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Developer, residents at odds over Oakwood

Deanna Bremer Fisher

First Interstate has a plan for the former Oakwood Club property. Citizens for Oakwood have a plan. But, so far, the City of Cleveland Heights does not.

According to Howard Thompson, the city's new director of economic development, the city has not conducted a feasibility study or examined how the property fits into an economic development plan for the area. The city learned about the First Interstate proposal to develop the property into big-box retail and upscale housing at noon on Dec. 29, when First Interstate sent its press



CH-UH's kindergartens and preschool hold open houses

Angee Shaker

Parents and guardians of kids entering preschool or kindergarten are invited to attend the Cleveland Heights–University Heights City School District's open houses. Tour your neighborhood elementary building, meet the principal, visit kindergarten classrooms and interact with other parents, teachers and students.

All of the district's elementary school buildings are open on Thursday, Jan. 13, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. for the kindergarten open houses:

- Boulevard Elementary School, 1749 Lee Road; Lawrence Swoope, principal.
- Canterbury Elementary School, 2530 Canterbury Road; Kevin Harrell, principal.
- Fairfax Elementary School, 3150 Fair-

fax Road; Michael Wasser, principal.

- Gearity Professional Development School, 2323 Wrenford Road; Sherry Miller, principal.
- Noble Elementary School, 1293 Ardoon Street, Rachael Coleman, principal.
- Oxford Elementary School, 939 Quilliams Road; Denice Leddy, principal.
- Roxboro Elementary School, 2405 Roxboro Road; Tara Grove, principal

According to Tara Grove, "The decision about whom to trust with your children's education is one of the most important ones you make on their behalf. The significance of finding the school whose mission resonates with your expectations of excellence, whose faculty members are extraordinary, and

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Community invited to hear State of the Schools address

Angee Shaker

Douglas Heuer, CH schools superintendent, will deliver the district's annual State of the Schools address on Wednesday, Jan. 26, at 7 p.m. in the Social Room at Heights High, 13263 Cedar Road. He will recap the previous year and show how CH-UH educators are working to prepare all students for success and to build on the district's progress.

The CH-UH Parent Teacher Association will host the meeting and provide refreshments. The Barbershoppers will perform prior to the talk.

Angee Shaker is the coordinator of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

release to the media.

"The developer has not yet submitted the proposal to the city," said Mayor Ed Kelley. "I'll need to learn more about the developer and see the actual proposal before I can comment. I am looking forward to a lively public discourse on this issue."

First Interstate announced that it has purchased the 62 acres of the Oakwood property that lie within South Euclid and that it has an option to purchase the remaining 92 acres that lie within Cleveland Heights. The company plans to create value-based big-box re-

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Remembering Ezekiel "Zeke" Burrows

Vince Reddy

The news in recent months has been about Cleveland losing stars to Miami, but sometimes it goes the other way.



Ezekiel Burrows

Ezekiel "Zeke" Burrows of Cleveland Heights, who died on Dec. 15 at age 76 after a brief illness, came to us from his former home in Miami and, during his many years here, contributed immeasurably to the civic life of Greater Cleveland.

Burrows served on the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission for the last dozen years, where he was known for a unique style of oratory, an always friendly demeanor, and his insistence on commending his fellow citizens on the plans and ideas they brought before the commission. He was politically active, having participated in multiple political campaigns, including a run for a seat on the school board, and he served his church, Mount Zion Congregational, in numerous capacities. He was a leader in his neighborhood, where he led efforts to help neighbors in need and encouraged young people to excel in school and in life.

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OPINION

Heights schools begin their second century

Eric Silverman

As the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District embarks on a review of its physical needs for the 21st century, it is a good time to look back at the buildings that have served the community's children for the past century. Since the completion of the 1970s renovations, and construction of four new schools, the district has not constructed a new building in 35 years—the longest period in its history without new construction. Before this hiatus, there was a near-constant cycle of new school construction, first in Cleveland Heights and then in University Heights.

At the dawn of the 20th century, the township/city that became Cleveland Heights was beginning its transformation from a farming community in the hinterlands of Cleveland to a "garden suburb" of homes for people seeking to escape the city. Early districts, such as Euclid Heights, Euclid Golf, Ambler Heights and Mayfield Heights would soon be joined by numerous developments as Cleveland's population sought larger lots away from the noise and pollution of the city center.

In the early days of the Cleveland Heights School District, there were only three buildings to serve the small population: Superior Schoolhouse at the intersection of Superior Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard; Noble, located on Noble Road in the city's northeast, and Roxboro, serving the western edge of the community.

At that time, Cleveland Heights was on the cusp of tremendous growth and its civic leaders planned for a series of buildings to be constructed over the next 20 years. These would be needed as the city's population rapidly increased. Between 1910 and 1930, the population grew from 2,955 to 50,946.

To accommodate the growing school population, more schools were built: the first Heights High (later Roosevelt Junior High) on Lee Road in 1915; Fairfax in 1916; Coventry in 1917; the second Roxboro (Elementary) in 1919; Taylor and the second Noble in 1922; Boulevard in 1923; Roxboro Junior High and the new Cleveland Heights High in 1926; Oxford in 1928; Canter-

continued on page 2



The original entrance of Cleveland Heights High School is now obscured by an addition built in the 1950s.

Letters Policy

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The *Heights Observer* welcomes letters to the editor. They must be submitted electronically, along with the writer's name, phone number and e-mail address, to:
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How the region can—and should—get smart

Greg Donley

"Saturday Night Live" recently opened with a skit in which a fake John Boehner proclaimed, "The American people spoke loudly and clearly: Stop the tax hikes and stop the spending." Asked what programs to cut, he said, "The American people were not clear on that."

Our own region faces the same challenge. We need to significantly reduce spending, but how do we do it without abandoning core responsibilities? Consider this: A big reason taxes aren't lower in Northeast Ohio is that we have an oversupply of housing and commercial development. This depresses the value of all properties, and means we need higher tax rates to fund services.

Why the oversupply? Because our region has the same population as in 1950, but since then we've built out over twice as much land area. Increased costs divided by the same number of taxpayers equals higher taxes.

Many problems trace back to this. Crumbling infrastructure? We spend foolish amounts on new roads and utilities that are desired, but not needed.

Urban school struggles? When a new school is built on the outskirts and draws families outward, urban districts are saddled with the cost of redundant buildings and tougher-to-educate students. Plus, the regional oversupply of housing and retail disproportionately depresses the value of urban properties, undercutting the funding base of those school systems.

Sluggish growth? We move people and goods over needlessly long distances and spend too much on the enabling infrastructure.

Much of the outward spread has been subsidized one way or another in the name of growth. But growth that gives a great bargain of low taxes/high service to some people at the ongoing expense of everyone else is not progress; it's slow regional suicide. We can't blame people for taking the discount, but we also can't afford to keep giving away the store.

Where to start? First, Northeast Ohio has amazing assets: great location for intracontinental transportation; bounteous agriculture; world-class cultural, educational, and medical institutions and the commensurate brain trust; manufacturing expertise; natural beauty and recreation amenities; abundant fresh water; affordable cost of living; and a wealth of livable neighborhoods.

Our public policy should leverage those assets.

Second, assume that every dollar we don't spend subsidizing outer suburbia is like putting two to four dollars in the regional bank. Think about all the ways that savings could be used to put Northeast Ohio in a stronger competitive position.

So how about a few simple reforms:

- Make it illegal for utilities to fold the cost of new infrastructure for outer-ring development into all their customers' bills.
- End public funding for new highway interchanges designed to spur development. Developers should pay for that speculative asphalt.
- Home mortgage interest deductions? Not if you're moving into a new outer-ring development.
- State funds to build new schools? Take care of existing schools first.
- Want more highways? Make them toll roads and charge enough to pay for maintenance and policing, too.

Smart design makes a difference. Wise spending aims for the highest output for a given input. That means investing primarily in compact, efficient systems. The minimum "efficient" population density (just dense enough that people don't have to drive everywhere, allowing infrastructure to be reduced to more human scale) is exemplified by the 1920s streetcar suburb—that's Cleveland Heights or Lakewood. These places are our best model for a prosperous future.

Greg Donley, a Cleveland Heights resident since 1987, is a founding member of FutureHeights.

ZEKE BURROWS continued from page 1

After his graduation from Florida A & M University, Burrows worked as physical education teacher and assistant principal for the Miami-Dade School District before beginning a long career in the insurance industry in 1965. He retired from Nationwide Insurance as a district regional sales manager in 1998.

Burrows is survived by Gloria, his wife of 49 years, three children, six grandchildren, a great-grandchild, and a host of other friends and relatives. He epitomized the engaged citizen, for which Cleveland Heights is known. There will never be another Zeke.

Donations can be made in his name to Mount Zion Congregational Church's capital campaign.

Vince Reddy, who works for Cleveland Public Art, has lived in Cleveland Heights for nearly 14 years.

SECOND CENTURY continued from page 1

bury in 1929 and Monticello in 1930.

This was a golden age of school design, with one beautiful building after another, combining historical styles with the latest in building technologies and mechanical systems. With the Great Depression, growth came to a screeching halt and school design never recovered. But what great buildings the district commissioned in the first three decades of the century!

Boulevard School, designed by Warner, McCornack & Mitchell, was an impressive building, with minarets above its ornate stone-lined portico. Fairfax sported a dramatic front door, like something from a Tudor castle, with peaked towers above its staircases. Architect Franz C. Warner designed five diverse buildings in Cleveland Heights. Coventry School, built after considerable controversy in the neighborhood, anchored the intersection with a prominent tower and detailed scrollwork over its front door. Creative use of its awkward pie-shaped site allowed for a later addition along Euclid Heights Boulevard.

Warner's design for Roxboro had three prominent arch windows below its mansard roof, which were covered by an addition in the 1970s. Warner's third building, Taylor, featured a Tudor design, with arrow loops flanking a front door, which seemed intended to defend against invaders.

The second Noble School, designed by Warner, McCornack & Mitchell, displayed a more conservative design—similar to that of the Oxford and Canterbury schools, designed by John H. Graham. While most of the buildings were built with symmetrical additions in mind, the asymmetry of Canterbury's design was later marred by "eclectic" additions.

Although Canterbury's design lacked the architectural flourishes of other schools, Graham's designs for Roxboro and Monticello junior high schools gave the district two buildings with clean lines and prominent entrances. Monticello's arched entrance and Roxboro's Greek portico enable one to forgive later additions that disrupt these otherwise majestic buildings—new construction was quietly tucked behind the original buildings.

Temporary classrooms

As the student population grew rapidly, temporary trailers and added wings became common. Photos and plat maps show temporary buildings at several schools and how the buildings grew. Extensions had been planned for, and often were built just a year or two after a building's completion. Construction was so frequent that, from 1910 to 1960, the only time when school construction ceased was during the Depression and World War II.

Great Heights

Warner, McCornack & Mitchell's design for the new Cleveland Heights High School has survived multiple additions and alterations since 1926. Prior to the Sputnik-era addition along Cedar Road, Heights High's Tudor-Gothic design gave the building the appearance of a college or New England prep school, especially with the growth of ivy on its walls over the years.

A 1930 addition on the building's west side carefully matched the original

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SECOND CENTURY continued from page 2

design. The addition of a social room and classroom wing in 1948, on the building's east side, matched the rest, only in its use of similar brick. The addition of the science wing, south gym, south pool and new cafeteria ended debate, in the 1950s, over the need for a second high school. Unfortunately, the new additions obstructed the front of the building—so much so that casual passersby miss the grand main entrance of Height High.

The less said about the 1970s addition and alterations to the building, the better. In the 1990s, however, renovations to the 1,200-seat auditorium turned this worn area into the most impressive public space in the community.

Postwar Era

The hiatus caused by the Great Depression and World War II ended with the construction of Northwood (1948), Belvoir (1949), Millikin (1953) and Wiley (1954) schools. These buildings display the postwar aesthetic that came to dominate school design for decades,



Roxboro Elementary School before a 1970s addition covered the front facade.

and exhibit the same layered building program seen in the prewar buildings. For example, while Wiley appears to have been built all at once, it was actually constructed in phases, completed in 1954, 1956 and 1957. The construction of a new board of education building next to Wiley, in 1963, marked a change in the future of school buildings. The venerable Lee Road School was demolished to make room for athletic facilities at Roosevelt.

Modern Era

In 1972, the citizens passed a \$19.5 million bond issue to construct four new buildings and renovate the schools systemwide. Many buildings were approaching the age of 50 and had been in heavy use through constantly expanding enrollments.

Roosevelt fell to the wrecking ball, along with Coventry, Fairfax, Boulevard and Taylor. The four elementary schools were replaced with the same design. Indicative of the 1970s, the new “footprint” buildings would be known for their open-classroom design, a concept soon ignored by teachers, who subdivided the open spaces into traditional classrooms. The exuberance of the 1970s was seen not only in the garishly bright colors used in interiors, but also in the bronze-tinted replacement windows bolted to the exterior of buildings. A hodgepodge of

additions and alterations to every building, while well-intentioned, ignored the original designs.

Dramatic declines in enrollment, combined with changing enrollment patterns, resulted in the closure of buildings just a few years after the massive construction project ended. Millikin closed in 1979. Controversy and ill feelings followed the closing of Taylor and Northwood in 1986, and Coventry in 2008.

By the 1980s, disdain for the renovations of the 1970s was palpable; and in the 1990s, the shortcomings of these renovations were systematically corrected. Fresh paint was applied and new carpet installed. Architecturally compatible windows were added to Heights, Monticello and Roxboro schools, dramatically restoring their appearance.

Second Century

Heights schools have undergone construction in nearly every era of their existence. The district currently faces the challenge of meeting the needs of its students with aging buildings and a decreasing resource base. Keeping in mind the results of earlier decisions, the district must chart a path that will enable it to provide an ideal learning environment for all students. The key will be balancing current needs with buildings from the last century—a collection of structures whose designs and history range from the extraordinary to the mundane. With careful and creative planning, the district should be able to blend the best of the past with the promise of the future.

Eric J. Silverman, Heights High '87, is a former member of the CH-UH School Board and the CH-UH Library Board. He currently serves as president of the Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation.



Boulevard Elementary School, built in 1923, was demolished and replaced in the 1970s.

A version of this article appeared in View from the Overlook, the journal of the Cleveland Heights Historical Society. See more photos of heights school buildings online at www.heightsobserver.org.

The School Facilities Committee is meeting at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 5, at Roxboro Middle School. The public is invited to attend.

Sharrows remind motorists to ‘share the road’

Editor,

Wit regard to page 3 of December's edition, I just want to say that I, for one, am really happy to see the sharrows. Positioned “correctly” or not, the sharrows' best function is to simply remind motorists to share the road. The best road markings are the ones that actually create a real, two-lined lane

for bicyclists, but our residential roads are too narrow for that. The sharrows are the next best thing and I think it's reducing the amount of horn honking because it's increasing awareness and respect. The bike coalition is doing a GREAT job!

David Fair
Cleveland Heights

Barden Benner Carter Memorial Fund turns 10

Ann Kramer

Ten years. Can it possibly be? How did we make it through that dreadful night and the painful days, months and years that followed?

In the early morning hours of Sunday, Feb. 11, 2001, my son Kyle Barden was one of five teenage boys driving home from a party. There was a collision. Miraculously Scott Greggor and Greg Ugucini survived. Greg lives with some injuries that are permanent. Brendon Brenner, Milton Carter II and Kyle, who were all members of the Cleveland Heights High School varsity hockey team, perished that morning, leaving behind mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, a niece and countless friends.

The old advice, to “make something good out of a tragedy,” holds true in this case. The first part of the healing process began with dashboard cards. Many of the boys' friends and families came together and produced laminated cards that became a reminder to always be safe behind the wheel of a car. Some of you may still have one. A group of students, including my daughter Abi, went to area schools to share their story of loss and implore other students to value friendship, family and themselves.

We formed a memorial board as donations poured in. The generosity of the Cleveland Heights community and the entire suburban hockey community has been amazing. Should I be surprised by this strong community? I knew then, and know now, that the answer to this is “no.” Hockey families are famous for coming together and acting as one—friends and family will always be there, through thick and thin. My dearest friend, Justine Carter, Milton's

mom, taught me faith and acceptance. I am a better person because of her.

Our first event was a CHHS Hockey Alumni Game, in which more than 70 hockey players skated in honor of our sons. That event, along with a golf outing, have become annual traditions. These events are not just for hockey players to participate in, but also for friends and family. It warms my heart to see the love and camaraderie people have for one another and for our families.

Over the last 10 years, with the support of an amazing and dedicated memorial fund board, we have been able to award 32 scholarships, totaling more than \$60,000, to CHHS students. Awards from \$1,000 to \$3,000 are given to help defray some of the cost of a college education—tuition, textbooks, computers or other needs that may arise. We hope to continue our scholarship program for many years to come.

Supporting varsity and youth hockey programs has also been our focus. We continue to look for ways to attract new players to the program, not only through financial assistance, but also by working with the parents of kids in the programs.

If you have stepped into the courtyard of the high school recently, you may have noticed a memorial in the southwest corner. This is meant to be a reminder to us all of the value of friendship and necessity for safety. It is never too early or too late to teach your children about responsibility, and, please, always remember to let your friends and family know you love them.

Ann Kramer, mother of Kyle Barden, is treasurer of the Barden Benner Carter Memorial Fund and a lifelong Heights resident.

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OAKWOOD continued from page 1

tail, such as Costco and Home Depot, develop upscale housing surrounding the former clubhouse and donate two separate parcels, 66 acres, 45 percent of the total land, to the two cities for use as public parks. No details about how the donated land would be developed into parkland or how the cities would maintain the parks were available.

Citizens for Oakwood, a Cleveland Heights-based group headed by Severance Neighborhood Organization president Fran Mentch, say that they will continue to pursue their plan to have the entire acreage become a public park. "We have a plan and our plan has not changed," said Mentch.

Citizens for Oakwood has launched a campaign to raise \$1 million. "Raising this amount," said Mentch, "will show community support to grantmakers who might then be inclined to provide the remaining money. Both Metroparks and the West Creek Preservation Committee have had positive conversations with us about holding and managing the property once it is purchased."

The land in both cities is currently zoned residential and the developer must first have the cities rezone the land before any development could occur.

Deanna Bremer Fiber is the executive director of FutureHeights.

Meeting on sustainable zoning is Jan. 10

Vince Reddy

The City of Cleveland Heights will host a meeting on sustainable updates to its zoning code on Monday, Jan. 10, at 7:30 p.m., at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, Monticello Boulevard and Mayfield Road. At the meeting, the city's consultant, Camiros, Ltd., will report to members of city council and the public on environmentally sound practices that could be encouraged or required by the zoning code.

An initial meeting on the project, was held Sept. 29, 2010. Citizens had the opportunity to comment then, and Camiros staff have held discussions with several citizens and organizations in the months since.

A copy of the Sept. 29 presentation is available at www.clevelandheights.com. For more information, contact Karen Knittel at 216-291-4855 or kknittel@clvhts.com.

Vince Reddy, who works for Cleveland Public Art, has lived in Cleveland Heights for nearly 14 years.

Let's all skate!



Eleanor Mallet

I know it's not a good idea to laugh at your children. But the first time my husband and I took our then five-year-old son skating, his feet were flying out from under him in so many different directions, and at such a clip, that we—holding his hands on either side—could not stop laughing.

When we stopped to rest, we asked him how he was doing and he looked up at us with a euphoric expression. "Great!!" he said. He was having the best time. Such is the lure of the ice.

I was reminded of that day while watching the free skate at the Cleveland Heights Recreation Department's ice rink. The little ones push tentatively forward on wobbly ankles, their arms flailing for balance in jerky motions. All of a sudden a little guy's feet are up and he slides on his tush, laughing. I think of skating with another young son. Falling was another exploration: touching the ice, even tasting it.

Some hold onto walkers that slide across the ice. A girl walks hand-over-hand along the wall. They are so earnest. Most are not that far from learning to walk. Now walking is to become gliding. It takes a leap of faith.

A number of Orthodox Jewish families are here—girls in long flared skirts, boys in yarmulkes. Adults zoom by, keeping an eye on their kids or just enjoying their own smooth motion. In the other rink, a class is in progress. Lines of children skate across to the teacher or follow her in a large circle or serpentine, like rows of ducks.

This is an incredibly busy place. On this Sunday, 15 different sessions take place, punctuated in between by the Zamboni, scraping and smoothing the ice. Ice rink manager, Kelly Taylor, said that before the second rink opened in 2001, hockey practices were scheduled as early as 4:30 a.m.; the last one finished at 1:30 a.m.

The rink also offers women's hockey, coed hockey, speed skating, adult skate with an organist and lessons for special education students. Then there are the leagues: five for children, beginning at five years old. The rink is home to three high school varsity hockey teams—Cleveland Heights, Brush and Benedictine, as well as Case Western Reserve University and an adult league.

I catch the end of the Benedictine hockey tournament. These are big guys,

bulked up by their padding, expert skaters with an aggressive edge, who can turn on a dime. The clanging of sticks fills the air. Centerville, Dayton, wins over North Olmsted. At the end, the loyal parents and grandparents stream out, carrying blankets, seat pads and coffee cups.

In the morning, I felt I had a front row seat at the Olympics. Dance teams from the Pavilion Skating Club were having their last practice before heading off to the Junior Nationals in Salt Lake City.

Such breathtaking skill and beauty, poise and discipline. It is hard to believe that Kimberly Berkovich, of South Euclid, and Micah Jaffe, of Cleveland Heights, are both only 14 years old.

Alex Schachtel, of Shaker Heights, is 16 and Jessica Manahan, of Lyndhurst, is 14. As Alex and Jessica skate, their bodies have such power and grace as they bend to each other in perfect synchronicity. Daniel Klaber, 16, who attends Brush, will skate in the free-style solo at Junior Nationals.

I remember skating outdoors at another public rink, gliding along to the music, the sun going down, our bodies stoking heat against the creeping cold. The lure of the ice.

On one Sunday morning, it is possible to see men and women, boys and girls, novice and expert, parochial and public, those out for fun, those out to learn, and those out to win. This is what a community can do.

Eleanor Mallet's column, "A Heights Observer," explores the nooks and crannies in the Heights. She can be reached at eleanor-mallet@yahoo.com.



Jessica Manahan and Alex Schachtel at their last practice at the Cleveland Heights ice rink before going to the Junior Nationals in Salt Lake City.

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It's about YOU: Communication with the mortgage company or bank should begin before you get to the foreclosure process. You can also speak with a foreclosure prevention specialist to learn of ways to prevent foreclosure.

It's about ME: I can educate and provide options when the foreclosure process begins. I can assist you in speaking with

the mortgage company or bank. If staying in the home is no longer an option, I can assist you in the transition process.

It's about US: We can work together to come up with a successful strategy before, during and after the foreclosure process has begun.

You have options. Recently the State of Ohio received funds to help homeowners who have lost income in the past year, due to job loss or downsizing, to get caught up on their mortgage payments. Other options that you may be offered through your lender are forbearance, special forbearance, mortgage modification, deed in lieu of foreclosure, or short sale. Every situation is unique and handled individually.

To discuss your options, call the Home Repair Resource Center at 216-381-6100.

Denise Black is a foreclosure counselor with the Home Repair Resource Center.

Connect with community; become a JFSA volunteer

Becky Rocker

Looking to make a difference in your life and in the lives of others? Volunteer at Jewish Family Service Association and become a visitor to an aging member of our community. Short visits, small projects, perhaps an errand or two all help to bring the outside world to individuals who are often lonely or isolated. Contact Sandy Lusher-Waterhouse, manager of volunteer services for JFSA, at 216-378-3475 or e-mail slusher@jfsa-cleveland.org.



Becky Rocker is the public relations associate for the Jewish Family Services Association.

Memorial Day Parade committee forming in UH

Anita Kazarian

Snow is flying, but think summer. Marching bands, hot dogs, flags, and the University Heights Memorial Day Parade will kick off the summer of 2011. The parade committee is now forming and wants you to join.

Do you have an idea for a new group to march in the parade? Come to the first meeting and share your ideas. Join neighbors in helping to put together one of the most enjoyable community events in town. The parade committee will meet soon. For more information or to sign up, call 216-932-7800 x203.

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional, founder of Noah's Landing, LLC and a long-time resident of University Heights. Contact her at anitakazarian@gmail.com.

Estate planning: a New Year's resolution everyone should consider

Rebecca Price

Stop for a moment, and calculate how much time you spent last month shopping for the perfect holiday gifts and preparing the holiday feast. Now compare that to the amount of time you spent last year thinking about your estate plan.

Bet you spent much more time shopping and cooking. Now that the holidays are over, give some thought to ensuring that you and your family are protected in the future.

For most of us, a will might be the most important legal document that we ever sign. It protects our most important asset, our family. Without a will, the court will decide, based on state law, what happens to your property and who will become the guardian of your minor children.

If the following situations apply to you, this may be the right time to create an estate plan or review the one you have. Perhaps you never executed any estate planning documents, or maybe you have estate plan documents in place, but your situation has changed since signing them. If so, consider the following.

- You recently married. While your spouse has a legal right to a portion of your estate, do you really want your spouse to have to go to court to get the full amount you always intended for that person to receive?
- You divorced your spouse. Divorce frequently results in unintended consequences to one's property and estate. Make sure you know who will inherit your property.
- You now have children. Not only is a will an opportunity to leave specific assets to your children, but it is also the legal document in which you name a guardian to care for them and their assets in the event of your death.
- You have children from a previous marriage. Most people leave their assets to

their spouses, and then to their children, if the spouse is deceased. In the case of a second marriage, however, if all of your assets go to your new spouse (the stepparent of your children), there is no guarantee that the children from your first marriage will ever see a dime of your estate. If your new spouse also has children from an earlier marriage, those children may inherit your assets, unless you plan designated.

- Your relationships have changed. Perhaps you no longer trust the people you named earlier to administer your estate or to serve as your children's guardian. Maybe they moved out of the area, making it difficult for them to honor your wishes. Perhaps they are no longer alive. It is important to ensure that the people you want to be in charge in case of your death are properly designated.
- You no longer want the people named earlier to benefit after your death.
- You have had a substantial increase or decrease in your assets. Tax laws are constantly changing, so you should make sure that your plan will still function the way you intended.
- You have moved to a different state. States have different legal requirements for making a will. Make sure yours is still valid.
- Your estate plan is several years old. It is recommended that you have your estate plan reviewed every 3 to 5 years to ensure that it accurately reflects your wishes.

It's not too late to make another New Year's resolution—to protect your family in the event of your death and to make sure your wishes are protected in case you become ill or incapacitated. Don't put it off for another year!

Rebecca Yingst Price, an estate planning attorney at Gallup & Burns, lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband and 20-month-old daughter. She can be reached at 216-621-4636 or by e-mail at price@galluplaw.com.

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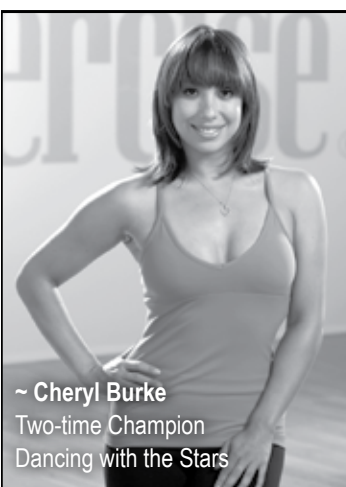
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Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights

NOVEMBER 15, 2010

All council members were present.

Kildare property declared a nuisance

Council passed a resolution declaring the property at 3285 Kildare Road to be a nuisance and authorizing abatement of the nuisance.

Wages and salary ordinance amended

Council passed an amendment to ordinance 25-2010, "Wages and Salary Ordinance," to provide an additional holiday on the fourth Friday of November, beginning this year.

New appointments to city commissions

Council Member Cheryl Stephens announced appointments to two city commissions. Pat Dillard, Wilma Kasper, James O'Brien and Judith Van Kleef were appointed to the Commission on Aging. Jeff Rink and Allyson Brandford were appointed to the Recreation Advisory Board. The city is still seeking applicants to serve on the Planning Commission, for a term of six years, and on the Citizens Advisory Committee, for a term of one year.

Snowplow purchase

Council authorized the purchase of a snowplow from Newell Equipment, Inc., at a cost of \$66,686.60. The purchase will be made through the Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing Program.

Survey of commercial districts

Council passed a resolution authorizing an agreement with the Cuyahoga County Planning

Commission for an Improvement Target Survey of Commercial Districts. This is necessary to address slum and blight conditions for commercial districts within the city, which includes about 600 properties. This is a key tool for future development. At Mayor Kelley's request, council voted to recuse him from the vote because of his involvement in the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission.

LWV observers: Kirsten Karakul and Lisa Peters.

DECEMBER 6, 2010

Vice Mayor Phyllis L. Evans was absent.

Heights High soccer teams honored

Council recognized the Cleveland Heights High School varsity and junior varsity soccer teams for the Greater Cleveland Sportsmanship awards they received.

Cumberland parking lot bid award

A Cumberland Park parking lot bid contract was awarded to RJ Platten for \$225,778.20.

R.I.T.A. ordinance

An ordinance, presented on first reading, would authorize an agreement for participation in the Regional Council of Governments for the purpose of administration and collection of municipal income tax. The use of Regional Income Tax Agency (R.I.T.A.) could save the city at least \$300,000 a year.

CDBG end of year adjustment

Council authorized the reprogramming and

reallocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds as an end of the year budget adjustment. This does not involve additional funding.

Technology equipment financing

Council authorized a contract with Fifth Third Bank for \$450,000 to be used for the purchase of technology equipment to update the city's computers, phones, and copiers. The upgrades should save the city \$13,000 a month. Council Member Bonnie Caplan thanked the Management Information Systems Department and the citizens who helped to develop the plan and said the new website will be unveiled in the spring.

Whitby Road waterline replacement

Council authorized a contract with Mackay Engineering & Surveying Company for surveying and engineering services for the Whitby Road Waterline Replacement Project with the cost not to exceed \$18,815 and to be paid for with a block grant. Professional services such as these do not need to go through the bid process.

Zeke Burrows

Zeke Burrows, who had served many years on the city's planning commission passed away. Both Council Member Dennis Wilcox and Mayor Edward Kelly praised his services to the city and sent condolences to his family.

Housing code misdemeanor

Council Member Ken Montlack offered on first reading an amendment to the city's housing code



to classify a violation of vacant dwelling structures registration as a minor misdemeanor.

Police vehicle purchase

Council authorized the purchase, for the police department, of nine new 2011 Ford Crown Victorias from Statewide Ford Lincoln Mercury, Inc. The cost is not to exceed \$215,000.

Police chief retired, new hire

The mayor thanked Police Chief Martin Lentz, who retired Dec. 2, for his service and said he was looking forward to working with the new chief, Jeff Robertson.

LWV observer: Lisa Peters.

Look for earlier, and often expanded, postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.

These meeting summaries are abstracted from LWV observers' written reports. The summaries have been edited and prepared by Anne McFarland, Charlene Morse 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.

2011 brings more of the same for Cleveland Heights budget

The Heights Observer asked city officials the following question:

The last few years have been tough on city budgets, and have resulted in trimming of staff and services. What is Cleveland Heights's revenue outlook for 2011 compared to 2010; and what, if any, significant service cuts or service additions are being considered at this time?

Robert C. Downey, Cleveland Heights city manager, responded:

Beginning in 2005, when economic projections began to indicate a downturn in the economy, city council and staff began to make adjustments in the budget and in staffing. Over the last five years, nearly 100 positions were eliminated and over \$3.5 million was cut from the budget. Staff in all departments have been cross-trained to absorb

the responsibilities of the jobs that were eliminated and there have been no salary increases in four years and 10 furlough days in 2009.

As we look forward to 2011, the outlook has not changed considerably for the good. The city's locally-generated revenues of property tax and income tax have been hurt by the economy in terms of a decrease in property tax appraisals and a decrease in income tax revenues as a result of job losses.

Revenues received by the city from various federal and state sources have likewise been trending downward for the last several years.

Council and staff continue to look at ways to reduce our expenditures, including regionalizing and sharing costs with other cities. The city anticipates that it will end 2010 with a surplus and the 2011 budget is balanced.

Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition to hold first meeting of the year

Mary Dunbar

The Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition (CHBC) is cycling into its second year with its first quarterly meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 19, 7:30 p.m. at Jimmy O'Neill's Tavern, 2195 Lee Road.

CHBC wants to give all residents a chance to steer the coalition on a path that will make Cleveland Heights an even better place for bicyclists and for the community as a whole. Those who attend the Jan. 19 meeting can hear about CHBC's work, provide input and learn about volunteer opportunities to help accelerate progress.

The coalition supports the idea that bicyclists are an indicator of a healthy, vibrant community with quality of life to attract and retain residents, businesses and visitors. CHBC is working to improve bicycle facilities, encourage more people to ride and educate bicyclists on safe cycling and motorists on sharing the road.

The coalition has worked with the City of Cleveland Heights, the Cleve-

land Heights-University Heights City School District, University Circle Inc., and other government agencies and bicycling organizations on initiatives, such as planning for sharrows on Euclid Heights Boulevard and helping four elementary schools launch "Walk or Bike to School Day" programs.

CHBC also encourages people to stop by Jimmy O'Neill's Tavern before the meeting to buy and enjoy supper or a pint and converse with cyclists and the coalition's current board members, including Mary Dunbar, Nick Matthew, Joy Henderson, Brandon Henneman and Ian Hoffman.

For information about CHBC, bicycling news and cycling tips, go to www.BikesintheHeights.org, or contact Joy Henderson at Lammerson@sbcglobal.net.

Mary Dunbar is part of the growing collaboration involving bicyclists, residents, government, schools, businesses and others to make Cleveland Heights more bicycle friendly. She is a founding member of CHBC and a retired communications professional.



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Choices, judgments and \$2.5 million



Anita Kazarian

University Heights has uncovered nearly \$2.5 million dollars in financial “irregularities” starting in 2008. This is not the final total. The city may still face additional charges until all payment agreements are finalized. These irregularities, mismanagement and negligence amount to more than \$240 for each registered voter in University Heights.

A full-time finance director manages our tax money—about \$25 million dollars. Our former director, Arman Ochoa, appointed in 2000, gave notice in 2008 that he was leaving to accept a position with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS). Council chose to reappoint him to manage our tax money at night and on weekends.

Council minutes of Dec. 1, 2008 records “Councilman Sims reported that the proposal was studied by all members of council. Sims noted that his consolation in moving toward a part-time finance director is based solely on the fact that Mr. Ochoa has done a good job for the city and because of his familiarity with the city.” Council voted on that night to reappoint Ochoa as a moonlighter, at an annual salary of \$50,000.

Councilmen Bullock, Consolo, Murphy, Sims, and Vice Mayor Goldberg voted for the reappointment, saying “The city will save approximately \$55,493 for the term of the appointment”

Many are now questioning council’s judgment. Why did council think a person putting in at least 40-60 hours a week, performing a demanding new job elsewhere, would have the energy, alertness and dedication to work an additional 32.5 hours each week to manage our tax monies?

According to public records, we paid him for working 130 hours a month. Do the math. The day job is 60 hours a week. The nights and weekends job with us is 32.5 hours a week. That adds up to a work schedule of 92.5 hours a week. Did Council really think he could work 13.2 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year?

Then, surprisingly—at least to council—“financial irregularities” cropped up in June 2009. It was discovered that Ochoa made “irregular” payroll advances to himself, amounting to \$69,795 in 2008, when he was still the full-time director.

Following his termination at the end of June 2009, council appointed yet another moonlighting finance director. This time, the appointment was made

with the full knowledge of existing irregularities in the city’s finances.

Some recall that council may have been preoccupied that summer. A few had reelection campaigns to focus on, and most were involved supporting proposals to change the city charter, which were on November’s ballot. Should they have been more concerned with the city’s finances?

Jenny Esarey began as full-time finance director in March 2010. As she reviewed the books, Esarey uncovered more irregularities. Workers compensation premiums were not paid on time. That cost the city nearly \$100,000 a year, every year, for lost discounts. She discovered a missed \$2,000,000 TIF payment for the second half of 2008. That led to the discovery of the nonpayment of \$420,000 in rollback monies to the TIF trustee. [TIF—Tax Increment Financing—is an economic incentive program established by the Ohio Legislature to enhance economic development and create jobs.]

On the heels of each new revelation by Mayor Susan Infeld, council’s reactions ranged from stunned, frozen silence to righteous indignation, demanding, “Why weren’t we informed?”

Is council being disingenuous? Or, as some people ask, are the five councilmen who voted for the moonlighters adopting a strategy of “the best defense is a good offense?”

Mayor Infeld succeeded in persuading the Bureau of Workers Compensation to reinstate the city’s discount, saving University Heights nearly \$100,000 each year. But the city still faces a balance of \$1,500,000 for the city’s TIF payment, \$420,000 for the TIF trustee, and the payroll irregularities of the previous finance director. These are considerable amounts for a city that has prided itself on its sound fiscal management.

Mayor Infeld is working hard to find ways to balance the books. Will we have to pay more taxes to get the same services or will we pay the same taxes to get less?

The 2011 budget process is underway. Although UH is surviving the current economic crisis better than some neighboring cities, Mayor Infeld will need this council’s total cooperation on the 2011 budget in order to restore the city’s finances. UH voters need councilmen to honor the promises they made and the pledge they took to serve the community.

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional, founder of Noah’s Landing, LLC, and a long-time resident of University Heights. Contact her at anitakazarian@gmail.com.

University Heights City Council

Meeting highlights



NOVEMBER 15, 2010

Councilman Steven Bullock was absent.

Sewer and water rate increase

Resident Judith Weiss was concerned about the impact of a 300 percent sewer and water rate increase on already struggling families. Joe Ciuni, city engineer, explained that the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS) is trying to comply with the requirements of the E.P.A. to clean Lake Erie’s water. The E.P.A. requires completion in 20 years, but NEORS is trying to extend it to 30 years to spread out the cost. No government funding is provided.

Senior services

Resident Sarah Wilder expressed her concern about senior services in University Heights. She said Walter Stinson does not have an office, phone, or fixed schedule. She appreciated the monthly programs at the library, but felt the needs of the residents were extensive and deserved better services.

City in arrears

Mayor Infeld read an announcement from the Bank of New York Mellon Trust stating that the city was in arrears on “rollback moneys” for the parking garage at University Square. The city was supposed to have paid \$30,000 semi-annually from 2006 to 2012, and now owes the entire amount of \$420,000.

Results of “garbage study”

Jim Skora of GT Environmental Inc. presented a review of the Solid Waste Collection Analysis, known as the “garbage study,” which the company conducted last year. The findings should help the Services & Utilities Committee make recommendations to council. Skora compared the cost of side door/back door pickup to curbside pickup, and truck options from two-person manual processes to trucks called “one-armed bandits.” Fifty-four percent of communities contract with private sector firms for trash pickup at an average cost of \$13.74 per household.

Traffic calming for Vernon and Lansdale

Council authorized the mayor to submit a grant application to the County Department of Development for the 2011 Community Development Block Grant funding. The grant application would request \$254,600 to provide traffic-calming measures, such as a raised island, signage, striping, and speed tables (which are wider than speed bumps) for Lansdale and Vernon roads. These streets back up to Cedar Center and have become cut-through streets.

Tax Incentive Review Council

Council authorized Mayor Infeld to submit the names of residents to serve on the Tax Incentive Review Council. Mayor Infeld said she would name former Vice Mayor Adele Zucker, and Michael Bohan, who serves on the citizen finance committee for the city.

LWV observer: Wendy Deuring.

DECEMBER 6, 2010

Councilman Frank Consolo was absent.

Article creates good financial news

The mayor happily explained why the railings along the council chamber were festively decorated with seven balloons. She reminded everyone that the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation’s had increased the cost of the yearly premium by \$100,000 due to late payments for the 2009 year. Despite many efforts by the city to get the decision reversed, the bureau held fast until an article written by Ed Wittenberg appeared in the *Sun Press* detailing the city’s financial woes and explaining the decision’s negative repercussions on University Heights. Council presented Wittenberg with a proclamation in appreciation for his help in getting the bureau to reverse its decision.

Cuyahoga County Board of Health

Terry Allan, health commissioner for Cuyahoga County, presented an overview of public health services provided by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. The board’s extensive involvement in citizen health includes education on bed bugs, flu shots, a 14-county grant to provide free health care where needed, a travel clinic, food inspection, a heat emergency and much more. Several challenges faced by the board include:

- Black babies are three times more likely to die than white babies
- Funding to fight smoking is disappearing
- Chronic diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes, are trending upward
- There is a 25-year difference in life expectancy between city and outer suburbs residents.

University Heights’s contract with the County Board of Health has the lowest rate in Ohio at \$3.70 per capita. Council approved the 2011 contract for public health services provided by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health.

Ashurst Community Garden fund

Council passed an ordinance to create the Ashurst Community Garden Grant Fund.

Recycling services

Council approved a five-year contract for recycling services with Kimble Transfer and Recycling. The city would earn money from the recycling.

Police pension fund

There was the first reading of an ordinance to authorize a transfer of money from the general fund into the police pension fund to cover the first quarter payment. Once the payment was made the pension fund would be left with less than \$100.

LWV observer: Carol Gibson.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.

See disclaimer on page 6.

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CH-UH Public Library Board Meeting highlights



NOVEMBER 15, 2010

Board Member Jason Stein was absent.

Friends of the Library

Friends' annual meeting was Dec. 2, featuring local mystery writer Richard Montanari, teaming with Noble Librarian Jo Ann Vicarel, writer of the library's mystery blog, to explore the mysterious relationships of readers, writers and critics.

The group discussed how to enlarge the ongoing book sale at the Lee Road Library to make it more like a bookstore, including the organization of the books into categories to make browsing easier.

Financial climate for libraries

Both the director and deputy director attended an Ohio Library Council webinar on the impact of the Nov. 2 elections. Highlights were:

- A 10 percent decline in the Public Library Fund (PLF) is predicted for 2011, which would affect half the year.
- Legislators need to be reminded that PLF funds are distributed by county, with each county creating a unique distribution formula. Cuyahoga County libraries have an agreement in place until 2013.

Staff training

In October, 48 staff members participated in training and development activities, including managerial leadership, technology on a shoe-string and teen bullying panel.

Teen party

About 80 teens attended a costume party, with other events, at the first annual "Library After Dark" at the Lee Road Library.

New staff at University Heights

New staff members at the University Heights branch include Jessica Robinson as the chil-

dren's librarian, Zahir Sutarwala as adult services associate and Juliana Lytkowski as a library apprentice.

Salary adjustments possible

Salary and benefits costs have been less than projected in the 2010 appropriation. Because staff had received only a 1.5% raise during this period while losing some benefits, the board passed a resolution to pay a one-time salary disbursement equal to one week's pay for all staff except the director, the deputy director and the fiscal officer. The board will address those three positions separately.

UH Branch Library activity

Audra Martinez, branch manager, spoke about the new furniture and arrangement of the children's area, now more open and colorful. A number of customers who normally use the Noble Neighborhood Library are coming to the University Heights branch while Noble is closed for renovation. A successful program is "In the Middle" writing club, which meets weekly. Hathaway Brown students provide a separate tutoring program, Aspire, to work with young women. This program will last through the school year.

LWV observer: Anne S. McFarland.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.

See disclaimer on page 6.

University Heights Library offers senior programs

Tonya Davis

The University Heights Branch of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library offers weekly programs designed for seniors of all ages. You can catch the Senior Spot every Wednesday from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. There is a new program each week, guaranteeing that no two visits will be the same. Programs include crafts, education, and food tastings, book discussions and more. There is something for everyone to enjoy.

The library's line-up for this month:

Jan. 5, Tech Training: Learn how to use Flickr for photo sharing.

Jan. 12, Book Discussion: *Murder on the Orient Express* by Agatha Christie, at Whole Foods Market.

Jan. 19, Tea Time: Learn about and sample a variety of teas.

Jan. 26, Guest speaker: Katherine Kohl presents "The Garfield Triangle, History of Our 20th President."

With the exception of the book



Enjoy a variety of senior programs in the Senior Spot!

discussion, senior spot meets at the University Heights Branch of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library, at 13866 Cedar Road. For more information call 216-321-4700.

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

OPEN HOUSES continued from page 1

that values the importance of personal responsibility, integrity and a sense of community cannot be underestimated." She and the other principals encourage parents to see for themselves what the district has to offer.

The preschool open house will take place at the district's Early Childhood Center, located at Gearity Professional Development School, 2323 Wrenford Road. Opportunities for families include

full- and part-time preschool and preschool programs for children with special needs.

Children are welcome to attend along with their parents. For more information, visit www.chuh.org or call 216-371-7356.

Angee Shaker is the coordinator of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

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Heights native returns to offer unique services for seniors

Bob Rosenbaum

Judith Eugene has returned to Cleveland Heights, where she grew up, to open two businesses: The Loving Hands Group and Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki Studio.

The Loving Hands Group provides a unique variety of enrichment activities for seniors and others with limited mobility. It works by pairing clients with professionals, skilled hobbyists and alternative health care practitioners who visit the clients in their homes or group living facilities, such as assisted-living and nursing homes.

Members of The Loving Hands Group use their skills and talents to provide clients with an extensive list of activities to help keep their minds engaged and their bodies active, and to help keep them connected with friends and family.

The company's goal is to bring education, professional skills, hobbies, physical fitness, and health to those who are having difficulty getting out and accessing these activities themselves.

Services include architecture, such as designing home modifications for handicapped accessibility; interior decorating; art, music and writing; Reiki therapy and yoga; cooking, sewing and gardening; pet interactions and even classic car shows. The list of services will change, depending on the needs of

her clients, Eugene said.

Eugene also has opened Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki studio in Cleveland Heights to offer Reiki therapy treatments and several types of yoga classes. With its unique home-based setting, the studio emphasizes individualized, personal attention in a quiet and relaxing environment.

Offering a variety of yoga classes, Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki is able to accommodate beginners and experienced yoga students. In addition to Gentle and Active Yoga, the studio offers chair yoga, yoga and Reiki, and yoga for recovery. All classes weave in discussions about yoga principles and philosophies to exercise mind and body.

Reiki is a gentle therapeutic technique for stress reduction, relaxation and general well-being. Treatment sessions last about an hour and are conducted on a massage table, bed or chair. Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki offers free phone consultations to explain the treatment process and its benefits.

Eugene is Cleveland Heights native and graduate of Cleveland Heights High School and Kent State University. She left the area after college, but decided to return, after her mother's death last year, to be near family and friends.

Both Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki and The Loving Hands Group are members of the Heights Independent Business Alliance. For a complete listing of



Yoga at Loving Hands is personalized for each client's ability.

services, contact Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki and The Loving Hands Group at 216-408-5578 or www.LovingHandsYoga.com and www.LovingHandsGroup.com.

In January, Eugene will be teaching a class, "Introduction to Reiki," through the Shaker Heights Recreation

Department.

For more information, go to www.shakeronline.com/recreation/.

Bob Rosenbaum is a regular contributor to the Heights Observer, and has known Judith Eugene since high school.

New website celebrates cultures, attracts immigrants

Anita Kazarian

The hottest website in town, www.clevelandpeople.com, spreads the word about more than 100 different ethnic groups in the Cleveland area. What makes the Heights so interesting and fun to live in is the region's diversity of ethnic groups, along with their customs, music and food.

Want to learn more about your own ethnic heritage, gain exposure to new cultures or see what's happening in the various communities? That's one of the goals of the site.

Cleveland Heights residents, Dan and Debbie Hanson, founders of ClevelandPeople.Com, believe that they can help grow Cleveland's population, economy and culture by attracting more immigrants, retaining talented students and workers, and celebrating the richness of the existing 100-plus ethnic groups in Greater Cleveland.

The brother and sister team point out that Cleveland profits little from international immigration. The city's foreign-born population grew by a mere 400 people in the 1990s, signaling that while modest numbers of immigrants continued to arrive in Cleveland (9,300 in the 1990s), an equivalent number of earlier arrivals left the city.

Of the thousands of visitors to www.clevelandpeople.com since its launch last year, about 25 percent are from outside the United States and often have specific questions about living and working in Cleveland.

ClevelandPeople.Com uses a group of "ambassadors" to assist specific communities. A question from a Polish student, for example, would be answered with the help of the Polish ambassador and others in that community.

The website helps bring students and business people to Cleveland by giving them a connection. Once here, they are more likely to stay if they feel welcome and know that their culture and traditions are valued.

The website features the people, customs, events, religions, music and



Scot Rourke, CEO/President of One Community, with ClevelandPeople.Com founder Dan Hanson.

heritage of our diverse population. By promoting and celebrating this diversity, the site creators expect to make Cleve-

land a more inviting and friendly place for immigrants.

The website identifies and promotes the region's existing cultural diversity and also exposes people to other cultures, making Cleveland a richer city. While searching for details on the local Armenian festival, for example, a visitor may notice a photo or video about an Indian event or Japanese drumming concert.

To see what's going on today—with global flavor—right here in Cleveland, visit www.clevelandpeople.com.

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional, founder of Noah's Landing, LLC and a long-time resident of University Heights. Reach her at anitakazarian@gmail.com.

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Boulevard to become a STEM Academy

Jacalyn Elfvin

As part of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools vision to Prepare All Students for Success in a Global Economy (PASSAGE), Boulevard Elementary School is in the first phase of reinventing itself into an elementary STEM Academy. (STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.)

Boulevard students will receive a rigorous, well-rounded education with an inquiry-based instructional approach. Students will be challenged to investigate the world around them, and will work on design and construction projects that integrate math, science, technology and communications skills.

The design team is researching STEM approaches and conducting site visits, and will create an implementation plan. During this initial phase, Boulevard has received support from the First Ring Superintendents STEM Mini Grant. The mini grant has pro-

vided an opportunity to demonstrate STEM programming during the design phase. Jacqueline Taylor, science resource teacher, describes a recent lesson: "Students were learning that fossils provide evidence about plants and animals that lived long ago. We began the lesson by sharing what we know about fossils. Then, we watched a video that explained the four ways that fossils form, as well as what makes something a fossil. We observed rock samples in our small groups and tried to identify whether we thought something was a fossil. Students recorded their observations in their science journals. We then created a bar graph showing how many groups thought each sample was a fossil as I identified which samples were or were not fossils. We discussed our data. Lastly, we created our own fossils."

Jackie Elfvin is the administrative assistant in the office of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.



Boulevard science teacher Jacqueline Taylor helps 4th graders create their own fossils by pressing leaves into plaster.

COURTESY CH-UH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Heights High students learn value of recycling

Joy Henderson

Three years ago, Cleveland Heights High School Work Lab students started a paper recycling program at the school. Once a week, they collected paper from classrooms and offices, and cardboard from the kitchen.

The amount of paper collected has increased each year as the participation by students and staff has grown.

"Now we are working to encourage bottle and can recycling in the cafeteria," Mary Sickbert, Work Lab teacher said.

Each week, six Work Lab students collect the paper and cardboard and take it to the parking lot, where a Cleveland Heights recycling truck picks it up. Tony Torres, in the Cleveland Heights Recycling Department, provides collection bins and works closely with the school to schedule pickups.

Sophomores Quashawn Tolliver, Santez Tucker and Shaquille Collins are on the morning recycling crew. They said they enjoy doing something good for the school and are advocates for the environment.



Heights students Quashawn Tolliver (L) and Santez Tucker are part of a six-person recycling team that collects paper, cardboard, bottles and cans from the school. The City of Cleveland Heights picks up the materials and takes them to a recycling site.

"Recycling is important," Tolliver said. "I told my neighbor about the importance of recycling, and now he does it, too."

Torres estimates that he collects about one ton of paper each week from the high school. That is one ton less of garbage—saving the school money on dumpster fees.

The 39 Work Lab students also work in school offices and the kitchen. The program teaches students valuable skills and pays them a small stipend.

Joy Henderson is the parent/community liaison for Heights High.

CH-UH Board of Education Meeting highlights

NOVEMBER 16, 2010

All board members were present.



Field trips

The board approved field trips for the varsity basketball team to play in three Ohio cities: Newark, Grove City and Dayton.

Evaluation of small schools

Representatives of a committee from the small schools presented the evaluation of many of the schools. They looked at data from the state report card, student and faculty surveys, and other schools.

- The committee wants to keep small schools, but will look at how the instructional model of each school is used.
- There will be alignment with the middle schools to help students choose a school that fits their learning style. Middle school and high school teachers will meet regularly. This should also help freshmen.

The committee will come back in January with a plan for changes.

LWV observer: Adele Cohen.

Some concerns and points were:

- Students with IEP's (Individual Education Program) did not have all their core classes in their small school. Small schools will work on ensuring that all core classes will be in the small school of the student's choice.
- The freshman class had a large number of repeaters and the committee discussed what could be done to help these students.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.

See disclaimer on page 6.

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Heights students present at Bioneers Conference

Joy Henderson

Science students from Heights High presented their water quality research and a new proposal at the Cleveland Bioneers Conference on Nov. 4. Their "Healthy Water, Healthy People" presentation focused on a proposal to use the Taylor School grounds for a three-part science project—a field study area around Dugway Brook, a rain garden

that would capture water from the roof of Taylor School, and an urban farm. The 13 students, from four classes, presented different sections of the material and described the science behind their plans for the proposed project.

The students were pleased with their presentation. "We are happy that it turned out so well," BeNard Mitchell said.

"It was cool to have so many adults asking us questions and interested in our

work," Aaron Tyson said.

Science teacher Steve Warner is the driving force behind the project, working with three other teachers. "Water quality and storm water management is an important issue for our region and our students are learning the science behind the problem," Warner said. "We hope these young scientists will help generate solutions."

The 4th Annual Cleveland Bioneers

Conference aimed to educate, inspire, and empower citizens to create a more sustainable region. The conference celebrated current sustainability projects and presented new ideas in the field. Among the presenters and other speakers was Jane Goodall, primatologist and humanitarian.

Joy Henderson is the parent/community liaison for Heights High.

Students present sustainable ideas for Taylor

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Cleveland Heights High School seniors Evan Lanese and Tamar Atwell hope to transform the former Taylor School property into a sustainable learning lab. The advanced placement biology students presented their plan to fellow students in December, hoping to inspire them to form an environmental club to work on the project. Science teacher Steve Warner invited community experts to provide technical and funding advice and ideas about community involvement.

Last year, students in Warner's class studied the local water cycle and sewer system. "This work led to the idea of making a rain garden and a field study at Taylor School" said Warner. "Later, the idea of community gardening or urban farming was developed."

Warner began thinking of how the school could provide students with learning projects that might also benefit the community when Laura Stuart-Lilley, transition coordinator at Heights High, proposed the idea of

service learning projects.

Taylor School, is currently used to house a technology center and Family Connections, and is a seven-minute walk from the high school.

Lanese, Atwell, and fellow student Nick Negenborn worked on the plan for Taylor School on their own time. The students believe that rain falling on the building's large roof and substantial parking lot could be used to water a garden, instead of flowing into the sewer system. They say the garden could be a model for best practices for storm water management.

The students envision an urban farm on the building's ample lawn, where students and the community could learn about organic farming and healthy food. They hope to use produce from the farm in school cafeterias, local restaurants and food banks.

Dugway Brook passes behind the school's parking lot. The students imagine using the farm, rain garden and surrounding area as a field laboratory to study the area's biological makeup and how it changes over time. The facilities



Evan Lanese and Tamar Atwell, Heights seniors, present a sustainability plan for Taylor School.

would provide hands-on learning opportunities for students working across several subject areas.

The students say that the environmental club, which would be open to high school students of all abilities, would focus first on the Taylor School project.

Warner is proposing a service learn-

ing class for the next school year, developing a curriculum and seeking funding for the project. For more information, contact Steve Warner at steven_warner@chuh.org.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights.

State recognizes CH-UH for educating students with limited English proficiency

Angee Shaker

The students of Cleveland Heights-University Heights City Schools, along with their teachers, are striving every day to excel, particularly on their state assessment tests. The district recently received news that its students who enter school with limited English language proficiency, known to the state as LEP students, are thriving and meeting all state standards.

"Our English Language Learners (ELL) program, for students with limited English proficiency, is a rigorous set of supports that are producing results," says Elenny Tuleta, language services coordinator. "Our students face a major challenge that other students don't. They have to gain proficiency in the English language before they can immerse themselves in their core classes. Given this challenge, we are thrilled to be

recognized by the state for our students' progress and achievement."

The state results, known as the Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAO) for Limited English Proficient students, indicate the percentage of Heights LEP students who made progress in achieving English proficiency (86%) and the percentage of LEP students who attained full English language proficiency (42%).

"The Ohio Department of Education congratulates you, your staff, students, and parents in your service to help your LEP students achieve English language proficiency and make academic progress," an official notification stated.

Angee Shaker is the coordinator of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.



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Program helps students catch up, not drop out

Susie Kaeser

Antonio starts his school day at Heights High around 4 p.m., in a computer lab tucked away in the northwest corner of the school. He is one of about 55 students in Success Connections, an on-line academic path to high school graduation.

Antonio was more than a year behind in credits when he enrolled in Success Connections last year. The program gave Antonio a second chance. He now knows that “just because you mess up, you don’t have to drop out.”

The transition to high school can be tough for some students. Antonio didn’t earn any credits his first year at Heights; he found it easier to skip class than to attend. During his second year in 9th grade, he decided to dig in and catch up by enrolling in Success Connections—and it worked. In just over a year, Antonio

completed two years of course work and is now an 11th grader on track to graduate.

Despite a history of solid school performance at Roxboro, Bria Williams’s 9th-grade year was a disaster. She lost focus, started skipping class, and completed the year with just a half-credit. Since starting Success Connections a year ago, she has achieved junior status, completed all of the English credits needed to graduate, and regained her mother’s trust. She is looking forward to reentering the regular school program next year to take electives and to graduate.

Nick Petty, principal of Mosaic School and the administrator in charge of this five-year-old program, is enthusiastic about what he has seen students achieve. “It gives kids options for completing their education. It gives them the hope and support they need to make the effort.”

Every student in the program is earning credits toward graduation—students who might otherwise give up and drop out. It is keeping kids in school and reducing the number of students who are stuck in 9th grade. Currently, five of the students are seniors and will graduate—something that seemed unlikely for them two years ago.

Many students who are behind in school want to do well. According to Success Connections counselor, Kristie Cooper, “They just have trouble making it work in the traditional way.” Her top priority is to help students focus on themselves, make school success a priority, and use this alternative program to help them succeed.

Success Connections is housed in two computer labs, each accommodating up to 30 students. A Heights High teacher is assigned to each lab for two hours a day to work with students, one-on-one, as they pursue their individualized academic plans. Because the focus is on a different core subject each day, a teacher specializing in that subject will be on duty.

Jeffrey Johnston, director of student services, helped set up the program five years ago as part of the school district’s efforts to address the persistent issue of too many overage 9th-grade students. Visits to other school districts led to Apex Learning, the company that provides the digital curriculum used by Success Connections students. The curriculum was selected for its rigor, flexibility, advanced placement courses, and compliance with Ohio learning standards.

After the regular school day ends, Connections students arrive and log on to the course from the Apex curriculum

for that day. Typically students work on four half-credit courses during the week, one in each core area. Students frequently complete as many as eight of these courses in a semester—the equivalent of a year’s credits. In this way, many students complete two years of work in a year.

Cooper finds that online learning has many advantages. It gives students control of when and where to work, how hard they work and how fast. School fits their lives rather than the reverse, and they don’t have to cope with bell schedules and social distractions.

The emphasis on mastery learning is another plus. Students learn at different speeds. In a regular classroom everyone is expected to learn the material in time for a quiz or exam. Apex courses give students as much time, and as many tries, as they need, to demonstrate their knowledge before they move forward. Each incremental step is a success that motivates the student to keep working.

Over the last eight years, the school district has adopted a “whatever it takes” philosophy for helping all students succeed. District programs, policies, and practices are evolving from punishment for failure to creating new paths toward learning and success.

Michael Carter, a security guard and student advocate, troubleshoots problems to keep students connected. He beams with pride and says, “This is as good as it gets.”

Susie Kaeser, has lived in Cleveland Heights for more than 30 years. She is the former director of Reaching Heights and current board member of the Home Repair Resource Center.



Math teacher Ian Miller works with Bria Williams, an 11th-grader who completed two years of classes in one year in the Success Connections program.

CH-UH teachers recognized by Martha Holden Jennings Foundation

Angee Shaker

Two Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District teachers, Jennifer Bennett and Yolanda Harris, were recognized by the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation as 2010 Jennings Educators Institute alumni, during a Nov. 6 awards brunch. The ceremony was hosted by the College of Education, Health and Human Services at Kent State University, and marked the completion of a three-part workshop series designed to help teachers enhance classroom education through solid curriculum, quality instruction and sound assessment practices.

Bennett has been with the CH-UH

City School District for 17 years. She spent several years working as a special education teacher and also teaching Title I reading, and is now in her second year of working as the Title I teacher leader and Instructional Rounds lead facilitator.

Harris came to the CH-UH district in 2002. She taught reading at Monticello Middle School and has served on many district committees related to literacy and the adolescent student. In 2006, Harris became a program specialist for literacy, responsible for supporting implementation of the core English language arts program and facilitating Read 180 throughout the district.



Jennifer Bennett, left, and Yolanda Harris, right, were recognized for their dedication to improving education.

Both Bennett and Harris were recognized for their personal dedication to improving education, and for taking a leadership role within the district.

Angee Shaker is the coordinator of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

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Parenting Q & A

Ellen Barrett, a parent educator at Family Connections (formerly known as Heights Parent Center) for the last 12 years, fields questions from parents about the daily ups and downs of parenting. The same issues impact many parents. E-mail questions for Ellen to ebarrett@heightsparentcenter.org.



Q. My wife and I used to look forward to meal time, but now find that we dread it. We have such a hard time getting our two-year-old to eat what we've made, and he never wants to sit still long enough for us to enjoy our meal. We've come to expect a battle each time. It makes us tense and cranky and is very unpleasant. What can we do to get him to eat and enjoy dinner so we can enjoy our family?

A. Parents often find that one of the hardest parts of the early years of parenting involves food. What are the best foods to feed my child? When is my

child full? How can I be sure my child is getting the calories and nutrition he needs? Combine those uncertainties with the temperament of a two-year-old and there is no telling how meal time might play out. The first thing to remember is that two-year-olds don't see meal time the same way we do. They are just as likely to wish they were playing with their trucks or running around. So for right now you might have to change your expectations. That being said, dinnertime can evolve into a pleasant, quality family experience if you remember a few things.

- It is your responsibility as the parent to provide the food and it's your child's responsibility to eat it. You are the one making the grocery list, planning the meals and preparing the food, but you cannot chew or swallow the food for your child. Choose tasty, nutritious foods that are reasonable choices for a toddler. Don't be afraid to offer flavorful food. And try to steer away from offering a default food if he rejects what is on the menu. Calmly put away the portion of food he has not eaten and, if he says he is hungry later, bring out that food again.
- Don't force food on your child. The "clean plate club" mentality from our own childhood is counterproductive to the goal of developing a child's ability to know when he is full.
- Let your child explore the food. Involve him in some of the preparation when possible. Kids can measure and stir and help set the table. When he is eating he may want to touch or mash his food and it may go in and out of his mouth a few times. Try to accept

this behavior and understand that it is one more way that your toddler is exploring his world.

- Set your child up for success. Set regular meal times and (healthy) snack times and resist the urge to let your child graze throughout the day. Even limit the amount of liquid you allow him to drink in between meals—juices and milk can trick his body into thinking he has eaten. You want him to be hungry, but not starving, at dinner time.
- Model healthy eating habits. Choose healthy foods for yourself and resist the temptation to eat on the run or while standing at the kitchen counter. Your child will see these behaviors and follow your example.
- Be patient. Toddlers are very tuned into the mood around them. If you become exasperated, he may focus on that instead of the meal.
- Most important, make mealtime pleasant. Share your day, include him in the conversation and enjoy one another's company.

Winter open house at Ruffing is set for Jan. 9

Danielle Reavis

Families are invited to attend the winter open house at Ruffing Montessori School on Sunday, Jan. 9, from 2 to 4 p.m., to learn about Ruffing's comprehensive Montessori curriculum for students from 18 months through 8th grade.

The day's plan includes tours of the school's newly renovated LEED-certified building, an opportunity to interact with a panel of current parents and alumni, meet faculty and observe students working in the elementary classrooms, talk with the head of school, and learn more about the Montessori philosophy and Ruffing's school community.

Located at 3380 Fairmount Boulevard in Cleveland Heights, the Ruffing Montessori School serves approximately 315 students.

To RSVP to the open house or to schedule a personal tour, contact Ruffing's Admission Office at 216-321-7571 or visit the school's website at www.ruffingmontessori.net.

Danielle Reavis is a development assistant with Ruffing Montessori School.

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Fairmount Co-op Preschool to hold open house on Jan. 9

Amy Kalasunas

Looking for a preschool environment offering exposure to art, music, science, books, and dramatic play? The Fairmount Church Cooperative Nursery School will hold its annual open house for prospective members on Sunday, Jan. 9, from 1 to 3 p.m.

Children can experience the school's "learning through play" philosophy, enabling them to learn at their own pace via the carefree play of early childhood.

Teachers, administrators and parents of current students will be on hand to answer questions, provide tours of the facility, and discuss the role of a cooperative preschool.

A co-op school recognizes that parents are the primary educators of their children. While staffed by professional teachers, co-ops are operated by parents of the students.

Parents share responsibility for the daily work necessary to operate a successful school. Assisting teachers in the classroom, serving on committees, and volunteering on the board of directors are some of the ways parents and teachers at the Fairmount Church Cooperative Nursery School work together to create an optimal learning experience.

At Fairmount Co-op, children are respected for their unique personalities and accepted at their own learning pace.

The environment is relaxed and friendly while offering the motivation appropriate to each child's developmental level.

The preschool offers its students a variety of social contacts, a sense of belonging to a group, and the chance to share and cooperate with others their own age. Tuition is kept low in part by the active role of parents in facilitating the daily operation of the school.

Parents are required to help in their children's classrooms on a rotating basis, usually one morning each month. They are responsible for bringing healthy snacks and assisting the teacher with

the day's activities.

Parents are also asked to serve on a committee for the school year, to participate in fundraisers and to help clean classrooms as assigned.

Membership chairs, Jessica Horn and Carolyn Foss, look forward to answering questions about the school. For more information, including how to schedule individual tours of the facility, go to www.fairmountcoop.org or call 216-321-5800.

Amy Kalasunas serves on the membership committee of her children's preschool.



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Heights graduate receives \$20,000 fellowship

Tom Schorgl

Laura Cooperman, a 2001 graduate of Cleveland Heights High School, received a one-year, \$20,000 fellowship for her outstanding work as an artist in Cuyahoga County.

She was named on Dec. 10 as one of 20 artists to receive a Creative Workforce Fellowship. The Community Partnership for Arts and Culture (CPAC), the organization that operates the program, convened a panel of seven experts from around the country to judge the applications. After six weeks of studying the entire applicant pool at home, followed by a four-day public adjudication session, they unanimously approved the 20 finalists. Applications, which were anonymous to the panel, were judged on the basis of artistic merit and the artists' statements about how they would use the fellowship.

"This fellowship is a tribute to the benefits artists bring to Cuyahoga County," says Tim Mueller, chair of CPAC's board of trustees. "And our community's investment in these artists shows our commitment to a strong and vibrant economic future."

Cooperman received a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2006. While at MICA, she was accepted into the New York Studio Program in New York City, where she worked as an assistant and studied under the direction of many professional artists.

Following graduation, Cooperman was awarded the Graner Marburgh



Travel Grant, which enabled her to live and work in Beijing, China, and led to a one-year period of extensive travel. In each new place, she created a collection of cut paper drawings and installations depicting the specific architectural landscape she found there. Through the amalgamation of these specific sites, Cooperman references the loss of localized meaning in our contemporary world. Traditional textile designs, architectural elements, wild vegetation and commercial products from different cultures find themselves pieced together in a new environment with new meaning and purpose attached.

Cooperman has exhibited both nationally and internationally at venues such as the Maryland Art Place, the Center For Emerging Visual Arts in Philadelphia, Flanders Art Gallery in Raleigh, and Gallery Imperato in Baltimore. Her awards include the Winefred

M. Gordon International Award, the Granger Marburgh Travel Grant and a residency at Red Gate in Beijing, China. Her work has been included in publications, such as *Perfect Paper*, *Choosing and Using Paper*, *Handmade 3D* and *The Paper Engineering Handbook*.

Born in Cleveland, Cooperman lives and works in Cleveland Heights. Her work is currently on view in the exhibition "Cut it Up" at Ann Street Gallery in Newburgh, NY.

For more information about the fellowship, visit www.cpacbiz.org/business/CWF2.shtml.

CPAC launched the Creative Workforce Fellowship program with a grant it received from Cuyahoga Arts and Culture, a special unit of government established to receive and distribute local tobacco excise tax revenue, dedicated to arts and culture support. CPAC, a nonprofit organization, is dedicated to improving greater Cleveland by ensuring the artistic and economic success of its arts and culture community.

Heights Youth Theatre presents 'Joseph'

Mary Patton

A crash of drums. A flash of light! Heights Youth Theater presents a brand-new production of one of the most colorful musicals of all time, Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat," directed by Sean Szaller.

You may have seen this show before, but people connected with the show say that the company is excited to present a whole new spin on this famous tale. Drawn from the Bible, the story follows Joseph as he is sold into slavery by his own jealous brothers, thrown in jail for a crime he didn't commit and, ultimately, rises to power as Pharaoh's right-hand man.

With a musical score that ranges from country to calypso, and a coat that has more colors than the rainbow, this high-energy explosion of music and dance promises to entertain and touch your heart.

The cast includes 60 students—



Heights area youth at a rehearsal for the upcoming performances of "Joseph" at Heights Youth Theatre.

1st-through-12th grade—many from Cleveland Heights and University Heights—and professional musicians. Lead cast members include Dan Hoy (Joseph), Sidney Perelman (Narrator),

Austin Riley (Potifar), Rebecca Chaney (Mrs. Potifar), and Jordan Brown (Pharaoh).

"Joseph" will be presented at Wiley Auditorium, 2181 Miramar Blvd., in University Heights, Friday, Jan. 14, 21 and 28, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 15 and 29, at 2 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m.; and Sunday, Jan. 23 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$9, \$8 for seniors and children under 6. For more information, visit www.heightsyouththeatre.org.

Mary Patton is a public relations consultant and University Heights resident.

Tom Schorgl is president and CEO of the Community Partnership for Arts & Culture.

HeightsWrites

Poem for January 2011

Most 21st-century Americans are not very good at waiting, but the speaker in this poem has cultivated a single-minded ability to stand in line for what he wants.

—Meredith Holmes

I Waited

By David Hall

In wind, through rain,
and answerless cold,
wearing the insignia of a hat alone,
I waited so long outside your window
careless of the dark night's caress
that I was burned by the light of the moon,
in darkness a superficial wound
that in daylight is an understanding
I might never fully possess.

David Hall is a Cleveland Heights resident who works as a software architect. He has two teenaged children and also directs his artistic energy toward photography.

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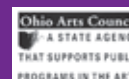
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Jan. 13, Student Recital, 7 p.m.
Jan. 16, Vocal Performance Class, 2 p.m.
Jan. 16, Classic Piano Fest, 3 p.m.

Jan. 16, Brass Blast Student Invitational, 11 a.m.
Jan. 19, World Music with Leo Coach, 6 p.m.
Jan. 23, Jason Vieaux Guitar Master Class, 1 p.m.
Jan. 23, Cleveland Cello Society Master Class, 2 p.m.
Jan. 29, Student Recital, 2 p.m.

Jan. 30, Suzuki Recital, 2 p.m.
Feb. 10, Student Recital, 7 p.m.
Feb. 13, Student String Workshops, 2 p.m.
Feb. 14, Bobby Jackson: The Jazz Mind, 7 p.m.
Feb. 19, Early Childhood Silent Auction, 7 p.m.

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