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Heights Barbershoppers are best in the U.S.

Joy Henderson

The Heights High Barbershoppers scored a high note at the International Youth Chorus Barbershop Festival, taking first place in the nation and second place internationally in their division. Vocal music director Craig McGaughey, 13 students and several chaperones attended the competition on Jan. 31 at the Long Beach Performing Arts Center in Long Beach, Calif.

Unlike many of the groups competing, the Heights Barbershoppers perform without their director in front. "When the boys are on stage by themselves, they build more trust and confidence and they have to really listen to each other," said McGaughey.

The fierce competition featured groups from all over the U.S. and Canada—many with up to 80 members. The judges were very impressed with the Heights vocalists. After the performance, the judges reviewed their scoring with the young men, citing areas where the group excelled and making suggestions for ways to improve.



Heights High's award-winning Barbershoppers (from left): Devin Davis, Wyatt Sudduth, Michael Carder, Ian Teunissen van Manen, Joseph Nicoletti, Orion Brock, Michael Judge, Vaughn Young, Shawn Reed, Ravi Lesser, Graham Ball, Garth Bennett and Joshua Perelman-Hall.

In addition to receiving detailed feedback from the official judges, the group also listened to and received critiques from several award-winning barbershop groups.

"The input the boys received was invaluable," said McGaughey. "This is a journey, as they are learning the technical and performance skills that will make them top-notch singers and performers."

While most of the five-day trip was

focused on learning, there was also time for teaching. Heights alum Scott Mandel, vocal music director at Pacoima Middle School, invited the Heights vocalists to perform for and mentor his students.

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

Wine Spot embraces digital currency

Alastair Pearson

Adam Fleischer, owner of the Wine Spot, is the first Cleveland Heights retailer to integrate Bitcoin payment processing into his business. Bitcoin, a digital cryptocurrency, is a complex and rapidly growing financial ecosystem with the potential to revolutionize the future of money.

Since Feb. 4, Wine Spot customers have been able to pay using Bitcoin, as the result of a partnership between Fleischer and Northeast Ohio Bitcoin consultancy CoinNEO.

"Bitcoin provides my customers the flexibility of another form of payment, and those investing in Bitcoin are searching for places to spend it," Fleischer said in a CoinNEO press release. "In addition, as a small business owner I am always looking for ways to manage expenses. At this point Bitcoin transaction fees are less expensive for me, versus credit cards and PayPal. I see why many believe digital currencies are the future."

On March 5, at 6:15 p.m., the Wine Spot will host a Cleveland Bitcoin Meetup. It is open to anyone interested in the digital currency.

As of mid-February, reported Fleischer, some customers had already used Bitcoin at the shop. He added, "There is interest from the Bitcoin community, and they are thrilled that a merchant in Northeast Ohio is accepting it."

Bitcoin is an anonymous peer-to-peer payment system in which users trade Bitcoins (BTC) that attain value as a result of supply and demand. BTC are minted through a "mining" process where private individuals use computers to solve complex algorithms. New BTC are added to the digital economy at a constant rate as problems are solved.

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Judge by day, rocker by night

James Henke

Cleveland Heights resident Mike Donnelly has had a long career in the legal world. He received his law degree from the Cleveland-Marshall College of Law in 1992. He then became an assistant county prosecutor under Stephanie Tubbs Jones. After four years in the prosecutor's office, Donnelly went into private law practice. Then, in 2005, he was elected a Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court judge, a position he still holds.

Donnelly has another interest: rock and roll. "I'm a judge by day and a rocker by night," said Donnelly, who sings and plays guitar in the band Faith and Whiskey. The group includes nine other musicians: Rich Wesorick, vocals and percussion; Steve Zashin, vocals and guitar; Dan Krueger, bass; Jerry Kysela, guitar; Keith Merritt, vocals and percussion; Jim Pujolas, percussion; Jim



Faith and Whiskey playing at the House of Blues last year.

Reesing, vocals and guitar; Joe Barone, keyboards; and Matt Kozink guitar. Half the members live in the Heights, and two are also lawyers.

Faith and Whiskey plays from 10 to 20 shows a year. Its next gig is on Friday, March 7, at the Grog Shop. The band performed at a benefit for Miles for

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District embarks on superintendent search

KimSergio Inglis

On Feb. 6, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education (BOE) outlined its superintendent search process and timeline for "identify[ing] the next leader of the CH-UH school district." According to the news release, "the search is underway for a new superintendent to replace Nylajeane McDaniel, who previously announced that she will retire after the end of this school year."

The overall timeline set forth by

the district commenced with an online community survey, open Feb. 6-19, which asked participants "to help identify the characteristics that are most important for a leader of the CH-UH school district." In mid-February, the district held "prescheduled interviews" with community groups and staff, and one "open forum" community meeting, in



Superintendent Nylajeane McDaniel

order "to learn desired attributes and characteristics of the next superintendent." In its release, the district characterized the search process as one that "will place a heavy emphasis on gathering community and staff input."

The board is working with Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, one

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Former superintendent Douglas Heuer

Letters Policy

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 or
e-mail: info@futureheights.org

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FutureHeights publishes the *Observer* to build community



OPENING
THE OBSERVER

FutureHeights

Clare Taft

For the past six years, FutureHeights, the community-building nonprofit organization serving Cleveland Heights and University Heights, has published the *Heights Observer*. The *Observer* is, without a doubt, FutureHeights’s most visible—and time-consuming—program. Yet, too often, the connection between the *Observer* and FutureHeights is lost.

The *Observer* came about six years ago, when the FutureHeights Board of Directors decided that publishing a citizen-driven newspaper was the best way to engage the citizenry and encourage community engagement, and to further FutureHeights’s mission: To promote a vibrant and sustainable future for Cleveland Heights and University Heights through innovative ideas and civic engagement.

FutureHeights’s small—but mighty—staff works throughout the year to publish our hyper-local, citizen-driven monthly newspaper, and our weekly e-newsletter. This means that FutureHeights works with other community organizations, citizens and our city governments to ensure that the stories that matter to you—and to all of us—are published.

The *Observer* fills a critical role in our community, providing a venue where Cleveland Heights and University Heights residents can tell the stories that matter to them. Each month, Heights-based nonprofit organizations, community groups, churches, schools and neighbors submit articles to the *Observer*. Many of these are stories that would go unnoticed by conventional print and online news sources, but they are stories that FutureHeights recognizes are critical to building, growing and engaging the community.

As a result, the *Observer* has become the heart of FutureHeights’ community building and civic engagement mission and programs.

Without FutureHeights, though, and without the vision of our Board of Directors in 2008, the *Heights Observer* would not exist.

What else does FutureHeights do (while producing a monthly newspaper and weekly e-newsletter)? Above all, FutureHeights supports community building, with the goal of engaging the citizenry of Cleveland Heights and University Heights to grow, build and foster this community that we live in and love. FutureHeights actively supports new community gardens and neighborhood groups, as well as our locally owned and operated businesses.

Each year, FutureHeights hosts the Best of the Heights awards, recognizing our unique, diverse and indispensable local businesses. In 2013, FutureHeights kicked off the first Heights Music Hop, and that popular event will return in October of this year.

FutureHeights also brings together other local organizations, community groups and our city governments, to discuss and work through issues such as community development, vacant storefronts, safety and city services.

Without a doubt, where community grows and the citizenry is engaged, you will be sure to find FutureHeights—whether it is at a community forum, a new community garden or in the pages of the *Observer*.

If you value the *Observer* and value the voice that the *Observer* gives to our community, please consider supporting FutureHeights—as a volunteer, donor or citizen journalist—so that we may continue to build community.

Learn more about Future Heights at www.futureheights.org.

To sign up to receive the weekly e-newsletter, go to www.heightsobserver.org and select “Get the E-newsletter” from the left-hand menu.

Clare Taft is president of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.

Excerpts from *Observer* blogs

Read the whole story at blogs.heightsobserver.org

The problem isn’t really winter walking; it’s lack of commitment to public safety

Social media has been filled over the past few weeks with complaints about walking throughout Cleveland Heights as the snow piles up.

This Facebook post by Jim Miller sums up the frustration, but—to use the appropriate cliché—it’s only the tip of the iceberg.

While I continue to clear boulders of ice from my Cedar Road frontage after the plows trundle by, I frankly hadn’t given it much thought until a Facebook friend pointedly noted that it’s not a matter of being neighborly; it’s a matter of public safety.

That’s when I realized snow clearance isn’t the problem; it’s a symptom.

Admittedly, we’ve grown soft from easy winters and this year has caught everyone by surprise. But since the last time we had a winter this insistent, we’ve been through a budget-busting recession, voters have finally put fresh talent on city council, and a calcified police chief and city manager have been replaced.

Here’s what hasn’t changed:

- Residents remain concerned about safety—mostly from the violent punks who seem to like their chances in our tree-lined neighborhoods.
- People from other communities remain vocal about staying out of



To read the entire post, visit
<http://blogs.heightsobserver.org>
or scan the QR code.

Cleveland Heights for fear of being mugged—making no distinction whether it’s by a thug, or a cop with radar gun and a sheaf of parking tickets.

- Our police department continues to have a reputation for underreporting violent crimes that occur here—and no credible means to refute it.
- Our government still depends on being listed among Ohio’s 50 safest cities to demonstrate that public safety is under control.

The police department and city manager’s office desperately seem to want people to hear them when they tell us our city is as safe as any and safer than most.

The problem isn’t that we don’t hear it; it’s that we don’t feel it.

—Bob Rosenbaum

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A salute to a community An open letter from Mosdos to the CH-UH BOE

To the Editor,

At last, now that my health issues have become familiar, and no longer troublesome, I can try to extend all my daily thank-yous to countless people, both in and out of the Cleveland Heights community.

The rallying support, and the ongoing chatter that erupted, did reach my hospital room within days. I was flabbergasted, lifted, and so deeply moved by all the attention then, as I still am now.

How does one ever convey the gratitude, the emotional boost, and the surprising connections I am humbled by? My guess, it will be an ongoing process, as it has been all along. From the visitors, flowers, plants, cards, gifts, phone calls and prayers, my recovery was off to a very strong beginning.

As if that wasn't enough, a network of some dear, determined friends collaborated with the merchants of Cedar Fairmount, local and distant businesses, and the local community, to create the fundraiser, "Share The Road," at Nighttown. Once again, the outstanding attendance, donations, participation, and success of the event proved the compassion of so many people. Truly dumbfounding!

I have had the privilege to hear some of your stories in connection with the accident, at random and almost daily as our paths have crossed, most commonly at Starbuck's, Dave's and walking around the neighborhood. My verbal thank-yous seemed trite in comparison to what I have been surrounded by.

For what I heard was the goodness, concern, thoughtfulness and generosity of people whom I have been blessed by. They, too, felt the surge of a united, rejuvenated, and inspired community. Some met their neighbor, some have reunited with past acquaintances, and some met for the first time. All because people engaged, rallied and connected. We all experienced humanity at its best.

Thank you, beyond these written words.

Mindy Manyo
Cleveland Heights

[Editor's Note: Mindy Manyo, a longtime resident of the Cedar Fairmount neighborhood, waterer of flowers in the Cedar Fairmount Business District, and avid cyclist, was hit by a car while bicycling on Fairmount Boulevard on Oct. 3, 2013, suffering severe injuries. Friends and business owners organized a benefit for her at Nighttown last fall.]

[This was submitted to the Observer for publication as an open letter to the CH-UH Board of Education.]

Mosdos has been negotiating with you privately to buy the old Millikin School property. Recent public comments made by your board president have been one-sided. They inferred that Mosdos had been nonresponsive and uncommunicative in negotiations, without mentioning that most delays were due to religious holidays that forbid the conduct of any business whatsoever by members of the Orthodox Jewish community.

Your board president also leaked an early private offer by Mosdos to purchase the Millikin property for \$215,000, suggesting that Mosdos had made only one unreasonably low bid. He did not mention that an appraisal estimates the value of land at \$215,000. Your lawyer argued that even a building which may require \$3.5 million in improvements has some value. Mosdos responded with a most generous offer of \$600,000 [in December 2013] to try and make a deal. Your board president neglected to mention in his public comments that this higher offer was even made.

Mosdos offered \$600,000 for two parcels. One has a blighted building on it. The other includes property used for storage and the dumping of refuse. You are refusing to sell this other parcel. Mosdos needs both parcels to create a viable land use plan. Your board president did not mention this need in his public comments.

Millikin is a test case of how you will recycle abandoned school buildings. You can convert an unused asset now into cash, decrease your maintenance expenses, and stabilize a neighborhood. On the other hand, failure to make a deal with Mosdos instead may encourage certain families to relocate outside Cleveland Heights to the detriment of the tax base. The price of failing this test therefore may be high.

Your recent public proposal to relocate a theater and trades people into Millikin raises many questions. Where will you find \$3.4 million to repair your buildings? This cost was not mentioned during the recent bond issue campaign. Will the cost

come from funds raised by that bond issue? Or must future bond issues or levies increase in size to cover this cost? Or will funding come from your operations budget and therefore require program cuts? And, will use of buildings other than for a school violate the city's zoning code?

Families who use private or parochial schools pay taxes that fund your programs. You have an opportunity now to show them that they can benefit from a public system that supports the education of all district children. Otherwise, why should that majority of all voters with no direct relationship to public schools support bond issues or levies, including

elderly and single people? You must not assume tax issues always will require only a large turnout by your current core constituency. Without expanding your constituent base, you risk our community becoming like Parma, where tax issues routinely fail at election time.

The board needs to resolve its differences with Mosdos. Mosdos remains open to the sale of both Millikin parcels. It asks you to reconsider your position and discuss such a sale before condemnation and demolition become the only realistic options.

Alan Rapoport is an attorney for Mosdos Ohr Hatorah and is a former mayor of Cleveland Heights.

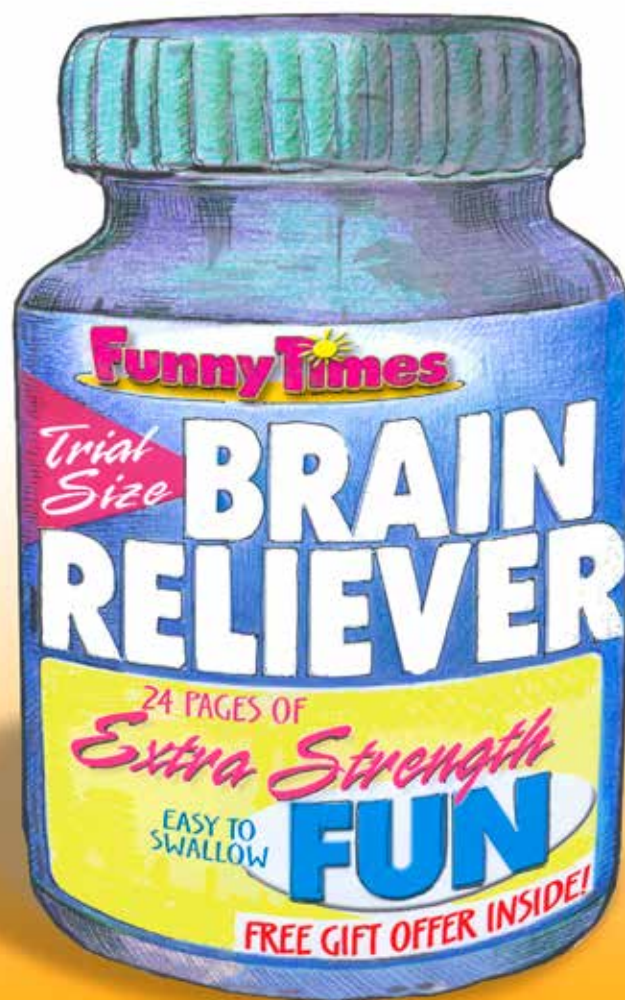


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It takes a village to keep sidewalks clear



STEIN'S WAY

Jason Stein

This has been an unusually cold winter. We have learned what a polar vortex is, and had more school snow days than my 30-something memory can recall. The winters of recent past had cold and snowy days, but there was always a break when temperatures would rise and the snow would melt. These thaws helped make the winter months feel shorter and cleared much of the snow from our sidewalks. This winter's constant cold has highlighted an ongoing challenge: to keep our city walkable, even in the winter months.

When the sidewalks are covered with six inches or more of snow, pedestrians tend to walk in the street. Among them are elementary school children walking to and from their schools and bus stops; disabled or senior individuals who have challenges walking under the best of weather conditions; and those who use public transportation. Walking in the streets is dangerous and a public safety issue.

Recently, I posted a question on my Facebook page: Should Cleveland Heights enforce the sidewalk snow removal ordinance by issuing a warning for the first offense and a ticket for subsequent offences (and why)? In 2011, at a city council meeting, I requested ideas from the public to encourage residents and businesses to make their sidewalks passable by shoveling them after a snowfall. At that time, I received no more than a handful of responses. To my surprise, my Facebook question quickly had 240 comments!

Most who responded indicated that they felt this issue needed the attention of city council, and needed a resolution. There was no clear consensus on how the city should approach the issue.

City council and staff discussed the issue at our Feb. 9 city council meeting. In a lengthy discussion, we dissected numerous options, including the three most popular from respondents to my Facebook post:

1. The city should clear the sidewalks, like University Heights and Shaker Heights: This would solve the problem. However, the cost would exceed \$500,000 a year. Cleveland Heights's income tax rate is 2 percent, Shaker Heights's is 2.25 percent and University Heights's is 2.5 percent. The city would need additional tax revenue to add this service.

2. Fine residents and businesses that do not clear their sidewalks: This option would increase compliance and lead to the majority of sidewalks being shoveled after a snowfall. Exceptions would be made, however, for the disabled, seniors and others who are unable to clear their sidewalks. The city could collaborate with schools and nonprofits to assist those who cannot clear their own sidewalks, but this would not be a perfect system and would leave a percentage of sidewalks filled with snow. Of course, there would likely be complaints from residents who receive warnings and/or fines, as the city already experiences with tall grass

citations in the summer.

3. Private snow-removal businesses should offer sidewalk snow removal with their driveway service: The city can encourage licensed snow-removal businesses to offer sidewalk snow removal. Certainly, paying for snow removal for the season would be less expensive than receiving a few tickets. Many residents, however, including myself, do not have any intention of paying for snow removal (I clear my own driveway and sidewalk).

In the end, it was decided that:

- The city's public works department will map out the city's main roads and design a plan to plow those sidewalks.
- The city will encourage private snow-plow businesses to offer sidewalk snow removal.
- The city will look for best practices from other municipalities that have programs to assist the elderly and disabled in clearing their sidewalks.
- When the city receives a complaint of unpassable sidewalks at a residence or business, the city will send out an inspector and issue a warning.
- When the city receives a complaint that a private snow-plow service has covered a sidewalk with snow, the city will issue a citation, when warranted, to the service provider.
- The city will create and distribute a guide to educate and assist residents with tips for keeping sidewalks and driveway aprons clear during the winter months.

Council and city staff will continue to discuss this issue through the summer in preparation for walkable sidewalks during the 2014-15 winter season.

It does take a village, and Cleveland Heights has great neighbors throughout our "village." I have heard stories of residents who go above and beyond, plowing neighbors' sidewalks, cutting grass for a neighbor, helping a neighbor put trash out on the tree lawn, starting a street club and contributing in other ways.

I want to recognize those Cleveland Heights heroes who make our city so special, and encourage others to be more neighborly. With this in mind, I am establishing "Councilman Stein's Outstanding Neighbor of the Month" award, to be awarded to CH residents who go above and beyond to help their neighbors and improve their neighborhood. To nominate a neighbor for this recognition, fill out the online form at councilmanstein.blogspot.com/ or contact me at jstein@clvhts.com or 440-253-9613 for a nomination form.

Jason Stein is a member of Cleveland Heights City Council, a Heights High graduate and a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident. He can be reached at 440-253-9613 or jstein@clvhts.com.

JUDGE BY DAY continued from page 1

Smiles and the Heights Youth Scholarship Fund at Nighttown last December. The show was packed, and Kathy Blackman, the owner of the Grog Shop, heard about the band and offered it a gig at the Grog.

"We do a lot of benefits," Donnelly said. "I really like playing for free for worthy causes." Donnelly estimates that the band has raised about \$200,000 at benefits over the years.

Last year, the group played the Jam for Justice at the House of Blues. As a result of that gig, it was featured on "Live on Lakeside" on WKYC-TV.

Donnelly, 47, grew up in Rocky River and went to high school at St. Ignatius, then majored in history at John Carroll University. He started playing guitar in high school. "I've followed bands and music all my life since high school," he said. "It's my number one passion." About five years ago, he decided to attend the School of Rock in Highland Heights. "They have a 'grad-school' program for adults," he said, "and you work with other musicians and come up with a set of about 20 songs. Then it culminates with a live performance at the Beachland Ballroom."

One night, Donnelly and his School of Rock classmates decided to go out on their own. In 2011, they played their first gig at Brothers Lounge in Cleveland.

They came up with the name Faith and Whiskey after experimenting with a variety of other names. "Faith and Whiskey is the name of a bar in Chicago," Donnelly said. "Our bass player suggested that we use it." The group has a motto related to the name: "If you don't have one, you better have the other."

The group has played many local venues, including a Wade Oval Wednesday event last summer. The group's repertoire comprises about 60 cover songs, including songs by the Rolling Stones, the Clash, J. Geils Band, Simple Minds and Billy Idol. "We basically agreed that the band members could bring any song to the group, and we'll play it," Donnelly said. "But it has to be an upbeat song that will make the crowd react in a positive way."

Donnelly moved to Cleveland Heights in 2002, and loves the area. "I love the diversity, I love the people, I love the sense of community that exists here," he said. "And I like the fact that there is so much arts and culture on this side of town. I also love the different areas, like Coventry and Lee Road."

He is delighted to now be playing in a real band. "It's a dream come true for me," he said. "I never thought I would have the talent to play in a band."

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is also the author of several books, including biographies of Jim Morrison, John Lennon and Bob Marley.

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Can our voices change the world?



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

How do you change the world?

In a recent conversation about the future of public education—the focus of my quest for a more just and inclusive society—a friend reminded me that change starts with each of us: “I only have control over what I do.”

Can a one-person-at-a-time approach make a difference when unfettered corporate influence, gerrymandered legislators, and both political parties embrace education policies that are undemocratic and harmful to children?

For the last 20 years I’ve had a growing fear that reform ideas sounding reasonable on the surface could destroy public education. The narrative of crisis and failure has infiltrated the public discourse, and obsession with standardized tests has narrowed learning, while emphasizing labeling and judging. The free-market school reformers have created a dual system of schools but have not improved outcomes.

Competition for scarce resources has replaced stable support, and, rather than mobilizing the expertise of teachers to find solutions, we blame and shame them.

A “no excuses” approach to success for poor children ignores the effects of poverty, and federal policy has drowned out local control. It’s a nightmare.

The more I became aware of how these policies threatened my community and what I value, the less powerful I felt. I was at a loss about what to do—until now.

Oddly, my hope comes from reading a book. It started in late December when Ari Klein, a public school parent and president of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, invited me and representatives of various local organizations to plan a community discussion of Diane Ravitch’s *Reign of Error*. The book describes the transformation of state and federal education policy since 1982, challenges the ideas used to justify the reforms and articulates the dangers of testing and privatization.

A month later, for three consecutive Wednesday evenings during this cold and snowy winter, a hearty group of teachers and community members filed into Heights High to discuss the book.

The turnout was large and diverse, the conversations thoughtful and respectful. More than 110 people participated at least once, and many of the 97 who came to the first meeting attended all three.

People with different experiences had the chance to explore ideas, clarify their own beliefs and arrive at some level of shared understanding.

Proponents of the policies reviewed by Ravitch have discouraged any questioning of their ideas, so this series of conversations was radical in that it ended the public silence.

It increased awareness of complex issues and put the community and educators on the same team. It demonstrated that individual citizens are willing to invest the time and thought needed to create informed action.

The series was a model of how to build awareness, common language, shared understanding, trust and the will to act. We need more of this!



Community members braved the cold to discuss Diane Ravitch’s *Reign of Error*.

The experience helped overcome my paralysis: If I focus on what I can do in my community with my fellow readers to resist the negative thrust of public policy—instead of worrying about the well-financed privatization machine—I can make a difference.

I don’t like someone far from the daily reality of our schools defining who we are, judging our quality, or determining our future. Their tools are flawed, their criteria too narrow, and the effects of their policies are potentially devastating. The judgments are ours, not theirs, to make.

If we speak up, we can change the narrative about public education. We can define what we want education to achieve, reject as invalid the use of standardized tests to judge our students and their teachers, and embrace approaches to assessment that facilitate learning.

We can support investing in

our teachers, mobilize community resources to reduce stress in the lives of children and families, create opportunities for our graduates, and address the legislature’s failure to provide a thorough and efficient system of public schools.

If we act, so will others.

Susie Kaeser is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, former director of Reaching Heights, and serves on the national board of Parents for Public Schools.

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University Heights City Council

Meeting highlights



JANUARY 21, 2014

Vice Mayor Susan Pardee and Councilwoman Adele Zucker were absent.

Ed Kelley

Ed Kelley, former mayor of Cleveland Heights, officially announced that he is seeking election to Cuyahoga County Council to fill the seat representing the district that includes University Heights.

Green driveways

The Home Repair Resource Center will be presenting a free lecture on green driveways, including such ideas as water-permeable pavers, which would reduce water runoff. Mayor Infeld noted the possibility of increased fees in the future for nonpermeable surfaces, [and said] this program might be of particular interest.

Police dispatchers

Council approved a contract wage reopened agreement, implementing the new contract terms between the city and the three police dispatchers. This contract expired last July, but an agreement was finally reached in December. A salary increase of 2 percent plus a signing bonus will be paid retroactively to July 1 to each of the dispatchers, at a cost to the city of \$2,860. Councilman Mark Wiseman voted against passing the issue on emergency standing, leaving only four council members voting yes. The law director ascertained that four votes were insufficient for approval on emergency. Because the ordinance would still pass, but with a 30-day delay of the retroactive pay increase if it were not passed now on emergency, Wiseman made a motion to recall the vote and changed his vote to yes.

Council chambers repairs

The roof has been repaired and there has been no additional water damage. Council approved Robert C. Van Gunten Inc. to paint the chambers in a palette of grays and cream for no more than \$5,885. Council also approved Marshall Carpeting to replace the carpet and asphalt tiles

at a cost of no more than \$5,476.04.

Sanitary sewer repair

Council approved Land Networking LLC [to carry out] the emergency repair of a sanitary sewer at 2535 Eaton Road at a cost of \$6,234. The sewer became blocked when the pipe crumbled. Sewage was already beginning to back up into the home, so the emergency contractor had to be brought in. Council authorized the mayor to request bids for the 2014-16 emergency sewer repair contract. University Heights has paid \$100,000 over the past two years to Land Networking LLC for emergency sewer repairs under the current contract.

LWV Observer: Wendy Deuring.

FEBRUARY 3, 2014

All council members were present.

Tribute to Martin Luther King

Councilwoman Nancy English spoke briefly on the evolution from Negro History Week, selected to honor the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglas, to what is now Black History Month. Wayne Dawson from Fox 8 News spoke next, noting that February is the time to honor people who came before us and laid the foundation for today's promised land, a truly American story of perseverance.

Nine children from Mrs. Mendelson's third-grade class at Gesu Elementary School spoke with poise and clarity, reading poems and essays they had written in honor of Dr. King. The Wiley Middle School Challenge Choir, comprising sixth- to eighth-grade students, performed under the direction of Glen Brackens. This group recently won three first-place awards from the Music Showcase Festival in New York City, and has traveled across the country sharing its music. The current president of the choir read an essay she had written as the choir sang behind her.

University-community liaison

Kyle Wise, a junior at John Carroll University, expressed the importance of university students and permanent residents learning to coexist. He asked council to provide a contact person, someone

other than the police, to serve as a liaison when issues arise between students and residents. He suggested that punishments and compensatory actions could be arranged through mediation. Mayor Infeld noted that all the students are full residents of the community, just for a shorter time than homeowners. Although she appreciated his ideas, incidents that happen off-campus are more difficult to mediate because the students are considered citizens of the community and are bound to the same laws as long-term residents. Anthony J. Coyne, UH law director, noted that such an agreement would require legislation, and that the Juvenile Diversion program exists already and might be an option.

Gas line replacement

Engineer Joe Ciuni reported that Dominion East Ohio Gas will be replacing gas lines along Cedar Road this summer, extending from Miramar Boulevard to Legacy Village. [The company] will need to close one lane on the south side of Cedar Road. It will be a rolling shutdown, as [workers] move from section to section. All work will be done during the day, except for the intersection of Green and Cedar roads, which will be done at night due to traffic congestion. The project will take three months to complete.

LWV Observer: Wendy Deuring.

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

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

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

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Senior Citizen Happenings

Senior Citizen Happenings, sponsored by the City of University Heights, are open to all senior citizens. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. at the University Heights Library. For information, and to suggest program topics, contact the UH Office for Senior Services at 216-397-0336 or info@universityheights.com.

March 6: Sheela Das and Kevin Richards, popular lyricists for Roots of American Music, will perform unforgettable hits of the 1930s and engage attendees in an exercise to compose some new classics.

March 13: Robert Walton, UH's 2013 Citizen of the Year; Frankie Goldberg, UH's 2013 Public Servant of the Year; and Scott Rudyk, UH's 2013 Employee of the Year, will reflect on how fulfilling the responsibilities of their respective oc-

cupations earned them the city's tribute.

March 20: Patrick Mullen, executive director of Reaching Heights, discusses the work of this nonprofit organization that views the CH-UH public schools as the community's greatest asset. It mobilizes human and financial resources for their support, creates innovative extracurricular programming, and fosters excellence and pride in the schools.

March 27: Denise San Antonio Zeman, St. Luke's Foundation president and CEO, was named a 2014 Woman of Achievement by the Greater Cleveland YWCA in recognition of her leadership. She'll talk about her work with the nonprofit organization, and commitment to transform the lives of people and the life of a community.

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CH offers citizens more information online

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The City of Cleveland Heights recently made more information available to residents on its website, www.clevelandheights.com. On Feb. 6, the city announced that it was making available online a searchable database of incident and accident reports. Last month, the city launched an OpenGov site that provides annual budget and financial reports.

In a Feb. 6 news release, Tanisha Briley, city manager, said, "Using technology to make us more efficient, accessible, and responsive is a priority for the city in 2014. OpenGov and online police reports are just the beginning of more initiatives to come this year."

The police reports are categorized as either incidents or accidents, and are available within three to five business days of when the event took place. Residents can search by report number, report date, street name or—for accidents only—by last name.

A printed copy of a report can also be requested at the Cleveland Heights Police Records Division, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. The cost is 10 cents per page.

Questions about the reports can be directed to the records division at 216-291-4743.

On Jan. 24, the city announced that it had become the first city in Ohio to make its financial data available through an online application called OpenGov. Using the website, residents can view budget and monthly expenditures for city departments and divisions over a five-year period. The city website also provides a list of frequently asked questions to help residents navigate the system.

If residents have questions, the website instructs them to e-mail Tom Raguz, city finance director, at traguz@clvhts.com and states that the questions and the finance department's answers will be posted to the FAQ page.

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

Remembering Chessie Bleick

Chesca Hadden and Halley Moore

Heights resident Francesca Kemp Bleick, known as Chessie, died peacefully on Feb. 18, following a struggle with cancer. She was 73.

Bleick was born in Cleveland on Nov. 23, 1940, and attended Roxboro Elementary School and Laurel School. Following her graduation from Colorado College, she returned to her hometown to work as a librarian for General Electric.

In 1963, she married Edgar Bleick and settled into life on Delaware Drive in Cleveland Heights. She and her husband worked together for many years at K&E, the company they owned that manufactures a specialty chemical used to clean cathedrals and other historic stone buildings.

Alongtime civic leader dedicated to the improvement of Cleveland Heights, Bleick was the founder of Friends of Cain Park; one of the founders of The Heights Fund, a pro-integrative housing initiative; and PTA president at Roxboro Elementary and Roxboro Middle schools.

Bleick served as chair of the Junior League of Cleveland's House Operations Committee, and was a dedicated member of the Cleveland Botanical Garden, where she helped with the club's legendary White Elephant Sale.

She volunteered for more than a decade at the Nearly New Shop, which benefited the Cleveland Sight Center.

She was once voted "Kiwanian of the



Chessie Bleick with two of her six grandchildren.

Year" by the Kiwanis Club, and ran for Cleveland Heights City Council in 1995.

Bleick was an ardent supporter of Cleveland Heights ice hockey, having two generations of exceptional Bleick hockey players under her wings. This season, Bleick was the top seller of fundraising wreaths for the Heights hockey team.

Bleick traveled extensively and managed to visit every place she intended to, with the exception of the Arctic and Antarctic regions. She was a longtime member of the Cleveland Skating Club, where she played bridge and swam daily. An avid needlepointer, she was always secretly working on a canvas for a loved one.

Bleick was a magnificent cook and host; her New Year's Eve parties were a tradition etched into the lives of many of her friends and family. Her great

room, which her son, Carl, built, was the site of countless parties and afternoon visits.

She was the glue that held her community together, and she will be greatly missed.

A memorial service will be held at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, March 1, at Forest Hill Church in Cleveland Heights. In lieu of flowers, her family asks that friends consider a memorial gift to the Forest Hill Church Endowment Fund, 3031 Monticello Blvd., Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118.

Bleick is survived by her husband, Edgar Carl Bleick Jr.; her son, Edgar Carl Bleick III (Mary "Missy" Grace Bleick); her daughter, Francesca "Chesca" Bleick Hadden (Edward "Kenny" Kenneth Hadden IV); grandchildren Emma Grace Bleick, Calvin Jennings Bleick, Evan Mitchell Bleick, Zachary Kemp Bleick, Francesca Alexandra Hadden and Edward "Kent" Kenneth Hadden V; brother-in-law, George Goodwin (sister Molly Bliss Goodwin, deceased); niece, Sally Goodwin Connolly (Sean Connolly); nephew, Richard Goodwin (Molly McGuigan); and brother, Phillip Bliss.

She is predeceased by her mother, Francesca "Chess" Moore Kemp Bliss; her father, Evan Jennings Kemp; her brother, Evan "Van" Jennings Kemp, Jr.; her father, Charles "Bill" William Bliss; and sister, Sarah Bliss..

Chesca Hadden and Halley Moore are members of Chessie Bleick's family.



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Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights



LEAGUE OF
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JANUARY 21, 2014

All council members were present.

Arnold Pinkney

Vice Mayor Cheryl Stephens reflected on the life and service of longtime political and community activist Arnold Pinkney, who died earlier this month.

Sanitary sewer work

Council approved an agreement, at a cost not to exceed \$198,000, with Mackay Engineering & Surveying Company for the engineering and surveying services needed in advance of constructing a new sanitary relief sewer, and rehabilitating an existing sanitary sewer, on Fairmount Boulevard between Shelburne Road and approximately 200 feet east of Wellington Road. The existing sanitary sewer on Fairmount Boulevard is supposed to control up to five sanitary sewer overflows along this route, but is too small to do so without periodically overflowing into the storm sewer, thus sending waste into Lake Erie. The city will issue tax-exempt notes or bonds to cover these costs.

Cedar Lee streetscape

Council authorized an agreement with CDM Smith for engineering, bidding support, and post-bidding design services for signal design and roadway work for the Cedar Lee Streetscape Project, at a cost of \$69,778, to be covered by issuance of tax-exempt notes or bonds.

Heritage Home Program

Council renewed an agreement with the Cleveland Restoration Society and Preservation Resource Center of Northeastern Ohio for historic preservation consulting services in connection with the Heritage Home Program. Since 2001, the city has participated in this program, which provides below-market interest rate loans to owners of historic properties, for repairs and improvements. The fee paid for these services will be \$17,850.

Juvenile offender mentoring

Council authorized establishment of a

Juvenile Diversion/Mentoring Program. The program's goal is to provide an opportunity to juvenile first-time offenders to correct self-defeating and life-altering behaviors instead of referral to the juvenile court system. Stemming from an alliance of the Cleveland Heights Police Department, the Cleveland Heights Municipal Court and the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Court, the program has three objectives: 1) to redirect juveniles from delinquent, unruly, and anti-social behavior, 2) to reduce the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders and 3) to decrease the risk factors associated with delinquent behaviors.

Notable Heights residents

Council Member Melissa Yasinow noted that resident Margaret Bernstein is a finalist for the Cleveland Indians "Mentor of the Year." Another prominent resident, Michael Symon, recently taped a segment of his network show, "The Chew," with members of the Cleveland Heights Fire Department. The program will be broadcast at 1 p.m. on Feb. 4 [on ABC, Channel 5].

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

FEBRUARY 3, 2014

All council members were present.

Public comments

Easton Dental: Joseph Walker, a dentist with Easton Dental, invited council to the firm's grand opening in the Severance Medical Arts Building on Feb. 9. He expressed enthusiasm for the chance to serve the Cleveland Heights community.

Janine Boyd's candidacy: Resident Diane Hallum criticized Council Member Janine Boyd for running for her mother's [Barbara Boyd] seat in the [state] legislature. If elected, Boyd's replacement for the city council seat would be appointed and not elected.

Heights Community Garden Network: Samantha Provencio, director, described the new organization's work to connect local gardeners and promote the development of

community gardens. They work with the city to develop gardens on vacant lots. Information can be found on their website: www.heightscommunitygardens.net.

Lennox/Surrey parking garage

Council authorized receipt of proposals to review strategic operations and bids for repairs for the Lennox/Surrey parking garage.

Turkey Ridge development

Council heard a first reading for the establishment of the boundaries of the Turkey Ridge Community Reinvestment Area, which includes Kenilworth Mews and parts of Overlook and Edgehill roads. Designation as a Community Reinvestment Area will encourage reinvestment for remodeling or new construction of owner-occupied housing. The resolution introduced outlines for three different categories of investment that will enjoy tax exemptions on the value of improvements to property:

- New construction of owner-occupied housing valued at \$400,000 per unit minimum, in a project that is valued at \$4 million or more, may apply for property tax exemption for 15 years.
- New owner occupied housing valued at \$400,000 per unit minimum, in a project valued at \$1.6 million, may apply for seven years of tax exemptions.
- Rehab of existing housing with a minimum investment of \$500,000 or more may apply for 10 years of tax exemptions.
- The legislation also creates a five-person Community Reinvestment Area Housing Council to inspect properties that have received exemptions.

Building code fees increased

Council heard a first reading of legislation amending several sections of the building code to increase a variety of fees for permits and inspection related to property improvements

Nuisance business and properties

Council declared the bar operating at 2573 Noble Road (The Byou) to be a nuisance, and revoked its certificate of business occupancy.

Council also declared two vacant properties in serious disrepair to be nuisances and authorized abatement by demolition. The properties are at 14321 and 14327 Superior Road.

Police reports on website

Council Member Melissa Yasinow noted that beginning Feb. 1 police reports will be available on the city's website.

LWV Observer: Susie Kaeser.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.
See disclaimer on page 6.

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Reaching Heights to honor Bailey at 23rd annual Bee

Saroya Queen-Tabor

On March 12, Reaching Heights will host its annual Adult Spelling Bee in the Heights High auditorium. The event serves as both a fundraiser for the organization and a family-friendly event for the whole community.

For 23 years, community members have formed teams of three to test their spelling skills and compete for the honor of having their team's name emblazoned on the "Coveted Big Plastic Bee Trophy." Teams represent organizations, such as parent-teacher associations from Heights schools, lo-

cal religious institutions, universities, world-class orchestras, law firms, and city councils, or they comprise groups of friends. Some teams train extensively, others not so much, but all get into the spirit of the evening with creative costumes and cheering sections.

Each year at the Bee, Reaching Heights honors a Friend of Public Education for his or her commitment to Heights schools. This year's honoree is Carla Bailey.

"Carla Bailey is a parent, PTA leader, vocal music volunteer, AFS International student exchange host parent and advocate, refugee student advi-

sor, social justice monitor, lifelong learner, and public school champion," said Krista Hawthorne, assistant director of Reaching Heights, "We are excited to have this opportunity to recognize Carla for her years of dedication to kids in the district."

The Bee will start at 7 p.m. on March 12, and all are welcome to attend the free event. As in previous years, Steve Presser, owner of Big Fun, will be master of ceremonies, and Nancy Levin, CH-UH library director, will be the pronouncer. This year's judges will be Nylajeon McDan-



Carla Bailey

COURTESY CARLA BAILEY

iel, CH-UH superintendent, and Tony Zupancic, a Heights resident and associate professor of communications, English and theater at Notre Dame College.

The Reaching Heights Spelling Bee raises funds for programs that support academic and musical excellence in the CH-UH public schools. Each team raises a minimum of \$500. In 2013, 25 teams competed and raised \$13,000. Video of last year's Bee is online at www.reachingheights.org.

The deadline to register a team is March 4. To register, or for more information, contact Krista Hawthorn at 216-932-5110 or krista@reachingheights.org.

Saroya Queen-Tabor is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and a member of the Reaching Heights Board of Directors.

The effects of frigid temperatures on garden plants



COURTESY LAUREN LANPHEAR

Taxus shrubs in front of Church of the Saviour on Lee Road. Any cold-temperature injury will not be visible until spring or early summer.

Lauren Lanphear

With periods of extreme cold come questions about the impact such temperatures may have on plant materials in the landscape. It is a good time to review potential damage to trees and shrubs, keeping in mind that much of the damage that may occur will not become apparent until new growth begins in the spring. By then, many of us will have forgotten the frigid temperatures that have now twice invaded the Heights, especially if it's a mild spring, and gardeners may not relate plant damage to the extreme events of this winter.

Weather conditions this past fall played a part in how plants prepared for winter. Trees and shrubs in our area received inadequate moisture in the weeks leading up to the first hard frost. Rainfall last August and September was below-normal, leaving plants much more likely to suffer cold injury.

Native plant materials in their natural habitats will better tolerate these harsh conditions, but native species planted in the urban and suburban landscapes of the Heights and where soils and environmental factors are

vastly different from their normal habitats, can experience cold injury due to stress imposed by these exotic habitats. Most woody ornamental species used in Heights landscapes are non-native, and even a species rated hardy to our region may not survive when exposed to extreme temperatures. Keep this in mind when assessing plant problems in the spring.

Significant root kill will certainly affect the survivability of landscape plants. Soil by itself is a good insulator, and in most winters it provides adequate protection for roots. Snow cover is also important, as it provides natural insulation that can help to protect root systems. If low temperatures affect roots, it is the feeder roots—those closest to the surface—that are likely to be killed. The roots of plants in above-ground planters or containers, of course, are much less protected and are subject to direct injury or death from the cold.

One type of cold injury that is most predictable is the killing of flower buds on those trees and shrubs that are marginally hardy in our region. For example, the buds of forsythia, a common ornamental in Heights gardens, are prone to winter kill when temperatures drop to 15 degrees below zero.

Evergreen trees and shrubs are at additional risk as they continue to evaporate moisture due to winter's drying winds. Frozen soil prevents replacement of this water. The beautiful mature landscapes surrounding our homes include many rhododendrons, azaleas and the like—broad-leaf evergreens that are particularly susceptible to winter burn, a common injury that results in brown, yellow, or, sometimes, dead plants in the spring. A late-fall application of an anti-desiccant to these plants can significantly reduce this moisture loss, thereby giving shrubs and trees an edge against winter injury. The spray's effects last through the winter and help to maintain the evergreens' natural color and protect them from salt damage.

The frigid weather and the possible types of damage that it could cause should be kept in mind when evaluating plant growth or death come spring.

Lauren Lanphear is the third-generation owner of Forest City Tree Protection Company in South Euclid, founded in 1910. He has been a member of the Church of the Saviour in Cleveland Heights since 1969.

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HCC hosts March 7 diversity awareness program

Mayethel White

Heights Community Congress (HCC) will host a diversity awareness program on Friday, March 7, from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Lee Road Library. Advance registration is not required for this event, where participants will have the opportunity to experience the choices people made during the civil rights movement. Sometimes these choices meant the difference between life and death.

HCC will ask this question: You are living in the United States during the time when African Americans aren't treated equally; will you join in the movement to bring civil rights to all Americans?

This is an interactive program, and those participating in the history adventure will deepen their understanding of life before the Civil Rights Act was passed. Participants may help desegregate bus lines as Freedom Riders, or join a lunch counter sit-in.

The March 7 program continues a series that began in October 2013 with a screening of "The Last White Knight," and a conversation with the film's director and producer, Paul Saltzman, about his experiences during the civil rights movement. It is presented as a direct response to feedback HCC received from youths in the community—their thoughts and ideas on issues of race and diversity. HCC's goal during the 2013-14 program year is to understand the dynamics of our own and others' past experiences, so we can respond positively to the present.

Mayethel White is the president of the Heights Community Congress Board of Directors.

New CRS program facilitates purchase and rehab of older homes

Deanna Bremer Fisher

On Jan. 16, the Cleveland Restoration Society (CRS) announced the expansion of its Heritage HomeSM Program to assist potential homeowners in both purchasing and rehabbing existing homes. Previously, homeowners could receive a low-interest fixed-rate loan for renovations. Now, they can also receive a second mortgage to make the initial purchase more affordable.

Called the Heritage Home PurchaseSM Program, the new program combines free technical assistance from CRS with a variable-rate home purchase loan and fixed-rate home improvement loan from program partner First Federal of Lakewood. Cuyahoga County subsidizes the loan to ensure a low interest rate.

Kathleen Crowther, CRS president, made the announcement at a press conference held in front of a vacant home on Bluestone Road in South Euclid. One South Euclid, the city's community development corporation, recently purchased the home from the Cuyahoga Land Bank, and seeks to market it as a candidate for the purchase/rehab program.

The loans are made based on the after-rehab value of the property—up to 90 percent of the appraised value or 95 percent if the property is located in a low/moderate census tract or the borrower's income falls within a low/moderate range. The purchase loan is a variable rate. The rehab loan is a low fixed rate—currently 2 percent through KeyBank and 1.85 percent through First Federal Lakewood. No real estate tax or insurance reserves need to be posted at closing, so homebuyers can put all of their cash into upgrading

the property.

The program is available to buyers of homes that are 50 years old or older, in communities that participate in CRS's Heritage HomeSM Program. The home does not have to be owner-occupied, and it can be income-producing.

Cleveland Heights has participated since 2002, and University Heights, which participated from 2003-09, rejoined the program in 2013.

According to Mary Ogle, program specialist at CRS, Cleveland Heights is one of the most active participants in the program. In Cleveland Heights, CRS has facilitated 164 loans valued at more than \$5.5 million, conducted 244 personalized site visits and provided 647 instances of free technical assistance valued at \$12.4 million.

In University Heights, CRS has facilitated 12 loans valued at \$355,682, conducted 14 site visits and provided 97 instances of technical assistance valued at \$1.5 million.

"We see great potential for prospective homebuyers looking to relocate to the Heights and take advantage of real estate opportunities," said Ogle. "We also think the Heritage Home Purchase Program would be a great tool for existing Heights homeowners looking to upgrade or downsize their living situation in a community they love."

Ogle said that CRS can review a vacant or distressed home, identify the rehab potential and estimate the project costs. She said that CRS has worked with the cities of South Euclid and Lakewood to promote properties that each city brought to CRS's attention, and could partner with Cleveland Heights and



CRS President Kathleen Crowther announces the Heritage Home PurchaseSM Program in front of a house on Bluestone Road in South Euclid.

University Heights in the same way.

Both interior and exterior renovations are eligible, and CRS staff will provide unbiased and impartial advice about materials, contractors and the scope of work. CRS staff also will help homeowners work with contractors to ensure accurate estimates and monitor progress.

"Having access to these services before purchasing a home can help eliminate [the potential for] the homeowner feeling overwhelmed, and help think through the surprises home renovations sometimes bring," said Ogle.

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

WINE SPOT continued from page 1

The Bitcoin protocol was founded by an unknown person or group in 2009, who designed the system to be self-limiting and stabilizing. Only a total of 21 million BTC will ever exist, and coins will be created at a decreasing rate because the mining process increases in difficulty over time.

The mining system inputs approximately 25 additional BTC every 10 minutes. An individual Bitcoin currently trades at \$625.20 USD as of Feb. 17, and the market capitalization of all BTC in existence was around \$7.9 billion on that date. Coins can be traded in fractions down to eight decimal places, allowing for small-scale consumer transactions.

The flexibility and low fees of those BTC transactions convinced Fleischer to work with CoinNEO founder Nikhil

Chand, who helped the Wine Spot build BTC into its existing point-of-sale system as well as its upcoming online store, which will ship nationwide.

Chand is confident about the Wine Spot's new Bitcoin policy, and said that he thinks the store can serve as a model for other businesses interested in adopting BTC.

"The retailer does not assume the risk of Bitcoin's extreme market volatility," said Chand. "Bitcoins are automatically converted to U.S. dollars within one or two business days, guaranteed for the price paid at the time of transaction."

Alastair Pearson, a Cleveland Heights resident, is a student at Saint Ignatius, where he edits the school newspaper and literary magazine. He is an Observer contributor.

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SUPERINTENDENT continued from page 1

of three superintendent search firms the board interviewed in January. The board anticipated that the firm would provide a report of the “desired attributes and characteristics” on Feb. 26, and begin recruiting that same day.

At its Feb. 4 meeting, the board said it plans to develop interview questions on April 2. The first round of interviews, with the top five candidates, are planned for April 7 and 8. Then, April 15–17, the top three candidates will return for “more discussion,” and will each spend a day in the schools and the community. On April 19, the board plans to meet in executive session to select a superintendent.

“This will be a critical decision, and it’s extremely important that we get it right. That’s why we will conduct this superintendent search in a thorough, professional and diligent manner,” said Ron Register, BOE president. “Dr. McDaniel has been

a strong and steady leader for this district during a time of change, and her leadership is directly responsible for the historic passage of the bond issue, which will renovate and renew our high school and middle schools. That’s an impressive legacy to leave.”

On June 25, 2013, the BOE announced that then-superintendent Douglas Heuer was “stepping down,” and that Nylajeane McDaniel, the district’s director of human resources, would become the new superintendent for one year.

McDaniel had been set to retire as the district’s director of human resources in June 2013, but “interrupted those plans,” according to Register, “in order to help the district transition to new leadership.” Prior to joining the CH-UH district, McDaniel was superintendent of the Fairview Park School District.

McDaniel’s superintendent contract began on July 1, 2013 and ends July 31, 2014, at an annual salary rate of \$155,329. At the time Heuer stepped down as superintendent, his salary was \$152,062.

In the same June 2013 news release that announced the transition from one superintendent to another, the district announced a “new role” for Heuer, and said he would “lead an effort in the upcoming year to help the district implement the State of Ohio’s new standards-based evaluation system for teachers and principals.”

According to Angree Shaker, director of communications for the district, in June 2013 the board “contracted for consulting services with Heuer through Cuyahoga County Educations Services Center (CCESC) to address three critical state mandates: OPES (Ohio Principal Evaluation System), OTES (Ohio Teacher Evaluation System) and the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.” Heuer’s consulting contract with the district is for a period of one year, ending June 30. He is being paid \$121,956 for his consulting services through CCESC. The district does not plan to renew the consulting service when the contractual agreement ends.

Commenting on Heuer’s consulting work for the district, McDaniel

said, “Mr. Heuer has provided counsel . . . to assist us in implementing the State of Ohio’s new standards-based evaluation system for teachers and principals (OTES and OPES). The framework provides tools for assessing and monitoring leadership performance, including both formative assessment and summative evaluation. Mr. Heuer has provided consulting work to our assistant superintendent, Dr. Andrea Celico, has been available to our principals to assist them with their OTES examination preparation and has been providing leadership development for three of our principals.”

Heuer became superintendent of CH-UH schools in 2009, and received an initial three-year contract, effective Aug. 1, 2009.

In June 2011, the BOE voted unanimously to extend Heuer’s contract for an additional three years, effective August 2012 through July 31, 2015. Heuer’s June 2013 resignation came less than one year into that three-year contract. In April 2013, he was a finalist for the position of superintendent of Toledo Public Schools.

Kim Sergio Inglis is editor-in-chief of the Heights Observer. She lives in the Shaker Farm Historic District in Cleveland Heights.

Finding the needle in the haystack of senior support services



SENIOR SCENE

Judith Eugene

As our needs change due to age, illness or injury, it can be difficult to sort through the myriad support services available. Choosing one that best meets our needs is a daunting and sometimes confusing task. Fortunately, there are local resources to help us to make a well-informed decision.

The estate and life-care planning firm of Bartimole-Greene, located in Beachwood, is one such resource. The firm helps clients with legal and financial services. Kelsey Loushin, the on-staff care coordinator, assists clients with all aging-related needs. A well-respected veteran in the senior care field, she has an extensive inventory of local services, programs and products at her fingertips. “Our clients tell us what their goals are and then we do everything in our power to help them meet their goals,” Loushin said.

An elderly Cleveland Heights couple came to Bartimole-Greene for help when the husband’s health started to decline. Loushin connected them with a local company that helped them modify their home so they could continue to live there safely. Eventually, the husband needed nursing care and Loushin helped them apply for Medicaid benefits to preserve the couple’s assets and enable the wife to continue living at home. “We pride ourselves on being a holistic care firm,” said Loushin. “We address all of the aging needs someone might have.”

The Senior Comfort Guide is another useful resource for finding care options. Published by University Heights resident Max Compton, the guide is a comprehensive listing of resources for every stage of the aging process. It covers services such as insurance, home care, transportation, medical supplies and long-term care. The guide is user-friendly with easy-to-

read type. There are more than 9,000 copies available at local senior centers, hospitals and doctor’s offices.

Compton personally visits all of the businesses listed in his guide and reviews their services. “People can call me at no charge,” he said, “and I will match them to the services that best fit their needs.” When a Cleveland Heights family needed a medical alert system, they called Compton for advice. He referred them to a reputable company that provided them with a system, which enabled them to remain living safely at home. The guide is available online, a convenience for out-of-town family members.

A Place for Mom is a national company that provides free telephone and Internet referrals to helpful resources for seniors in the Heights and surrounding areas. “Our job is to make sure mom and dad are safe and comfortable first,” said Angelique Kaczmarek, community relations advisor for the Heights, “and then we find them the best resources for their particular situation.”

The service lists senior housing options and helps families compare the features of each, then arranges tours of the facilities for the family. To ensure it refers clients only to high quality companies, the company reviews the licenses and inspection reports of each facility on its list. A Place for Mom also offers helpful tools, guides and articles on subjects such as dementia, Medicare and Medicaid, and caregiver concerns.

Bartimole-Greene can be reached at 216-464-9999, Max Compton can be reached at 216-292-8485 or www.seniorcomfortguide.com, and A Place for Mom can be reached at 866-344-8005 or www.aplaceformom.com.

Judith Eugene is a native of Cleveland Heights who provides life-enrichment classes and activities for senior adults and those with physical and mental challenges through www.lovinglandsgroup.com. She can be reached at 216-408-5578 or judith@lovinglandsgroup.com.

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Heights Swim Cadets perform annual show

March 6–8

Amy Rosenbluth

The Cleveland Heights High School Swim Cadets, a synchronized swim team, will hold its 2014 season performances on March 6, 7 and 8. This year’s theme is “Swim Cadets Fall into a Dream.”

The 20-girl team is the school’s oldest extracurricular organization, and has been active for more than 80 years.

Laina Cohen, a Heights High graduate and one of the team’s coaches, said, “The athletics department has graciously taken us under [its] wing for the first time this year. I am so proud to say that, with the amazing amount of help they have given us, as well as all of the work and dedication these girls bring to the team, this year’s show is bound to be a must-see event!”

Kristin Hughes, Heights High’s director of athletics, commented, “I was really happy to support the Swim Cadets this season. They are a great group of students who work very hard. Coach Cohen has done a tremendous job in her first season with us. Upholding this tradition is truly something special for Tiger Nation.”

The shows begin at 7:30 p.m. each night at the Heights High pool, at 13263 Cedar Road in Cleveland



Heights Swim Cadets will kick off performances of their annual show on March 6.

Heights.

Parking is available at the rear of the building, and the pool entrance is at the northeast corner. Tickets

are available from cadet members and will also be sold at the door. Buy them early—these shows always sell out.

This year’s Swim Cadet officers are co-presidents Phoebe Lammert and Sarah Lentz, treasurer Emma Bleick, secretary Franny Krupkin and sergeant-at-arms Meredith Matia.

Laina Cohen and Madison Walker, the team’s coaches, are both former Heights High Swim Cadets.

2014 Heights Swim Cadets members are: seniors Emma Bartz, Emma Bleick, Amber Jackson, Franny Krupkin, Phoebe Lammert, Kasey Lanese and Meredith Matia; juniors Julianna Clark, Miranda Coble, Arden Dyer, Emily Lang, Sarah Lentz and Amelia Williams; sophomores Maya Hubbard, Grace Peppler, Allegra Steiger; and freshmen Soli Collins, Aubrey Fort, Jessa Lammert and Laurel Matia.

Amy Rosenbluth is the proud parent of a Heights Swim Cadet.

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Worship

Wednesday
6 p.m. - Agape Community Meal (students welcome!)

7 p.m. - Neo Monastic Evening Prayer
March 5, 12, 19 and 26

Sunday
10 a.m. - Community Eucharist
March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30

Compline & Evensong
5 p.m. March 2 at St. Paul's
5 p.m. March 9, 16, 23 and 30 at St. Alban's

Lenten Season
Ash Wednesday, March 5
7:30 p.m. - Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes


Fridays during Lent
7:00 p.m. - Stations of the Cross

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Heights Observer March 1, 2014

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Heights High hockey wins division, coach of the year

Mike Adams

The 2013-14 Cleveland Heights High School varsity hockey team won the White East Division of the Greater Cleveland High School Hockey League (GCHSHL) with a league record of 6-1-1, and an overall record of 12-9-3.

The team's season was highlighted by strong leadership from veteran players, with younger players contributing to the successful season, and providing a glimpse toward an exciting future. The small team, coached by Heights graduate Eddie Babcox, exceeded expectations by earning post-season play in the Baron Cup Tournament.

After the team's second-round defeat to eventual Baron Cup Champion Western Reserve Academy, Kristen Hughes, Cleveland Heights athletic director, said, "I am really proud of how well our ice hockey program represented Tiger Nation this season. They are a gritty bunch who play with a lot of heart. When you look at how young our roster is, you can only be excited about the future of



Heights High hockey team engages in a pregame ritual on its way to earning league and division honors.

Heights Hockey."

Senior defenseman Isaac Brown and freshman forward Stephen Lang were named to the GCHSHL/White All-League team. Freshman goalie Trent Swain was named to

the second team, and junior forward Dominic DiTirro earned third-team honors. Sophomore defenseman Bobby Edwards earned honorable mention. GCHSHL/White All-Division

first-team honors went to DiTirro, Lang, Edwards and Swain, with Brown earning second-team honors.

Babcock was named coach of the year for both the league and the division.

Mike Adams lives in Cleveland Heights and has long been involved with local youth hockey and baseball.



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Heights athletes raise pens for the ceremonial National Signing Day, where they commit to play a sport and study at a college or university.

Heights athletes are college-bound

Joy Henderson

On Feb. 5, 19 Heights High student-athletes signed national letters of intent to officially accept college athletic scholarships.

The February ceremony at Cleveland Heights High School has become an important tradition for many of the school's teams. The football team had a strong showing, with 16 seniors on the auditorium stage.

Jeff Rotsky, the team's coach, expects at least five students will play at Division III schools. "We have one of the largest numbers of athletes signing in the Cleveland area," said Rotsky.

Building a winning team is very important to the coach. "However, building men of character and sending our young men to college is really our top priority," Rotsky added.

There were three girls at the signing table. Basketball player A'Shanti Abshaw, who averaged 21 points per game and has scored more than 1,000 points in her high school career, will attend Cleveland State University. Diver Ellen Posch, currently ranked

second in the state, will attend Georgia Tech. Soccer player Kalah Saunders, who earned a record of 53 goals and 50 assists during her high school career, plans to attend Lake Erie College.

The 14 football players who committed to a college as of mid-February are: Marcus Bagley, St. Francis University (Pa.); Dorian Baker, University of Kentucky; D'Andre Barden, University of Charleston (W.Va.); Melo'N Barnes, Moorehead State (Ky.); Karvele Booker-Hunt, Walsh University (Ohio); Devon Cox, West Liberty University (W.Va.); Rayshawn Dickerson, University of Charleston (W.Va.); Derwin Martin, West Liberty University (W.Va.); Marquon Menefee, Alderson Broadus University (W.Va.); Taz Pauldo, Central Connecticut State University; Kory Pearson, St. Francis University (Penn.); Stewart Smith, University of Charleston (W.Va.); David Steele, Robert Morris University (Pa.); and DeAngelo Ware, Bowling Green State University.

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

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Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights



JANUARY 27, 2014

All board members were present.

Coventry residents address board

Coventry resident Sarah Wean presented a petition with 175 signatures protesting the board's decision to close Coventry Village Library on Fridays, transferring the hours to the University Heights Library to enable it to open Sunday afternoons. Other residents who spoke against the Friday closure were Colleen Burke, Carla Rautenberg, Michael McGraw, Patrick McGraw and Susan Eagan.

The speakers made the following points:

- The decision was made without prior announcement or opportunity for input from the community.
- The decision seems to have been made on the basis of numbers only, ignoring the facts that the Coventry Village Library serves the neighborhood with the lowest median income and [one that] has already lost its neighborhood school.
- Coventry Village Library is the smallest branch and has the worst parking.
- The library is an integral part of the neighborhood and is the center for services to the deaf.
- If the board feels that the library is underused, perhaps innovative programming is needed.
- The library hours are already inconvenient.
- Is the board working on a zero-sum theory in that if one library gains hours, another loses them?

University Heights resident Marcia Besuner Klausner sympathized with the Coventry supporters but asked the board not to take away the Sunday hours for University Heights, indicating how important they are, especially for the Orthodox community.

Suzanne DeGaetano of Mac's Backs and Angie Hetrick from the Coventry Village Special Improvement District (SID) offered to help the board in any way they can to restore Coventry's Friday hours.

Many of the speakers told of their own history with the Coventry Village Library, and a number thanked the board for its unpaid service.

James Posch, board president, stated that he had no intention of pitting one neighborhood against another, as he felt had happened with school closings. He assured the group that board members would discuss this issue and report back. Nancy Levin, library director, said that she has already set meetings with the Coventry Village SID and the Grant Deming [Forest Hill] Neighborhood [Association].

Dobama report

Nathan Motta, artistic director, presented the current state of the theater:

- A part-time development director has been hired.
- A new ticketing system has been installed.
- Average attendance is 84 per performance.
- Dobama is focusing on community collaborations, including Interplay Jewish Theatre, Verb Ballet and the Cleveland Food Bank.
- Katz Club and Stone Oven will be partners.

- Dobama has 42 percent more "likes" on Facebook and is active on Twitter.

James Roosa, board member, asked whether Motta had any comments on the newest occupant of the building, Heights Knowledge and Information Center (HKIC). Motta responded that HKIC drives more traffic past Dobama, which is welcome. He said there can be a shortage of parking but that doesn't always affect performances.

Jim Posch asked whether revenue is up. Motta replied that it was, especially in light of other benefits added to membership. Single-ticket revenue remains the same.

Nancy Levin indicated that the board will need a financial report. She [said she] appreciated the fact that library staff is invited to dress rehearsals. In answer to a question about the Marilyn Bianchi Kids' Playwriting Festival, Motta indicated that 300 plays were submitted in 2013.

December public service report

Among the highlights are:

- New library card application forms, which clarify the policy regarding library card theft, have been printed and distributed to branches.
- Poet laureate Kathleen Cerveney organized a reading of Dylan Thomas's *A Child's Christmas in Wales* as part of the Coventry Village Winter Festival.
- Coventry Village Library's Winter Storytime was well attended, and Meredith Prisett, youth services associate, played violin.
- Constance Dickerson, Noble Neighborhood Library manager, served as a reader for the Maltz Museum's Stop the Hate essay contest.
- At Noble Neighborhood Library, Mary Looby started a new preschool series, Little Learners, focusing on STEM literacy and engaging children in simple experiments.
- Noble Neighborhood Library staff chose to make a holiday donation to the Free Clinic of Greater Cleveland.
- *Public Libraries* magazine has accepted Sam Lapides's piece, "Pedal Power: How the Heights Library Book Bike Got Rolling."
- Mari Keating of Food Not Lawns, Cleveland has been working with Aurora Martinez, manager, to improve the landscaping at the University Heights Library. A dwarf apple tree, donated to the library by a colleague of Keating, was planted in the front yard.

New website live

Sheryl Banks, marketing and community relations manager, reported that total Web visits and visitors for 2013 were higher than for both 2012 and 2011, indicating that website use will continue to grow. The new website is now live for customers.

LWV Observer: Anne S. McFarland.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 6.

New computers boost literacy

Sheryl Banks

"We wanted to provide a computer just for kids that would help build skills in literacy, math and science," said Brian Hare, youth services manager at the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library. "These computers allow children to focus exclusively on these skills because they have no Web access."

Hare is talking about the new Early Literacy Stations at the Lee Road, Coventry Village and University Heights libraries. Early Literacy Stations (ESLs) are computers designed for children ages 2 through 8 that feature preloaded educational games and resources, instead of Internet access. The keyboard is colorful, the mouse is child-sized, and the interface is easy to navigate, depending as much on images—smiling faces and arrows—as words, so children at various literacy levels can use them easily.

The ESLs are designed to support the Public Library Association's national Every Child Ready to Read initiative, which Heights Libraries has been following since 2004. Every Child Ready to Read empowers public libraries to assume an essential role in supporting early literacy with curriculum, guidelines and materials that focus on the importance of early literacy activities for children's later success in learning.

Heights Libraries initially obtained two ESLs when the Noble Neighborhood Library was renovated in 2010, as part of its new literacy-based playroom. Staff tracked the usage of the computers and, after two years, recommended the purchase of additional stations, two for Lee Road and one each for the University Heights and Coventry Village libraries.

"Ours are continually in use," said Constance Dickerson, Noble Neighborhood Library manager. "We are always happy when children choose to use them over the Internet PCs. This happens quite a bit!"

The stations feature such programs as Homework Help, which gives school-age kids a wide variety of learning resources, including guides for writing book reports and science reports; and online reference sources such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, a dictionary and a world atlas. For the younger set, there are multiple games that teach numbers and letters, and read aloud to children while they follow the words on the screen.

The stations also offer a service to parents and other caregivers—they give kids a fun, educational way to stay busy while mom and dad get some work done nearby.

Sheryl Banks is the marketing and community relations manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

What's going on at your library?

Got cabin fever? Stop by the library, where we are getting ready for spring. At the Lee Road Library, the Home Grown Food series will explore composting, food preservation, garden planning by plant type, and backyard chicken keeping.

Coventry Village Library

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400
Friday, March 21, 4 p.m.

Bubble Gum Fun. Have fun with bubble gum. Learn about this sticky treat, sample various flavors, and make a bubble-gum craft. For school-age children. Registration begins March 7 at www.heightslibrary.org.

Lee Road Library

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600
Monday, March 10, 7 p.m.

Home Grown Food: Home Food Preservation. Linnette Goard, field specialist for food safety with The Ohio State University Extension, will present a workshop on home canning and food preservation. The program will address food safety principles, water-bath and pressure canning,

as well as freezing fruits and vegetables. Register at www.heightslibrary.org.

Noble Neighborhood Library

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665
Monday-Friday, March 10-14, 3:30 p.m.
Teen Tech Week: DIY @ Your Library. Drop in anytime during the week for online gaming tournaments, crafts, a movie and prizes.

University Heights Library

13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700
Thursday, March 27, 6:30 p.m.
Family Flash Mob. Parents, grandparents, children and friends of the library are all welcome to participate in our University Heights Memorial Day Parade flash mob on May 26. We will be promoting our Rock Out and Read (ROAR) summer reading program. Learn the choreography in our monthly lessons, held at the UH Library. All participants must attend two rehearsals in order to participate. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Special needs participants are welcome. Register at www.heightslibrary.org.

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CH-UH students are finalists in in Maltz Museum essay contest

Jewel Moulthrop

More than 2,500 students in grades 6–10, from throughout Northeast Ohio, entered the sixth annual Stop the Hate: Youth Speak Out essay contest created by the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage. The contest encourages middle- and high-school students to focus attention on the corrosive effects of discrimination and intolerance while developing critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills.

Three finalists from each lower-grade level have been chosen and are eligible for cash prizes to be awarded at a ceremony on Thursday, March 13 at Severance Hall.

Among these finalists are four students from the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. They are Jordan Major, 8th-grader at Roxboro Middle School; Justin Fitzger-

ald, 9th-grader at Heights High; and Taylor Jackson and Madeleine Shutt, 10th-graders at Heights High.

This year, students in grades 6–12 were asked to write an essay, in 500 words or less, about one of the following themes: witnessing an act of discrimination or hate toward yourself or someone else; if you responded, why did you decide to stand up and how can you encourage your peers to do the same; if you didn't respond, why not and what changes might you make to your behavior next time.

More than 200 community volunteers evaluated the student submissions. Jill Rembrandt, Maltz Museum director of education and public programs, said, "We are so pleased to be a part of encouraging dialogue about ways to put an end to hate and discrimination in our schools and communities.

This year the entries for the essay contest doubled. [Students] who entered should feel proud of their effort."

Upper-grade students also participated in the contest. Randall Gregory, a 12th-grader at Beaumont School, is a finalist.

The junior or senior with the winning essay will receive a \$40,000 Grand Scholarship Prize. First and second runners-up will receive a \$15,000 and \$10,000 scholarship, respectively; and seven honorable mentions will each receive a \$500 cash prize. In addition to student scholarships, three schools will be eligible to win \$10,000 for their schools, to be used specifically toward anti-bias education.

The essay contest is a yearly initiative that supports the Maltz Museum's mission to build bridges of appreciation, tolerance and understanding of persons of all religions, races, cultures and ethnic backgrounds. It reflects Jewish values of responsible citizenship and respect for all humanity by challenging young people to consider the consequences of intolerance and the role of personal responsibility in affecting change. This year's contest is sponsored by Cleveland Clinic, Dealer Tire, KeyBank and the Nordson Company Foundation.

Jewel Moulthrop is a Cleveland Heights resident and member of the Heights Observer's Editorial Advisory Committee.

Teens support library programs and director

Julia Murphy

Yes, that is Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director, duct-taped to a wall. This was the work of the Teen Advisory Board (TAB), which comprises a group of students who design and advocate for events that they would like to see at the library. They also raise funds to enable teen programming to continue and improve.

"When the teens are the ones making the decisions, there is a lot more momentum from them to make these programs happen, whether it is the Teen Poetry Slam, Teen Movie Zone or the Teen Spot," said Jessica Robinson, youth services librarian.

Last year, TAB held a bake sale to fund the Teen Tech Week program. The group has been the spark for other programs, from science-related experiments to the nerd-fighter meet-up and, most recently, the Middle Earth walk-off event. The group also helped promote the programs to other teens and provide the manpower and volunteer time to set up for these events.

A recent event that benefitted from TAB's involvement was the 15th Annual Poetry Slam. Sixteen teenage poets performed for an audience of more than 60. While community partners, such as Lake Erie Ink and Heights High, contributed greatly to the event's success, said Robinson, "It wouldn't exist without the efforts of the Teen Advisory Board."

So why did Levin allow herself to be duct-taped to the wall? It was a fundraiser put on by TAB on Friday,



Teens tape Nancy Levin to the wall to raise funds for teen programming.

Jan. 10. Selling strips of duct tape for \$2 each, the teens made more than \$100 and successfully anchored Levin to the wall without any other support.

TAB occupies a special place in Levin's heart. She explained, "Teen advisory boards are a staple in public libraries. They are created to harness the energy of our young adults and to help them become engaged in the creation of exciting and productive programming for their age group. In addition, it gives them leadership opportunities where they can hone skills used later in the workplace or in college."

Teens interested in joining the Teen Advisory Board can call 216-932-3600 or talk to any Heights Libraries staff member.

Julia Murphy is the marketing assistant for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

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Ruffing Montessori School's partnership with Geauga Family Farms

Kelly O'Melia

Ruffing Montessori middle school students have become involved in the local food movement through Ruffing's curriculum, which encourages students to answer the question: Where does our food come from?

Ruffing students are encouraged to engage with the community through running their own micro-economy. Students have started seeds for local restaurants, helped create urban gardens, and sold handcrafted goods, such as artisan soaps and jewelry.

In 2012, the students began a partnership with Geauga Family Farms (GFF) and the Ruffing campus became a pick-up site for the farm's community supported agriculture program (CSA).

A CSA supports the financial viability of small family farms. Before the growing season begins, members of the public purchase shares of the season's harvest directly from the farmers. During the season, a share of the harvest is delivered each week to designated pick-up sites.

Each week, members of the GFF CSA are greeted at Ruffing by seventh-

and eighth-grade students, along with parents and teachers. The students unload trucks from the farm, which contain fresh produce, bread, free-range eggs and homemade jams. Students arrange the weekly bounty on tables, and facilitate the pick-up process.

"Working with the CSA and seeing the boxes of fresh veggies every week gives me the sensation of being on a farm," said seventh-grader Fabio Tessiore.

Ruffing's students learn through participation. Each week, they discuss what produce is in season, and learn about recipes and food preparation techniques.

"The CSA work and bulk setup is good because our micro-economy earns money as a result, while our community enjoys fruits and vegetables from the farm," said Lia Coyle, an eighth-grader.

Seventh-grader Gavin Gidlow explained why this is important: "Buying food from the CSA is better because it also helps the local economy. We all benefit."

Michelle Bandy-Zalatoris, GFF's representative, lives a few blocks from the school, and enjoys stopping by on

Thursdays during the season, to help with unloading and setup. "We love this partnership with Ruffing Montessori School. It's great to see the students and their families get involved, and so rewarding to know that everyone is gaining a deeper understanding of our local food economy. It's the kind of community experience that adds great richness to the simple act of providing nourishment to our families," she said.

Applications for a share in the GFF summer CSA season are available

online at www.geaugafamilyfarms.org, and are due by May 15. GFF's 20-week summer season begins in June and ends in October, with shares delivered weekly to pick-up sites, including Ruffing Montessori (Thursdays) and St. Paul's Episcopal Church (Saturdays) in Cleveland Heights. Items in the share will vary as the season progresses.

Kelly O'Melia is a teacher at Ruffing Montessori School in Cleveland Heights and a mother of three.

CH-UH middle school students in regional Power of the Pen competition



CH-UH middle school Power of the Pen participants.

Camilla Welsch

Monticello Middle School hosted the regional Power of the Pen Competition on Dec. 14. More than 200 seventh- and eighth-grade writers from Greater Cleveland participated in this district-level creative writing competition. The competition consisted of three rounds of writings, and students were given a "prompt" and 40 minutes to develop a creative story. Students who qualified for the regional tournament will write again on Saturday, March 15 at St. Joseph's Academy.

Teams from Roxboro and Wiley middle schools also participated in the competition.

"Hard work paid off, as teams were very successful at their first competition," said Caitlin Gerber, Roxboro Middle School teacher and co-coach. Teacher Wendy Ward-Price is also a Power of the Pen co-coach at Roxboro.

"Every competitor put their hard-earned skills to use at the competition. They did a wonderful job and had fun," said Ashley Newman, Wiley Middle School teacher and coach.

"This was a great opportunity for CH-UH to showcase our most talented and creative writers," said Deborah Frost, Monticello Middle School teacher and coach. Teacher Marian Kopp is also a coach at Monticello.

Results for individual students and teams are:

- Monticello Middle School: Suvedini Ainkaran, seventh grade, sixth place.
- Roxboro Middle School: Julia Lynn, seventh grade, second place; Sophie Gilson, eighth grade, second place overall; Hannah Gilson, eighth grade, ninth place overall; and eighth-grade team, fourth place.

The regional qualifiers from the three middle schools, who will move on to the March 15 competition, are:

- Monticello Middle School: Suvedini Ainkaran, seventh grade; Emily Cassidy, seventh grade; Chantee McMillan, seventh grade; Miranda Wyse, seventh grade; Maria Tarnay, seventh grade; and Peyton Marshall, eighth grade.
- Roxboro Middle School: Sophie Gilson, eighth grade; Hannah Gilson, eighth grade; Corinne Nicol, eighth grade; Melanie Graham, eighth grade; Gabby Taylor, seventh grade; Glennis Covault, seventh grade; Julia Lynn, seventh grade; and Rebecca Gordon, seventh grade.
- Wiley Middle School: Alexa Solomon, seventh grade; and Angelique Hale, eighth grade.

Camilla Welsch is the communications and community engagement department assistant for the CH-UH City School District.



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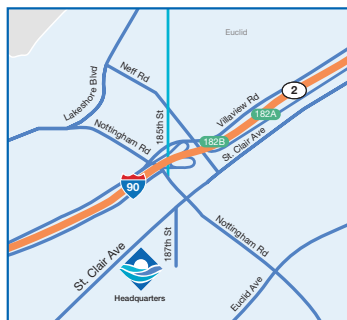
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Heights High musicians excel in OMEA competition

Florence D'Emilia

Cleveland Heights High School's Instrumental Music Department (IMD) excelled at the annual OMEA Solo and Ensembles Contest.

The adjudicated event, sponsored by the Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA), took place on Jan. 18 at Heights High.

Four Heights High chamber ensembles and 12 soloists received the contest's highest possible rating, which is reserved for outstanding performances with very few technical errors, exemplifying a truly musical experience.

Participating ensembles were: Baker's Dozen with Ann Zicari (trumpet), Samantha Espenschied (trumpet), Cody Radivoyevitch (horn), Gretchen Drushel (trombone), Oleaser Johnson (tuba); Five Guys, Valves and Slides with William van den Bogert (trumpet), Benjamin Gillooly (trumpet), Ian Bartz (French horn), Abraham Mendes (trombone), David Pecoraro (tuba); Rock 'n Viol', a viola duo with Mariah Mendes and Christina Wynne; T.A.G. with Gabriella Russo (flute), Alyssa Underwood (oboe), Tanesha Hammond (bassoon); and The Sax Pistols, a saxophone quartet with sophomores Genaro Aiken, Noah Gonzalez, GianFrancesco Quartell and Ryan Wilson.

Soloists prepared music for instruments as diverse as harp and snare drum, with several soloists performing with piano accompaniment.

In addition to the 12 superior ratings, the remaining three soloists received excellent ratings, the second highest possible.

The following students competed as soloists: Anastasia Cyr (English horn), Ilona Eke (viola), Devin Gamble (flute), Kristin Gustafson (flute), Aviva Klein (bassoon), Isabel McGaugh (flute), Brendan Mullen (snare drum), GianFrancesco Quartell (alto saxophone), Brittany Rabb (flute), Halling Roosa (cello), James Smith (French horn), Juliana Soreo (flute), Celia van den Bogert (prepared two solos, one for harp and one for flute), William van den Bogert (trumpet) and Ann Zicari (trumpet).

The Chamber Ensemble program at Heights High is a yearlong elective class under the direction of Dan Heim, instrumental music director.

Students form ensembles that are coached by professional musicians on a weekly basis, outside of regular school hours.

In addition to expanding the students' repertoires, the ensembles allow participants to gain firsthand experience with many of the tasks professional musicians perform. For example, groups assign one of the students to serve as music librarian, another takes responsibility for scheduling rehearsals, and another arranges recital performances in the community.

Florence D'Emilia is a Cleveland Heights resident and parent of a Heights High student.



Baker's Dozen with Ann Zicari (trumpet), Samantha Espenschied (trumpet), Cody Radivoyevitch (horn), Gretchen Drushel (trombone) and Oleaser Johnson (tuba).



High Five Guys, Valves and Slides with William van den Bogert (trumpet), Benjamin Gillooly (trumpet), Ian Bartz (French horn), Abraham Mendes (trombone) and David Pecoraro (tuba).

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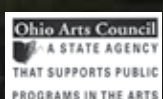
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CH-UH Board of Education Meeting highlights



JANUARY 13, 2014

All board members were present.

Superintendent search firms

The board interviewed the following superintendent search firms:

- Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates
- Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA)
- Finding Leaders

Each firm gave a presentation and then answered questions from board members. The board will consult with other school boards that have used these firms. A decision will be made on Jan. 21 when the board will meet after the superintendent's annual State of the Schools address.

LWV Observer: Adele Cohn.

JANUARY 14, 2014

All board members were present.

Policy adjustments

Joseph Micheller, director of curriculum and instruction, led board members through a first reading of policy adjustments necessary to keep district policies consistent and up-to-date with state and federal policy changes. Adjustments are prepared for twice-yearly presentations to the board by NEOLA, a manager of documents for school districts.

Changes included an employee anti-harassment policy; student ability to enroll in post-secondary options based on individual institutions' enrollment requirements, rather than a uniform state standard; state adjustments to the Third Grade Reading Guarantee; additional regulations relative to concussions; more specific guidelines on food allergens; alignment of bullying policy with the anti-harassment policy; clarification of restrictions on hiring relatives of board or staff members; substitution of "skilled" for "proficient" in teacher evaluations; a school calendar based on hours rather than days; and prenotification of families regarding service animals in classrooms.

Board members discussed these items and the policy regarding the disposition of school property, which states that a district selling a building must give first refusal rights to a charter school, start-up school, or college-prep boarding school within its boundaries. If such a school offers fair market value, the district must accept the offer, and proceeds may only be used for maintenance, capital improvements, or technological improvements. Specifics of this policy will be investigated. Also, the district's food service, Chartwell, will be scrutinized to determine if it has eliminated trans fats for any of the districts it serves.

LWV Observer: Nancy Dietrich.

FEBRUARY 4, 2014

All board members were present.

Superintendent search

Ted Blaesing of Hazard, Young, Atta & Associates, consultants for the superintendent search, outlined plans for the coming months. He will meet with focal groups on Feb. 17 and with staff on Feb. 18 to hear about the qualities they want

in a superintendent. The Feb. 17 meeting will be open to the public. For people who cannot attend, a public survey will be posted from Feb. 6 to 19 on the district's website. The board will meet on Feb. 26 to develop a list of qualities and again on April 2 to develop interview questions. On April 7 and 8, the first round of interviews will be conducted. From April 15 to 17, the top three candidates will each spend a day in the schools and the community. On April 19, the board will meet in executive session to select a superintendent.

Awards and recognitions

Superintendent McDaniel recognized district elementary, middle, and high school students for their award-winning essays and poetry in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. Ron Register, board president, acknowledged the Heights High hockey team for a successful season. He announced that the Heights High Barbershoppers came in second overall in [inter]national competition. He also reported that the district has become an example to other districts for the various opportunities offered to students through the Career and Technical Education program under the leadership of Jay Hobbs.

New high school math courses

The board approved new high school course recommendations for the 2014-15 school year, which will include an additional calculus course that is not AP, and a rearrangement of high level math courses that will make it more convenient for students to take a fourth year of math.

Race to the Top

In a Race to the Top update, Joe Micheller reported that the district has been invited to be a co-presenter at the Ohio Department of Education conference in March.

Coventry school

The board authorized a nonbinding proposal to lease a portion of Coventry School to FutureHeights and Reaching Heights for use as office and meeting space. Steve Shergalis noted that the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission must also give its approval.

Facilities master plan

The board authorized an Owner's Representation Services Agreement with Project Management Consultants (PMC) LLC. [PMC] will monitor the implementation of the facilities master plan on behalf of the district. Hiring an independent owner's representative for complex projects is a growing trend. PMC will also act as a resource to the volunteer Facilities Accountability Committee and be present at all of its meetings.

LWV Observers: Adele Cohn and Nancy Dietrich.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 6.

March 5 is wrap-up session for communitywide book discussion

Deanna Bremer Fisher

This winter, more than 115 people participated in three evening conversations about the future of public education and education reform. The focus of the communitywide discussions was the book *Reign of Error*, written by Diane Ravitch, an education historian who served as assistant secretary of education under President George H. W. Bush.

A follow-up session to discuss action steps will be held from 7-9 p.m. on Wednesday, March 5, at the Heights High Social Room.

Ravitch, whose own views have changed significantly as she has observed the impact of widespread high-stakes standardized testing on public schools, neighborhoods, cities, teachers and children, argues in her book that the privatization approach that educational reformers advocate threatens the future existence of public schools in the United States.

Discussion participants explored such topics as standardized testing, the achievement gap, the meaning of international test comparisons, high school

graduation rates, value-added ratings for teachers, and charter schools. In the last session, participants brainstormed actions they could take, individually and collectively. At the March 5 session, participants will discuss possible next steps for parents, teachers, community members, school administrators and elected officials. It is not necessary to have read the book or to have attended past discussion sessions to attend.

Several Heights-based organizations hosted the discussions, including Reaching Heights, FutureHeights, Heights Community Congress, the CH-UH Public Library, the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, the CH-UH City School District, the CH-UH PTA Council and Link Educational Consulting.

Free child care is available, by reservation (call 216-321-0020), to those attending the March 5 session. For more information, visit <http://cctu.ob.aft.org/news>.

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

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'Perspectives in Nature' at St. Paul's

Mary Krogness

The South Wing Gallery of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. in Cleveland Heights, announces its spring show—"Awe and Abstract: Perspectives in Nature."

The opening reception is scheduled for Friday, March 7, from 5-7 p.m. Participating artists David Bergholz (photographs), Judith Brandon (mixed media on paper), Bonnie J. Gordon (porcelain) and Nijole Palubinskas (monotypes) will be on hand to greet visitors and talk about their work. The show runs until May 29.

With a pocket-size Sony RX-100, David Bergholz sets out in search of images that pique his curiosity and please his keen eye, wherever he might be. "Photography has a great capacity to move me," said this self-taught photographer who immerses himself in influential visual experiences.

Bergholz, whose interest is in the architecture of objects, will exhibit botanical collages and abstracts. Characteristic of his mostly representational work is clarity of color, order and design. Polaroid prints of an amaryllis, for example, are imaginatively arranged, inviting the viewer to respond again and again. Bergholz's art is in the collections of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation and University Hospitals.

"Paper and I have a great relationship—it knows more about me than most people!" said Judith Brandon, a mixed-media artist who works exclusively on paper. Brandon's "Night Wave with Southern Cross," a towering avalanche of water in deep purple, is dramatic in size and power. It rises defiantly to declare the turbulence of uncontrolled forces in nature, while speaking of the human condition.

Water—oceans, rivers, clouds, tornados—dominates Brandon's tempestuous work, which is bound to evoke a response from viewers. A graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Art, she regularly shows at the Kenneth Paul Lesko Gallery and had a solo exhibition there.

Bonnie J. Gordon, who creates works in porcelain, said it was her father, a painter, who inspired her when he said, "Women can do anything!" Gordon took her father's liberating words to heart.

"In Full Bloom," a porcelain vessel, exudes energy through vibrant colors, petals and leaves, while representing



Bloom, porcelain by Bonnie Gordon.

the flowering and coming of age of women. In contrast, "Medusa," two years in the making, inspired Gordon to explore the dark side. She has exhibited her work at the Cleveland Clinic and the Artists' Archives of the Western Reserve.

Printmaker Nijole Palubinskas said, "If I were to start my life again, I would be an artist." Born in Lithuania, this fourth-generation artist will exhibit monotypes, where soft edges and muted colors grace a print of crashing waves, and a lush landscape of pillow-like hills enhances the viewer's ability to see nature freshly.

Palubinskas describes her art as abstract-realism. She is emphatic about creating original images from her imagi-



Amaryllis Collage (detail), photograph by David Bergholz.

nation rather than relying on sketches. A graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Art, her work has been shown in the Lithuanian National Museum in Vilnas and the Palanga Museum. Her art also hangs in private collections in Europe and the United States.

Kathleen McKenna, a portrait artist and former South Wing Gallery exhibitor, said, "The South Wing Gallery provides a worthwhile experience for artists and viewers. The gallery is a handsome exhibition space, and installations and

publicity are handled in a professional manner. I especially appreciated the perceptive observations made by guests—St. Paul's parishioners and art lovers from outside the church—at the well-attended opening reception."

The gallery is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and weekends from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, visit www.stpauls-church.org.

Mary Krogness is a member of St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

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Jazz Vespers at St. Paul's features Paul Ferguson and friends



Paul Ferguson and friends at St. Paul's Jazz Vespers in 2012.

Kim Fry

St. Paul's Episcopal Church will hold a Jazz Vespers service on Sunday, March 2 at 5 p.m. The service will include prayers, reflection, and music led by Paul Ferguson. He will be accompanied by a jazz combo, augmented by violin and French horn, and soprano Sandy Simon.

Ferguson is director of jazz studies at Case Western Reserve University and associate artistic director of the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra. He also enjoys a varied career as a performer. He can be found in the pit orchestra for the national touring production of "Porgy and Bess" when it appears in Cleveland, performing Christmas concerts with the Cleveland Orchestra, and making guest appearances in other musical events around town.

The vespers service will be a fitting conclusion to a weekend of recording his next CD, called "Evensong," available in the fall.

The service will follow the format of the vespers worship liturgy, but will feature special jazz arrangements in an instrumental prelude, new responsive singing, and old favorites, such as

"Walk Forth," "All Who Hunger, Let Us Gather" and "When the Saints Go Marching In."

The combo will feature Ferguson on trombone, Jack Schantz on trumpet, Mark Lopeman on saxophone, Bill Hoyt on French horn, Hanne Berit Hahnemann on violin, Russell Schmidt on piano, Dave Morgan on bass and Jim Rupp on drums.

A Mardi Gras celebration in Tucker Hall will follow the jazz vespers service.

This event is part of a series of renovation celebrations at St. Paul's, hailing the conclusion of a multi-year capital building project that included the restoration of Tucker Hall, the renovation of the church's nave, the remodeling of its dining room and kitchen, and the creation of a new north entrance.

Jazz Vespers is made possible by a grant from The ACT II Shop, a resale shop located on the church's lower level, and is free and open to the public. The church is located at 2747 Fairmount Blvd., at the intersection of Coventry Road, in Cleveland Heights. For more information, call 216-932-5815.

Kim Fry is the director of communications at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

World Beats Drum Festival at Canterbury School

Michelle Bandy-Zalatoris

March in Northeast Ohio? Many complain that this is their least favorite month, but Canterbury Elementary School will be hosting an event to shake off the winter blahs and welcome spring with a bang.

The World Beats Drum Festival will bring music, art and culture to the Canterbury stage, and is open to the community. Proceeds will support future arts programs at the school.

The school has hosted a monthly community concert series for the past year. Organizers wanted to create an interactive event that would appeal to families. Co-organizer Gina Gillombardo spoke to a number of percussion groups in developing the series, and thought it would be fun to bring several groups together for one event.

Creating a musical work tour fit with Canterbury's goals as an International Baccalaureate candidate school and a Fine Arts Pathway school, Gil-

lombardo said.

Adam Kukuk of Deep Grooves, and also a Canterbury parent, helped plan and organize the event. "He brings experience in leading interactive drum activities for all ages, and we're thrilled to have him involved," Gillombardo said.

The event is intended to be hands-on and will include a drum-building workshop, a percussion instrument 'petting zoo' and a drum circle during the first part of the evening. Performances by a range of percussion groups will follow, as will a final jam session, to include musicians and audience members.

The World Beats Drum Festival will be held at Canterbury Elementary School, on March 28, 6-8:30 p.m. Tickets, \$5 for adults and \$3 for children, will be sold at the door. Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

Michelle Bandy-Zalatoris, a Cleveland Heights resident, is a city planner and local food advocate. She is a co-organizer of the World Drum Beats Festival.



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'Alternate Routes to an Outer Space' at Heights Arts

Andrea Joki

A new exhibition, *Alternate Routes to an Outer Space*, opens at Heights Arts, 2175 Lee Road, on Friday, March 7 at 6 p.m. Featuring new works by regional artists Christi Birchfield, Terry Clark, April Friges and Benjamin Hauser, the show reveals the artists' shared intrigue in exploiting chance through both inventive and traditional processes.

Representing photography, print-making and painting, the selected works reflect meditative engagements with inner worlds, while also providing visual links to our physical world through references to natural phenomena.

Christi Birchfield's large-format monoprints read as mirrored images or palindromes. To make them, she places inked plant materials or pools of water-color between sheets of paper, runs the "sandwich" through a printing press, then unfolds the paper to discover the result.

April Friges and Benjamin Hauser experiment with the medium of photography. Friges presents two works made during a recent artist residency at Vermont Studio Center: large-scale photograms that she manipulated through scrunching and folding, thus turning them into more-sculptural objects. Hauser experiments by painting directly on photography paper with film developing solutions, creating abstract images that evoke



An Alchemist's Light #1, c-print by Benjamin Hauser.

deep space.

Abstract paintings by local artist Terry Clark round out the exhibition. Interested in optical phenomena, Clark presents new works that balance assertive bands of prism-like colors with atmospheric washes and drips.

Greg Donley, a member of the Heights Arts gallery committee, said, "In making chance elements a key aspect of their work, these artists embrace the unpredictable. Their thrill of discovery is contagious."

Alternate Routes to an Outer Space is on view at Heights Arts through April 19.

For more information, visit www.heightsarts.org or call 216-371-3457.

Andrea Joki is an artist and staff member of Heights Arts.

Dobama presents 'Made in America' by Joel Hammer

Jewel Moulthrop

What happens when Esther, a savvy sales rep, and Barry, a buyer for a manufacturing company, finally meet to seal the deal after months of negotiating over the phone? Meeting in a hotel bar, they begin a cat-and-mouse game that falls into dangerous territory. But all may not be what it seems.

To find out more, check out the world premiere of "Made in America," this season's fifth mainstage production at Dobama Theatre. Written by Joel Hammer, the play runs from March 7 through April 6, and is directed by Scott Miller.

Hammer has worked as both an actor and director for Dobama Theatre for the past 25 years. As the theater's artistic director from 2009 to 2013, he helped transition the theater from its space on Coventry Road to its current home on Lee Road. He participated in the fundraising, design and development of Dobama's new home and current management structure.

Joel Hammer has a B.F.A. from The Ohio State University. He served his theater apprenticeship at Actors Theatre of Louisville. After a brief stay at the Arkansas Repertory Theatre, he moved home to Cleveland where he worked at Cleveland Play House under the leadership of Richard Oberlin. Hammer made his Dobama directorial debut with John Patrick Shanley's "Savage in Limbo." As a writer,

Hammer's play "The King of Carpets" was produced by The Jewish Repertory Theatre of New York and his play "Every Other Jump" was produced at Dobama.

Scott Miller is the director of the Cleveland School of the Arts theater program. Before coming to Cleveland, he served as the artistic director of the Children's Theater of Charlotte. He is also the founding artistic director of the Orange Summer Shakespeare Festival, a theater program for urban teenagers in New Jersey. Most recently, Miller directed "Sons of the Prophet," "Dead Man's Cell Phone" and "The Seafarer" for Dobama.

Miller has worked as an actor appearing in Off-Broadway and regional theater productions, and locally in "The Goat or Who is Sylvia," "I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me by a Young Lady from Rwanda" and "God of Carnage," among others.

Performances are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings and Sunday afternoons. For a complete schedule, ticket prices and reservations, call the Dobama Theatre box office at 216-932-3396. Ask about reduced prices for RUSH tickets (as available, no earlier than five minutes before curtain), the preview performance on March 6, and the "pay-as-you-can" performance on March 9.

Jewel Moulthrop is a Cleveland Heights resident and member of the Heights Observer's Editorial Advisory Committee.

"There was no question—Judson was it!"

—Don and Dottie Kuhn, Judson Park residents since 2012



University Circle played a pivotal role in Don and Dottie Kuhn's lives together.

The couple, now residents of Judson Park, met in 1974 while attending an Audubon Society meeting at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

"The rest is history—we've been together ever since," says Dottie.

With no children, they felt it essential to have a plan in place as they grew older. "We wanted to make decisions under our own power," says Don.

Deciding where they'd spend their later years was easy.

"There was no question—Judson was it," says Don. "We continue to enjoy the things we've always loved to do," adds Dottie. "We're practically in the same Cleveland Heights neighborhood where we lived before."

"The transition was seamless," continues Don. "Judson was home from day one!"

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March choral concerts at Fairmount Presbyterian

Robert Moncrief

Fairmount Presbyterian Church will feature its own choir and the visiting Choir of The College of William and Mary in two Sunday concerts during March. Both concerts are free to the public.

The 40-voice Fairmount Choir will be joined by orchestra to present the Mass in C and the “Choral Fantasy” by Ludwig van Beethoven on Sunday, March 9, at 4 p.m.

The “Choral Fantasy” will feature Russian-born pianist Halida Dinova in the virtuoso keyboard part. Vocal soloists are Lisa Litteral, Nicole Batson Bush, Alicia Hrubey, Lyndsay Moy, Baichuan Han, Steven Weems, Peter



Pianist Halida Dinova

Bush and John Watson.

The Mass in C was commissioned by Prince Nikolaus Esterhazy II in 1807, in honor of his wife, and premiered in the court chapel in Eisenstadt in September 1807. The “Choral Fantasy” was first performed in Vienna in December 1808 at a concert that included the first performance of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, the Fourth Piano Concerto, an aria, part of the Mass in C and a solo fantasia improvised by Beethoven.

The “Choral Fantasy” ended the concert, with Beethoven at the piano. The work revealed Beethoven’s power as both composer and virtuoso pianist, foreshadowed his great Ninth Symphony.

The 66-voice Choir of The College of William and Mary, from Williams-

burg, Va., will sing at Fairmount on Sunday, March 16, at 7:30 p.m.

The featured works will be R. Nathaniel Dett’s oratorio “Chariot Jubilee” for tenor soloist, choir and organ (based on the African-American spiritual “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”) and Alexander Kastalsky’s Orthodox Requiem titled “Eternal Memory to the Heroes: Selected Hymns from the Memorial Service,” composed in 1916 in memory of the fallen Allied troops in World War I.

The choir, directed by Dr. James

Armstrong, will also preview a work by Estonian composer Piret Raps-Laul, commissioned especially for the upcoming international tour of the choir and Botetourt Chamber Singers to the Baltic States and Russia in May.

The church is located at 2757 Fairmount Blvd. in Cleveland Heights. For information, go to www.fairmountchurch.org or call 216-321-5800.

Robert Moncrief has been minister of music at Fairmount Presbyterian Church since 2001. He will conduct the March 9 concert.

Western Reserve Chorale performs Mozart’s Requiem

Gina Ventre

The Western Reserve Chorale (WRC), under the direction of David Gilson, performs Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s magnificent Requiem in D minor, Sunday, March 16, at 4 p.m. at Cleveland State University’s Waetjen Auditorium. Joining WRC are the R. Nathaniel Dett Concert Choir from the Cleveland School of the Arts (CSA); soloists Sandra Simon, Joanne Uniatowski, Nathanael Hein and Brian Keith Johnson; and an orchestra pairing professionals with CSA students.

Intrigue has surrounded the Requiem since its commission in 1791 by Count von Walsegg. According to one legend, the commission was delivered with 50 ducats and a warning about Mozart’s own death. Another tale had Mozart poisoned, perhaps by his archrival, Salieri, who wanted to pass off the Requiem as his own.

Some speculate Mozart wrote the Requiem for his own death, which came, according to certain accounts, eight bars into the Lacrimosa, at the words “day of tears and mourning.”

Then, fearing that von Walsegg would not pay the last half of the

advance for an unfinished piece, Mozart’s widow turned to his students to complete the score under his name and deliver it with a forged signature. Von Walsegg then copied the score and claimed the Requiem as his own. Or, so the stories go.

CSA is a specialty school within the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, and its Dett Choir has a longstanding relationship with this masterwork: each year, director William Woods teaches his 90-plus students select movements as part of the curriculum. Until now, however, the choir has never performed it. The CSA choir was invited to join with WRC, to give students the opportunity to learn the entire work and perform it for the first time.

In its 22nd season, WRC is a non-profit group of amateur and professional singers, many of whom are Heights residents, dedicated to bringing high-quality performances of choral music to Greater Cleveland. Concerts are free; freewill offerings accepted. For more information, visit www.westernreservechorale.org.

Gina Ventre is a writer and editor, and lives in University Heights.

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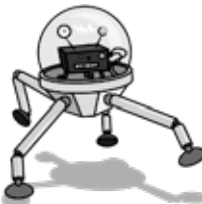
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The Wine Spot's evolution includes live music

James Henke

Ever since it opened back in December 2011, The Wine Spot, located on Lee Road between Silsby and Meadowbrook roads, has continued to evolve. The latest change involves live music. In January, The Wine Spot kicked off its new program with an appearance by the local band Meridian, featuring Max Stern and Jake Stern. The retail store/wine bar will continue to present live music on the last Friday of every month. The shows, which are free and open to the public, take place from 7-9 p.m.

"This is a really nice space for music," said Adam Fleischer, owner of The Wine Spot. "I thought we could provide the best local music in a comfortable space, at no cost and in a family-friendly environment." The opening show drew about 75 people, and Fleischer said, "They ranged in age from about 21 years old to 80 years old!"

The Wine Spot is collaborating with two local organizations—Cleveland Rocks: Past, Present and Future and ChamberFest Cleveland—to present the shows. Cleveland Rocks, founded by Cindy Barber, owner of the Beachland Ballroom, will assist Fleischer in presenting folk and rock acts.

ChamberFest, created by Franklin Cohen, principal clarinetist for the Cleveland Orchestra, will bring in musicians to play chamber music and other forms of classical music. Fleischer's idea is to have the styles of music alternate every two months. For example, he will present two rock shows, followed by



Adam Fleischer (center) with Mike Kinsella of Cleveland Rocks and Diana Cohen, executive and artistic director of ChamberFest Cleveland.

two classical shows. Coming up next, on March 28 and April 25, are two events with music provided by Chamberfest Cleveland, featuring local jazz and chamber ensembles.

Fleischer grew up in Cleveland Heights and attended Wiley Middle School and Heights High. After high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and became a medic. Following his military service, he worked for various healthcare firms that deal with electronic medical records for about 20 years.

"When I had my IT job, I traveled a lot, and I saw a lot of different cities," said Fleischer. "But I had young children, and I realized that if I was constantly on the road, I wouldn't be there to see them grow up." So he left the IT world and decided to open The Wine Spot. "I saw a lot of different things in the cities

I went to, so I wanted to open something unique in Cleveland Heights," he said.

When it opened, The Wine Spot was a bottle shop, selling retail wine and craft beer. Then, only a month after the store opened, ChamberFest's Cohen stopped by the store. Cohen's organization presents a series of chamber music events in and around Cleveland over the course of two weeks every June, and he suggested that one of the 2012 events take place at The Wine Spot. So that June, Fleischer presented a movie night, screening black-and-white Buster Keaton films, with piano accompaniment. About 200 people showed up for the event. The Wine Spot hosted a ChamberFest event again last June.

In addition to hosting music-related events, Fleischer has also been working with the Cleveland Institute of Art

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(CIA). Every two months, he presents an exhibit of works by CIA students, and he said that the art usually sells out. Fleischer also hosts wine tastings every Thursday night, from 6-8 p.m., and every Saturday night, from 5-7 p.m.

Last June, Fleischer got a full bar license. The Wine Spot now sells beer and wine by the glass, as well as drinks made with vodka, bourbon, tequila and mescal. Guests can also purchase cheese plates with dried meats and olives and local breads.

Fleischer, who still lives in Cleveland Heights, is delighted with the progress he has made with The Wine Spot, and has no regrets about leaving the IT world. "Cleveland Heights is a great location," he said, "and I am very happy to be able to serve the city." Despite all of the changes, Fleischer emphasized that the sale of retail wine and craft beer is still the store's core business.

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is the author of several books, including biographies of Jim Morrison, John Lennon and Bob Marley.

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