbacks are two for 50 cents. More than 100,000 books will be available.

There's more! More than 40,000 adult comics, published by Innovation Corporation, will also be on sale. Great deals are to be found on high quality comics like *Lost in Space*, *Quantum Leap*, *Dark Shadows* and *On a Pale Horse*. Who knew Anne Rice and Piers Anthony were comic book writers? Start your collection —most items will be two for 50 cents.

Admission to the sale is free for friends of the Heights Library. Non-members pay a \$10 admission per person and \$25 per family. Admission includes a one-year membership to the Friends, newsletters with insider updates and discounts at area independent bookstores.

Volunteers are needed to work the sale. Please call 216-932-3600 ext. 234 if you are interested in learning more.

See you in the basement!

**Ride for Miles**  
**Sept. 12**

[www.rideformiles.org](http://www.rideformiles.org)

## Library partners with Art Museum

Tonya Gibson

The Heights Library system is delighted to announce that starting this fall, the Ingalls Library at the Cleveland Museum of Art will present joint programs with the Lee Road Library. This is only the second time that the Ingalls Library has entered into collaboration with a public library.

The partnership will offer several programs each quarter to highlight the primary exhibit on display at the museum. The programs will enhance visitors' experiences and deepen their understanding of the main exhibitions on view at the museum. During each quarter, the first offering will be presented by a member of the museum's staff at the Lee Road Library.

This program lays the groundwork for the new exhibitions and sets the stage for visits to the show.

The second program features a journey to Ingalls Library for a "Collection in Focus." Using items culled from their 440,000 cataloged volumes, the Ingalls staff will concentrate on a particular aspect of the exhibit.

The third program will be a book discussion at the Lee Road Library. In addition to hosting a lively conversation

on a book matched with the exhibit, lists of further reading suggestions and Web links will be available.

The first series is tied to the "Paul Gauguin: Paris, 1889" exhibition, opening on Oct. 4, organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art and the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam.

Registration for all programs is handled through the Heights Libraries. Call, visit or log on to [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org) to register online. Sign up for an individual program, or for all three.

### An Introduction to Paul Gauguin: Paris, 1889

Sunday, Oct. 11, 2:30 p.m.  
at the Lee Road Library

### Paul Gauguin: Paris, 1889 – Collection in Focus

Wednesday, Nov. 11, 7 p.m. at the Ingalls Library in the Cleveland Museum of Art

### Paul Gauguin: Paris, 1889 – Book Discussion

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010, 7 p.m.  
at the Lee Road Library

*Tonya Gibson is an employee of the Heights Libraries who enjoys writing and photography in her free time.*

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## Families invited to casual Dobama party

Tonya Gibson

While black tie may be the attire for the fancy gala planned for Dobama Theater's opening night on Sept. 25, the community will be able to dress casually for a sneak peek and celebration on Saturday afternoon, Sept. 12 from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The library will present a program for all ages, Shadow Puppet Theater, a fascinating combination of shape, light, and sound that comes together in a performance in which the actors are never seen, only their shadows.

Children can have their faces painted and participate in other theater-related activities sponsored by the

library and Heights Parent Center. Displays throughout the library will feature books and resources celebrating the performing arts.

Heights Arts Studio will host an exhibit of historic Cuyahoga County maps in honor of the opening play, "Ten Minutes from Cleveland," by Cleveland Heights playwright Eric Coble.

Dobama will hold an open rehearsal during which the curious may visit the brand new performance space in the lower level of the west wing of the library.

Dobama is currently selling tickets for the coming season, the 50th season of groundbreaking performances in Cleveland.

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# Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights

JULY 20, 2009

Council Member Bonita Caplan excused.

## Cell phones and driving

The Public Safety and Health Committee is considering a ban of handheld cell phones, texting and certain other activities while driving.

## Oxford neighborhood

A pilot program in the Oxford neighborhood involves weekly meetings with a liaison from the police force. If successful, the program may be expanded to other neighborhoods.

## Neighborhood problems

Council members have noticed an increase in phone calls regarding antisocial behavior of inconsiderate neighbors. People experiencing such issues should phone council members at home and call the police at 911 or 216-321-1234. To help set a better tone in neighborhoods, the city can help by printing fliers and sending a staff person, police officer or council member to meet with neighborhood groups.

## 2010 tax budget approved

Council approved the city's 2010 tax budget, which estimates almost \$40 million in revenues and slightly less in expenses. At an earlier budget hearing, it was noted that laying the groundwork for the 2010 budget was the \$3 million reduction in spending in 2009, all of which—personnel cuts, no pay raises, mandatory 10-day furloughs and decreases in programming—will carry over.

Also, because the city had paid off its short-term debt and most of its long-term debt during the past few years, projected interest expenses were low. Careful monitoring of expenses will be necessary and the state's budget will have implications for the city.

A copy of the budget is available to the public in the office of the city's director of finance and is also filed with the Cuyahoga County Budget Commission. City Manager Robert Downey and Finance Director Thomas Malone were



congratulated for managing the budget.

## Monticello Road project

Council approved an agreement with CT Consultants Inc. for engineering and support services for the first phase of the Monticello Boulevard Rehabilitation Project funded by the Ohio Public Works Commission. Fees paid will be based on percentages related to levels of actual construction costs.

## Electric Aggregation Power Supply Program

Council agreed to reestablish the city's Electric Aggregation Power Supply Program to offer residents and businesses electric power at discounted rates, as was in place from 2001 to 2005. The electric power is to be provided by First Energy Solutions Corp. for 33 months beginning in September. The discounted prices include a guaranteed 6 percent off the CEI standard service offer for residents and a guaranteed 4 percent off the CEI standard service rate for qualifying businesses.

## City to purchase distressed properties

Council authorized the city manager to use Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) Funds of \$2.35 million to purchase vacant, abandoned, and foreclosed single- and two-family homes located in NSP Priority Target Areas for the purpose of demolition or rehabilitation. The purchase price for any property shall not exceed \$75,000 for a single-family home and \$125,000 for a two-family home. The city manager must report all such transactions to council within one week of execution of a purchase agreement.

LWV observers: Katherine Solender and Carol Gibson.

AUGUST 3, 2009

Vice Mayor Phyllis Evans excused.

## Community Center fees

Admission fees for the Community Center for the 2009-2010 fall/winter season were set. Speed skating membership and adult basketball and hockey and group skating lessons will increase by less than 10 percent with no changes in yearly or monthly passes.

## City land bank

Council voted to give the city the option to create a city land bank (distinct from the County Land Bank) and take title of properties foreclosed due to tax delinquency. Such property would be tax exempt until it is sold and put back into use.

## Federal grant for police car purchase

A grant was accepted from the US Department of Justice through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to assist with the purchase of five new police cruisers. The cars will be purchased through the Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing program.

## Tattoo prohibition repealed

Council repealed a 1918 law prohibiting tattooing in Cleveland Heights. Changes in Ohio's health code made the old legislation unnecessary to protect public health.

## Nuisance properties to be demolished

Seriously deteriorating properties at 3100 East Derbyshire, 1015 Oxford and 860 Woodview roads were declared nuisances. The city will use federal stimulus funds to demolish the properties and recoup the cost from the property owners.

LWV observer: Susan Kaeser, Lisa Peters.

Space restrictions sometimes require the deletion of some proceedings. For more complete summaries view online postings at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).

See disclaimer on page 3.

HOME TOUR continued from page 1

cased hundreds of Cleveland Heights homes, she said.

"I'm saddened by the news," said Mayor Ed Kelley. "I look forward to what Heights Community Congress will do in the future and, as always, they have my complete support."

Susan Delaney, chair of the tour committee, said, "The tour has been an incredible undertaking for more than 30 years. It really speaks to the 'essence' of the city—its diversity in housing stock, neighborhoods, residents, all that Cleveland Heights has to offer and what makes it such a desirable place to live."

"A downturn in funding to present the tour puts the quality of the event in jeopardy. We cannot afford that risk," said Heights Community Congress Board President John Satola.

Greer said the organization is continuing to plan the event for 2010 and will consider making it biennial. She said her office has received dozens of calls about the tour. "All have been positive and understanding," she said.

Delaney said the tour committee is already working toward next year. "I personally am truly excited and energized by the enthusiasm. We welcome anyone interested in joining this dynamic group of volunteers to call Heights Community Congress or me. And we are grateful to any home owner wishing to participate next year."

Contact Heights Community Congress at 216.321-6775.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is the executive director of FutureHeights.

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UH CHARTER REFORM continued from page 1

operating budget, he said, and having an administrator would make the government more efficient and, therefore, ultimately save money.

Murphy also expects many City Hall employees will retire when Rothschild leaves office, potentially freeing up funds.

Councilman Frank Consolo, the only mayoral candidate on council, is on the record supporting the administrator position. That position was reiterated on his behalf by Murphy and Councilman Steven Bullock. However, Consolo failed to respond to repeated requests to discuss his position for this article.

Council members Murphy, Bullock

and Frankie Goldberg all support Consolo for mayor. Earlier this year, Murphy and Goldberg considered running for the office too.

“In my mind it’s important for most of council to get behind one candidate,” said Murphy, “as well as the plan for the administrator.”

Bullock is backing Consolo because “he’s a good leader and has a good understanding of the issues facing our city. We have to think in terms of today’s needs, and I think Frank can do that.”

Undecided

So how will residents vote in November?

FORECLOSURE continued from page 1

properties in the city; it was a very minor problem.” According to Wagner, in 2002, there were 44 properties that required “nuisance abatement” work, such as lawn cutting and emergency boarding. By 2008 there were 455 properties that required nuisance abatement.

There are more than 25,000 residential properties in Cleveland Heights, and O’Neil and Wagner believe the city avoided the worst of the crisis, unlike Cleveland.

Despite the financial burden placed on the city to deal with vacant homes—nuisance abatement cost the city \$95,750 in 2008—Wagner said the strong annual inspection program his office runs and neighbors’ awareness of city regulations has helped the city keep foreclosed homes from falling into disrepair.

Why does the city end up caring for so many foreclosed homes in the first place? According to Cleveland Heights Council Member Mark Tumeo, “The banks are heavily implicated in a lot of these problems. They just are not good players, 9 times out of 10. If the banks take over the house, but don’t file the deed, the owner is still liable. The banks have foreclosed and theoretically moved them out but [the former owners] still hold their titles.”

This leads to properties having “clouded titles,” where no one can tell who exactly can sell the home. Although the original residents are liable under law for the property if the bank hasn’t claimed the deed, they often move away or are unable to properly maintain the property, leaving the burden on the city.

Nonetheless, Wagner and O’Neil said they’re hopeful that the city will weather the crisis because of the variety of programs it has initiated. The city has been able to buy homes and rehabilitate or demolish them as necessary through several state and federal grant programs.

Using Community Development Block Grants, and ironically, as a result of the depreciated housing market, the city was able to purchase homes in some of its most problematic neighborhoods and rehab them.

The best example is the East Derbyshire project. The city purchased four units on the street using block grants and renovated the properties, turning them into condos that are now on the market for \$119,000 each. Although none of the East Derbyshire homes has sold, Wagner noted heavy interest in the homes since the first showing.

“Even though the foreclosure crisis was a disaster for everybody, it presented opportunities. We were able to acquire the properties on Derbyshire.

Council candidate Rick Adante, who does not support the addition of a city administrator, said residents have voiced concerns about the issue throughout his campaign.

“People are skeptical that a city administrator would be better for the city,” Adante said. “The charter review commission has never been able to provide specific problems and issues the city manager can handle; everything is very vague.”

“Residents are unaware or just don’t have enough information,” counters Murphy. “When I’m able to take the time to explain what’s happening, they’re supportive of it. The key is to educate them.”

Bullock said the reaction he has been getting from his constituents has been, “We don’t understand what you want to do.”

Based on that feedback, Bullock said there are a lot of questions City Council must answer by November if they want the position of city administrator to be approved. “We have a challenge ahead of us,” he said.

Kaitlin Bushinski is a recent graduate of Oberlin College and a summer intern at the Heights Observer.

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Prior to that, it wasn’t feasible because the cost of the properties was too high. When we sell them, we hope to get our money back,” said Wagner.

Wagner hopes to expand the East Derbyshire project with federal stimulus funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Programs. With NSP funds, the city is targeting blocks off of Lee Road between Mayfield and Cedar roads, areas of Caledonia between Taylor and Noble roads, the Randolph area and the Noble-Monticello area.

Through another program—a special offer from HUD—Cleveland Heights purchased ailing homes for \$1. Nonprofit housing agencies are eligible to buy these \$1 homes and renovate them.

The Home Repair Resource Center, a nonprofit based in Cleveland Heights, is one of the organizations that has purchased HUD homes from the city and


renovated them.

Kathryn Lad, the executive director of HRRC, said her organization has seen great success with its rehabilitation program. HRRC sold its first rehabilitated home before the renovations were even finished.

Lad praised the city for its efforts to regulate and manage housing in the Heights, saying “The city has always put a high priority on housing. Some people might complain because we have housing inspections every five years. In some ways it can be tough, but because of the housing inspections, Cleveland Heights housing is in better shape than many similar communities. It has made a big difference.”

Kaitlin Bushinski is a recent graduate of Oberlin College and a summer intern at the Heights Observer.

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## CH-UH Board of Education Meeting highlights

AUGUST 4, 2009

All board members present.

### Grant applications

The board approved the submission of two grant applications: 1) 2010 Career-Technical and Adult Education Application, to the Ohio Department of Education for \$267,834.08 and 2) Fiscal Year 2010 Consolidated Application: Titles I, II, III, IV, IDEA-B, and ECSE, to the Ohio Department of Education for \$4,573,202.

### Board policy updates

Board policy updates on property and operations were presented on second reading and will be acted on at the Sept. 8 meeting.

### New principal and high school music teacher

Superintendent Heuer introduced the new principal for Wiley Middle School, Dr. Octavia Reid and the new instrumental music teacher at the high school, Daniel Heim.

### Monticello and Noble repairs

The board approved a bid for the Monticello Middle School and Noble Elementary School boiler feed water tank replacement project.

### Middle school technology

The board authorized the execution of the master lease-purchase agreement for computer hardware and software for the middle schools.



### Jason West Scholarship Fund

The board accepted a \$300 donation to the Jason D. West Scholarship Fund.

### Oxford repairs

Responding to Board Member Michael Cicero's query on repairs at Oxford School, Director of Business Services Stephen Shergalis said that the concrete walkways were being repaired and the new windows should arrive in time. He has a backup plan if needed.

### State budget

Board President Kal Zucker noted that the Ohio School Boards Association was looking at the new state budget and will be commenting on how it affects school districts.

LWV observer: Adele Cohn.

Space restrictions sometimes require the deletion of some proceedings. For more complete summaries view online postings at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).

See disclaimer on page 3.

## Heights High students receive scholarship offers totaling more than \$8.5 million

Jacalyn Elfvin

Congratulations to the Class of 2009! Cleveland Heights High School seniors were offered scholarships exceeding \$8.5 million.

The graduating seniors were accepted to the following colleges and universities:

Alfred University, Allegheny College, Alliant International University, American Jewish University/Indiana University, Ashland University, Ashworth College, Baldwin-Wallace College, Beloit College, Bluffton University, Boston College, Bowling Green State University, California Institute of Technology, Capital University, Carnegie Mellon University, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cloud Community College, College of Wooster, Columbus College of Art and Design, Cornell University, Cuyahoga Community College, DePauw University, Dominican University, Earlham College, Eastern University, Eastern Michigan University, Elmira College, Georgetown University, Goshen College, Grambling State University, Greenville College, Heidelberg University, Hendrix College, Hiram College, Holy Cross College, Hope College, Indiana University, Iowa Western University, John Carroll University, Kent State University, Kenyon College, Lakeland Community College, Marietta College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Mercyhurst College, Miami University, Michigan

State University, Montgomery College, Mount Union College, New York University, North Carolina State University, Northwood University, Oberlin College, Ohio State University, Ohio University, Ohio Wesleyan University, Pennsylvania Culinary Arts Institute, Rochester Institute of Technology, Savannah College of Art and Design, Scottsdale Culinary Institute, Shawnee State University, Skidmore College, Southern Illinois University, Southwest Baptist University, Spelman College, St. Olaf College, Stauzenburger Community College, Syracuse University, Texas Tech, Tiffin University, Tulane University, United States Air Force, University of Akron, University of Charleston, University of Chicago, University of Cincinnati, University of Dayton, University of Findlay, University of Hartford, University of Iowa, University of Kansas, University of Michigan, University of North Carolina, University of Pittsburgh, University of Puget Sound, University of Toledo, University of Vermont, Vassar College, Virginia Wesleyan College, Walsh University, Washington and Jefferson University, West Virginia University, Westminster College, Wilberforce University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Wright State University and Xavier University.

*Jackie Elfvin is the administrative assistant in the Office of Communications and Community Engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.*

## Ruffing Montessori School turns 50

Carol Provan

The community is invited to attend Ruffing Montessori School's birthday party on Sunday, Sept. 13, from 3 to 5 p.m., at Ruffing Montessori School, 3380 Fairmount Blvd., in honor of its 50 years in education. Established by the Cleveland Montessori Association in 1959 as the second Montessori school in the United States, and operated since 1977 by the Fairmount Montessori Association, Ruffing has a tradition of

educational leadership.

The party will feature activities for all ages: games, music, songs, a display from Ruffing's archives, green school tours and birthday cake. Current families, former families, alumni and all community friends are invited.

Please RSVP to [Karenh@ruffing-montessori.net](mailto:Karenh@ruffing-montessori.net) or by calling 216-321-7571.

*Carol Provan is director of development for Ruffing Montessori School.*

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# Parenting Q&A



Ellen Barrett

*Q. Our daughter is usually so pleasant but we have had a very hard time getting her to share. It is almost impossible in our own home and often just as much of a challenge at friend's house. We feel sure that she knows better and often looks right at us as she snatches a toy or pushes her way into a space! How can we teach her to share and be a more compatible friend?*

A. The first thing to remember is children are not able to control many of their behaviors. In fact research shows that the part of the brain that controls impulses (prefrontal cortex) isn't fully developed until age 25, so you can imagine what it looks like at age 2 or 3! Although it may appear that your child knows "right" from "wrong" and may sense your disapproval, she may not actually be able to stop herself from committing the offense.

That being said, you can have a strong influence on the process. Giving your child opportunities to play with you and with others helps strengthen the development of that area of the brain.

The other thing to keep in mind is that the concept of "sharing" is much more abstract than "taking turns." For example, here at the Heights Parent Center, I use the slide that sits in the

middle of the room as a great teaching tool. Kids clamor for the slide, rush for it and try to slip in ahead of (or often on top of) the child in front of them. They also go around and try to climb up the front while someone else is trying to slide down causing a "traffic jam!"

Asking the kids to "share" the slide might be unclear and confusing. However, by stating the phrase "up the steps, down the slide" and naming the children and where they fall in the process — "Olivia slides while Ben waits, now Ben slides while Olivia waits"—and repeat these (over and over sometimes) helps the children find the rhythm. Each child is playing a role—waiting and sliding become two parts of the whole. This can then be transferred to other situations: "Elliot turns the first page and Sam lifts the flap," and "Jack pushes the cart while Erin makes a path."

Children are creatures of habit and will find comfort in predictable patterns and expectations and parents find it helpful to have a few phrases that they can rely on to trigger the expected (hoped for) behavior.

*Ellen Barrett, a parent educator at Heights Parent Center for the last 12 years, fields questions about the daily ups and downs of parenting. The same issues affect many parents. Ellen invites readers to send questions for her to ebarrett@heightsparentcenter.org.*

WORKSHOP continued from page 1

skills. It's not necessary to have attended either of the previous sessions.

This workshop will focus on writing feature stories. Topics include selecting a subject, background research, interviewing and beginning to write. Attendees will examine samples of good feature writing, and will be given tips and other resources for honing their craft.

The workshop will be led by John Ettorre, a member of the *Heights Observer* editorial advisory board, a professional journalist and Emmy Award-winning writer. His bylined work has appeared in nearly 100 publications, including *The New York Times* and *The Christian Science Monitor*. One of his cover stories for *Cleveland Magazine* was chosen by the editors as among the 50 best in the magazine's history.

His blog, "Working With Words," a daily digest of notes and observations about the writing craft, has been recognized as the best blog in Ohio by the

Society for Professional Journalists. Pulitzer-winning columnist Connie Schultz once called it "a thoughtful, sane place where inspiration simmers and wisdom reigns."

"Making interesting people come alive on a page through the art of good storytelling is one of the tougher challenges for any writer, but also one of the most rewarding," Ettorre said. "This workshop is designed to break feature-writing down to its essential elements, demystify the process, and arm anyone with a curious mind with the tools to tackle any topic, or any person, they find interesting."

The session will include ample time for questions, and individual attention will be available as well.

The workshop is free, but reservations are highly recommended. To make reservations, please call FutureHeights at 216-320-1423. You can also sign up on [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com), in the "events" box of the "FutureHeights" group.

# BE GREAT

## Heights Youth Club is a safe haven after school

Jeff Haynes

What are your children doing after school? If you worry about them being home alone or hanging out with the wrong crowd, the Heights Youth Club on Lee Road can end those concerns.

The club offers a positive and safe environment for youth ages 6-18, where they can do their homework with the help of tutors, participate in daily games and contests and nurture their creative side.

The club also offers teen-specific programming, such as setting goals for jobs and careers, and just relaxing in a teen-designated lounge area. Club members love the place.

As one teen said, "When I think of the Heights Youth Club, I think of a positive place for kids. If this club wasn't open, I would probably be hanging around the wrong people, which can get you into a whole lot of trouble. This club and the people here make me feel safe. I love this place. I can meet new people, have fun, learn new things and just be a kid. Instead of just having one staff member here to inspire me, I have many. It is important to have positive influences in your life because they can

help you to be in a better situation than what you may be in now."

Despite the current national and local economic woes, the club is offering a quality program for only \$10 a year. That is not a typo! For just \$10 a year, your child can participate in as many or as few programs and he or she would like. Also included in that price is one full hot meal every day. Not only will your child be in a safe and nurturing environment, learning and having fun, but he or she will also receive a full meal every day.

To become a member of the club, fill out an application and pay the membership fee. The club meets during after-school hours, Monday-Friday from 3:30-7:30 p.m.

Still not sure? Take advantage of the free tours of the facility. To arrange for a tour, call ahead to make sure someone is available to show you around. The Heights Youth Club is located at 2065 Lee Road, on the corner of Lee and Washington, next to the Heights Football Field. If you have any questions, call the club at 216-321-CLUB or <http://heightsyouthclub.org>. Come check it out!

*Jeff Haynes is the Heights Youth Club's assistant director.*

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# Running strong with 30 years under the hood: Hollis Automotive

Kaitlin Bushinski

Richard Hollis, owner of Hollis Automotive on Noble Road, has been working on cars since he was 9 or 10 years old.

"I started in 1949-50," said Hollis. His mother marched him into a local auto shop and asked the head mechanic, "Why don't you hire him?"

"OK, we'll give him a quarter per hour," said the mechanic. "That's too much," replied Mrs. Hollis. "Give him 10 cents."

Since then, hard work and fair pricing has defined Hollis' business philosophy, something this reporter experienced first-hand. Showing up with a coupon Hollis had published in the *Heights Observer*, I received an oil change for less than \$20.

Sitting down after he had replenished various fluids in my Mitsubishi Gallant, Hollis, born and raised in Cleveland Heights, said he has kept his two-employee business running since 1977.

"There have been times when on Friday I think 'This is it, I'm never going to open the door again.' But I come back Monday and everything is fine," he said.

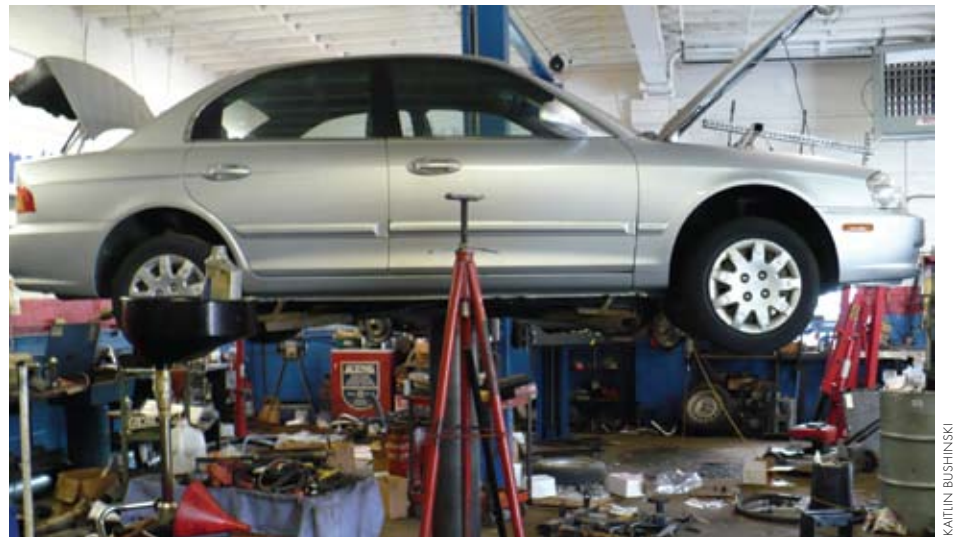
He completed a year-and-a-half at what was then the Western Reserve Division of Part-Time Studies, now known as Case Western Reserve University. But Hollis said studying for a degree in psychology and English wasn't for him.

"I have a pretty good mechanical aptitude, and that's something you can't always teach someone," said Hollis. "I like mechanical things."

After working at several garages and briefly running a word-of-mouth repair shop out of his home garage ("Highly illegal in Cleveland Heights, I'm sure," chuckled Hollis), he found a space for his own auto shop on Lee Road, just south of Cedar.

Over the years he's built a loyal clientele, most of whom followed him in 2001 when he moved to his current location on Noble Road.

Although his doctor told him to get



Hollis is known for personal service and a lifetime working on cars.

out of the business when a car accident severely injured his back, Hollis decided to stay put. He said he wanted to keep the shop open and continue offering the service he's known for. Sometimes he'll even drive over to customers' homes to pick up their vehicle, service it, and return it.

"Yes," said Hollis, "sometimes I do stupid things like that."

But that is part of what has kept Hollis Automotive in business for over 30 years. When asked what distinguishes

his business from others, Hollis simply shrugged and said, "I'm here."

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Kaitlin Bushinski is a recent graduate of Oberlin College and a summer intern at the *Heights Observer*. She was uninjured in a car accident that, sadly, totaled her recently serviced Mitsubishi Gallant.

## Magnolia Clubhouse teams up with local businesses to provide jobs

Daisy Schwarz

Magnolia Clubhouse, Inc., located in University Circle, is a community that creates opportunities for people with mental illness. Its mission is to ensure that people who have a mental illness are respected coworkers, neighbors and friends. Formerly known as Hill House, The clubhouse has promoted vocational, educational, social and personal achievement since 1961.

One unique feature of the clubhouse, and one that's essential to rehabilitation, is employment. Transitional employment is often the first step in obtaining work experience and building confidence. Transitional employment positions are part-time, entry-level jobs with area businesses. This partnership provides a great benefit to the employer, including guaranteed job coverage. Members rotate into the highly supported transitional jobs, which usually

are held for nine months to a year. The clubhouse also assists members in obtaining ongoing employment. The results are significant. Statistics show that employment rates for clubhouse members are at least four times higher than the national average for people who experience mental illness.

Zagara's Marketplace has hired clubhouse members for more than a decade. This successful partnership began at the store's original Lee Road location in Cleveland Heights and when the new Richmond Heights store was opened, the clubhouse was asked to supply employees for that location as well. During the past 10 years, 40 members have been employed both in transitional and ongoing positions.

Clubhouse member Jerome Brigham, now working in ongoing employment at Zagara's said, "I can't believe the changes that have taken place for me. I had never held a job before, and this job means so



Jerome Brigham at Zagara's Marketplace.

much to me. The management and staff at Zagara's are so thoughtful and respectful, which has helped me to have faith in my abilities and my worth."

T.J. Maxx and Magnolia Clubhouse began an employment partnership in 2006, starting with two transitional employment placements.

John Jordan, an operations assis-

tant at T.J. Maxx in University Heights, has been a supportive employer of clubhouse members ever since. "The members want to work and are a good addition to the T.J. Maxx team," he said. Three years after the inception of this partnership, nine members have successfully worked in a variety of custodial, stock room and fitting room positions.

Currently there are two members in transitional employment positions and four in ongoing employment there.

The clubhouse also partners with several other local businesses and seeks to create new employment opportunities for members. If you are interested in being a partner in employment, contact Paula Feher at 216-721-3030, ext. 132. The clubhouse will provide training and support and guarantee job coverage.

Daisy Schwarz is a licensed social worker at Magnolia Clubhouse, Inc.

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## Sunbeam welcomes silhouette artist

Janet Nelson

Nationally known silhouette artist, Clay Rice, will return to Sunbeam Shop for Children, 3469 Fairmount Blvd., on Oct. 2.

Rice creates a unique portrait of your child in minutes with just a pair of scissors and a small piece of black paper.

The art form of silhouette dates back to the 1700's and has been a traditional memento of childhood for generations. Performance silhouettes are a tradition in Rice's family: his grandfather Carew Rice started teaching him when he was a child.

Last year Rice wrote and illustrated a children's story called *The Lonely Shadow*.

Clients who purchase this book along with a silhouette portrait will receive a complimentary silhouette and a special flat frame that can be attached to the book to create an heirloom memento.

Silhouette appointments are available on Friday Oct. 2 from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Call 216-397-3929.

All proceeds from Sunbeam Shop for Children help support Vocational Guidance Services in its mission of providing work for people with barriers to employment.

Janet Nelson has served as manager and buyer for Sunbeam Shop for Children for 29 years.





Donna Dixon (left) instructs students in home health care.

# Integrity Care home health care with heart

Cecily Anitah Bryant

When Donna Dixon sent her daughter, Denise, and two sons to Sunday school at Hope Lutheran Church years ago, she never imagined she would someday operate a business from that very location.

But one day, while traveling past the Taylor Road church to her mother's home in University Heights, that daughter (Denise Ford) noticed a sign advertising "five classrooms/offices for rent." Fondly remembering those rooms and mentally connecting them to the expanding home-based business she operated with her mother, Ford suggested to Dixon that they visit the location.

The match was perfect.

Dixon, 53, is an R.N. and the president and chief executive officer of Integrity Care Solutions, Inc., a new home health-care agency. Ford, an L.P.N., is nurse administrator and a nursing supervisor.

Now located in the annex of Hope Lutheran Church, at 2222 North Taylor Road, Integrity Care provides skilled nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy and aide services to Ohio residents.

Integrity Care's special approach to home health care has its roots in personal experience. The family lived through and coped with the illness and loss of two young family members.

"We had to deal with nurses, therapists, doctors, people coming into the home, case managers, hospice," said Dixon. "It's tough on a family. We can look at the caregiver role and see it differently than other agency owners because we have been there."

Integrity Care trains its own staff, offering two certification programs on-site: Home Health Aide and State-Tested Nursing Assistant. Both are 75-hour courses, offered in the evenings.

Integrity Care also offers a course for caregivers: a two-hour session that provides practical information on time management, the best ways to care for loved ones and maintaining a safe environment. The course helps caregivers make time for themselves. And if staff identify caregiver burnout issues, the agency can also offer respite.

There are also two CPR classes, one for the general public and one for health care professionals.

Integrity Care is an affiliate partner for Alarm Care System, a 24-hour personal emergency response system that enables many people with serious health problems to live a safe and independent life.

Beginning in January 2010, Integrity Care will offer two annual scholarships to students furthering their education by enrolling in nursing school. The Desmond L. Garner Scholarship, for a man, and the Jaidyn T. Sims Scholarship, for a woman, are named in memory of Dixon's two grandchildren, Desmond and Jaidyn.

In addition, for every State-Tested Nursing Assistant class offered, one person who cannot afford the course will be able to attend without charge.

Dixon, a longtime resident of University Heights, said it was a natural decision to bring her new business to Cleveland Heights. "This is where I raised my children, my grandchild is being raised here and this is where I want to make a contribution."

**INTEGRITY CARE SOLUTIONS, INC.**  
2222 N. Taylor Road  
Cleveland Heights, OH 44112  
(216) 320-9055  
[www.ohioics.com](http://www.ohioics.com)

Cecily Anitah Bryant is a freelance writer.

## Local eateries start marketing with new text message service

Kaitlin Bushinski

Afr8d ur missing specialz @ ur local hangout? You may be in luck.

Cleveland Heights entrepreneur Dan Murphy has created a way for businesses to integrate cell phone text messaging into their traditional advertising programs.

Murphy, 27, said his firm, Smart Messaging, is the only one offering this marketing service to local businesses.

"Small businesses think, 'It's so expensive, I can't do it,'" said Murphy of his texting services. "But it is less expensive and more effective than traditional advertising."

Here's how it works. A business that uses the service tells patrons they can receive special offers by opting to receive text messages. Patrons opt in by sending a special code for that business to the Smart Messaging server at 95495.

When Smart Messaging receives the code, it responds by sending out a coupon or offer designated by the business. The patron's phone number is saved, enabling the business to send mass e-mails with offers, business announcements or other relevant information.

Consumers can opt out at any time by texting "STOP" to 95495.

Regular text rates apply, but other than that, the service is free to consumers.

Craig Sumers, owner of Lopez on Lee Road, is one of Murphy's clients. During August, he offered \$20 off the table's bill for customers who texted "LOPEZ." "After one text, we have almost 400 people on our texting list," Sumers said. "We're very excited about it. It's really been a spectacular response."

"There are two reasons Craig was able to get so many people to text in so quickly," Murphy said. "First, he offered a great deal . . . \$20 off. And second, he did a great job of promoting the text

offer by sending an e-mail blast and also asking his servers to inform customers about the deal."

Sumers said he'll be texting patrons every Friday with the latest deals and menu specials.

Declan Synnott, owner of the Cedar Lee Pub on Lee Road, has signed on to Smart Messaging as well. Cedar Lee Pub patrons can text "Pub2" to receive food and drink specials.

"I think it's going to work very well," said Synnott, who plans to start texting specials every Friday starting in September. "Ninety-seven percent of texts are opened, compared to 25 percent of e-mails; that's why we're doing it."

For more information about Smart Messaging, contact Dan Murphy at 216-233-2665 or [dmurphy@smartmessage.me](mailto:dmurphy@smartmessage.me).

Kaitlin Bushinski is a recent graduate of Oberlin College and a summer intern for the Heights Observer.

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<b>October 6</b>	<b>Staging Your Home</b> Marissa Iacovetta & Angie Potts, Reflections Interior Design
<b>October 13</b>	<b>Selling Your Home</b> Lee-Ann Spacek, North Coast Residential Relocation Attorney Art Smialek
<b>October 20</b>	<b>Living Smart!</b> HGTV Host Matt Fox
<b>November 10</b>	<b>Safe and Happy at Home!</b> Autumn Richmond LSW, Benjamin Rose Institute



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# Anatolia Café

## Turkish wines to go with great food

Loren Sonkin

The Heights area has many culinary treasures that commit to serving wines, both interesting and out of the ordinary. In that vein, my wife and I visited Anatolia Café, a Turkish restaurant on Lee Road, that features a full bar and a very interesting wine list.

Anatolia's wine list is quite broad and includes a handful of Turkish choic-

es. Having never had the opportunity, we decided to focus on a few Turkish wines and we were not disappointed. We started with a glass (\$7) of Kavaklidere Cankay white wine. This is a blend of the Narince, Emir, and Sultaniye grapes. It has clean white pepper and tarragon scents eventually giving way to grapefruit and smoke. It is an austere wine that went well with the Lentil soup.

Next up was a red, Kavaklidere

Selection. At \$8 per glass, it is a blend of the Öküzgözü, and Boğazkere grapes. This is a darker wine with a nose of dark cherries and dust. More new world in style, it has a hefty amount of oak as well as a bit tart plums.

Finally we ordered a bottle of the red 2004 Kavaklidere Kale'cik Karasi (\$54). It has an almost Pinot Noir quality, but the fruit is more dried. Lots of cherries, persimmon, and pomegranate and also some spice (nutmeg?). We drank a couple of glasses and took the rest home (I am glad Ohio changed the law to allow this). It was even better the next day.

The owner, Yashar Yildirim, sat down with us and talked to us about

Turkey, his home, and the wines. Then he poured us a glass of Yeni Raki, an anise liqueur served on ice with water. Similar to Ouzo, it was like liquefied Good & Plenty's® and quite tasty.

Anatolia has a full service bar and a very good wine list. They also have a few Turkish and Russian beers. It is certainly worth visiting just for that. Although I have said little about the food, it was excellent and interesting as well. I look forward to going back and continuing my education on Turkish wine, beer and food.

*Loren Sonkin lives in Cleveland Heights, is the winemaker for SonkinCellars.com in California and writes for IntoWine.com.*

## Nighttown serves entertainment and the community

Kathleen Fairweather

Cleveland Heights residents know they have a treasure in Nighttown, Brendan Ring's nationally renowned jazz club named for the Dublin red-light district in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Nighttown dishes up fine food and cool jazz. What folks may not know is that Nighttown is dedicated to serving the neighborhood as well.

It's no secret that Cleveland Heights has been affected by the economy, as has Nighttown. "Foot traffic is off by 10 percent," says Ring. "However, the economy has an upside as there are more fundraisers and benefits held at Nighttown and that business is up by 30 percent. We've had benefits for organizations such as El Barrio, the American Cancer Society, and United Cerebral Palsy—to name just a few."

Ring is a great believer in giving back to the community and is a big supporter of the Cleveland Food Bank. Instead of the usual two-for-one dinner specials designed to lure customers in during a slow economy, Ring donates



Derdriu and Brendan Ring with Nighttown's prize Yamaha piano.

\$5 to the Food Bank for every dinner purchased on Hungry First Monday. The program has proved so popular that Ring has managed to raise \$9,000 for the Food Bank since March of this year. "If they come in on the first Monday," Ring notes, "they are coming in to support the Food Bank program."

Ring constantly looks for ways to combine music and community, and after learning that Yamaha was donating concert grand pianos to select jazz clubs across the nation, Ring lobbied Yamaha Piano to consider Nighttown.

Yamaha was so impressed with the Cleveland Heights jazz club that Nighttown received a free concert grand piano worth \$75,000. This is an honor typically bestowed on big city jazz clubs in New York, San Francisco, Chicago and Los Angeles. "This adds a huge legitimacy to a suburban area jazz club," says Ring. "Not only will we utilize it with our concert series, but we also plan to provide workshops for children in the community."

Giving back to the community is a family affair. Derdriu Ring, local actress and sister of Brendan Ring, is producing (along with Regina Brett), *Wise Up!!*, a literary feast and fundraiser to benefit the Friends of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library. [See related story by Bruce Hennes on page 11.]

For more information, to make a donation, or to volunteer, contact Derdriu Ring at 216-795-0550 or e-mail ringkerry@hotmail.com.

*Kathleen Fairweather is a Hollywood refugee, documentary filmmaker, journalist, turned Cleveland Heights resident. She has never lived in snow, but has seen it on TV.*

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# Nighttown to host literary fundraiser for CH-UH Library Friends

Bruce Hennes

The Nighttown Academy of Poetry & Letters is the fictional invention of two friends, both award-winning Cleveland Heights residents: Irish actress Derdriu Ring and Regina Brett, Plain Dealer columnist.

Envisioned as less Harvard or Hogwarts and more James Joyce meets Monty Python, this academy will come alive for one night only on October 4 when it stages a fundraiser benefiting the Friends of the CH-UH Public Library.

The event, Wise Up!!, features a cast of local celebrities, literary greats

and friends of the arts, each reading a poem or prose. The all-star cast currently includes Afi-Odelia Scruggs, Barbara Bisantz Raymond, Bob Conrad, Brendan Ring, Carlo Wolff, Carolyn Jack, Dan Chaon, David Giffels, Dee Perry, Derdriu Ring, Dick Feagler, Ed Kelly, Gail Belamy, George Bilgere, Joan Southgate, Joe Esterhaus, Judith Mansour, Karen Long, Karen Sandstrom, Kathleen Cerveney, Kathleen Fairweather, Kris Ohlson, Laura Taxel, Les Roberts, Loren Weiss, Mansfield Frazier, Margaret Bernstein, Mark Dawidziak, Mary Doria Russell, Mary Weems, Meredith Holmes, Michael Heaton, Michael Ruhlman, Nancy

Levin, Natalia Rodas, Peggy Spaeth, Peter Lawson Jones, Regina Brett, Ron Wilson, Sarah May, Scott Lax, Steve Presser and Thrity Umrigar. Literary-themed music will be performed by Maryann Nagel, Bill Rudman, Helen Welch and Fabio Polanco, accompanied by Nancy Maier on the piano. The event also features a silent auction. Anyone with an item to donate should call 216-321-7774.

Appletree Books and Mac's Backs will also be present, with the proceeds of their book sales staying with the bookstores, though all other event-related dollars will go to the Friends of

the Library.

Wise Up!! will be held on Sunday, Oct. 4 at Nighttown. There will be two separate shows, each featuring half the cast, at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., with a separate \$20 per person admission charge for each 90-minute show. Producer/directors Ring and Brett said "Advance reservations are indeed a must!" For reservations, call 216-795-0550.

Wise Up!! is sponsored by Nighttown and the law firm of Weisman, Kennedy and Berris, LPA.

*Bruce Hennes is a volunteer for Wise Up!!*

## JCU talent show to benefit Center for Autism

Jamie Ott

John Carroll University is the epicenter for service and social action in the Heights area. Two years ago, during the fall semester of 2007, a new colony of the Beta Theta Pi fraternity was born under the premise of principled living and giving back to the community.

On Oct. 2, the men of Beta will be hosting the second annual Carroll's Got Talent—a talent show including students, faculty and staff. The proceeds will benefit the Center for Autism at the local Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital in Shaker Square.

Last year's debut event raised more than \$700 with acts that included singing, dancing, comedy, acrobatics and more.

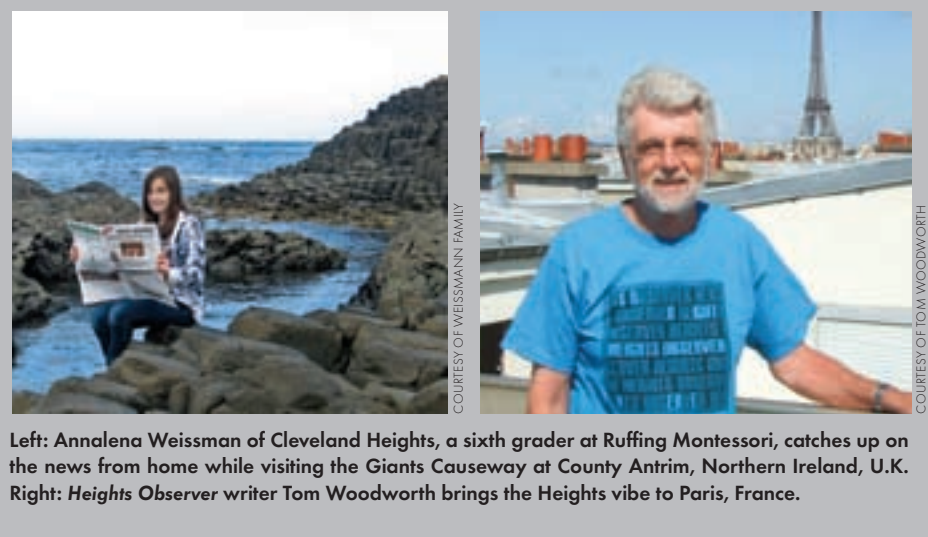
This year's event, which promises to be even bigger and better, starts at 7 p.m. in the Kulas Auditorium on the campus of John Carroll University. Tickets will be sold for \$3 at the door the night of the show, and the entire community is welcome.

*Jaimie Ott is a senior at John Carroll University and is founding father and philanthropy chairman for the new Beta Theta Pi fraternity.*

## HEIGHTS HISTORY: Picture This



Built in 1923, the Alcazar Hotel at Surrey and Derbyshire roads was billed as "Cleveland's most desirable residential hotel." Designed in the Spanish-Moorish eclectic style, the Alcazar is reminiscent of Florida hotels built in the 1880s by Henry Flagler. Special guests at the hotel included George Gershwin, Jack Benny and Mary Martin. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places and designated a Cleveland Heights Landmark, the Alcazar Hotel still operates as a residential hotel. Find out more at [www.chhistory.org](http://www.chhistory.org)! The Cleveland Heights Historical Society promotes the history of our community through public programs, an informative Web site and fact-filled newsletters. Join today!



Left: Annalena Weissman of Cleveland Heights, a sixth grader at Ruffing Montessori, catches up on the news from home while visiting the Giants Causeway at County Antrim, Northern Ireland, U.K. Right: Heights Observer writer Tom Woodworth brings the Heights vibe to Paris, France.

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# Planting your financial garden

Rebecca Bar-Shain

Money. It can provide opportunities and it can be the source of much worry. How can you reduce the stress you feel about money? One approach is to do some thoughtful planning.

When was the last time you made a list of your goals and dreams and made a plan for achieving them? Taking this step might feel big and scary, but the process really is energizing and exciting. Developing a plan can enable you to provide for your loved ones while helping to create security for your own retirement. When you take the time to evaluate your finances and your future goals, you will develop a strategy that will give you a sense of empowerment and control.

One way to begin is to set aside 30 minutes to brainstorm 5 to 10 goals. Once you have identified your goals, set a time frame and the steps you'll need to achieve them. This includes estimating the funds needed to achieve the goals. Remember also that you're not alone. By all means, get some outside perspective from a trusted friend or relative, or better yet, find a financial planner you trust. This can be a valuable, long-term partnership.

If you have tangible goals, you can use them as an incentive to save. Cut out a picture of one of your goals (e.g. a relaxed retiree on the beach; a new car) and put it in your wallet next to

your credit card. The next time you're tempted to buy something, you'll remember your bigger goals.

You don't have to be wealthy now to ensure security in the future. Financial security can come one day at a time. Establish good saving and spending habits and then educate yourself further by exploring which investment vehicles best suit your goals. Don't let the market scare you. Become educated about using the downturn to buy low. If you feel overwhelmed, don't walk away, but rather seek out experts

to help you.

Of course, you should save for your children's educations. But keep in mind that your own retirement should be a priority over your children's college savings accounts for one simple reason. No one offers "retirement loans," but there are multiple ways to finance a college education. Someone who has planned wisely for his or her own retirement will be in a sound financial position to help a child pay off a student loan.

For that matter, someone who has set goals for his or her financial security

will be in a sound position for much of what happens in life. Really, there's no better time than the present to start thinking about tomorrow.

*Rebecca L. Bar-Shain works with families and business owners to help recognize opportunities and manage their financial resources to meet their personal goals. She is an advisor at Cedar Brook Financial Partners and a representative of Securities America Inc, SIPC and Securities America Advisors. Cedar Brook Financial Partners and Securities America are not affiliated.*

## If your mortgage is late, don't wait

Gail Jackson

Home Repair Resource Center, a HUD-certified housing counseling agency in Cleveland Heights, received a national grant that enables it to extend its foreclosure intervention and prevention counseling services to residents in Northeast Ohio, including the inner-ring suburbs.

For those facing foreclosure on their homes, it is important to first contact your lender. Second, contact a HUD-approved counseling agency, like the Home Repair Resource Center. One should understand that there is not one standard solution for each household. Foreclosure prevention provides various options that may or may not be

available depending on the household circumstances and the type of mortgage loan a person might have. However, homeowners must be proactive in all efforts to avoid foreclosure.

Foreclosures affect the person holding the mortgage, the family, the neighborhood and the entire community. There are many possible outcomes, but the most important step is to reach out for help sooner rather than later. Early intervention has the potential to minimize the impact and help save your home.

Mortgage lenders and servicers have agreed to participate in various federal and state programs to assist struggling homeowners keep their homes. Programs include: Making Homes Affordable, Home Now

Alliance, and Cuyahoga County Foreclosure Prevention.

Beware of scams. HUD-certified counseling agencies don't charge a fee for services involving foreclosure intervention. The Home Repair Resource Center has certified and experienced counselors specially trained in foreclosure intervention. Its counselors have been instrumental in helping many Cleveland Heights residents save their homes.

Call 216-381-6100 during regular business hours to make an appointment.

*Gail Jackson lives on East Derbyshire Road and works for the Home Repair Resource Center.*



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# Losing my father: dealing with Alzheimer's disease

Lita Gonzalez

"Your father tried to cut the grass this morning with his car. He thought it was the riding mower," my mother said. "Well," I replied, "at least he didn't cut the grass too short." She laughed briefly, then began to cry. "It's getting harder," she said. "I know mom . . . I know."

I am a baby boomer, one of 76 million born in the United States between 1946 and 1964. My 85-year-old father grew up during the Great Depression and fought in World War II. In 1985 my parents retired to Florida; my husband and I moved to Ohio, and my brother and his wife remained on Long Island. Our comfortable lives were upended when my father developed Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's is irreversible—a progressive brain disorder that begins with mild memory loss and confusion, but eventually destroys judgment, language and thinking skills, and the ability to care for oneself. The causes of Alzheimer's are unclear. There is no cure and the available drugs only slow down its progression.

The nation's population is aging. The Alzheimer's Association estimates that one out of every eight baby boomers could develop the disease. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 4.5 million Americans have Alzheimer's now, and about 50 percent of people older than 85 are believed to be affected as well. Most people with Alzheimer's begin exhibiting symptoms after 60, though it can strike people in their 40s and 50s. Many Americans are literally losing their minds.

The warning signs for my father began as early as 2001, but we dismissed them as "senior moments." By 2005 we could no longer ignore the signs. He was diagnosed with middle-stage Alzheimer's disease. I was scared. My grandmother had died horribly from the ravages of Alzheimer's. Now it was attacking my father. Panic set in whenever I misplaced my keys or forgot a name. This is not an unusual reaction. According to a MetLife Foundation survey, Americans age 55 and older fear Alzheimer's disease more than any other ailment, including heart disease, stroke or diabetes. Yet few of us prepare for coping with Alzheimer's in ourselves or our love ones.

Where do you start when the amount of available information is over-

whelming or a loved one is in denial?

Start with a visit to the local Alzheimer's Association chapter office and their Web site, [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org), can provide you with a wealth of information. The book we found most helpful was *Coach Broyles' Playbook for Alzheimer's Caregivers: A Practical Tips Guide*. It is full of information, advice, resources and suggestions for laying out a plan of action.

Get your ducks in a row now, update all legal papers, including living wills, financial power of attorney, and health care power of attorney. *Broyles' Playbook* and the Alzheimer's Web site explain the purpose of these and other legal documents. It is important to consult an attorney who understands elder care law so that these documents are drawn up properly. The local Alzheimer's Association office can suggest elder law attorneys or visit [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov).

Medically speaking, go with your parent to his or her doctor visits. During these appointments, your parent can verbally give the doctors permission to discuss health care issues with you, and can sign a HIPAA release of information form. The Privacy Rule (HIPAA) does not require health care providers to discuss health care decisions with family, friends or even the patient's spouse.

Manage the situation long distance by visiting the Web site of the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers, [www.caremanager.org](http://www.caremanager.org). A Professional Geriatric Care Manager (PGCM) is a health and human services specialist who helps families care for older relatives. PGCMs are trained and experienced in several fields, including nursing, gerontology, social work or psychology, with a specialized focus on issues related to aging and elder care. The Web site has tools for finding PGCMs near your parents' home, provides a list of questions to ask when interviewing a potential care manager, and explains the types of services a PGCM can provide.

The most difficult obstacle we had to overcome was getting my mother to agree to work with a geriatric care manager. It took several crises, frantic phone calls, and flights to Florida for her to finally agree to accept outside help. To increase mom's comfort level, I flew to Florida when the PGCM did the cognitive and physical assessment on my parents. Her written assessment is a comprehensive evaluation of the situation and the list of recommendations is a blueprint for what still needs

to be done.

We now have a person in place who can be a support for my mother, brother and me. My parents' legal papers are updated and I can communicate directly with their physician. I wish I could say that our problems are solved. Unfortunately, the worst is yet to come. My father no longer recognizes family members in pictures, no longer

remembers my husband's or my daughters' names, and I know from experience, that I will one day look into my father's eyes and he will not know who I am.

*Lita Gonzalez, a longtime community volunteer, lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband Mark. Both her daughters are Heights High graduates.*

## Alcazar presents 'From House to Home'

Heights Observer Staff

As people age, they often find that their house is getting too big and the yard is becoming too much to manage. Yet even thinking about change can be overwhelming. The Alcazar, an institution that offers independent living for seniors, is offering free workshops this fall.

"From House to Home" is a series of workshops designed to help seniors and their children think about the next stage of their lives. These free programs will be held at the Alcazar, 2450 Derbyshire Road, on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8 p.m., beginning with a reception at 6:30, catered by Ben Cyr, owner of Green Planet Catering. A schedule and description of the workshops follow:

**Sept. 15, Downsizing and Decluttering.** Muffy Kaesberg and Jo-Ellen Salkin, from Organizing 4 U, discuss how to get started and how to prepare your home for sale. Learn what to keep and what do with the rest.

**Oct. 6, Staging Your Home for**

**a Quick Profitable Sale.** Marissa Iacovetta and Angie Potts, of Reflections Interior Design, help you discover how to use what you already own to redesign your home to maximize its appeal and value to potential buyers.

**Oct. 13, Selling Your Home.** This informative session helps you develop a marketing plan for your home. With legal tips for seniors, this program is presented by Lee-Ann Spacek, owner of North Coast Residential Relocation, and Arthur Smialek, attorney at law.

**Oct. 20, Living Smart!** Matt Fox of HGTV's "Room by Room" shows how a bigger place isn't necessarily better. In fact, smaller is probably smarter.

**Nov. 10, Safe and Happy at Home** will be presented by the Benjamin Rose Institute and Autumn Richmond, LSW, of the Eldercare Services Institute.

For more information or reservations, contact Janet Hildebrandt at 216-321-5400, x.103 or by e-mail: [janet@thealcazar.com](mailto:janet@thealcazar.com).

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# Rebuilt HUD home impresses visitors

Susie Kaeser

"I wish it was mine," proclaimed Cleveland Heights author and longtime resident Marian Morton, referring to a recently renovated home on Westover Road.

She was among more than 200 people who attended the Aug. 13 open house hosted by the Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC), the Cleveland Heights nonprofit that spearheaded the reclamation of this previously neglected property.

The celebration marked the completion of an 18-month effort by HRRC's subsidiary, Home in the Heights, to restore the house. During a brief ribbon-cutting ceremony by Mayor Ed Kelley, HRRC Board Chairman Mike Gaynier thanked the many partners for making the project possible. Then Project Manager David Hunter turned the keys over to new owners Nadelane Joseph and Mark Finkenbine.

"The work on that house is phenomenal," observed Council Member Mark Tumeo. "It sets the benchmark for future renovation projects in Cleveland Heights." The project's high quality is why he believes the house sold so quickly.

Joseph and Finkenbine were only the third prospects to see the house; they walked through when it was still being gutted, Gaynier said. They paid \$181,500 for the property, which was sold through Howard Hanna Real Estate Services.

Less than a year ago, the home was an eyesore on a lovely street in the Forest Hill neighborhood. By then, it had been vacant for three years. This spring, after several delays, Home in the Heights, secured ownership from the city, and

financed its restoration. Hunter shepherded the six-month process that upgraded almost every major system in the house, while making it energy efficient and using green building practices.

The City of Cleveland Heights was a critical partner in the project. In 2008, the city obtained 28 homes from the federal government through a program to address HUD-owned foreclosed properties. The Westover house is the first of these to be rehabilitated.

Hunter worked closely with Cleveland Heights Housing Manager Rick Wagner to determine which houses were feasible to renovate. HRRC hoped to renovate about a dozen of the homes, but last year's credit-market collapse forced it to limit the project to three properties. The other two are on Quilliams and Edison roads; HRRC's goal is to complete one of those by January.

Tumeo said four of the other 28 HUD houses have been demolished. The city has sold one parcel to a neighbor, is developing a community garden on one, and will land-bank two parcels. Another eight houses will be demolished using



More than 200 well-wishers helped the Home Repair Resource Center celebrate the complete renovation of a neglected home on Westover Road.

federal stimulus funds; they aren't cost effective to repair. The city is working on plans for the others.

The Home Repair Resource Center was established in 1971 to maintain and strengthen the houses of Cleveland Heights to support the community's rich diversity. Its programs help residents complete repairs to their homes (do-it-yourself and contracted), advocate for

improved housing, and provide financial assistance, individual counseling and financial literacy classes. In 38 years, the organization has facilitated more than \$13 million in home repairs. To learn more or make a donation, call 216-381-6100 or visit [www.hrrc-ch.org](http://www.hrrc-ch.org).

*Susie Kaeser is on the board of the Home Repair Resource Center.*

## Inglewood neighborhood achieves National Register status

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The National Park Service has approved the Inglewood neighborhood's application to be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The area is located north of Mayfield Road, is centered on Inglewood Drive, and includes homes on Yellowstone, Quilliams and Glenwood roads, Oakridge Drive,

and Cleveland Heights Boulevard. The neighborhood will hold a celebration on Sept. 11.

Aided by neighbors Mazie Adams and Diana Woodbridge, resident Diana Wellman completed the application.

"Our history is something we can capitalize on," said Wellman. "It is what sets us apart from other communities." Eighty-one homes in the area met the historic district criteria and were the basis for the designation.

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. Inglewood meets the criteria for its relationship to historic events, significant individuals and architecture.

"It is exciting for Cleveland Heights to be recognized on a national level," said Kara Hamley O'Donnell, historic preservation planner for the City of Cleveland Heights. "We have so much that is worthy of recognition in this city."

O'Donnell said that the city has another nomination under review: Grant Deming's Forest Hill neighborhood.

"These are grassroots efforts led by individual citizens," said O'Donnell. "This is not imposed from above, but something the residents really want. They are willing to put countless hours into researching and documenting their historic neighborhoods."

The City of Cleveland Heights will install three Inglewood Historic District markers at major entry points to the district.

The celebration will be held on Friday, Sept. 11 from 6 to 7 p.m. on the island where Oakridge and Inglewood drives meet. Mayor Ed Kelley and Council Member Bonnie Caplan will deliver remarks and unveil the marker. In case of rain, the ceremony will be held at 1390 Inglewood Drive.

"I'm really pleased with the amount of community support," said Wellman, "not just from our neighbors, but also all of Cleveland Heights. Mayor Kelley has been very supportive and so have other community organizations. Old homes are challenging at times, but they're worth it!"

*Deanna Bremer Fisher is the executive director of FutureHeights and the publisher of the Heights Observer.*

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Side by Side

Local foundation helps breast cancer survivors

Kathy Dawson

*Q: For some reason, I can't seem to get my husband to do what I ask him to. Whether I ask him to stop leaving the cupboard door open every time he takes out a glass or to not leave the toilet seat up, he just tunes me out. How do I get him to do the things I want him to do?*

A: My guess is that your husband isn't tuning you out. He probably hears your every word, but isn't doing what you want him to because of how you are asking. Instead of asking him for what you want, it sounds like you are asking for what you don't want. For example, instead of saying, "Would you stop leaving the cupboard door open each time you get out a glass?" say "Would you close the cupboard door each time you take out a glass?" A small shift in your words can make a big difference. By avoiding the use of words such as "don't," "stop" and "not," you will learn to ask for what you do want rather than what you don't. In the event that your husband does grant your request, do you reinforce his new behavior with appreciation and gratitude or do you think, "Why thank him for doing something he is supposed to be doing?" This may sound like you're training a dog, but we humans are highly motivated by positive reinforcement!

*Kathy Dawson is a Cleveland Heights author and relationship coach. To learn more, visit [www.kathythecoach.com](http://www.kathythecoach.com). If you would like your anonymous relationship question answered in a future column, send it to Kathy at [kathy@kathythecoach.com](mailto:kathy@kathythecoach.com).*

Sheila Howard

The following letter was written by a Cleveland Heights woman. To protect her privacy, I refer to her as DA.

"I found a sizable lump in my right breast in January 2007. I was diagnosed with stage 3 breast cancer. I was devastated! My surgeon and oncologist told me that we must be aggressive because this type of cancer is fast-growing and invasive. Thus began my long journey battling this terrible disease. I didn't know how drastically my life would change. I had coped with arthritis and fibromyalgia for years, and learned to live with these. I didn't know how I could possibly live with CANCER!

"I immediately shared the news with my family and friends, rallying all the support possible. Everyone was reassuring, even my husband of 20 years, with whom I had just reconciled. He told me not to worry; we'd get through this together. Three months later, he walked out, leaving a letter stating he just didn't want to be married anymore. Talk about a one-two punch!

"I was unable to work. I had used the little reserves I had and now my other means of support—my husband—decided he wanted out. I felt I would surely be homeless soon. But I am not homeless, thanks to a loving daughter, sister and brother. They all contributed to keep me afloat.

"I returned to work part-time, as a caregiver, before finishing radiation—too soon, I was told. I developed a blood clot and needed to take blood thinners,

all the while trying to keep my sanity. It soon became necessary to restart antidepressants and anxiety medication to help me deal with a divorce, staying alive and earning some income. I did not want to become totally dependent on my family.

"The arthritis, which had worsened as a result of chemotherapy, made it difficult to do the work I had previously done. Adding to my stress was trying to pay the most important bills: housing, utilities and food, while trying to hold onto my private health insurance on my own.

"I am trying to retrain myself for less physical work, but my limited computer skills hold me back. Mostly, I'm

just trying to hold onto my home and restore my health."

The J. D. Breast Cancer Foundation provides financial assistance to women with breast cancer and provided \$600 to cover the cost of DA's insurance for one month. J. D. Breast Cancer Foundation is hosting the Young Survivors' Symposium and 5k race on Oct. 3 and 4. Come and hear cancer experts discuss advances in nutrition and cancer treatment, and a special appearance by Kris Carr, filmmaker and author of *Crazy Sexy Cancer Survivor*. For more information, go to [www.jdbcfoundation.org](http://www.jdbcfoundation.org).

*Sheila Howard is the executive director of the J. D. Breast Cancer Foundation.*

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