

See us at  
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Memorial  
Day parade  
May 28

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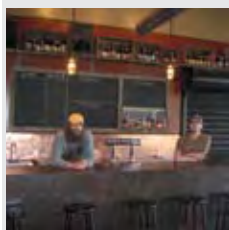
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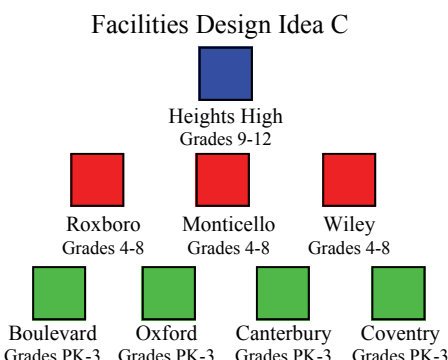
## CH-UH presents Plan C to community

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District presented a third iteration of its facilities master plan to the public on April 18. Plan C, the “Community Plan,” responds to concerns raised about the previous options (Plans A and B). Plan C maintains all three middle school sites and adds an elementary school (Boulevard); however, it still calls for the closing of three elementary schools—Fairfax, Noble and Gearity.

“We heard loud and clear that the community did not like the big buildings contained in the previous plans and the loss of neighborhood schools,” said Eric Coble, CH-UH Board of Education member. “I think Plan C addresses those concerns.”

In his statement to the more than 200 people gathered for the April 18 presentation, Superintendent Doug Heuer painted a bleak picture of the district’s future if a comprehensive facilities plan is not adopted. “If we do nothing to address our deteriorating school facilities,” he said, “we will be forced to spend at least \$40 million



on critical repairs that will continue to mount. That money will not update our schools, or allow us to avoid costlier repairs just down the road.”

Fielding Nair, architectural consultants, presented details of Plan C:

- Noble, Gearity and Fairfax elementary schools would close. The district has nine potential partners who may be interested in repurposing the buildings. Future uses could include youth activities programming and post-secondary education.
- The Gearity site would be used for swing space—temporary buildings to accommodate students displaced during construction.
- Four primary schools (grades preK-3)

would be located at the current Roxboro, Canterbury, Oxford and Boulevard elementary school sites. Boulevard would be demolished and rebuilt, beginning summer 2015. Construction would begin at the other three buildings in 2016. They would retain their current footprints. Mechanical and electrical systems would be replaced, and interiors remodeled for flexible learning spaces.

- Three intermediate schools (grades 4-8) would be located on the existing middle school sites: Wiley, Monticello and Roxboro. The historic cores of Roxboro and Monticello would be preserved, additions would be demolished, and new space added. Interiors would be reconfigured for flexible learning spaces. Grades 4, 5 and 6 would be physically separated from grades 7 and 8. Wiley would be remodeled within its current footprint. Construction at Roxboro and Wiley would start in summer 2013, followed by Monticello in 2015.
- Cleveland Heights High School (grades 9-12) would remain at its existing site. The building’s historic core, football stadium and swimming pool would be preserved and renovated, post-1925 additions demolished, and new space added. The interior would be reconfigured for flexible learning spaces. Construction would begin in 2018—the last phase of the project—and possibly would be funded by a separate bond issue. Operational savings realized from the consolidation of primary and intermediate schools, estimated at \$3.5 million annually, would help fund the high school.

Although school sites were added, the \$189 million projected cost of Plan C is less than that of the two previous plans, which were each estimated in excess of \$200 million. This was achieved by renovating Wiley, rather than demolishing and rebuilding it, and

*continued on page 11*

## Violin soloist performs

Kim Conklin

Each fall Cleveland Heights High School seniors sign up to audition for the coveted senior soloist spots in the instrumental music department (IMD) season programs. One of the honored seniors this year is Kelsey Ferguson who will be on stage playing Mendelssohn’s “Violin Concerto in E Minor” at a symphony concert on Friday, May 4.

A daughter of two music professionals, Ferguson began playing piano at age three and took up violin in fourth grade as a part of the CH-UH school district music program. She is now excited to be working with her friends and peers in the Heights High Orchestra. Ferguson has especially appreciated how the orchestra’s director, Daniel Heim, treats her as a professional, asking for collaborative input and responding to her cues as a soloist. She hopes that people will relate to the music and enjoy themselves.

Ferguson expressed gratitude to both sets of grandparents for purchasing the violin she will play on Friday, and to her “trio mates and coach for just being great!” The piano trio she refers to will be one of several chamber groups playing a pre-concert program at 6:30 p.m. in the Heights High Social Room.

The joint performance by the Symphonic Winds and Orchestra will follow at 7:30 in the auditorium. In addition to the Mendelssohn piece, the program will feature Maurice Ravel’s “Pavane pour une infante defunte” and Camille Saint-Saens’s “Danse Bacchanale” from “Samson et Dalila.”



Kelsey Ferguson performs on May 4 at Heights High auditorium.

“The IMD is awesome. It’s such a strong community, and I’m going to miss it a lot,” said Ferguson, as she looks ahead to completing a double major in music performance and a yet-to-be-determined subject at DePaul University.

Ferguson was inspired by the “sparkle” of the Mendelssohn violin concerto years ago, but was initially advised that it was too difficult for her to master. Nonetheless, she wanted to push herself, and described what followed as the hardest, longest work she has ever undertaken. “It has brought me pretty far,” seems an understatement.

*Kim Conklin is a Cleveland Heights resident, the parent of children in the CH-UH schools, a preschool teacher and an assistant in the high school instrumental music department.*

## Bob Downey, longtime CH city manager, resigns

Deanna Bremer Fisher

City Manager Bob Downey announced his resignation last month, after learning that his contract would not be renewed. The city manager is hired by council to supervise day-to-day operations, and serve as director of public safety.

Downey served as city manager from 1985-2012 and as assistant city manager from 1970-85. Prior to that, he was the personnel and budget manager for the City of Fairfield, Ohio.

Mayor Ed Kelley announced Downey’s resignation at the April 16 city council meeting. “Bob Downey did a great job for our community during these many years,” he said. “We thank him for his commitment and dedication. Cleveland Heights City Council wishes

*continued on page 11*

## UH to acquire Fuchs Mizrachi property

Kim Sergio Inglis

On April 16, University Heights City Council voted to approve, on second reading, a purchase agreement with The Leonard and Susan Fuchs Mizrachi School. The purchase price of \$600,000 will be paid on a three-two-one schedule, with \$300,000 due at closing. The vote was 6 to 1, with Vice Mayor Frankie Goldberg abstaining due to a conflict of interest.

University Heights Mayor Susan Infeld said, on April 27, that she expected to sign the contract “in a week or so.” Ac-

*continued on page 3*

Deliver to addressee or current resident

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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:  
[www.heightsobserver.org/members](http://www.heightsobserver.org/members) or  
 e-mail: [info@futureheights.org](mailto:info@futureheights.org)

## HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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### PUBLISHER

Deanna Bremer Fisher  
[dbfisher@futureheights.org](mailto:dbfisher@futureheights.org)

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kim Sergio Inglis  
[city.editor@heightsobserver.org](mailto:city.editor@heightsobserver.org)

### ADVERTISING

Bob Rosenbaum  
 216-401-9342  
[brosenbaum@heightsobserver.org](mailto:brosenbaum@heightsobserver.org)

### EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Carrie Buchanan, David Budin, John Ettore, Greg Donley, Frank Lewis, Jewel Moulthrop, Vince Reddy, Clare Taft

### EDITORS

Jamison Babb, Maryann Barnes, Deanna Bremer Fisher, Ben Bubnick, Carrie Buchanan, David Budin, Greg Donley, Kelli Fontenot, Frank Lewis, Eleanor Mallet, Jewel Moulthrop, Vince Reddy, Bob Rosenbaum, Jessica Schreiber, Kim Sergio Inglis, Dermot Somerville, Clare Taft

### WEBMASTER

Dan Ott

### DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Temma Collins and Ruth D'Emilia

### DISTRIBUTION

Hannah Baldwin

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## FutureHeights informs, educates and advocates via Observer



OPENING  
THE OBSERVER

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The construction of new and renovated public schools in Cleveland Heights and University Heights may represent the single largest investment in our communities over the next several decades. This is an important issue—one I've been following since summer 2010, when the school district asked me to join the Citizens Facilities Committee—and it is a good example of how FutureHeights uses various tools to encourage civic engagement. (Full disclosure: I am the parent of a CH-UH kindergartener who will be affected by this process.)

At FutureHeights, we seek to promote a vibrant and sustainable future for the Heights through civic engagement and innovative ideas. We do this by informing, educating and advocating.

Here's how FutureHeights has used these tools in respect to the school district's master facilities planning process:

- We provided information about the process by writing about it in the *Heights Observer*. As publisher of the *Observer*, FutureHeights refrains from writing editorials promoting one aspect of the plan over another. Instead, we provide space for community members to voice their concerns and advocate for issues that are important to them.
- We held an educational public forum on March 1, a week after the district presented Plans A and B. Many of the concerns we were hearing from community members—via letters to the editor and opinion pieces in the *Observer*—led us to believe that such a forum would be helpful. We brought together a panel of experts to address some of the issues by providing facts and examples from other communities. We were pleased when the district subsequently responded to community concerns and developed a Plan C.
- We advocated for increased dialogue

between the members of the CH-UH Board of Education and the city councils of Cleveland Heights and University Heights, the elected representatives who we entrust with the responsibility of safeguarding our community values. We sent a letter on March 5 urging them to meet to discuss the master facilities plan and its impact on our communities, and we continued to advocate for a meeting both privately and publicly. I am pleased to report that a meeting will occur on May 14, at 7:30 p.m. at Cleveland Heights Community Center.

The school facilities process is far from over, and there are many other issues that affect our community. Keep your letters and articles coming. Submit them via the Member Center at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org) or send them to [info@futureheights.org](mailto:info@futureheights.org). We will continue to do all we can to provide opportunities for your voices to be heard.

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

## Highlights from Observer blogs Read the whole story at [blogs.heightsobserver.org](http://blogs.heightsobserver.org)

### A moment with . . . Antonio Pompa-Baldi

Born and raised in Foggia, Italy, Antonio Pompa-Baldi first came to the U. S. in 1999 to participate in the Cleveland International Piano Competition, in which he won first prize. Shortly thereafter he and his wife, Italian pianist Emanuela Friscioni, decided to make

Cleveland Heights their home.

*What is a typical day for you, how does your day unfold?* When I am not traveling, I usually get up around 6:30 and wake my daughter Eleanor. The whole family has breakfast and then I take her to school. After that, I head to CIM.

*What are your favorite aspects of*

*living in the Heights?* There is a lot of culture here, many people being artists or patrons of the arts. I also love being so close to CIM and University Circle.

—Tiffany Laufer

### On the persistence of dandelions

I have turned into one of those gardeners—the kind who pours through early-arriving plant catalogs to get through the long winter months when hands-on gardening is impossible. (Houseplants are no substitute, and seem to require a different kind of green thumb than I possess.)

This year's warm and extended early spring gave me fleeting hope that I could get a jump on spring clean up and weeding, but a new job and other obligations kept me from spending more than a day or two in the yard. I was almost—almost—happy when cold weather returned, putting a hold on some of spring's progress, and the inevitable weeds that come with that first hint of warm weather.

—Kim Sergio Inglis

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## Opinion: An open letter to the CH-UH City School District on bullying

Matthew MacDonald

Being a kid in today's society makes my own childhood look primitive. Grade school children can be seen bandying about cell phones before and after school. Video games and video game systems were once the status symbol of a family that was well off. Instead of the world being right outside your door, it's now available in any part of your house as long as the Wi-Fi signal is strong enough.

If there is one constant that hasn't changed from my childhood to that of my children, it's bullying.

When I was growing up, getting bullied by someone was treated like a right of passage. You either let the bully continue demoralizing you on a regular basis, or you took matters into your own hands. That was as far as things went. People didn't die back then as a result of bullying.

When my family and I first moved to Cleveland Heights, I was very impressed with the school board's "no tolerance" stance when it came to bullying. It didn't take long for me to see how unwilling the school board is to follow up its words with decisive action.

Last year, my oldest daughter started having problems with some

of her classmates. She was a student at Canterbury Elementary. Things got to the point where she would call home two to three times a week pretending to be sick, just because there was no end to the bullying.

This year, my wife and I enrolled her in Boulevard Elementary. We figured a change would be good for our daughter and we couldn't pass up the convenience—it's right at the end of our street. For all of the crowing that the school board has done, things have only gotten worse.

Recently, I received a phone call from my daughter's teacher informing me that she was the victim of extortion by one of her classmates. On a weekly basis, my daughter would have to pay money to this classmate. If she didn't pay, she would get beaten up. Amazingly, this classmate was also doing this to boys in their grade as well.

Was this classmate made an example of the school district's "no tolerance" stance?

The classmate received a suspension, nothing more. The only thing that this classmate's suspension showed was that you can still act like a bully and get away with it.

Recently, I made a point of standing

with my daughter in line one morning while we waited for the bell to ring. This same classmate was still bullying my daughter—while I was next to her! That following afternoon when I went to pick up my daughter, other classmates told her they were going to follow her home and jump her. Again, while I was standing right next to her!

These kids today never grew up without a computer. They never had to make a phone call on a land line. Most of them can't imagine a world without cable television or streaming Netflix. They feel that they are entitled, and this sense of entitlement has led them to believe that they are owed the world in spite of having to respect their elders.

School board members, it's time for you to wake up. Redefine your bullying policies. Instead of "no tolerance" adopt a "zero tolerance" attitude and start expelling kids who are bullying other kids.

How else do you expect to truly make a difference in the lives of those whom you have promised to educate?

*Matthew MacDonald is a freelance writer based in Cleveland Heights.*

## Board of Ed should consider a Plan D

"I don't get a second chance to do this," said Kal Zucker, CH-UH school board member, at the April 23 work session, where master facilities Plan C was presented to the board of education (BOE). The BOE acknowledged that residents are voicing opinions on what they are willing to support. I believe the BOE grasps the gravity of the situation and understands the need for broad-based community support before a final plan is placed on the ballot.

I commend the BOE for questioning the position that only two options exist: Do nothing and continue to let the district bleed; or implement Plan C, a bold, large-scale plan that many in the community perceive as divisive and expensive.

Plan C clearly pits one community against the other, and we need to find a plan that brings us together. Save Our School-University Heights has been very vocal on three key issues:

- We believe we need to keep a public elementary school in UH or our community will be unattractive for families. This will decrease property values and the entire district will lose revenue over time.
- The BOE offices need to remain in UH or our city will suffer a severe and unexpected decline in revenue. If one city decays, both will feel the impact.
- The plan needs to be fiscally responsible so our collective community can afford it.

We need a plan that addresses many of our needs, but is less radical and more cost effective than what is currently on the table. To use an analogy: everyone wants to drive a Mercedes-Benz, and no one wants to drive a Yugo. Most people review what is reasonable, affordable and meets their needs, so they choose a Honda, a Ford or a Chevy.

In a district where three out of every five children live in poverty, it is irresponsible to consider only options at either end of the spectrum of "do nothing" or "do everything we'd ever want." We need to make sure the plan will actually lead to improved educational outcomes. Our children and our community deserve nothing less.

Our BOE members have the opportunity to be heroes by addressing our concerns and providing a cost-effective plan. I am encouraged that on May 14 both city governments and the BOE will meet. It's long past time these entities work together for the good of their constituents.

I sincerely hope the BOE is listening.

Jodi Sourini  
Member, Save Our School-University Heights

FUCHS MIZRACHI continued from page 1

cording to Ken Fisher, law director, the last steps (including title search) are in process, and should be completed soon. After that, the mayor will sign the contract.

Mayor Infeld said, "I am very happy that the city will own the last large remaining green space in University Heights. Although my preference is to use the space as a public park, I will appoint a citizens committee to make recommendations about the use of the property." Asked about next steps, Infeld said, "I anticipate that the citizens committee will begin meeting in May, and will likely make recommendations to the city council later in the summer."

At a March 12 town hall meeting, most in attendance expressed support for purchasing the property to create Saybrook Park. A show of hands indicated 40 in favor of the park, and 3 not in favor. Infeld explained that the purchase would be funded with a portion of the \$1.3 million revenue surplus generated by the city in 2011, and carried over into 2012.

*Kim Sergio Inglis is editor-in-chief of the Heights Observer.*

## Waiting to see what happens to Millikin

To the Editor,

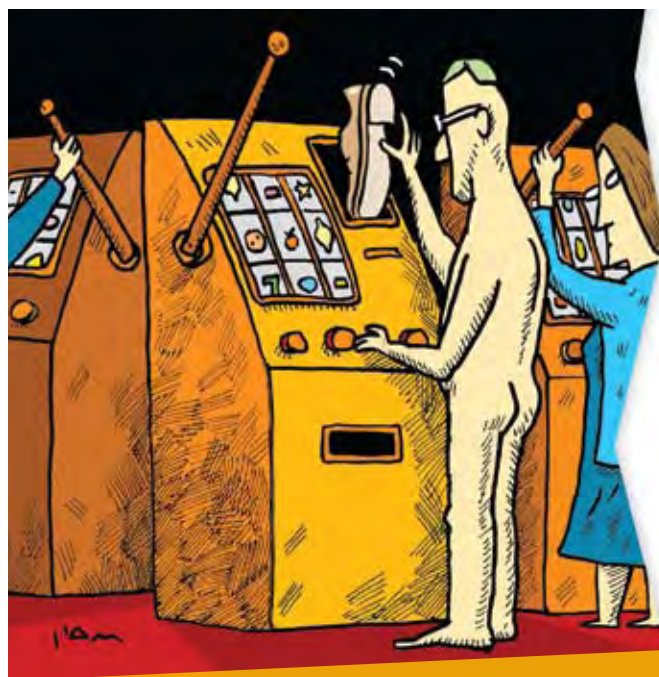
I am writing about the Millikin property, which remains an open issue. As the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school board has its facilities evaluation to deal with declining population, and is promising to close more neighborhood buildings, taxpayers are wondering if Fairfax, Gearity, and Noble neighborhoods will suffer the same drop in property values with the abandonment of those buildings, incurring the crime, trouble and disregard for upkeep that Millikin residents have had to put up with. Yet the facilities plan indeed calls for closing these buildings while asking for a levy to foot the bill.

The school board may have been negligent in the past with the property, but now has a unique opportunity to build trust with its constituency. Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, a private Orthodox

day school, has made a fair market offer to purchase the property, repair it, and reinvest in the neighborhood. Yet so far, the board has not acted by putting it up for public sale, and is apparently delaying on the appraisal. It does so at the peril to its own plans.

Mosdos is but one element in the district ready and willing to work with the school board. If Millikin can be saved and retain its tradition and value by continuing to educate our district's children, the board would be signalling that it indeed cares about the values of all its residents. As recent letters signed by pastors of all faiths, and recent comments by former Cleveland Heights City Council Member Nancy Dietrich demonstrate, the entire district is watching and waiting to see if the board will grab this opportunity now.

Susan Efroymson  
Cleveland Heights



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# Cleveland Heights City Council

## Meeting highlights

MARCH 19, 2012

All council members were present.

### Fair Housing Month

The city approved a resolution in which the city joins with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other communities nationwide in observing Fair Housing Month, and reaffirms the city's 47-year commitment to open housing.

### Cain Park schedule

Council Member Phyllis Evans reminded residents to watch for updates to the Cain Park summer schedule, as new performers are being added to the lineup.

### CDBG funds

Council authorized the programming of additional Community Development Block Grant funds that have been awarded to the city, which received about \$250,000 above the anticipated amount. The use of the funds must be approved by the Citizens Advisory Committee. The resolution covers \$126,497 for street resurfacing and \$40,000 for waterline repairs. The distribution of the remaining funds will be determined later.

### Recycling equipment

Council authorized acceptance of a grant of \$3,650 from the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste Management District for the purchase of recycling equipment, including eight 38-gallon recycling cans and ten ClearStream recycling bins with 200 bags. The recycling cans will be utilized at outdoor community events at Cain Park, Forest Hill Park, and other city properties to encourage recycling of cans and bottles at such events. The ClearStream bins will be distributed by the city for block parties and other similar events, also to encourage recycling.

### 3942 Delmore Road

Council authorized the sale of the city-owned single-family property at 3942 Delmore Road,

which has been rehabilitated with federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds. The sale price is \$70,000, with an award to the buyer of \$5,000 in down payment assistance. This is the tenth house to be renovated and sold under the NSP. Proceeds from the sale go back into the program to address problems with vacant homes in the city.

### 1481 Rydalmount Road

Council approved a resolution declaring the property at 1481 Rydalmount Road to be a nuisance and authorizing abatement of the nuisance.

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

APRIL 2, 2012

All council members were present.

### Bids and contracts

City Manager Robert Downey requested and was granted authority to receive bids for the city's 2012 road resurfacing program. Downey reported that contracts had been awarded to Erie Materials for the purchase of sand (\$4,000); Arms Trucking for the purchase of gravel (\$28,000); Bridgestone Americas for water and sewer billing services (\$120,384); and Snavelly Excavating for the Denison pool demolition (\$131,000).

### Yard waste

Council Member Bonnie Caplan reminded residents that yard waste and debris must be placed in paper bags. Mounds of loose leaves will not be cleared by the city.

### Monticello Boulevard environmental assessment

Council approved support for the grant application of Gloree Continuation Holdings to the Cuyahoga County Brownfield Redevelopment Fund Community Assessment Initiative. The grant will fund an environmental assessment of the commercial property at 2930-3008 Monticello Blvd. The company projects that 150 full-time jobs will result from the developing this property.

### Sustainable development

Information about last week's public hearing on

the Sustainable Development Practices/Green Zoning Initiative is available for review on the city's website.

### Police cruiser purchase

Council authorized the purchase of police cruisers for the police department from Greve Chrysler Jeep Dodge. The purchase will be made through the Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing Program. The cost of nine Dodge Charger police cruisers, plus accessories, is not to exceed \$225,000.

### Nuisance properties

Council declared three abandoned properties to be nuisances and authorized abatement: 3643 Grosvenor Road, 3421 Silsby Road, and 3527 Woodridge Road.

### Millikin School building

Council Member Jason Stein read a letter from the Heights Interfaith Council, regarding the Millikin School building, encouraging the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school administration and board to "move forward in a prompt, open, and transparent manner to provide a solution that will maintain this community asset."

### Cain Park fundraiser

Council Member Phyllis Evans encouraged residents to support Cain Park by buying a brick paver. Prospective donors should call 216-791-5149.

### Paul Gurgol

Council Member Evans offered the city's condolences to the family and friends of stage director Paul Gurgol, who passed away recently. Gurgol was artistic director of Kalliope Stage and also directed productions at Cain Park, the Beck Center, and Opera Cleveland.

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

Look for earlier, and often expanded, postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://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](mailto: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.

### CH meetings now on YouTube

The City of Cleveland Heights is now posting video of council meetings and public hearings on its own YouTube channel. Go to [www.youtube.com/user/ClevelandHeightsOH](http://www.youtube.com/user/ClevelandHeightsOH) to view video of recent council meetings. Subscribe to receive notices of new postings.

### City of Cleveland Heights revamps website

Cleveland Heights's website, [www.clevelandheights.com](http://www.clevelandheights.com), has a fresh, new look and has been reorganized to help residents, prospective residents, visitors and businesses find the information they need. This comprehensive website also includes additional sites for Cain Park, the Police Department, and Parks and Recreation. In addition, online registration for recreation programs will be available with the next season of classes.



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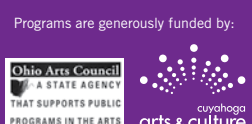
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## Cedar Lee District debuts QR code, mobile site

Kelli Fontenot

By the end of May, visitors to the Cedar Lee district should begin to notice Quick Response (QR) codes displayed in shop windows. Those who scan the square barcodes with their phones will be directed to a new mobile site that aims to inform passersby about local events and perhaps help them choose their next destination, according to Kelley Robinson, director of the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District (SID).

"We're finding a lot of people are creatures of habit and come to the district but will often go to the same places," Robinson said, noting that while most people recognize the Cedar Lee Theatre, non-Eastsiders who visit might not know where to find Anatolia Café, for example. The primary purpose of the new QR code and mobile site is to encourage visitors to check out businesses they don't usually frequent. A convenient directory and map feature will help make navigating the district easy, Robinson said.

When scanned with a smart phone's camera, a QR code directs the user to a mobile website or app. The use of these visual links has skyrocketed recently, according to Robinson, who pointed out that many local newspaper ads now contain QR codes. They are used to promote products, distribute coupons, aid in the search for missing children, and are even being etched into gravestones to give people a way to digitally revisit memories of the departed. The technology is being used in Northeast Ohio for community building, and nearby districts, including Tremont and University Circle, are using mobile marketing, Robinson said. "Having already established a social media presence, Cedar Lee making a mobile site was a natural next step," she said.

Available for iOS, Android and Blackberry platforms by late May, the new mobile site will provide a listing of local companies, feature different merchants every few weeks with a "Business Spotlight," and link to the Cedar Lee Facebook and Twitter pages. Window clings imprinted with the QR code image are being distributed to every Cedar Lee business. Participants will also receive business cards featuring the QR code to distribute to their customers.

In addition to engaging loyal shoppers, attracting newcomers is another

goal. "Most people with smart phones rely on the ability to access information immediately. This will play a pivotal role in keeping them engaged in our district," Robinson said. "We've got a 10-minute proximity to University Circle and its institutions, and it would be ideal to capture more of that population and bring them to our district."

According to the Pew Research Center, 46 percent of American adults owned smart phones in February 2011, and their use is growing, with adoption levels at 60 percent or more for college graduates; people with annual incomes of \$75,000; and 18- to 35-year-olds. In June 2011, around 6.2 percent of the total U.S. mobile audience—14 million mobile users—scanned at least one QR code, according to the researcher ComScore.

When it comes to QR codes, there are pros and cons, said Declan Synnott, owner of Ireland Inc. and vice president of the SID board. "Of course, you want people to come in to your business, but having it on the window is also for people walking by my business who see it, and may want to go to a movie theater," he explained. "If they scan the code, then they have that site on their phone so they can pull it up anytime. It's making everything more convenient."

Keeping content fresh will be a challenge, but with more than 100 businesses in the Cedar Lee district, "there's always something happening," Synnott said. "Individual businesses will be able to update it, to feature drink specials, or events that are happening on a given night."

The development of the code and site, by locally-owned UrbanMatrix Tech, cost around \$24 each for the more than 100 businesses included in the directory, but Robinson said the Cedar Lee SID is paying that bill. Merchants can pay to update their menus, service listings and event details. Once they have had about a year to try it out, they can renew their participation.

"It will allow us to effectively use our limited resources to maximize the marketing opportunity for the district as a whole, reinforce our branding efforts and engage the mobile consumer," Robinson said. "It's going to encourage consumers to continue to support independent local businesses, and strong commercial districts add stability to a community."

*Kelli Fontenot is a writer and editor living in Cleveland Heights.*



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6/16 JAKE SHIMABUKURO

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6/23 NEWFOUND ROAD  
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6/27 "HAPPILY EVER  
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6/28 TOWER OF POWER  
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6/30 CIRCO COMEDIA

7/6 FIONA APPLE  
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7/20 CAROLINA  
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7/21 SEAL  
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7/25 & 7/26

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# University Heights City Council

## Meeting highlights

MARCH 19, 2012

Councilman Phillip Ertel was excused.

### 2012 water main replacement

Council approved advertisement for bids for the 2012 Water Main Replacement Project. The City of Cleveland has agreed to replace the water mains for two streets, Lansdale and Westwood roads, in their entirety. Cleveland pays the cost for digging the pavement above the water lines, replacing the lines, and repaving that portion of the street. University Heights administers the project and thus advertises for contractor bids.

### 2012 budget

Council approved finalizing the city's budget for the period of Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2012. Councilman Sims was concerned with leaving the repaving of Lansdale Road to a grant process, but Joe Ciuni, city engineer, suggested that if the city can find money in its budget, potential funders would not be interested in providing grant money. Sims was assured that although this is a final budget, it could be amended over the course of the year if grant funding cannot be obtained and city funds do become available.

### Lansdale Road

Council authorized application for Community Development Block Grant funding for the Lansdale Road Streetscape Improvement. Lansdale Road will be partially repaved in

the process of replacing water mains but grant funding is needed to pave the other side of the street. The grant application is for the maximum amount of \$150,000 and will also allow for traffic calming measures, as Lansdale has become a cut-through street.

### House repair notices

Homes between Washington and Miramar boulevards needing exterior repairs will receive letters. Building Director David Menn said these letters are in the public record and contractors will obtain the information and offer their services to homeowners. This is legal. Financial assistance is available. People should contact the building department or call 211 (First Call for Help) for financial assistance.

LWV observer: Wendy Deuring.

MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2012

All council members were present.

### Proposed park on Saybrook Road

Resident Sheila Hubman raised concerns about the proposed park on Saybrook Road, noting many unanswered questions about the existing building, security plans, lighting, hours and resources. Responding to Hubman, Mayor Susan Infeld maintained that if council approves land acquisition for the proposed park, the city would draw from a \$4-million surplus for the purchase and demolition of the building (with a possible grant to help). There is no money in the budget to staff a community center or

to build or renovate a building. After acquisition, a commission would be appointed to study and determine specific usages. Later in the meeting, an ordinance authorizing a purchase agreement with The Leonard and Susan Fuchs Mizrahi School (the Saybrook property) was entered on first reading. Payment of the \$600,000 purchase price would be on a three-two-one schedule, with \$300,000 paid in the first year.

### Schools facilities plans

The mayor attended a Cleveland Heights-University Heights Schools facilities meeting and was dismayed to learn that the proposed plan included closing Gearity School, and the four remaining elementary schools would all be in Cleveland Heights. Councilwoman Susan Pardee noted that one of those is Canterbury, which is one street from University Heights and enrolls 190 UH students. Currently, 170 UH students are at Gearity. Council had an extended discussion about the detrimental effects this plan would have on University Heights, especially the Gearity neighborhood. School Board President Karen Gorman Jones has suggested a meeting with the UH council after the community meeting at Heights High on April 18. Council was dissatisfied that this had not been offered earlier. The mayor proposed a University Heights town meeting with school board members on April 11, to assure that more UH residents are aware of the proposed plan. Council will discuss a draft resolution at the April 16 council meeting.



### 3954 Silsby Road

Council authorized purchase of 3954 Silsby Road. A point-of-sale inspection showed 35 violations. The city owns another house two doors away, behind the municipal complex.

### Audit services

Council Members Steven Sims, Adele Zucker, Frankie Goldberg and Philip Ertel voted no to defeat authorization of an agreement with James G. Zupka, C.P.A., Inc. for audit services for the period Dec. 31, 2011 through Dec. 31, 2014. Councilman Sims questioned why council had not had input into the chosen firm or the cost, and pointed out that council had problems with this firm on the previous audit. Interim Finance Director Anthony Ianaro explained that the State Audit Office is charged to provide municipal audits. If they choose to outsource, only firms with appropriate experience and certification to do municipal audits are eligible. A technical evaluation by the State Audit Office, and separately by the municipal finance director, and the proposed cost determines the selection. Zupka rated highest on the evaluation and the bid was \$13,000 less than the next highest.

LWV Observer: Patricia Solomon.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).

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## UH residents sound off on proposed Gearity school closing

Sarah Wean

The April 11 University Heights town hall meeting to address the potential closing of Gearity Elementary School as part of a districtwide overhaul of CH-UH City School District facilities drew more than 100 passionate residents, many of whom took their turn at the microphone.

Sitting shoulder to shoulder with members of the school board and administration in the packed council chambers, concerned citizens listened as Mayor Susan Infeld, who had called the meeting, cited studies showing a strong relationship between school closures and loss of property values. "Closing University Heights's only public elementary school will be devastating and impact us in a way that



UH residents discuss the proposed closing of Gearity Elementary School as part of the district's new master plan.

will cause us concern for many years to come," she said. "Our community will die."

Residents spoke for two hours, expressing their opinions and concerns in sometimes angry terms, and with an occasional heckle. By the end of the night, Infeld's good-natured and even-handed facilitation enabled everyone to have a say.

Beryl Rothschild, the spirited former University Heights mayor, spoke of the perils of planning for fads in education, saying the 1970s districtwide destruction of historic neighborhood school structures to build open classrooms did a disservice to the community. "University Heights has to stand up and fight like hell to defeat this thing. Close Canterbury [located in Cleveland Heights] and leave us alone," she said.

Although CH-UH district representatives took pains to describe the lengthy community engagement process that has taken place up to this point, many participants remarked that the district's actions appeared to be an effort to convince them of decisions already made, not to truly consult with them. Dori Hollis, Gearity PTA president, said she was frustrated by what she felt was a lack of willingness by the school administration to sit down with parents to discuss the plans. "Have a conversation with us," she said.

Some questioned the district's

ability to effectively manage more empty properties. Others wanted an elementary school in University Heights regardless of the site. And many spoke of how the closing would affect the Gearity neighborhood's property values and quality of life.

While expressing sympathy with the concerns of University Heights residents, Steve Shergalis, business manager for the district, pointed to declining enrollment, excess space and the need to make realistic and difficult decisions about which schools to close. Jeffery Talbert, assistant superintendent, said, "We have to improve these facilities. We have to give our kids a better learning environment."

District literature indicates that the three planned elementary school closures (Gearity in University Heights, Fairfax and Noble in Cleveland Heights) will create opportunities to build "vital community hubs." The district says it intends to have a Gearity reuse plan in place before voters are asked to approve funding for a bond issue this November.

Despite the district's efforts to assuage the concerns of residents, most appeared unmoved, leaving the event no less aggrieved than when they entered.

Mayor Infeld was adamant about keeping an elementary school in her community and implored the district to look at the larger picture. Pointing out that University Heights residents make up one quarter of the combined populations of the two cities in the district, she said, "If the district is going to have four elementary schools, I don't see why we can't have one."

Visit [www.chub.org](http://www.chub.org) for more information about the plan and for school board contact information.

Sarah Wean is a 22-year resident of Cleveland Heights and is active in the Coventry Neighbors and Sustainable Heights Network: [coventryneighborhood.org](http://coventryneighborhood.org) and [sustainableheightsnetwork.net](http://sustainableheightsnetwork.net).

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## Introducing Biblio Radio to the Heights

Jim Perkins

Cleveland Heights and University Heights, meet Biblio Radio, the new voice of your community library.

Biblio Radio is a weekly segment on WJCU 88.7 FM and a podcast on [www.wjcu.org](http://www.wjcu.org) and [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org) that informs Heights residents about events sponsored by the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

There is something for listeners of every age on Biblio Radio. Past segments covered topics such as balancing a personal budget, home repair classes for adults, movie scriptwriting and blogging classes for teens, a Dr. Seuss birthday party and sign language classes for kids. Future segments will cover everything from book clubs to art study groups.

Biblio Radio is a partnership between WJCU and the Heights Libraries. Each week, a WJCU producer meets with Sheryl Banks, marketing and community relations manager for Heights Libraries, and Anna Register, marketing assistant and occasional Biblio Radio co-host. Together, they decide which library events to bring to the attention of WJCU listeners.

"We have incredibly talented librarians, so one of the best aspects of Biblio Radio is that we give them a chance to speak directly to the community about their programs," said Banks.



"The partnership between the library and WJCU gives us the opportunity to promote two great Heights organizations at the same time," said Register.

Heights Libraries and WJCU wanted to establish a voice outside of library walls, and reach Heights residents in a new way. Biblio Radio aims to be that voice, by sharing librarians' insights, and encouraging listeners to participate in library events and programs.

Listen to Biblio Radio on WJCU 88.7 FM on Mondays at 5:30 p.m., Tuesdays at 2:40 p.m., Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m., Thursdays at 12:14 p.m., and Fridays at 8:29 p.m. Or, listen anytime via the podcasts on WJCU's and Heights Libraries' websites.

*Jim Perkins is WJCU station manager, Biblio Radio creator/producer, and a communications management graduate student at John Carroll University.*

## 'Raise the Roof' to celebrate 40 years of Home Repair Resource Center

Rebecca Stager

For four decades, the Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) has worked hand in hand with residents to keep the houses of Cleveland Heights in good repair, amounting to more than \$14 million in home improvements, and benefiting both individual homeowners and their neighbors.

To celebrate this milestone, HRRC invites the public to "Raise the Roof: Celebrate 40 Years of HRRC." This informal benefit party will be held on June 17, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m., at Heights Grill on Lee Road. The celebration will recognize the organization's history and impact, acknowledge key partners, and look ahead to HRRC's next decades.

Led by Nancy Dietrich and Andrea Morris, a committee of HRRC's supporters is planning the celebration. Tickets for the event are \$40 per person, and space is limited. A house-themed auction will add to the evening's festivities.

"HRRC has really made a difference in this community," observed Kathryn Lad,

now in her fifth year as the organization's executive director. "We have grown from a small outreach project, founded in 1971 by members of Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian, to an organization that now assists people in all stages of home ownership. Over the years, HRRC has responded to changing housing needs, while remaining committed to our mission."

Alex Pesta, HRRC board president, said, "Strong partnerships have been critical to our success." Among the organization's partners are Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian; Key Bank; the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library; and the City of Cleveland Heights, which provides Community Development Block Grant funding to help support HRRC's work.

For more information about Raise the Roof, or to make a reservation, call 216-381-6100, ext. 16. For information about HRRC's programs and services, go to [www.hrrc-ch.org](http://www.hrrc-ch.org) or call 216-381-6100.

*Becky Stager has been the home repair education coordinator at HRRC since 1989.*

## Heights High faculty artwork at library

During the month of May, original artwork by the Cleveland Heights High School faculty is on display at the Harvey & Friends Bookshop on the second floor of the Lee Road Library.

All pieces are available for sale.

The artists—all members of the art department faculty—are Susan Hood, Hillary Nemecek, Barbara Townsend and Jerome White.

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# Cleveland Heights's 2012 Preservation Month events

Kara Hamley O'Donnell

May is National Preservation Month and this year's theme is "Discovering America's Hidden Gems." Here in Cleveland Heights, one month isn't enough to celebrate all of the city's hidden gems, so this year we're stretching it a bit—starting in early May and continuing into July.

Preservation Month 2012 will feature seven free events co-sponsored by the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, Cleveland Heights Historical Society, Heights Libraries, Future-Heights, Heights Bicycle Coalition and Home Repair Resource Center. Space is limited and preregistration is required for all events. See specific event for registration details. For additional information, contact Kara Hamley O'Donnell at 216-291-4885 or kodonnell@clvhts.com.

**Saturday, May 12, 10 a.m.–noon.**

**Biking Tour of Historic Districts on the National Register of Historic Places.** Meet at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. (Rain date: May 26.) To register, call the Cleveland Heights Planning Department, 216-291-4878.

*Speakers:* Christopher Roy, Cleveland Heights Historical Society; and Kara Hamley O'Donnell, city planner, City of Cleveland Heights. *Biking Tour Leader:* Mary Dunbar, member of CH City Council and Heights Bicycle Coalition.

The Heights Bicycle Coalition and the Cleveland Heights Historical Society are joining forces for a free lecture and bicycle tour of historic districts in the southern part of Cleveland Heights.

**Monday, May 14, 7 p.m. The Art of Reading: Cleveland's WPA-Era Ceramics.** Lee Road Library. To register, two weeks prior to the event visit [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org), or call 216-932-3600.

*Speaker:* Mark Bassett, scholar in residence, Cleveland Institute of Art.

During the 1930s, Cleveland artists created handmade figurines for librarians and teachers to use in teaching reading, history, and culture through visualization. Bassett will discuss the innovative ceramics designed then, including those made for Cleveland Heights public schools, many of which are now on view at the Lee Road Library.

**Saturday, May 19, 10 a.m.–noon. "App-Enhanced" Walking Tour of the Coventry Neighborhood.**

Start at Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Arch by the Coventry Village Library. (Rain or shine). To register, call 216-320-1423 or e-mail [info@futureheights.org](mailto:info@futureheights.org).

*Leader:* J. Mark Souther, associate professor of history, Cleveland State University, and member of Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission.

Using the Cleveland Mobile History app, guides will share the history of the Coventry neighborhood. Learn how to use the app to explore the history of other Cleveland Heights neighborhoods on your own. Bring your smart phone for a demonstration on how to download and navigate through Cleveland Mobile History. The Coventry tour was created with support from Cuyhoga Arts & Culture.

**Thursday, May 24, 7 p.m. Cleveland Heights House History Workshop.**

Lee Road Library. To register, two weeks prior to the event visit [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org), or call 216-932-3600.

*Speaker:* Kara Hamley O'Donnell, city planner, City of Cleveland Heights.

Using local research tools and online sites, this workshop will teach participants how to research their home's history, including when it was built and by whom, past owners and historic photos. Learn how to use *Plain Dealer* indexes to find out what may have happened at a property—home sales, lost pets, society events and more. Participants who preregister and provide a mailing address will receive advance information to start a search on a property. Others can receive the information at a later date.

**Thursday, June 7, 7 p.m. Maintenance and Energy Efficiency.**

Lee Road Library. To register, two weeks prior to the event visit [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org), or call 216-932-3600.

*Speaker:* Mary Ogle, Cleveland Restoration Society program assistant.

All houses need continual maintenance to stay at their best. Take a top-to-bottom look at the typical maintenance issues of an older house. Learn how to spot problems before they become worse and how to make an older home more energy efficient without breaking the bank. Get information about the Heritage Home Program, which provides preservation-based technical assistance and low-interest loans for rehabilitation projects.

**Thursday, June 21, 7 p.m. American Home Interiors: 1850–1950.**

Lee Road Library. To register, two weeks prior to the event visit [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org), or call 216-932-3600.

*Speaker:* Michael Fleenor, Cleveland Restoration Society director of preservation services.

Explore the ever-evolving American home interior over a 100-year period, beginning in the 1850s. Major emphasis on stylistic trends from Classical Revival, Victorian Aesthetic Period, Arts & Crafts, Colonial Revival and Mid-Century Modern will be showcased. If you own an old house, come and find inspiration for the appropriate period treatments and furnishings.

**Thursday, July 12, 7 p.m. Your Roof: Bottom/Up, Top/Down Sustainability.**

Lee Road Library. To register, two weeks prior to the event visit [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org), or call 216-932-3600.

*Speaker:* Chuck Miller, Principal, Doty & Miller Architects.

When major roof repair or asphalt shingle replacement is being planned, it's a perfect time to consider what else can be done to improve a home's energy performance. The most effective results occur when the entire building shell undergoes a Deep Energy Retrofit (aggressive energy-improving upgrades), but this is beyond the budget of most homeowners. This presentation will identify effective options for attic and roof improvements. Are vented or unvented roofs better? Should insulation be added at the attic floor or at the roof line? These questions and more will be discussed and illustrated for varying roof conditions found in older homes.

*Kara Hamley O'Donnell is the city planner for the City of Cleveland Heights.*

## Eastside Kickers U9 Boys win Blast Cup



Playing in Series A, the premier division, of the Blast Cup in Columbus, the Eastside Kickers U9 Boys took home the gold with a 4-to-2 victory over Project 24 Academy on April 15. The Blast Cup draws teams from Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Pennsylvania, New York and West Virginia.

The finals were played at a pounding tempo, and all 12 players were needed to win the first-ever Blast Cup for the team, which has won 42 games since last fall.

## Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park clean up May 5

Joanne Campbell

Volunteers are needed for spring clean-up day at Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park on Saturday, May 5, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., rain or shine. Help clean up the park, garden and make repairs. Tools, gloves, snacks, beverages and guidance will be provided.

Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park is the playground at the former Coventry Elementary School in Cleveland Heights. It was built in 1993 using funds raised and donated by area residents. Coventry

P.E.A.C.E., the volunteer organization that cares for the park, hosts a twice annual clean-up and maintenance event.

A general meeting will take place at the park at 2 p.m., following the cleanup. For more information, call 216-832-4365, e-mail [erick.kauffman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:erick.kauffman@sbcglobal.net), or visit the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/Coventry-PEACE](http://www.facebook.com/Coventry-PEACE).

*Joanne Campbell has helped maintain the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park since 1993.*

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## May is Bike Month in Cleveland Heights

Deidre McPherson

For the third year in a row, Cleveland Heights City Council has declared May Bike Month. Each year, the array of Bike Month activities in our city and region has grown.

The heart of Bike Month is Bike-to-Work Week, May 14-18. Highlights include, Bike-to-Work Day and the annual Ride of Silence to honor those killed while riding their bicycles.

Ride of Silence participants assemble at 5:45 p.m. on Wednesday, May 16, at the Whole Foods Market in University Heights. The ride starts at 6 p.m., and progresses through Cleveland Heights to the Adelbert Road entrance of University Hospitals, where bicyclists meet with others from Cleveland for a ceremony.

During morning rush hours on Bike-to-Work Day, 6:30-9:30 a.m., Friday, May 18, the Heights Bicycle Coalition, with the support of Phoenix Coffee and others, will provide a coffee station at the intersection of Edgemoor and Overlook roads. Bicycle commuters are invited to stop for free coffee and edibles. Edgemoor Road, between Cleveland Heights and University Circle, is one of the busiest bicycle routes in Northeast Ohio, with hundreds of bicyclists using this roadway every workday.

Other bicycling events will occur throughout Bike Month:

- On Thursday, May 3, at 7 p.m., the Heights Bicycle Coalition holds its first annual meeting since gaining

501(c)3 status from the IRS earlier this year. The meeting is at the Lee Road Library and includes the election of officers and board members, a progress report, a talk by newly appointed Bike Cleveland executive Jacob VanSickle, and opportunities to get involved.

- On Wednesday, May 9, schools are invited to participate in the inaugural national Bike-to-School Day.
- On Saturday, May 12, 10 a.m.-noon, the Heights Bicycle Coalition and the Cleveland Heights Historical Society collaborate on a free Biking Tour of Historic Districts. Meet at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. Brief lectures describe architectural features and styles to look for in the ride's historic districts and sites. Preregister by calling the Cleveland Heights Planning Department, 216-291-4878. (Rain date is Saturday, May 26.)
- On Friday, May 25, Fairfax Elementary School will present a Bike Rodeo to train students in safe bicycling. Fairfax is also home to a weekly after-school bicycle club from mid-April through May. These pilot programs are anticipated to spread to other schools in the future.

Bike Cleveland also lists many Bike Month events in Cleveland and the region on its website, <http://bikecleveland.org/>.

*Deidre McPherson serves on the education and encouragement committee of the Heights Bicycle Coalition.*

## Getting geared up



LIFE CYCLE

Heights Bicycle Coalition

With gasoline prices near \$4 a gallon, using a bicycle for transportation is more attractive than ever. In addition to the economic advantage, cycling is a great way to exercise while also doing errands or commuting to work.

In city traffic, cycling can be almost as fast as a driving a car. The average new-to-cycling woman can ride one mile in 5-6 minutes, which means she can cover 10-12 miles in an hour. More experienced cyclists can ride at 15-18 mph.

For all cyclists, developing road riding skills is more important to safety and enjoyment than any piece of safety equipment. The Ohio City Bike Coop offers bicycling classes that teach the skills needed to operate a bike confidently on the road.

Bicyclists are required by Ohio

law to follow most of the same laws as other vehicles, and they also have most of the same rights. It is important to ride predictably, use hand signals to communicate turns, and obey stop signs and red lights.

Motorists also have responsibilities while sharing the road with non-motorized riders. Ohio law requires cars to pass bicycles at "a safe distance." The Ohio Bicycle Federation suggests that a safe distance is at least three feet.

The Heights Bicycle Coalition encourages cycling as a sustainable and healthy form of transportation and recreation. For more information or to get involved, visit our website [www.bikesintheheights.org](http://www.bikesintheheights.org) or find us on Facebook.

Another resource for local rides and cycling activities is Bike Cleveland, [www.bikecleveland.org](http://www.bikecleveland.org).

*The Heights Bicycle Coalition was formed in the spring of 2010 and works to encourage citizens to ride bicycles for fun, fitness and transportation.*



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**SPRING SPLASH 2: CHINESE FOLK MUSIC**  
**Thursday, May 24 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.**  
Demonstrations of Chinese folk music every 30 minutes.

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Chinese Summer Camp for  
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Cost: \$160 per student • Registration Deadline: May 31, 2012  
Application form available at: <https://lakewood.uakron.edu/>  
Send Application and \$160 to: The Confucius Institute, The University of Akron Quaker Square, Suite 307 • Akron, OH 44325-9003  
Questions? Contact: 330-972-2013 • [nee@uakron.edu](mailto:nee@uakron.edu) • [www.uakron.edu/ci](http://www.uakron.edu/ci)

### Coming in Fall 2012 - Beginning Chinese 1

Course will be offered to the community as a noncredit & university credit course. Course cost \$50. Number of classes: 27  
Days of the week: Monday, Wednesday • Dates: Aug. 27 - Dec. 5  
Class times: 6:05 PM - 7:45 PM  
Register at: [www.uakron.edu/ce/classes/?cat=1956184](http://www.uakron.edu/ce/classes/?cat=1956184)

## Citizen action is something to celebrate



THE COMMON  
GOOD

Susie Kaeser

In 1966, Painesville residents Diana and Ted Woodbridge started their search for a home closer to the city. As they looked for housing in Cleveland's eastern suburbs, the white couple was steered away from a neighborhood that had recently started to integrate—a distressing artifact of the days of legally sanctioned racial segregation. The experience began a life-changing journey that, five years later, produced a powerful resource for justice that endures today: Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC).

In 1968, after moving to the predominantly white Oxford neighborhood of Cleveland Heights, Diana Woodbridge became a checker for the Suburban Citizens for Open Housing. When she learned that an African-American woman seeking to rent an apartment was rejected by the landlord, Woodbridge posed as a prospective tenant for the same unit and was offered a lease.

"It was blatant discrimination," she recalled.

Woodbridge's commitment to justice and inclusion developed further when she participated in the Church and Society Committee at Forest Hill

Church, Presbyterian. The committee studied race and reconciliation one year, and the next year focused on social change and fair housing. The group felt compelled to act.

Woodbridge knew exactly what she wanted to do: make Cleveland Heights—a community that was just beginning to include African-American homeowners—a model integrated community. She had passion, conscience, vision, and a trusted group of colleagues with whom she shared determination to make a difference.

"We were lucky," remembered Woodbridge. "Members of our group had the expertise for creating a nonprofit. In September of 1971, Charlie Ault helped us incorporate as Forest Hill Church Housing Corporation. We had a vision for our community. We wanted to make a difference. We settled on something we knew was critical to a stable, diverse, welcoming community: keeping the houses in good repair." Woodbridge eventually became the executive director of the new nonprofit and held the job for 35 years.

Forty years ago, the church-based group began to evolve and build a supportive board separate from the church. Today it operates as HRRC, and through an enduring presence made possible by an inspiring and critical mission, effective programs, and the financial support and energy of community members, it has empowered homeowners to invest more than \$14 million in their homes—touching nearly

every street in Cleveland Heights.

This combination of zeal, empowerment and a group of caring citizens with a common purpose is a recipe for successful citizen activism, the building block of a just society and a strong community.

Since then, many other citizen-led and supported nonprofits have been established to enrich community life. HRRC was followed by the Heights Community Congress, Heights Parent Center, Reaching Heights, Heights Arts, Future Heights, Open Doors, Heights Youth Club. This year Lake Erie Ink and the Heights Bicycle Coalition joined the ranks of locally focused nonprofits, and more will follow as needs change and new generations of activists step forward to shape our city.

This year HRRC, Heights Community Congress, FutureHeights and the Heights Parent Center will achieve significant milestones. These programs built stronger ties and deeper commitments among our residents. They built community, which is the strongest resource there is for stability.

As we celebrate this great history and tradition, I hope it will renew our sense of responsibility to one another, and inspire a new and diverse generation of community leaders to come forward to pursue their vision for our community and society through collective citizen activism.

*Susie Kaeser is former director of Reaching Heights and a board member of the Home Repair Resource Center. She has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1979.*

## Fairfax School Young Authors Conference needs volunteers

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

Students at Fairfax Elementary School will spend the month of May writing, revising, illustrating and binding their own works of fiction. The first annual Young Authors Conference will center on the theme Journeys, as students create individual tales of trips to places real or imagined.

Volunteers are needed for many different tasks:

- Helping the students bind their books in art class during the weeks of April 30–May 4 and May 7–11.
- Guiding pairs of students through peer conferences during the revision and editing stage, May 14–18. (Volunteers will receive a brief training for this.)
- Typing the students' final drafts. This can be done at home, on your own computer on your own time, between May 22–29.
- Donating old wallpaper samples for the book covers.

Contact Krissy Dietrich Gallagher at [kcdg@live.com](mailto:kcdg@live.com) or 216-397-6587 to volunteer, or for more information.

*Krissy Dietrich Gallagher is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, a graduate of Heights schools, and a former Coventry school teacher. She currently sits on the Board of Directors of Family Connections, while raising her two sons and working on her memoir. She blogs at <http://krissygallagher.wordpress.com>.*



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216-221-1141  
[lakewood.uakron.edu](http://lakewood.uakron.edu)

We're located in the historic Bailey Bldg. at Detroit and Warren roads in Lakewood, Ohio. Our main entrance is to the south of the building just off of the parking lot.



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\*The 2012 Bloomberg BusinessWeek rankings of part-time MBA programs.

Visit [mba.uakron.edu](http://mba.uakron.edu) to learn more about the Saturday MBA program.

## Cleveland Foodbank benefit outreach program simplifies application process

Jamie Sullivan

The Cleveland Foodbank understands that times are tough and money is tight for many in Northeast Ohio. To help, the Foodbank started a new benefit outreach program to make the application process quick and easy for more than 20 programs, including SNAP (food stamps), prescription benefits, child care vouchers, WIC, medical coverage, and other assistance programs.

The Foodbank's team of benefit counselors can assist people with the application process by phone, and outreach counselors can help people apply in person. Those who are not currently receiving SNAP can call the Foodbank to determine eligibility, find helpful resources in the community, and apply for assistance—all in one phone call.

Lauren Thomas is the outreach worker for Cleveland Heights and University Heights. Contact her by phone at 216-200-3042, or by e-mail at [ltomas@clevelandfoodbank.org](mailto:ltomas@clevelandfoodbank.org).

Assistance is available for seniors, students, families, full- and part-time



workers, the unemployed—anyone 18 years of age or older who is struggling to make ends meet. Eligibility is based on monthly income and expenses, including medical, rent and utilities. Anyone making less than \$1,200 per month may be eligible for assistance. This food assistance is not a charity program; it is an entitlement program and is given to anyone who qualifies. If you have never used assistance programs before and have questions, call 216-738-2067. For more information, visit [www.cleveland-foodbank.org](http://www.cleveland-foodbank.org).

*Jamie Sullivan is program manager for the Cleveland Foodbank's benefit outreach program.*

PLAN C continued from page 1

by keeping the current footprint of the three historic elementary schools. "It is just too costly to take off the 1970s additions," said Angee Shaker, director of communications for the district.

Community members expressed concerns at the April 18 meeting, among them the disposition of the vacant Millikin Elementary School property, which has been empty for six years. Joanne Siegel, a Fairfax parent, said, "You should sell Millikin to people who live in the neighborhood," referring to Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, a private Jewish school that wants to purchase the property. "Your track record is not good on one vacant building and now there will be three more," said another resident. "You've not demonstrated that you have the ability to do what you say you are going to do."

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher urged the district to renovate the high school first, rather than last. "It represents us publicly, and every one of our kids would attend there," she said.

The most vocal concerns were raised by residents of University Heights about Gearity's closing. Mayor Susan Infeld read a resolution condemning the closing, passed by UH Council on April 16, following a town hall meeting

on the issue. "If we eliminate the only public elementary school in University Heights, families with children won't be interested in living here," she said.

Dori Hollis, Gearity PTA president, expressed concern over the lack of transparency in the district's decision-making process and its patronizing attitude toward Gearity parents. "We have real questions that we want answers to," she said. "It's not just about emotion. This plan is short-sighted and is alienating the City of University Heights."

On April 23, consultants presented options for funding the plan to the board of education, and indicated potential risks of postponing a bond issue beyond November 2012.

The district plans to test the flexible learning space concept this fall. According to Steve Shergalis, director of business services, the public will be able to view pilots of the proposed learning communities in the New Tech School at the high school, the sixth grade at Roxboro Middle School and the first grade at Oxford Elementary School in fall 2012. Construction will occur over the summer, and there will be several opportunities to visit classrooms prior to the November election. Detailed plans for each building, however, will not be available until after a bond issue passes and architects are selected.

The board of education will have its first meeting with the city councils of Cleveland Heights and University Heights to discuss the facilities plan on Monday, May 14, at 7:30 p.m. The meeting, at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, 1 Monticello Blvd., is open to the public. CH Mayor Ed Kelley encourages the public to attend, but is unsure if there will be time for public comments during the meeting. He has committed to stay afterwards to hear residents' comments.

For more information about the district's master facilities plan, visit <http://chubfacilitiesmasterplan.wordpress.com>.

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

## Recycling batteries in University Heights

Penny Adelstein

As a conscientious recycler, you may have been dropping off batteries at the University Heights Recycling Center. Until March of this year, however, batteries were not recycled; they were thrown out.

As a result of the efforts of one concerned resident, the City of University Heights now recycles all types of batteries, through a program with The Big Green Box—the only company in Ohio that recycles batteries.

UH residents may have noticed several new, blue receptacles next to the paper recycling truck at the UH Recycling Center

DOWNY continued from page 1

him well in his future endeavors."

"Because we are a city manager form of government, the importance of Bob's contributions cannot be understated," said Council Member Dennis Wilcox. "He's one of the reasons why the city is what it is today." Wilcox attributed many of the city's accomplishments during Downey's tenure, at least in part, to his management skills. "The city has remained integrated and vibrant," he said. "Bob built a strong team at city hall. He managed the city budget through the recession, and developed more than 300 new housing units in the city."

Kelley noted that there has been more than \$400 million in new development in the city in the last 12 years, including the Coventry streetscape, the redevelopment of Severance Town Center, numerous road projects and the construction of the Cleveland Heights Community Center. "Downey managed a budget of more than \$40 million and effectively managed a staff of more than 400," he added.

Susanna Niermann O'Neil, appointed interim city manager at the April 16 meeting, said, "The evolution of our community is due in large part to Bob's leadership. We were led to do what we felt was the best for our departments. He had an open-door policy. You didn't have to get on a calendar or make an appointment. As a result, there was often a line of people waiting to see him—senior staff—who brainstormed about ideas as they were waiting."

John Gibbon, city law director, praised

(behind city hall and the fire station. One is marked for batteries. Others are marked for glass, plastic, metal, or computer, cell phone and related accessories.

Alkaline batteries should be placed in bags so that they can be easily handled. Auto batteries can be placed next to the battery container. Nickel cadmium (NiCd), lithium (Li/Li-ion) and lead acid (Pb) batteries can be placed in the battery container. Any of the recyclable items mentioned above can be dropped off anytime, day or night, any day of the week.

*Penny Adelstein is a resident of University Heights, and a concerned citizen.*

the tradition of professional government in Cleveland Heights. "Bob allowed me to do the job that I was hired for," he said. "He gave me the support I needed, but otherwise he left me to do what I knew how to do, and I was very grateful for that."

Council Member Bonnie Caplan praised Downey's professionalism. "[He] served the community with intelligence, hard work, vision and caring. His home is here, and his personal mission was to ensure that we would all be proud to call Cleveland Heights home."

Kaye Lowe, executive director of the Cedar Fairmount SID, said, "As city manager, Bob was readily accessible. He had an intimate knowledge of the Cedar Fairmount area. We enjoyed working with him and will miss his cooperation."

CH City Council intends to do a national search to fill the position. "Cleveland Heights is a unique and vital first-ring suburb," said Mayor Kelley. "Our community's commitment to diversity and to innovation is well known. We will be looking for a talented, experienced administrator who will embrace our city and our residents."

Kelley added, "We are not going to rush this process. We want to get the best person in place to lead our city. I am confident in the abilities of Susanna and the rest of our staff to continue the city's work."

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

## Thunder Run to be held in Forest Hill Park

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Forest Hill Thunder Run 2012 will take place at 8 a.m., on Saturday, July 21 in Forest Hill Park. This year's 5k run/walk will benefit FutureHeights, a nonprofit that promotes a vibrant and sustainable future for Cleveland Heights and University Heights through innovative ideas and civic engagement.

The event benefits a different Heights-based nonprofit every year. Organizers Jim Roosa and Jed Koops began the run in 2009. The inaugural run took place on July 18, 2009 and drew 60 registrants from throughout Northeast Ohio. Proceeds were donated to the Heights Emergency Food Center. In 2010, the event drew even more participants and proceeds were donated to Reaching Heights. After a hiatus in 2011, the event is back.

"The run has brought well-deserved attention to beautiful Forest Hill Park, which straddles the cities of Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland," said

Roosa, "And it's been a fun experience for participants of all ages."

Roosa said that local businesses help sponsor the event each year. Several sponsorship levels are available. Companies that contribute are named in publicity for the event, including the T-shirts given to participants.

Thunder Run starts near the east parking lot of Forest Hill Park and loops through the trails, around the lagoon and past the overlook on the west side of the park before returning to the finish line next to the softball fields. Prizes are awarded for overall winners, masters-level winners (over age 40) and winners in each age group.

Runners and walkers can register for this year's event by visiting [www.thunderrun.org](http://www.thunderrun.org) and clicking "Register." For more information about sponsorship, e-mail [info@thunderrun.org](mailto:info@thunderrun.org) or call 216-789-5357.

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

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# Local preschoolers give back

Kirsten Radivoyevitch

People are never too young to make a difference in the lives of others. Learning the value of giving back is an important part of the curriculum at St. Paul's Cooperative Preschool.

St. Paul's has a long tradition of community outreach and support. The preschool's latest project let children take on responsibility while experiencing the excitement and satisfaction of helping animals. The children partnered with the Kevin P. Clinton Wildlife Center, a refuge for animals that are not able to survive in their natural habitat.

After learning about the various animals at the center, the preschoolers voted to adopt Coil, a black rat snake. Coil has been imprinted, meaning that he has grown too accustomed to human interaction to live in the wild.

Coil was the guest of honor at the school's pancake breakfast. The children met the snake and some of his wildlife center companions during an outreach program conducted by center staff.

The children donated supplies needed to care for and rehabilitate the many injured animals housed there. The children and their families also raised money toward Coil's upkeep at the wildlife center.

"St. Paul's Cooperative Preschool is very committed to providing children



A representative from the Clinton Wildlife Center introduces St. Paul's preschool families to their newly adopted snake, Coil.

with a broad range of experiences, incorporating principles that create a foundation for civic responsibility and empathy," said Gina Gillombardo, a school parent. "I love that they recognize the importance of building strong citizens of the future."

*Kirsten Radivoyevitch is an early childhood educator and mother of four.*

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- Flower Clown
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# What's going on at your library?

Visit [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org) for the complete calendar, and to register for selected events.

**Coventry Village Library**  
1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400  
Tuesdays, May 1-15, 4 p.m.  
*Make Your Own Mad Science.* Join in for a three-part series of hands-on experiments and out-of-control fun. For grades 2-5. (Registration required.)  
Thursday, May 17, 7 p.m.  
*Local Author Series: Judah Leblang.* Leblang's essays and commentaries have been broadcast on NPR. In his memoir, *Finding My Place: One Man's Journey from Cleveland*, he sketches the world he comes from—the industrial Cleveland of the 1960s and 70s—and the world he inhabits today, as a hard-of-hearing man with a funny name, navigating middle age. (Registration required.)

**Lee Road Library**  
2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600  
Thursday, May 10, 3:30 p.m.  
*Annual Spring Talent Show.* Love to dance, sing, or tell silly jokes? If you are in grades K-6, join the library for its annual talent show, and show your stuff. Everyone is a winner and everyone will receive a prize for participating. (Registration recommended, but not required. Registered participants will perform first.)  
Tuesday, May 15, 7 p.m.  
*Third Tuesday Book Club.* Join the library's lively monthly book club. May's book is *The Uncoupling* by bestselling author Meg Wolitzer.

**Noble Neighborhood Library**  
2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665  
Thursday, May 10, 7 p.m.  
*Noble Mystery Book Discussion: Eye of the Red Tsar* by Sam Eastland. Hosted by nationally known mystery expert JoAnn Vicarel.  
Tuesday, May 22, 7 p.m.  
*Pajamas in the PLAYroom.* Come for books, music, rhymes, puppets and toys. This evening storytime will focus on the learning stations in the PLAYroom. For ages 3-6.

**University Heights Library**  
13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700  
Wednesday, May 16, 12:30 p.m.  
*The Senior Spot: Sensational Strawberries.* Strawberry season starts this month. Learn all about this delicious local treat.  
Thursday, May 24, 7 p.m.  
*National Backyard Games Day.* Learn and play new games at the library, then go teach them to your friends. For grades K-5.

# Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board

## Meeting highlights

MARCH 19, 2012  
CarDala Carter was absent.

**Liquor permit for Dobama Theatre**  
Representatives of Dobama asked for the board's approval of Dobama's application for a liquor permit. Dobama is seeking a nonprofit liquor permit to sell beer and wine when the theatre is open for performances and fundraisers. All consumption of liquor will be inside Dobama's premises and not in the lobby area that it shares with the library. Regarding board concerns on liability, Dobama's representative noted that the theatre carries its own insurance, and Library Director Nancy Levin said that an informal discussion with the library's carrier indicated that there would be no issues. The board tabled a resolution to approve the application subject to further checking with the library's insurance carrier.

**2012 budget**  
The completed 2012 budget was presented to the board. While the collection budget remains the same as that of 2011, a larger share will go to ebooks and downloadable material. Building and repair fund expenditures will include the build-out of the old gym space, and the library will seek other funding to aid this project.

**Heights Knowledge and Innovation Center to fill space in Activity Center**  
Director Levin met with Studio Techne architects to plan a timeline for construction of the Heights Knowledge and Innovation Center in the unused space in the Activity Center building. With the city, the library has applied for a \$400,000 matching grant from the Institute of Museum and



Library Services. Grant funding would be used for enhancement of the Computer Gallery, the creation of a small business/nonprofit incubator space, and the relocation of Cleveland State's Monte Ahuja College of Business, Small Business Development Center to this space.

**Safety concern at Noble**  
A customer raised a concern over safety at the Noble Neighborhood Library. Two young males, who were hidden by shrubbery behind the library, where there is a board-on-board fence, accosted and cursed at him. He asked the board to consider trimming the shrubbery to the height of the lower shrubs around the main library building. Board President Esther Moss said that the situation would be addressed and he would be contacted about the resolution. Director Levin indicated that there had been an incident report from Noble.

**Time Warner charges for Internet connections**  
Prior to this year, the library was able to connect its buildings to Internet service at no charge through the contract the City of Cleveland Heights had with Time Warner. Due to a suit by AT&T against Time Warner, Time Warner no longer has to offer this service at no charge. In discussion with Clevnet, the library will now move its Internet hub from the school district's Delisle Building to the Lee Road Library. The board approved a five-year contract with Time Warner for \$26,364 annually, which will provide a two-strand fiber connection from the hub to each of the three branches.

**Board chooses NODIS for survey**  
The board chose Northern Ohio Data and In-

formation Service (NODIS), part of the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University, over OrangeBoy as its market research organization. Both proposals were outlined at the February board meeting. NODIS will research service area demographics and submit a descriptive report to include narratives, graphs and maps. The board will use the results of this study for data-driven decision-making.

**Friends of the Library coming events**  
Friends will sponsor a fundraising evening at the Wine Spot on April 21. The Gigantic Book Sale will take place May 17-21.

**February Public Service report highlights**  
The highlights include:  
• Constance Dickerson, Noble librarian, has re-activated the Readers' Advisory Team (RATS). This group, of 20 years duration, is made up of adult services staff and concentrates on recommending books to customers.  
• Coventry Village Library's program with author Thrity Umrigar hosted 85 people, and was standing-room only.  
• Aleese Fluharty, University Heights children's associate, presented the Whole Foods family program, "Roses are Red, Violets are Blue," in which children and caregivers made books with tissue-paper flowers and decorated heart-shaped cookies.  
• Live Action Candy Land was a huge success, showing cooperation among all departments and staff.

LWW observer: Anne S. McFarland.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).  
See disclaimer on page 4.

# Stuffed animals run amok at the Library



What happens when stuffed animals are let loose in a library overnight? Heights Libraries found out on Saturday, April 14, at the Stuffed Animal Sleepover at the Lee Road branch. After a special storytime, kids kissed their stuffed friends goodbye, leaving them alone in the library for a full-filled night of mayhem and mischief. On Sunday, kids picked up their friends, along with a photo booklet revealing what had happened overnight while no one was watching.

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# CH-UH Schools roll out new tiger mascot

Jacalyn Elfvin

In April, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District rolled out its new tiger mascot. The district's schools are celebrating its launch through spirit days and pep rallies. New Tiger Nation banners are hanging in each of the buildings.

"We hope this new tiger will unite our schools even more and help us continue to build community among our campuses," said Angee Shaker, director of communications and community engagement for the district. "We felt this new and consistent tiger image would work across all grade levels, preK-12. It's something we can all be proud of."

Before unrolling the new tiger banner at the April 3 school board meeting, Kristin Hughes, athletic director, said that she has seen many variations of tigers throughout the years and it's about time that the district has one consistent image for its mascot. "There is a lot of momentum around our black and gold colors and the idea of Tiger Nation is a uniting force in itself; now we have an official tiger."

That's not all that's new. Students, parents, CH-UH faculty, staff, and members of the community can show their Tiger pride by purchasing Heights



Gear—including apparel, window clings, umbrellas, and plush toys—at a new online store, which was launched in partnership with the Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation. To shop online, go to [www.heightsgear.com](http://www.heightsgear.com).

Eric Silverman, CHHS Alumni Foundation president, said, "We're excited about the new energy in Tiger Nation. It will be fun to see everyone decked out in their new gear in the months to come."

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

## Local students participate in science fair at CSU

Jenn Prater

The din coming from the Cleveland State University Recreation Center in mid-March was not the usual squeaking of athletic shoes on the polished wood floor. Instead, the gym was abuzz with 600 students in grades 7-12 from more than 100 public, private and parochial schools in Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina, Portage and Summit counties. They were there to showcase their work at the 59th annual Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSEF).

Presented by Cleveland State University, Cleveland Clinic and Great Lakes Science Center, NEOSEF provides an opportunity for students to discuss their work with local experts. Science fairs are not just about winning scholarship money (though prizes are motivating). Students who participate in these fairs develop skills in research and problem solving, as well as in oral and written communication.

Nancy DiIulio, president of NEOSEF, assistant dean of undergraduate studies, instructor of biology at Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Heights resident, believes a good science project starts with a good question, which leads to investigations with measurable results. This year's students asked important questions, some with broad implications. As they consider the scientific process, questions evolve into a premise that can be tested.

NEOSEF selects students to represent the region at the next levels of competition. This year, NEOSEF is sending

four grand-prize winners, from grades 9 through 12, to the INTEL International Science and Engineering Fair, where they will compete with 1,500 students for more than \$4 million in scholarships and prizes.

Representing Beaumont School were Danielle Dejak, Katie Hankins, Maria Ianni, Jane Kim, Erika Klek, Gabriela Leskur, Anna Libertin, Grace Mascha, Leat Perez, Marija Rowane, Allison Siragusa and Johanna Tomsick. Several Cleveland Heights middle school students competed as well, including Isabel Catanzaro, Ethan Hynds, Abigail Christine Kopp, Samah Malkieh, Rachel Nowak, Grace Rossi, Anna Zarembo and Matthew Zarembo, all from the Communion of Saints.

NEOSEF is a nonprofit volunteer organization, established in 1953, whose goal is to interest young adults in science and engineering by participating in competition. Many local businesses and organizations make the competition possible. These include Adcom Communications, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland State University, Dominion, FirstEnergy Foundation, Great Lakes Science Cen-

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## Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board

### Meeting highlights



MARCH 20, 2012

All board members were present.

#### Policy changes

Joseph Micheller, director of special programs, went over the policy changes suggested by NEOLA, the document management company that tracks legislative changes and court decisions. This was the first reading of the suggested changes that covered all policy areas needing updates in the last six months.

Some of the areas covered were evaluation of administrators, administrators' contracts, staff reduction, special needs students, student productions, Ohio ethics, Internet use, mentoring, professional development, and student records. Areas that board members were concerned about will be changed and brought to the April meeting.

#### Report card

Joseph Micheller reviewed changes in the Ohio Department of Education report card. The grade classification will be changed to letter grades (A, B, C, D and F). These grades will be based on student performance, student progress (value added), district performance, and gap closing. Board Member Eric Coble maintained that the school district needs to explain these changes to the community.

#### P.A.S.S.A.G.E., Pathways

Jeffery Talbert, assistant superintendent, reviewed the programs P.A.S.S.A.G.E. (Preparing All Students for Success in a Global Economy) and Pathways. P.A.S.S.A.G.E. will create students who are critical thinkers, commentators, collaborators, communicators, creators, and innovators. The roadmap to get there includes all students reading at grade level or above by third grade and facilities that enhance and support collaboration and flexibility. Pathways will give students and parents the opportunity to select a learning style that best fits their needs.

#### Disney Plant Challenge

Board Member Nancy Pepler commented on Boulevard Elementary School fourth and fifth grade gifted students placing first in Ohio and 20th in the nation in the Disney Plant Challenge.

LWV observer: Adele Cohen.

#### APRIL 3, 2012

All board members were present.

#### Millikin

Six community members supporting the sale of the Millikin School building to the Orthodox Jewish boys school, Mosdos Ohr HaTorah, spoke to the board about the use of Millikin School. They expressed concern about the lack of a public auc-

tion, an unusually slow appraisal process, limited response to e-mails from the community, the lack of a neighborhood facilities meeting to discuss the future of Millikin, and the problems posed by an abandoned building. Those speaking to the board included a representative from the Heights Interfaith Council and former Cleveland Heights City Council Member Nancy Dietrich.

During her report, Board President Karen Gorman Jones thanked the community speakers and assured them that the board was listening to their comments. Toward the end of the meeting, Board Member Nancy Pepler expressed frustration that some of the statements were inaccurate. She felt that, although board members had agreed not to make comments at the meeting, inaccuracies should be addressed.

#### Spelling bee third place

Arianna Murray, a Roxboro eighth grader, placed third in the Plain Dealer Cuyahoga County Scripps Spelling Bee and was presented with a certificate.

#### Tiger Nation logo

The new Tiger Nation logo was displayed and Eric Silverman, alumni president, showed slides of the Heights Spirit items with the logo to be sold on Heightsgear.com. Customized goods could be purchased at Mylocker.net.

#### Race for the top update

Administrators reviewed the updated standards at a professional development session. The partnership with John Carroll University to train master teachers is continuing.

#### Financial report

The board accepted the financial report. On the recommendation of investment advisors, the board approved investments in New Public Depository for more interest opportunities.

#### Heights spelling bee winners

Phyllis's Phriends won the Reaching Heights Spelling Bee on March 28. The trio was spelling in honor of Phyllis Albert, a Noble Elementary School teacher who died in March.

#### Heights High track team

The Heights High track team came in second in the Ohio State indoor championship.

LWV observer: Lillian Houser.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).

See disclaimer on page 4.

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ter, Gund Foundation, John Carroll University, Lubrizol Foundation, the Plain Dealer, PolyOne Corporation, Rockwell Automation and the Sherwin-Williams Company.

*Jenn Prater, a resident of Cleveland Heights and graduate of Cleveland State University, works as a research editor for a local bank.*

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# Harper family excels on and off the court

Joy Henderson

Heights High basketball players Jasmine, Antonio and Alexandra Harper were standout players this year. The girls varsity team was league champion, the boys received the #1 seed in the district tournament and reached the semifinals, and the girls freshman team played a strong season.

Their coaches say the three sibling post players have solid game fundamentals and leadership skills. Their success in basketball is paired with success in the classroom—they each have GPAs higher than 3.0.

The Harper family's dedication to basketball and school started with parents James and Elaine, both educators and athletes. While attending college, James played football and Elaine basketball. Elaine also played professional basketball in Greece. In addition to basketball, the Harper girls play volleyball and run track, and Antonio plays



The Harper family includes Elaine, Jasmine, Antonio, Alex and James (L-R). The family focuses both on academics and athletics.

football and runs track. They all swim, play soccer and tennis, and were trained in traditional Greek dance.

"Our family focus has always been

on both academics and athletics," James said. "We tell them that success in both will bring them more opportunities."

James and Elaine said they started their family during March Madness—Jasmine was born on March 17, with the broadcast of the first tournament game of 1994 as the soundtrack.

By the time Jasmine was five, James was coaching her youth basketball team at Hillcrest Y and later their church team at Sts. Constantine and Helen. The teams quickly added Antonio and Alex. Elaine coached from the sidelines, equipped with a video camera and Gatorade.

This has been a special year for the family, Elaine said. "Watching the games and seeing our kids grow and succeed has been fantastic," she said. "Heights High has been great for all of us."

Jasmine, now a senior, was captain of the girls varsity team and led the Lady Tigers to an LEL championship. Coach Kim Hanson depended on Jasmine to score and help others during practice. "She is a gamer. When we faced our toughest opponents, she put the team on her shoulders," Hanson said. Jasmine plans to study pre-med in college this fall and play basketball.

Antonio, a junior, was a starter on the boys varsity team. "Antonio understands his role. He plays hard and I can always depend on him to get the job done," said Coach Andy Suttell. "And even more important, he is a great young man." Antonio is in the interactive media program and wants to study video communications in college.

Alex played on the freshman team. "Alex has been very generous in her leadership and she has made a real difference on the team," said Coach Karen Battle. "We are looking for her to add even more next year."

All three kids expressed gratitude for their parents' support. "I have a good understanding of the game because of my dad," Jasmine said.

"He also stressed that we need to step up to be team leaders," Alex added.

Antonio explained: "Dad had us play hard, in hot gyms, the girls playing against boys; we all played against older players, and we watched video—all of that paid off."

This year the Harper family celebrated Jasmine's eighteenth birthday and March Madness in Columbus, watching six games. The Harper family is not defined by basketball, but it is a strong force that unites them.

*Joy Henderson is the parent/community liaison at Heights High.*

## Heights High clubs value service and sustainability



Heights High Project Build students complete the foundation of a green house for Community Green House Partners in the Hough neighborhood of Cleveland.

Ilona Eke

Project Build and the Environmental Club focus on sustainability and community service, providing hands-on volunteer opportunities for students at Cleveland Heights High School. Senior Ariel Travis, a leader in both clubs, seeks to create more service opportunities at the high school. "Both clubs share the same vision and have similar goals. I believe we can do great things together," Travis said.

Started in October 2011 by Travis and math teacher/club advisor Chris Sutton, Project Build has attracted more than 100 volunteers and is one of the fastest-growing clubs on campus.

In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, Project Build members have volunteered on more than 15 build dates, typically one each week. They also work with Community Greenhouse Partners to build greenhouses in the Hough neighborhood. Another long-term project is repairing foreclosed homes in Cleveland Heights.

Project Build is currently holding a "beard" fundraiser. Administrators have joined teams in a competition to grow beards for donations. Team Punk has Marc Aden (REAL principal), Joe Nohra (Mosaic principal) and Haethem Rasul (lead counselor). Team Pushy has Nick Petty (Renaissance principal), James Reed (freshman principal) and Marc Engoglia (Legacy principal).

Science teacher Steve Warner started the Environmental Club in 2010. That year, the club partnered with Uni-

versity Heights senior citizens to break ground for community gardens on the Delisle Options Complex property. During the 2011-12 school year, students tested the soil and learned how to improve its quality. "The kids are happy to be doing physical work at the garden as well as learning about gardening in general," Warner said. "This year students started seeds for over two hundred pepper and tomato plants to transplant to the garden."

The club has also worked on bike art for the garden, which will be part of an art show at the Ohio City Bicycle Coop on May 18. Using old bikes from the Coop, members are working with auto collision student welders to create art to decorate the gardens.

The Environmental Club plans to collaborate with Paige Baublitz-Watkins, Boulevard Elementary teacher, and her students, documenting the amount of litter on Lee Road between Heights High and Boulevard Elementary School, and addressing the problem.

Both Project Build and the Environmental Club are contributing in real ways to their school and the community by stressing the need for sustainable practices. For more information about the clubs, visit their websites: [www.project-build.org](http://www.project-build.org) and [www.chub.org/schools/cbhs/clubs-extracurriculars/environmental-club](http://www.chub.org/schools/cbhs/clubs-extracurriculars/environmental-club).

*Ilona Eke, a sophomore at Heights High, is a member of the Environmental Club and Project Build. She plays viola in the Heights Symphony and in the Contemporary Youth Orchestra.*

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## Senior Citizen Happenings for May

Senior Citizen Happenings are sponsored by the City of University Heights. All events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m., at the University Heights Library, 13866 Cedar Road.

**May 3:** Fred Griffith, for 30 years the popular host of “Morning Exchange” on WEWS-TV and “Good Morning” on WKYC-TV, reflects on his broadcasting experience, which has earned him many viewers and lasting esteem in the profession.

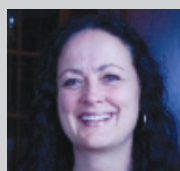
**May 10:** Robin Van Lear is artistic director for the Cleveland Museum of Art’s 23rd annual “Parade the Circle,” to be held this year on Saturday, June 9. She will present a colorful DVD highlighting the creative imagination and cultural diversity of the Greater Cleveland community.

**May 17:** Sonya Callahan, community services associate for LifeBanc, the nonprofit organ and tissue recovery organization for Northeast Ohio, tells why transplantation is one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of medicine.

**May 24:** Lynn Zimmerman, head of the English department at Notre Dame College in South Euclid, celebrates the 200th anniversary of Charles Dickens’s birth with a scholar’s analysis of his novels, *Great Expectations*, *Bleak House*, and *Hard Times*.

**May 31:** Jeffrey Brack, memorial advisor, and Katherine Goss, executive director of the Lakeview Foundation, will discuss Lakeview Cemetery, which shelters and honors the remains of many whose lives may have touched our own.

## Facts about hospice care



SENIOR SCENE

Judith Eugene

Hospice care provides support for terminally ill people and their families. There are several misconceptions about hospice, due to misunderstandings about what hospice is and a common reluctance to think about end-of-life realities. Clearing up these misunderstandings can help families better decide if, how and when to incorporate hospice into the care plan for a loved one.

Hospice care consists of a team of doctors, nurses, nursing assistants, pharmacists, social workers, spiritual counselors, companionship volunteers and bereavement specialists. The patient’s family, caregivers and physician are also members of the team. The purpose of hospice is to help patients spend their last days in as much physical and mental comfort as possible.

Hospice is not a specific place. Rather, it is a service that can be provided anywhere that the patient calls home—a house, apartment, assisted-living community, skilled nursing facility, hospital or any other location. Anyone who is terminally ill can receive hospice care, and he or she does not have to be bedridden.

Hospice costs are covered by Medicare and private insurance. The Medicare hospice benefit never expires, so the care can be continued for as long as the patient needs it. The benefit also covers the patient’s medication and medical equipment.

Many people view entering hospice as giving up. Michele Oblak of Senior Independence Hospice offered a different view: “The patient is not giving up when they enter hospice care. Rather, they are taking control. They decide what assistance they would like to have and when.”

Senior Independence Hospice recently assisted a Cleveland Heights

woman whose terminally ill father was in a nursing home. They helped move him to the daughter’s house, and got him the medication and equipment he needed. He was able to die in the comfort of a family environment. “The purpose of hospice is to maintain the patient’s quality of life for as long as possible,” said Oblak.

Laurie Henrichsen of Hospice of the Western Reserve agrees. “Many people don’t realize that hospice care can actually help prolong life, if it is started early,” she said. “It also reduces a lot of stress on the family.”



Staff members (Julie, pictured) helped Senior Independence Hospice client Francis (at left) bake cupcakes on her birthday.

In order to receive the greatest benefit from hospice care, it should be started as soon as the patient is eligible, rather than waiting until the last few weeks of life.

Not all hospice care providers are alike, so Henrichsen recommends beginning a search early and evaluating the differences. “Ask for recommendations from family, friends and your doctor,” she said, “and put your end-of-life wishes in writing while you are still able to do so. This way your family will know how you prefer to spend your final days.”

Contact Senior Independence Hospice at 440-953-1256, and Hospice of the Western Reserve at 800-707-8922.

*Judith Eugene is a native of Cleveland Heights who provides classes and activities for senior adults and those with physical and mental challenges through www.LovingHandsGroup.com. She may be reached at 216-408-5578.*



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# Heights Youth Theatre presents 'Chicago'

Mary Patton

Prohibition-era Chicago was overrun by murder, greed, corruption, violence, exploitation, adultery and treachery. "Chicago," the dark musical, tells the tale of two merry murderesses in the Cook County jail—Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly. Set in a 1920s speakeasy, John Kander and Fred Ebb's well-known score gives us Broadway jazz standards, such as "All That Jazz," "Razzle Dazzle" and "Cell Block Tango."

Heights Youth Theatre presents "Chicago" like you've never seen it before. This production will be true to the period of the Roaring 20s, highlighting the satiric nature of the original libretto, and promising a good time for all who catch the show.

The cast includes 30 talented stu-



The cast of HTY's "Chicago" rehearses for their May performances.

dents in 7th through 12th grade, many from Cleveland Heights and University Heights, and professional musicians playing the rousing score. Lead cast members include: Sophie Madorsky

(Velma Kelly), Katie Wilkinson (Roxie Hart), Ian Kallay (Fred Casely), Marina Oney (Sergeant Fogarty), Matthew McAllister (Amos Hart), Kaleigh Wilkie-Smith (Matron Mama Morton), Jason

Kowalczyk (Billy Flynn), Cat Lally (Mary Sunshine), Jade Shimooka (Kitty), and Gus Mahoney (Harry). The merry murderesses are played by Margaret Abood, Rebecca Chaney, Govanna Miller, Lillian Sindelar and Jamie Semel.

Performances are May 11, 12, 17, 18 and 19 at 7 p.m. at Wiley Middle School, 2181 Miramar Blvd., in University Heights.

Tickets are \$10 general admission, cash or checks only. The box office opens 45 minutes before each show.

On Sunday, May 20, at 7 p.m., there will be a special benefit performance of "Chicago" at Dobama Theatre, 2340 Lee Road. Tickets are \$20 and include refreshments. They can be purchased at the Dobama box office on May 20 or by calling 216-410-7500. For more information, visit [www.heightsyouththeatre.org](http://www.heightsyouththeatre.org).

Mary Patton, a University Heights resident, is a public relations consultant and member of the Heights Youth Theatre Advisory Board.

## HeightsWrites

Poem for May 2012

*It matters how we live and how we think, says the poet. It matters to the living, to the here and now, and to our own integrity.*

—Meredith Holmes

### Love Is Not Vain

by Cavana Faithwalker

dead seas seize  
with No Exit eyes  
So deep the pain and wide

the folly  
that feeds it

But living ways  
are in and out, high and low  
dead to the dead, alive to the living

For those who live  
the life concealed  
principles cooperate  
life operates spirit filled

How great the lesson  
How high the sublime  
revealed

*Cavana I. O. Faithwalker, in his second year as poet laureate of Cleveland Heights, is also a visual artist, a musician, and a father. He owns Left Thumbprint Solutions, which provides social media consulting, project management, grant-writing, and community engagement services.*

## 30th annual Roxboro Arts Festival to be held May 19

Lance Godard

The 30th annual Roxboro Arts Festival will be held on Saturday, May 19 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Roxboro Elementary School, 2405 Roxboro Road in Cleveland Heights.

Hosted by the Roxboro Elementary PTA, this year's festival is expected to bring together more than 400 people from across the Heights community to celebrate the arts, our schools, and our children. It promises to be a fun-filled afternoon for children of all ages, with hands-on arts and crafts activities, games, music, dancing, and food from a variety of local restaurants and cafes, including Mr. Brisket, Mitchell's Ice Cream, Guy's Pizza and more.

There will be also an arts and crafts sale featuring the work of local artists, and a plant sale hosted by the Roxboro Middle School.

Among this year's attractions are an installation by renowned "Lego guy" Arthur Gugick, the Euclid Beach Rocket Car, and a variety of live entertainment, including local guitarist Eric Paetz and the Heights High Jazz Ensemble.

Thanks to the generous donations of this year's sponsors—RoxArts, the Cleveland Center for Eating Disorders, the CH-UH Public Library, Stan Harris

State Farm Insurance, Sirrah Transportation, Lustrious Designs, Zagara's Marketplace, System 4, and Justin Horton—admission to this year's Roxboro Arts Festival has been reduced to \$2 per child. Adults are admitted free of charge. Food and drink will be available

for purchase.

For more information, e-mail [rox-elpta@gmail.com](mailto:rox-elpta@gmail.com).

Lance Godard is the parent of two Roxboro students. He has lived in Cleveland Heights for more than 15 years.

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# Richard Kogan gives lecture and recital on Mozart

Richard Lightbody

The Cleveland Psychoanalytic Center will hold its annual benefit event on Saturday, June 23, at the Cleveland Institute of Music (CIM). Richard Kogan, psychiatrist and concert pianist, will present a lecture/recital called "Mozart: The Mind and Music of a Genius."

The format is a compelling one, in which Kogan will first talk about Mozart's life, emphasizing his relationship with his father, and will then perform the composer's "Turkish Rondo" and selections from "Don Giovanni." The combination of psychobiography and music is intended to deepen the audience's experience of both.

Richard Kogan is familiar to many Clevelanders from previous performances on behalf of Cleveland psychoanalysis. All of his programs have had the twin focus on "the mind and music" of celebrated classical musicians.



Richard Kogan, psychiatrist and concert pianist, presents a lecture/recital on Mozart at Mixon Hall.

Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Schumann, Leonard Bernstein, and most recently, George Gershwin, have been featured in programs over the last 10 years. Kogan is a practicing psychotherapist as well as musician. His appeal to analysts is his recognition of the impact of early childhood development and life events on the emerging personalities and music of artists.

The benefit lecture/recital will take place in the Mixon Hall of CIM. The two-story wall behind the stage is a huge glass window, enabling the audience to watch the evening progress to darkness while Kogan performs at the piano. The event will begin at 7:30 p.m., without intermission, followed by a dessert reception. Tickets are \$75 per person. Guests who purchase tickets at the Patron level of \$125 will have their names listed in the program. Tickets are available from the Cleveland Psychoanalytic Center at 216-229-5959.

The Cleveland Psychoanalytic Center is a well-established Cleveland Heights institution in the Cedar Fairmount neighborhood, with a spacious third floor suite for its library, office, and teaching space. The center provides training in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, as well as continuing professional education programs. For interested adult learners, it provides enriching lectures, film discussion groups, and workshops in which well-known analytic scholars discuss their work.

The center has a referral and evaluation service to help individuals arrange individual treatment, parent guidance, couples therapy, or whatever else is needed. For more information, go to [www.psychoanalysiscleveland.org](http://www.psychoanalysiscleveland.org).

*Richard Lightbody is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and chair of the education committee of Cleveland Psychoanalytic Center.*

## Registration open for Heights Summer Music Camp

Susie Kaeser

Reaching Heights is looking for instrumental music students who want to spend a week playing great music.

Enrollment is now open for the Heights Summer Music Camp, which will be held from June 18-23 at Wiley Middle School. Reaching Heights started the camp in partnership with the CH-UH City School District in 2005, as an affordable opportunity to energize and develop 10 to 15-year-old musicians, and increase summer opportunities for youths.

The week-long program serves fifth through eighth graders who have participated in their school instrumental music program for at least two years, or have had a year of private lessons. Experienced fourth graders may participate by teacher recommendation. Campers must be residents of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school district.

Daniel Heim, Heights High instrumental music director, is the music director and conductor for the camp. More than 25 music educators and professionals, along with college and

high school musicians, provide expert instruction and mentoring to campers. A finale concert on June 23 will showcase camper progress.

The deadline for applications is May 15. Space is limited to 85 musicians. A placement audition for all new campers is scheduled for May 19. Financial assistance is available, to ensure that all motivated music students are able to participate.

The serious but relaxed setting is both motivating and fun. Campers play music from 9 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., with breaks for lunch, recitals, crafts and recreation. The daily schedule of orchestra rehearsals and sectional practice, chamber groups, and music theory builds skills and confidence. Campers also explore a variety of musical traditions through vocal, guitar and jazz workshops.

Applications are available online at [www.reachingheights.org](http://www.reachingheights.org) or by calling 216-371-9201.

*Susie Kaeser is former director of Reaching Heights and a board member of the Home Repair Resource Center. She has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1979.*

## Summer with Heights Arts

Peggy Spaeth

Heights Arts offers rich opportunities to observe and make art at Heights Arts Gallery and around town. For complete information visit [www.heightsarts.org](http://www.heightsarts.org).

**Create:** Workshops for teens and adults include silk painting with Susan Skove, mosaic with Susan Gallagher, yarn bombing with Carol Hummel, and writing with Cindy Washabaugh. Catherine Butler and Trisha Kenny offer popular kids classes.

**Look:** During May, The Small Show exhibits small works by significant artists. Works include painting, photography, fiber, and sculpture by Amber Anderson, Susan Danko, Emily Felderman, Renee Harris, Lynn O'Brien and Campbell Paxton.

**Listen:** Stay tuned for free concerts by local bands this summer, in the Cedar Lee minipark. Attend our popular chamber music concerts at the Dunham Tavern Barn. The summer concert will be "Americana": music by Gershwin,



Mosaic class at Heights Arts.

Schoenberg, and Terry Riley's "Half Wolf Dances Mad in the Moonlight," performed by Jung Oh, soprano, and members of the Cleveland Orchestra. For reservations call 216-371-3457.

You may find yourself wordsmithing with Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate Cavana Faithwalker, who will set up his Pop-Up Poetry booth at various summer events.

*Peggy Spaeth is the executive director of Heights Arts.*

## Western Reserve Chorale June 3 concert



Members of the Western Reserve Chorale.

Joanne Poderis

The Western Reserve Chorale (WRC) with guest director David Gilson, will present a concert on June 3 at 7 p.m. at Grace Lutheran Church, 13001 Cedar Road, Cleveland Heights. Celebrating its 20th season, WRC is a nonprofit group comprising both amateur and professional singers.

The mission of the chorale is to present free, high-quality performances of choral music. In keeping with this mission, this program will feature choral settings of psalms, poetry and prose celebrating themes of love, life, death,

faith, nature and the joy of music. Ralph Vaughan-Williams, Randall Thompson, Jean Berger, Alice Parker and Robert Shaw, Maurice Duruflé, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck and other composers will be represented in this potpourri of classical choral music.

WRC is supported by a grant from the Ohio Arts Council. For further information about this free concert, call 216-791-0061 or visit [www.westernreservechorale.org](http://www.westernreservechorale.org).

*Joanne Poderis, a longtime Cleveland Heights resident, is the executive director and accompanist for the Western Reserve Chorale.*

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# New sandwich shop opens in Heights Rockefeller Building

Chris Hanson

Barlē Soup & Sandwich is a new restaurant in the northern end of Cleveland Heights. Pronounced *barley*, the new spot takes its name from owner Jim Barle, and offers homemade soups, sandwiches made with artisan breads, vegan dishes and more. After months of painstaking restoration and planning, Barlē Soup & Sandwich officially opened on April 1.

Opening day—albeit busy—went as planned. Erin Petre, general manager, said, “We had between 100 and 120 customers come in.” In a play on the name Barle, the restaurant will feature a variation on barley soup each day, as well as a daily vegan soup.

Coffee and tea at Barlē Soup & Sandwich are complimentary with the purchase of a meal. While complimentary, a dollar donation is suggested, to benefit a nonprofit organization. The current beneficiary is Facing History and Ourselves—a group that encourages education as the key to combating bigotry and nurturing democracy.

Barle has spent the last few months working diligently to renovate the space which Barlē Soup & Sandwich now occupies, on the Lee Boulevard side of the Rockefeller building. It is adorned with antique furniture, a working grandfather clock, church pews, and items from local schools of long ago. It even has a Thomas the Tank Engine table for children. The



Jim Barle, owner of Barle Soup & Sandwich, explains the many menu options to a new customer.

restored old-world feel of the room is balanced by a contemporary look, with red and tin-ceiling colored paint on the walls, and new tables and chairs.

Barle provided a tour of the new restaurant, and pointed proudly to many of the restoration's details. “All of the hardware on the doors is original. The maple hardwood flooring is original,

too. You can see where the staples were; where we had to remove those and the glue that had covered it for so long.”

Barlē Soup & Sandwich will feature an Artist of the Month, whose work will be displayed throughout the restaurant, and available for purchase. The first featured artist was Joann Broadbooks, a retired teacher from Heights High.



“She used to be my teacher,” Barle said with excitement. He hopes to eventually have a jazz band play monthly for each new artist.

The restaurant is currently open daily from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., but Barle and Petre hope to be busy enough to warrant extending the hours. “We’re going to see how we do with one shift, and then we’ll look at adding on another,” said Petre.

Barle said of the location, “It was important to me to open here because there aren’t a whole lot of options [near Mayfield and Lee roads]. There is the pizza place across the street, but you can only eat so much pizza for lunch.”

Near the restaurant’s entrance, Barle stopped to point to an antique coat rack, stocked full of umbrellas of various colors and sizes. “People can take them as they need them,” said Barle. “We just hope they come back.”

*Chris Hanson is a senior in the Urban Studies program at Cleveland State University, a consultant at [www.urbancashcows.com](http://www.urbancashcows.com), and an intern at FutureHeights.*

## Tradition and innovation at Pizzazz

Richard Stewart

When David Spiccia told his family he planned to branch out from the family restaurant business and open a second, much larger location, no one considered it a wise move. Twenty years later, Pizzazz On the Circle is one of the most popular restaurants in the Heights.

“My family thought I was crazy going from a 50 seater to a restaurant that seats 200 plus,” said Spiccia. “My parents had the place in Mayfield and I wanted to expand, so I put together an investment package, went out and got some investors, and we got it done.”

Pizzazz, located in University Heights just across from John Carroll University, features “time-honored” Italian cuisine, derived from recipes created by Spiccia’s parents, John and Marie, more than 30 years ago when they opened the original Pizzazz in Mayfield Village. Spiccia and his wife of 27 years, Chris, operate their restaurant together, keeping the family tradition alive. Having spent 38 years in the restaurant business, Spiccia has come to understand what works and what doesn’t.

“Word of mouth has been our success. Our mission has always been to



Pizzazz On the Circle.

put out quality products at an affordable price,” said Spiccia. “The big thing in the restaurant industry is, if you make it through the first two years, you’re supposed to make it. I keep asking myself, is it done yet?”

Success hasn’t always come easily for Spiccia. He opened a third Pizzazz location in Solon 10 years ago, but it became a money trap and eventually failed. The experience was a setback in an otherwise successful restaurant career. “I ended up having to sell my home and I maxed out credit cards. Then the lawyers came calling. I set myself back 10 years,” recalled Spiccia.

He credits the University Heights location’s consistency with helping sustain his family, including his wife

and three children, through that rough period. “Thank God this place was always strong,” said Spiccia. “I put my nose to the grindstone, paid my bills and now I’m back where I was. The bills are gone.”

Positive changes are afoot at Piz-

zazz. The month of May will see a reworked menu featuring new items, such as tacos, expanded salad selections, at least one new pasta dish and an array of craft beers. Chris Spiccia attributes much of the restaurant’s success to her husband’s ability to make adjustments when necessary, and said, “David always likes to change things, and add new dishes. He’s very imaginative and forward thinking.”

An intensely loyal customer following has been another key to Pizzazz’s success and longevity. Joe Behm, seated at the bar enjoying lunch on a Monday afternoon, attested to that. “It’s my east side kitchen because I eat out seven days a week,” Behm said. “Pizzazz’s house salad dressing, in my opinion, is the best I’ve ever had.”

*Richard Stewart is owner of Digizoom Media and a member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.*

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# Open Office offers coworking space at Coventry School

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Open Office, a shared office and meeting room space for freelancers, mobile workers and other small business owners, is the latest tenant to open in the former Coventry School building.

For a monthly full-time or part-time membership fee, Open Office offers individual office space, meeting rooms, and collaboration areas. Members have access to hi-speed WiFi, printers, scanners, copiers, fax machine, storage lockers and a coffee bar that features fresh coffee and pastries daily, from Phoenix Coffee and Luna Bakery & Café. There are also day passes and conference room rentals available.

Owner Andrew Auten, who for now is keeping his day job at KeyBank, said, "People who work from their homes often miss the interaction and structure that an office provides. Open Office helps people build a professional community where they can feel connected, motivated and in the know, while maintaining their independence."

Auten, who lives in Shaker Heights and works from home one day a week, said he looked at several spaces in the Cleveland area, but wanted something



Andrew Auten is the owner of the new Open Office.

close to home. "I love being close to Coventry Village with all of its amenities. It's in walking distance of several lunch spots and has great access to transportation."

"Mobile workers need a place that is free of distractions," said Auten. "They need a place that reflects their professionalism, where they would be proud to bring clients."

Auten employed local artist Steven Tatar to design such a space. Tatar used a mixture of reclaimed items, modern furniture and custom-built fixtures to

transform the dated 1970s interior. "I wanted to create an environment that was sophisticated and professional, hip but not juvenile," said Tatar. "For example, we don't have foosball tables here."

Tatar repurposed recovered cubicle covers from one of his former employers, American Greetings. He kept chalkboards and displayed maps of Asia and Africa, found in the building, to add character and remind members of the space's elementary school origins.

Tatar salvaged pattern-cutting tables from the Ohio Knitting Mills

to create task tables, and purchased new ergonomically-designed Very Task chairs from Haworth. Users can adjust every aspect of the chair, including the height of the arm rest, the tension of the back and the seat depth. "It was important that we had seating that could fit every member's needs," said Tatar.

"The CH-UH school district has been a real partner," said Auten. "They've cleared out impediments to zoning, juggled the needs of multiple tenants and have a great relationship with the trades. They've had to work their way up the learning curve to being a landlord."

Auten plans to partner with several local businesses to augment the membership experience. He is planning book signings, wine tastings, lectures and workshops that will be free to members. The public will get a chance to see all that Open Office has to offer at a community open house, scheduled for Wednesday, May 2, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Open Office is located at 2843 Washington Blvd. For more information, call 216-320-6890 or visit [www.theopenoffice.net](http://www.theopenoffice.net).

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

## Remodeled Motorcars Toyota now services all makes

Chris Hanson

The Motorcars family keeps growing, but not with the addition of new personnel or relatives. Instead, Motorcars is growing physically, as its business footprint continues to expand. A year and a half ago, the environmentally friendly Rainforest Car Wash was added to the many services and luxuries offered by the business. This year, Motorcars Toyota completed a remodeling of its service facility, as well as the exterior of the building.

Matt Giles, general manager of Motorcars Toyota said, "Our service department has been growing so rapidly that we were doing our customers a disservice by making them wait as long as a week at times in order to schedule a service appointment. So, we added six express service bays, along with an enclosed four-lane garage for service reception."

The construction of the new service center took just seven months, aided by a mild winter. With new express

service bays installed, loyal Motorcars customers can enter and exit the service department without being subjected to the harsh weather conditions that are common in Cleveland.

Motorcars Toyota now has the ability to service all makes and models, including domestic vehicles. By stocking parts for all vehicle makes, Motorcars has most parts on hand when needed. Giles and company have had a lot of Ford and GM customers recently, much to their surprise and delight. They expect the trend to continue.

Living up to higher expectations, Motorcars didn't just stop with the addition of a new service facility. "One of the nicest new features is our new customer waiting lounge. It features a stone fireplace, a quiet seating area, a TV area, four workstations, and a café. We have all new furniture, and it makes waiting for your car much more enjoyable," Giles said.

What's next for the Motorcars family? Well, something that would make one drool—a drive-through coffee and



Motorcars Toyota's newly remodeled service facility: bring on the domestics.

donut shop. Giles says that there isn't one in that neighborhood of the Heights and they are looking forward to opening it soon.

In addition, Motorcars would like the new "all makes and models" service department to operate seven days a week. "We want our customers to be able to have their automotive needs ad-

dressed regardless of the day or time," said Giles. "We all have busy schedules, and servicing your car should not get in the way of [the customer's] daily routine."

Chris Hanson is a senior in the urban studies program at Cleveland State University, and an intern at FutureHeights.

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# Silhouette artist Clay Rice returns to Sunbeam

Janet Nelson

Silhouette artistry has been in Clay Rice's family for more than 80 years. After learning the technique from his South Carolinian grandfather, Carew, Rice traveled throughout the world creating more than 900,000 of these classic black paper portraits.

On Friday, May 18, he returns to Sunbeam—a Shop for Children, at 3469 Fairmount Blvd., after a three-year hiatus.

In a matter of minutes, Rice produces an heirloom-quality portrait that a family will treasure forever. People of all ages are fascinated by Rice's skill and speed.

Sunbeam is Cleveland's oldest children's store and a mainstay of the Fairmount Taylor retail district for more than 16 years.

Proceeds from the Clay Rice event help support Sunbeam's Vocational Guidance Services, a program to help people with physical or mental disabili-



Clay Rice creates a paper portrait in just a few minutes.

ties, economic disadvantages, or a history of incarceration find employment.

*Janet Nelson has been manager and buyer for Sunbeam for more than 30 years.*

## Severance Town Center is ready for challenges to perception and reinvention

Chris Hanson

Severance Town Center has received attention recently as the current home of the Walmart that will be moving to the Oakwood Commons development in South Euclid. For those living or working near the center, this increased attention can present a challenge if people begin to think that the departure of a major tenant represents a turning point in how the center will be maintained.

Howard Thompson, economic development director for the City of Cleveland Heights, noted, "Many people have been taking shots at Severance and voicing their opinions online and in editorials. I can say one thing and that is we know that the owners of the center are working to meet the challenge and possible opportunity for future development at Severance Town Center."

George Witherspoon, a nearby resident, recently expressed concern about the condition of the elevator area next to the theater. "I sometimes walk around the complex. One thing that is very disturbing is the condition of the elevator located next to the theaters. It is like a tooth. Once left to decay, it will start to infect the rest of the center," he said. "Whoever is in charge of the total center must be made to understand that you must maintain the total complex."

Pete Radanovich, operations manager for Severance Town Center, understands this well. "Anything that comes to the office is dealt with personally by me. We don't often get complaints. When we do, those complaints are then assigned to the maintenance team leader. We recently had a few complaints about the elevator, which were corrected immediately."

Witherspoon noted how quickly Severance's staff addressed his concern. "I did see them working on that area today, and I noticed they were sweeping it yesterday as I passed," he said.

"Severance Town Center can harness the considerable amount of attention that it is receiving to reinvent and reestablish itself once again as the benchmark of retail mixed-use development," said Thompson.

Severance was Ohio's first indoor shopping center when it was developed in the 1960s. It has been remodeled several times, including its transformation to a power center—a term used by International Council of Shopping Centers to describe a retail center dominated by more than 75-90 percent large anchor stores—in the 1990s.

*Chris Hanson is a senior in the Urban Studies program at Cleveland State University and an intern at FutureHeights.*



Pinetree Commercial Realty Company manages Severance Town Center.

# Goodyear returns to the Heights

Chris Hanson

Although you may have developed the habit of zigzagging around potholes along Taylor and Mayfield roads to avoid damage to your car, you need not defer vehicle maintenance any longer. There is a not-so-new neighbor in town that can help keep your car in good repair. On April 21, Goodyear Auto Service Center opened a new location at 3971 Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights.

It was a day of fun, food and prizes in celebration of the grand opening, as David Hinds, the store manager, welcomed new customers. As cars came in for servicing, people learned of the exceptional customer service that was imported along with the new crew. "Customer service is what we're known for," Hinds said. "I really brought my best guys up from Akron, and we're all extremely friendly. We like to have fun with our customers."

When asked about the services offered, assistant manager Mike Wiggins said, "We are able to do everything from oil changes to tire changes, brake jobs to exhaust . . . basically anything outside of replacing the engine or transmission. Everyone here is an ASE-certified technician."

Other services and amenities offered by the new Goodyear include overnight drop-off, Wi-Fi in the waiting room, online appointment scheduling, shuttle or vehicle pickup, tire air-pressure check and fill, fluids check and top-off (both free with any service), and



Goodyear's new auto service center in the Heights.

a children's play area.

The opening of this service center has some history behind it. Hinds explained, "Goodyear hasn't been in this market for 20-25 years. Back then, they sold most of the locations to Conrad's or Enger Auto Service. Enger closed, and Goodyear bought the location. This is Goodyear's first attempt to get back into the market in more than two decades. This is also Cleveland's only location that is both owned and operated by Goodyear."

Hinds hopes to make an impression in the Heights, and looks forward to providing great service. He has confidence in his service manager, Craig Stephens. "Don't be afraid to contact him for anything you need," said Hinds. To schedule an appointment online, go to [www.goodyear.com](http://www.goodyear.com) or call 216-382-7680.

*Chris Hanson is a senior in the urban studies program at Cleveland State University and an intern at FutureHeights.*

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# Realtor Chris Hallum hosts unique open house

Hannah Baldwin

Keller Williams realtor Chris Hallum hosted a unique open house on April 18 at 2572 Stratford Road in Cleveland Heights. This open house provided not only an opportunity for visitors to tour the home, but also a chance to meet neighbors and local business owners.

Adam Fleischer, owner of the Wine Spot on nearby Lee Road, poured wine for tasting as he answered questions about the community. The team Hallum works with consists of six realtors and one assistant. Five of them were present at the open house. With roots in Cleveland Heights, they support Hallum's idea to engage with the



A new take on the open house brings together visitors, realtors and business owners.

community, and know how involved Cleveland Heights residents are.

Working with Fleischer, Hallum got

the idea to exhibit art by CIA students at his next open house. Also present at the open house was Mike Reilly, the

contractor and painter who worked on the house, answering questions about the home repairs and improvements he made. Conversation flowed freely among visitors, realtors and business owners attending the open house event.

Hallum believes collaboration with local businesses to showcase their wares and services to potential buyers will create win-win situations. Buyers will have a chance to see what is available to them if they decide to move to the Heights, and Heights merchants will have a chance to market their businesses in a new way.

*Hannah Baldwin is the administrative assistant for FutureHeights and a resident of Cleveland Heights.*

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## 'Taste of the Heights' to be held June 14

Rebecca Storey

The Heights Youth Club (HYC) will hold its fourth annual Taste of the Heights fundraiser on Thursday, June 14 from 6-9 p.m., at its club facility at 2065 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights. The event will feature food donated by more than 20 local restaurants, a raffle, billiards tournament, and music by the band Hubb's Groove. Proceeds will benefit HYC.

Area restaurants continue to rally behind the club by providing food for this event, where the number of attendees has typically topped 200 people. "The Heights community has always

been very supportive of both the club and the event. HYC encourages people to view the event as a relaxing evening out with friends and neighbors," said Susan Oakes, event chair.

Unlike many "taste of" events, attendees pay only a flat admission price to sample food from all the participating restaurants. "You can literally taste food from all over Greater Heights area without leaving the building," co-chair Angela Karges pointed out. Restaurants from the Cedar Lee, Coventry, Cedar Fairmount, and Cedar Taylor neighborhoods will be represented, along with eateries from Cedar Center, Fairmount Circle and Shaker Square.

Admission is \$50 in advance and \$60 at the door. For tickets and more information go to [www.heightsyouthclub.org](http://www.heightsyouthclub.org) or contact Kimberly Morgan at 216-253-1639.

The Heights Youth Club partners with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland to offer programs that foster academic success, character and citizenship, healthy lifestyles, creativity, and cultural appreciation for children ages 6 to 18.

*Rebecca Storey serves on the board of directors of the Heights Youth Club. A Cleveland Heights native, she currently works for Progressive Insurance.*

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# Long-awaited BottleHouse Brewery opens on Lee Road

Hannah Baldwin

A new place to gather has arrived on Lee Road. The long-anticipated BottleHouse Brewery opened Tuesday, May 1, and owners Brian Bencheck and Dave Schubert invite all to celebrate and see what this microbrewery and “brew-on-premise” facility offers.

Bencheck and Schubert wanted to create a place close to home, to brew good beer. The brewery is family friendly, with a laid-back atmosphere. There is a gathering area for conversation, light music and entertainment. Local groups are encouraged to come and use the space. (Why not host a book club meeting there, and enjoy fresh-brewed beer while discussing the month’s selection?) The owners hope BottleHouse will bring a little of what Tremont and Ohio City offer: good brews, creativity and conversation with friends.

All the hard work and carefully planned design that Bencheck and Schubert undertook in creating the brewery has been worth it, the owners said, adding that “the city has been helpful in making the process smooth and progressive.” Bencheck and Schubert brought an artistic mindset and the desire to use sustainable materials in creating the interior space. Beneath the floors, they found steel plates that they used to create the bar and counters in the tasting area. The backdrop for the stage comes from an old fence, and the tables are rustic and handmade from various found items. Bencheck, a former glassblower, hung one of his chandeliers



Brian Bencheck and Dave Schubert, owners of BottleHouse, offer freshly brewed and brew-your-own beer.

near the bar. The small stage will accommodate acoustic music performances, soloists, stand-up performances and a movie screen. The dark red walls with old pictures imprinted on them enhance the rustic interior furnishings.

In addition to freshly brewed beer, BottleHouse offers whiskey tastings, as well as a small line of wines from the Wine Spot down the street. Pierogies from Perla Homemade Delights are

available Tuesday through Saturday. Bencheck and Schubert plan to collaborate with surrounding restaurants to offer an assortment of take-out menus at the brewery. They invite patrons to bring their own food to enjoy with the BottleHouse’s beer.

ACO performed on opening night. On Friday, May 4, Porch will perform, and BottleHouse’s manager, Harry Bacharach, will take the stage on Sat-

urday, May 5.

Brew-on-premise will begin in July. To learn more about scheduling a date to brew your own beer—selected from BottleHouse’s recipe collection—visit [www.thebottlehousebrewingcompany.com](http://www.thebottlehousebrewingcompany.com), and sign up for e-mail notices.

*Hannah Baldwin is the administrative assistant for FutureHeights and a resident of Cleveland Heights.*

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