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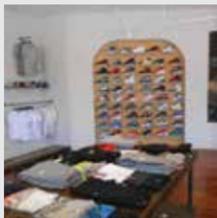
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FutureHeights
2843 Washington Blvd. #105
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

CH's Conwell secures spot on U.S. Olympic boxing team

Andrea C. Turner

Heights High senior Charles Conwell, 18, recently returned home from Buenos Aires, Argentina, where he secured a spot on the U.S. Olympic Boxing team. When he arrived at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport on March 21, he was greeted by cheering family and friends who were there to celebrate Conwell's achievement.

Conwell competed with 11 other American boxers, both men and women, at the Americas Olympic Qualifier, which took place in Buenos Aires, March 11-19. A middleweight boxer, at 5 feet 9 inches and 165 pounds, Conwell is the youngest member of the Team USA boxing squad that will compete in the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

"I'm so excited to be home! And finally on the 2016 Olympic team," said Conwell. "This is not just for me, but for my family, friends and all those who support me."

"My next step, now, is prom and graduation, and spending time with my family and friends."



Charles Conwell (far left) of Cleveland Heights traveled with other U.S. boxers and coaches to Argentina, where he earned a spot on the U.S. Olympic Team.

Conwell said his biggest inspiration is his family, who help motivate and push him to strive harder. "One of my biggest dreams came true," he said of making the Olympic team.

Conwell noted that the U.S. Olympic boxing team is not yet final, and two more qualifying events will determine who of the remaining contenders will make the team. Conwell said he was fortunate to make the cut in the first qualifier, and noted, "We have to train severely before going to the Olympics."

"It's a great opportunity to compete for the United States. I'm [going to] bring home the Gold!" exclaimed

Conwell.

According to the Team USA website, www.teamusa.org, Conwell was first introduced to boxing at the age of 11, by his father and coach, Charles Conwell. He also trains with Otha Jones II and Roshawn Jones with Team TUFF Boxing Academy and Soul City Boxing.

Conwell is a member of the Heights Youth Club, where his friends, family and supporters held a send-off celebration in January, before Conwell headed to the Olympic Training Facility in Colorado Springs, Colo., to prepare for the upcoming

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Noble Neighbors weekend celebration set for May 13-15

Brenda H. May

The northeast quadrant of Cleveland Heights will celebrate during the weekend of May 13-15. The neighborhoods and business districts north and east of Mayfield and Taylor roads will be vibrant with yard sales, real estate open houses, music, food and art-making activities.

Noble Elementary School's NobleFest and Noble Road Presbyterian Church's Urban Line Dance will kick off the weekend on Friday evening. On Saturday and Sunday, Kid Hubs will feature activities for children, and Denison and Caledonia parks, with their playgrounds and athletic fields, will offer organized activities.

On Saturday, the Oxford Elementary School Carnival will feature games, food and a flea market. Real-



tors are funding Rocket Car rides launched near the Oxford Community Garden, and Disciples Christian Church is hosting a family fun day. Noble Neighborhood Library will hold a book sale and activities showcasing its kids' and teens' facilities. Home Repair Resource Center will sell tools.

With this year's event, Noble Neighbors hopes to draw attention to the potential of its neighborhood business districts. The Noble Nela, Noble Monticello and Center May-

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FutureHeights events to focus on Heights business districts

Nathan Merritt

"Strong business districts with a vibrant mix of retail and services are vital to our ability to attract new residents, maintain property values and sustain the long-term health of our community," said Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights. "We've identified a growing need to support our districts by working to ensure that existing businesses remain strong and actively recruiting new businesses and new uses for vacant spaces."

FutureHeights, the nonprofit that works toward a vibrant and sustainable future for Cleveland Heights and University Heights, will host two events that focus on Heights business districts.

The first is a presentation of a Market Study of Cedar Lee by Viking Planners, a graduate-level class from the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University (CSU). Heights Community Development Alliance, a program of FutureHeights, hired the class to conduct a study of the Cedar Lee Business District during its spring semester. The students examined various aspects, including parking, safety, retail mix, and potential redevelopment and infill sites. They will present their findings on Monday, May 9, 4-6 p.m. at the Cedar Lee Theatre (2163 Lee Road).

The second event is the FutureHeights 2016 annual meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, June 1,

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Cleveland Heights City Council appoints Michael Ungar to vacant seat

Andrea C. Turner

On April 8, Cleveland Heights City Council announced the appointment of Cleveland Heights resident Michael Ungar to fill the unexpired term of former Council Member Jeff Coryell, whose resignation was effective Dec. 31, 2015. Ungar was sworn in as a council member at the April 18 Cleveland Heights City Council meeting.

According to an April 8 news release from the City of Cleveland Heights, Ungar is a longtime resident of the city who has served on its

planning commission since 1993, and chaired the commission for 16 years. Prior to that, Ungar was a member of the Citizen Advisory Committee.

Ungar is a partner in the law firm of Ulmer & Berne LLP, where he is chair of the firm's litigation department and a member of the management committee. He is also past president of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association. According



Michael Ungar

to the Ulmer & Berne website, Ungar was named a Top 10 2016 Ohio Super Lawyer (out of approximately 44,000 active attorneys) for the fourth consecutive year.

"This was a difficult choice because each of the 10 applicants brought commitment and different kinds of experience to the table," stated Cleveland Heights Mayor Cheryl Stephens in the April 8 news release. "However, City Council made the decision to select Michael Ungar as the best candidate." She added, "[He] will bring solid experience and

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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

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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When writers have a personal interest in the articles they submit



OPENING THE OBSERVER

Bob Rosenbaum

Anyone in Cleveland Heights and University Heights who is willing to meet some basic standards of civility is invited to write for the *Heights Observer*.

That means our pages are filled with articles by people who have a personal interest in the events and organizations they're covering.

That's supposed to be forbidden at a traditional newspaper. But the *Observer* has never paid for anything it publishes; it couldn't exist without volunteer contributions. So at the bottom of each article, we run a biographical statement that aims to disclose any pertinent information about the author's connection to the subject matter. We believe you're smart enough to take it from there.

There's no magic system to achieve this transparency. We rely on the honor system and our volunteer editors. If we miss one, we count on readers to let us know.

That's what happened recently, when a reader accused the *Observer* of publishing articles about the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District without disclosing that the authors had been paid to write them.

The contributions in question were from Krissy Dietrich Gallagher and Patti Carlyle. Both are active in the community and contribute frequently to the paper. Carlyle is a past board member of FutureHeights, which publishes the *Observer*, and a former member of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

When contacted, they confirmed that they've been paid as freelance writers since late last fall to write articles for use in the district's communications, and that they had also submitted some of these for publication in the *Observer* in the November 2015 to March 2016 editions. If we had known of the financial relationship, we would have disclosed it then. We didn't, so we're disclosing it now, at the first opportunity.

Personally, I don't believe the school district was trying to pull one over on anyone. It doesn't need to; we would have published these stories anyway.

I know both of the writers personally and don't think their intent was malicious either. But I wish they had been proactive about mentioning the financial relationship when it began, and I regret that it took five months to learn about it.

With that said, not every contribution they've made in recent months was an article they were paid to write. Both have been active and constructive contributors to the *Observer* and I hope that will continue.

In the future, though, their freelance role with CH-UH schools will be acknowledged in articles they write related to education and children.

We will continue to insist that contributors disclose such relationships, and we'll continue to let you know when we miss one. You can take it from there.

Cleveland Heights resident Bob Rosenbaum is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee, and is responsible for its advertising sales and market development. Contact him at brosenbaum@heightsobserver.org.

Parent advocates for school choice

To the Editor:

We're lucky to have people like [Ari] Klein in our city and in our school system. His passion for education is evident. However, as a parent who opted out of the public system, I see a few details differently.

My view is that, in general, parents are the best advocates for their children. Parents that opt out are not draining resources, or "starving children," in Mr. Klein's dramatic words [*Heights Observer* April 2016 issue]. They're being conscientious parents! Without these [opt-out] programs, when parents aren't satisfied, the only other choice might be to move away.

I hate to be so blunt, but money spent on private schools was never the district's money. Taxpayers hand money to the district to be used to educate our children. You could say it's the children's money in the sense that they're the beneficiaries. We have a public education system because there are economies of

scale, but the district is not entitled to a monopoly on public funding.

There are going to be failed private, parochial and charter schools, and even outright charlatans. But insisting that everyone participate in one system or move away is not the right response.

The right response for education professionals is to help parents be expert consumers, and then respect their choices, not make them feel guilty about them.

Mr. Klein compares public education to building roads, and says public funding for private schools is like paving roads for private use. Here's my problem with that: private-sector firms compete for contracts to build and maintain the roads. In other words, the situation that he's fighting—public funding of private educators—is the same model as how our system of roads and highways operate. This is also how Medicare works, how food stamps work, and many, many other public goods work.

It is too early to say if encouraging competition between schools will improve the situation, but it is clear that parents are dissatisfied with the status quo. As I said earlier, in general, I believe that parents make the best choices for their children. If those choices harm the interests of the school district, then the school district has work to do.

Matthew Wilson
Cleveland Heights
[Wilson is a FutureHeights board member]

About the Observer

The *Heights Observer* is not an ordinary newspaper; it is a nonprofit publication for residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

The *Observer* has no writing staff; it is written by you—the readers.

Individuals throughout the community decide what stories they want to write, then submit them for publication. Anyone in University Heights or Cleveland Heights is welcome to contribute regularly, occasionally or even just once.

Is there something you think should be covered in the *Heights Observer*? If so, please write it on your own, or with friends, neighbors or colleagues. Our volunteer editors will make sure it's ready to publish and contact you with any questions.

If you're writing a news article, it should be clear and factual. If you want to express an opinion, submit it as a letter to the editor or an opinion piece. Either way, make sure it's about something specific to our two cities.

- To make a submission of any kind, go to www.heightsobserver.org and click on "Member Center" at the left.

- For information about writing style, article length, etc., click on "Become an Observer" at the left. For questions that aren't answered there, call the FutureHeights office at 216-320-1423 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

Articles to be considered for the June issue must be submitted by May 9. We publish some articles online as they come in—and still consider them for the next print issue. We also publish an e-newsletter each Tuesday.

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Retired teacher seeks answers from BOE

To the Editor:

I felt the need to write after attending the CH-UH school board meeting of April 5. The board was voting on proposed cuts for the next school year.

I listened to all of the people who spoke before the board and thought each and every one of them spoke thoughtfully and with passion. The commitment of this community to its schools was on full display that evening.

That is why I was astonished that Superintendent Dixon did not take a minute to thank those who spoke [of] their concerns.

This district has students who speak eloquently of their teachers and classes, teachers who live and work dedicatedly here for many years, and parents who value and want to safeguard their children's fine education. None of this was acknowledged by the superintendent.

I would think it would be a gift to be the superintendent of such a district. No matter that the speakers' views were different from yours, they were presented respectfully. A moment to thank the people who spoke, especially the students, was notably lacking. This is a school district, not an "organization," as the superintendent kept referring to it [on] Tuesday night.

The only people who responded to the speakers were [board members] Mr. Posch and Mr. Silverman. Although they seemed to give credence to some of the questions that were raised by speaker after speaker, they voted for the proposed cuts.

Mr. Posch asked, and was told that the deadline for decisions is not until the end of May. Would it not have been more reasonable to table these cuts, and allow further study to find the answers to the questions raised that night?

Mr. Klein, representing the teachers, listed many inaccuracies in the cuts approved that evening.

I was dismayed at [the board's] responses. I live in this community and am a retired teacher from this district. I will be waiting to hear and to see [the board's] answers to all of the questions raised Tuesday evening. [The board] owe[s] all of those who spoke at least that.

Mary Sickbert
Cleveland Heights

[Editor's note: View the district's policy regarding public comment at school board meetings in bylaws section 0169.1 here: <http://neola.com/clevelandhgts-ob/>. According to Scott Wortman, coordinator of communications for the school district, "Public comment at board meetings is available as a means of allowing community members to address the board, rather than as conversation between board members and commenters." For many years, it has been the CH-UH Board of Education's procedure not to respond to commenters at board meetings.]

Engaged learning does wonders for students

Steven Warner

After 18 years of teaching in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school system, I took a year's leave of absence to rejuvenate my teaching enthusiasm by exploring ways to engage students with meaningful, hands-on learning experiences.

I taught special education at Heights High for most of my career and, regrettably, saw firsthand the problem of student disengagement. I also saw that outdoor, hands-on activities engage and motivate students. When I take a class outdoors for a lesson, learning comes alive and students become more engaged in learning. Outdoors, the learning experience becomes more real and more accessible. I believe the Heights community can be the catalyst to enable our schools to embrace hands-on outdoor learning experiences.

Let me give you an example of engaged learning: One of the projects I've been working on this year has involved the first-grade classes at Oxford Elementary School. Allen Wilkinson (a school volunteer and general advocate) and I spend two afternoons a week at the school doing hands-on lessons with the first-graders based on raising worms and plants to be transplanted to the community garden adjacent to the school. "It warms my heart every time I am at the school to be welcomed by the students with hugs and excitement. Their eyes and minds are so wide open," said Allen.

Learning should be measured by the personal engagement and overall development of the student. The first-graders at Oxford love the garden work and are learning through the work. One of them said, "I like the worms, and I can't wait until we start planting, because it is exciting and I have never planted anything before." I believe this type of excitement gives families a reason to keep their children in our schools.

Outdoor learning is happening all around Heights schools. Last summer, I was part of a team at Garity elementary school that led the creation of outdoor classrooms, a greenhouse, an educational cob pizza oven, nature trails, and a rehab of the school's sprawling gardens. I believe we could increase the use of outdoor spaces at all of our schools [by using them] for more than play; they could become a place for engaged student learning.

Though we are facing unfortunate teacher layoffs, I believe we could plan ways to enable future work to continue throughout the district on a low- to no-cost basis. The school district and I have set the precedent of funding the work at Oxford Elementary School externally: We received a National Park Trust "Kids to Parks Day" grant to help support the Oxford project.

It hurts me to see so many of our children being sent to schools outside of our school district. I believe we need to give parents a reason to keep their children in our schools. I think if the work at Oxford and Garity could be expanded, parents would see the kind of learning happening



COURTESY STEVEN WARNER

Oxford first-grade students visit the community garden adjacent to their school.

that would be a reason to keep their children in the Heights schools.

The Heights Community Congress (HCC) is helping to facilitate the expansion of the work at Oxford. "Supporting the Oxford Community Garden is very gratifying to the HCC. We believe people being involved in

tasks together promotes well-being and community spirit. Extending this concept to the classroom is icing on the cake," said Martha Goble, HCC's executive director. [FutureHeights awarded a \$1,000 mini-grant to Oxford Community Garden to develop a small orchard and the area surrounding the children's garden.]

I'm interested in forming a team of Heights people to advocate for an increase in engaged outdoor learning opportunities in our schools. To get involved, send an e-mail to HCC at info@heightscongress.org.

Steven Warner is a lifelong resident of Cleveland Heights. He has taught in the Heights schools since 1997.

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An argument against standardization in education

Ari Klein

When I started teaching math in the CH-UH school district in 1988, the requirements for graduation included one, then two, math classes, neither of which had to be Algebra I. Some kids took the Algebra I (geometry through calculus) courses, but others chose Basic Math, Applied Math, or Business Math. In Ohio today, the lowest level of high school math is Algebra I, and all students must take four years of math, including Algebra II. The assumption from the great state of Ohio is that every child should be ready to attend a four-year college, if they so choose.

I have often wondered why it is

that everyone needs so much formal math (strange coming from someone who actually likes math and teaches Algebra II). I wonder how many people actually use Algebra II skills in daily life or in their jobs. My wild guess is that it is probably a small percentage of the population.

For most daily tasks, solving or graphing exponential, logarithmic, or rational functions is not something people will ever need to do. As a practical matter, I believe that learning so that you can research and master any material is the essential skill. Solving and simplifying Algebra II problems may be a great skill for the process of learning, but may reinforce math phobia. Kids who are truly interested in math and science should probably continue to take these traditional classes. I wonder, though, why ALL students have to go through it.

If students were not required to take a traditional sequence in math, and take state tests on this standardized material, then perhaps we could offer other types of math learning that might be practical, challenging and even interesting. For instance, I have always thought that if I could teach a class on orienteering, students would learn a lot of math (and get exercise). I also believe advanced navigation is something that could appeal to students who want to become pilots of ships or planes. Carpentry skills, pouring concrete, or other [construction] applications presented from a math perspective could be incredibly powerful and interesting.

I spent time in the 1990s trying to figure out how to create a district-sponsored charter high school for students who wanted to study environmental and conservation issues in small, independent student-led groups. Even then, I thought that students could be engaged differently. (Obviously, I didn't get anywhere with

that idea—it was right in the early days of the test-and-punish routine we see all the time now.)

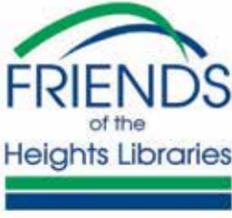
I could go on and on with examples of short or long courses that could make real changes for students. The problem is that the curriculum, by being "rigorous," is so narrow and standardized that every student has to come out knowing the same stuff.

Every student has to pass exams that show that the student knows all about algebra, English, the basic sciences, etc. Kids today are forced to learn so much more and at an earlier age than when I was at Heights. The pressure students are under is tremendous. Of course, this makes everyone "accountable" for their learning. But is it really desirable for every child to come out of school in Ohio with the exact same skills? Is it really desirable that every child attend a four-year college?

I believe that we should be teaching kids how to discriminate between good and bad information, form well-reasoned arguments, and be able to work in a team. They need to know how to learn. I believe we can accomplish these tasks without this strict narrowing of what students should learn. There are so many ways of reaching students through their interests, but the ability for teachers to "go off script" and explore the things that kids really want to study is more and more difficult. We teach courses instead of students in our Ohio schools, because that is what the kids need to pass their tests so they can get a diploma.

What if things were different? What will it take for the pendulum to swing back the other way? Imagine how fascinating school could be.

Ari Klein is a lifelong community member, math teacher at Cleveland Heights High School, and president of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union.



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FUTUREHEIGHTS continued from page 1

at the Heights Rockefeller Building, 3099 Mayfield Road. Richey Piiparinen will facilitate a panel discussion on dynamic commercial districts with local community development experts Dione Alexander, Adam Rosen, Michael Fleming and Bob Brown. FutureHeights will share its recent accomplishments, including its community-building programs and new initiatives for commercial districts. The event begins at 7 p.m.

Richey Piiparinen, a senior research associate at the Levin College at CSU, focuses on migration, demography, culture, and economic and community development. He is co-editor of the book *Rust Belt Chic: A Cleveland Anthology* and a blogger at *HuffingtonPost*.

Dione Alexander is president of Village Capital Corporation (VCC), the lending subsidiary of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress and a leading local community development financial institution which provides crucial funding to catalytic developments in Northeast Ohio, including Uptown in University Circle and Waverly Townhomes in Detroit Shoreway.

Adam Rosen leads the economic development and revitalization efforts

for the retail districts in Cleveland's Detroit Shoreway Neighborhood. He manages commercial leasing for a portfolio of properties in the Gordon Square Arts District, recruiting new businesses and providing technical assistance.

After nearly a decade working as a chef in Boston, Miami Beach and Madrid, Spain, Michael Fleming came back to his hometown of Cleveland in 2004 to be a part of the city's revival. He now leads a team of dedicated professionals who are working to build a dynamic neighborhood around the many assets of Cleveland's St. Clair Superior Neighborhood.

Bob Brown, former director of the Cleveland Planning Commission, has prepared comprehensive plans for cities and neighborhoods and written innovative zoning regulations on topics ranging from design review to urban agriculture.

Both events are free and open to the public, but reservations are required. For more information and to RSVP, visit www.futureheights.org or call 216-320-1423.

Nathan Merritt is an intern at FutureHeights and a graduate student at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University.

'Number sense' necessary to assess impact of school-funding policies



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

"Number sense" is an important part of learning math. If you know what a number represents you can use it to make sense of the world. I remember my kids collecting pop-top rings to take to school to help them understand 100 and 1,000. I don't think they tackled 1 million—too hard to collect that many rings in one year!

The number I am trying to understand now is \$5.5 million. This is the money the state of Ohio owes to our school district but withheld this year in order to fund private and religious education through vouchers, Peterson grants and charter schools. This number is too big to represent with pop-tops.

I know \$5.5 million is a lot of money, but, without knowing exactly what it would buy in terms of education, it is easy to brush it off and ignore it. Lack of perspective on the meaning of this large amount of money shields us from facing the facts, from outrage, from action.

Given the 30-year attack on

the public sector, the number won't bother some: Just tighten your belt a bit! I can't buy that with this number.

Just before spring break, my school district laid off 49 of its 452 teachers, two counselors and a security monitor. The cuts will save the district about \$3.5 million. The argument focused on "right-sizing" the district to conform to enrollment losses over the last decade. There was no mention of another driver—shrinking state funds.

I know that 52 adults who work in schools represent a lot of education, a lot of personal attention, a lot of concern, a lot of value added and a lot of opportunity. Imagine the impact of losing \$5.5 million to privatization! The number is heart-breaking.

Here is the story problem: If cutting 52 positions saves a school district \$3.5 million, how many positions would a school district have to drop to save \$5.5 million?

If my arithmetic is right, it's about 82, most of whom would be teachers. So the cost of privatization, if measured in the most important school-based variable in education, is about 82 teachers. This is drastic.

When the district announced the cuts, members of the public showed up in force to voice their concerns about the scale of the

reduction. The cuts have real consequences for the lives of teachers, levels of confidence in our schools, the provision of necessary support services to children, and our schools' ability to deliver an amazing educational program.

I am not here to argue if downsizing made sense. I agree that some right-sizing is valid given the steady loss of enrollment—some of it due to population loss and some of it due to privatization—but it is a teachable moment. We need to know that the steady drain of resources from our children due to Ohio's attack on public education, which it undertook to feed voucher programs and charter schools, is a serious threat to education quality. We can't cut our way to balancing the budget without causing serious damage to learning.

By taking money away from local districts, the state is abdicating its responsibility to provide a thorough and efficient system of public schools. Local taxpayers will need to make up for the flow of public money to nonpublic education when students enroll in charters or use vouchers to attend private schools. This shift violates three Supreme Court decisions that required the state to provide a larger share of the funding to local districts, not less.

I hate Ohio's rating of schools,

but if you take any stock in the measurement mania, our public schools are the leaders when it comes to value added—the measurement of the effect of teachers on student progress. We've got great teachers and class sizes, enrichment programs, and social supports that allow for personal attention. They add value!

Ohio school districts are finally pushing back. At least 47 boards of education have invoiced the state for funds lost to unregulated charter schools. On March 20, superintendents sent a letter to the state calling for an end to its destructive policies.

Local communities have lost control of their schools. Local boards are left holding the bag for Ohio's draconian policies, which include implementing intolerable testing and deciding how many positions to cut, instead of working to build a great education experience.

We need this to stop. Maybe if we can understand the meaning of numbers in terms that matter, we can build the political will to save public education.

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



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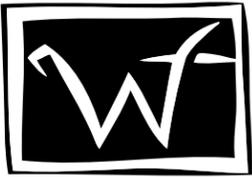
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University Heights City Council Meeting highlights



MARCH 21, 2016
Councilman Steven Sims was absent.

Master planning survey

The survey for the master planning process, which was put together by planners at the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, has been mailed out. Completed surveys can be mailed or dropped off at City Hall or at the University Heights Library. The Cuyahoga County Planning Commission stamped 25 percent of the return envelopes to ensure a sufficient return. Although council had authorized return postage for all envelopes, Cuyahoga County Planning Commission chose to follow its usual process, which is to stamp one-fourth of the envelopes.

Mayor's spending limit

An ordinance to increase the mayor's spending limit from \$5,000 to \$7,500 was proposed by Councilman Phillip Ertel but not seconded, so no vote was taken. The mayor's spending limit of \$5,000 was passed in 1988. Expenditures above that amount require council's approval. Several council members expressed a desire to be able to monitor the details on city expenditures. Councilman John Rach favored raising the limit in principle, but did not agree on the amount. Ertel felt that the \$5,000 limit is archaic, and that the mayor needs to be able to govern and council needs to focus on legislation. The mayor asked council members to bring in copies of expenditure reporting from other boards and organizations, so that she can have a clearer understanding of what is being sought. She also offered to resume her effort from several years ago to present all invoices to council for approval, which would require longer and more frequent meetings.

Disposition of city property

Council approved increasing the limits from \$2,500 for sale or disposition, and \$5,000 for disposal, to \$7,500, before council approval is required. The mayor is currently required to determine the value of any equipment that is to be removed, and if the value exceeds \$2,500, she must get council approval.

Library expansion

Council approved the March 10 planning commission recommendation for nine variances in the upcoming expansion of the University Heights Library. The library needs improvements due to lagging infrastructure, ADA requirements, and efforts to maintain green space for the neighboring residential community. The next step will be to find a temporary library space. Work should begin by August and be completed by September 2017. Council also approved the commission's recommendation to consolidate into a single parcel the three lots behind the library with the lot the library currently occupies. The homes on the three lots will be razed and the lots used to expand the library building and parking. Green space will be maintained around these three lots to help shield the neighboring residences. Councilman Rach and Vice Mayor Susan Pardee recused themselves from these votes due to their affiliations with the architec-

tural firm and the library, respectively.

Coyote sightings

Police Chief Steven Hammett reported several coyote sightings. The Cuyahoga County Department of Wildlife says that coyotes are present in all 88 Ohio counties, and are known to be living behind Legacy Village Shopping Center. The University Heights sightings were probably the same one or two coyotes. They [feed] on small animals. The police chief noted that they are, indeed, "wily."

LWV Observer: Wendy Duering.

APRIL 4, 2016

Councilman Phillip Ertel was absent.

Purvis Park

Council approved the pricing of activities at Purvis Park. Only the price of swim team [participation] has been increased, from \$35 to \$40.

Joint dispatch center

Presented on emergency was an ordinance authorizing a regional council of governments agreement with Cleveland Heights, South Euclid and Shaker Heights for the purpose of forming and operating a joint dispatch center for police and fire departments. Each of the participating city councils are reviewing the same ordinance. Dispatch centers must be consolidated to four centers by January 2018 for the cities to continue to receive 911 funding. This is still in the early planning phase with a location still to be determined. Staffing will be adjusted through attrition, as the level of actual need is determined. Dispatchers will be able to take calls for both police and fire, instead of [those] being separate operations. As the 2018 deadline approaches, mandates for cities to merge will begin, but University Heights wanted to be proactive and form a group that shares similar operations and procedures. These four cities currently provide back-up support to one another and are accustomed to working together.

State audit

Finance Director Larry Heiser reported that the state audit has been completed, and he is awaiting the final report. No significant issues were found.

LWV Observer: Wendy Duering.

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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NOBLE continued from page 1

field districts will actively promote their merchandise and services. Some businesses are working together to provide sidewalk entertainment, and the Cleveland Heights Police Academy will participate with K-9 unit demonstrations, safety information and an invitation to view the inside of its old-time firehouse building.

By showcasing the local businesses along Noble Road, neighborhood leaders hope to make it easier for investors and developers to imagine the possibilities for new businesses and development projects in the commercial districts.

On the residential side, Sunday activities will include open houses to showcase the variety of home styles that characterizes the Noble neighborhoods. Some homes are smaller than 900 square feet (and were built well before the current tiny-house craze), and a large inventory of bungalows and ranches supports aging-in-place. Spacious homes in the Van Sweringens' Inglewood Historic Dis-

trict, modern and mid-century homes and condos, and 1920s colonials grace the neighborhoods and give credence to the Noble Neighbors' motto, "Grow up with us, grow old with us."

Music and art activities are new this year. Musicians will perform in a variety of spaces, indoors and out, at churches and homes and on public sidewalks. Artists of all types will sell their works at homes and collective sites. Public art-making and storefront installations will help mark the weekend, and food will be offered throughout the Noble neighborhoods, at businesses, churches and homes.

The Noble Community Home and Yard Sale began last year in response to depressed property values and long market times for homes being sold in the area. When the idea was presented to the three brokerages in Cleveland Heights—RE/MAX, Keller Williams and Howard Hanna—agents responded willingly but advised that few people attend open houses unless there is an ac-

companying event.

Without a staff or budget, Noble Neighbors capitalized on social media, volunteers and the Cleveland Heights Community Relations Department to invite residents to hold yard sales. This created a stream of visitors to the neighborhood from as far away as Burton and Bedford. The yard sale and open house event was successful, especially in addressing Noble Neighbors' immediate goal of changing the neighborhood narrative.

At the close of his open house last

year, one realtor stated, "You folks have done a fabulous thing here today. You've shown new buyers what a wonderful, friendly, neighborly place this is. Tell us when you have your next event. We'll be there!" More feedback on last year's weekend can be viewed at www.nobleneighbors.com, and a map and schedule of events for this year's May 13-15 weekend will be posted there.

Brenda H. May is one of the leaders of Noble Neighbors.

May 21 walking tour explores 'deep history' of Quilliams Creek



The William Quilliams house (1867) is a Cleveland Heights landmark.

CH celebrates Preservation Month in May

Kara Hamley O'Donnell

May is National Preservation Month. In Cleveland Heights, as in communities across the country, this month celebrates our rich architectural and natural history. Since 2002, the City of Cleveland Heights and its partners have observed Preservation Month with lectures and tours, and this year holds special significance as Heights Libraries celebrates its centennial.

Preservation Month programs provide residents with the opportunity to learn the nuts-and-bolts of porches; the history of our library, city and school buildings; and explore Cleveland Heights's neighborhoods and natural features.

CH Preservation Month 2016 co-sponsors are the Cleveland Heights Historical Society, the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission and Heights Libraries.

Wednesday, May 4, 7 p.m., Looking Back, Looking Forward: Coventry Village Through the Decades

In this program, part of the library's Cedar-Coventry Author Series, Marian Morton (author) and Bob Brown (photographer and city planner) will explore the evolving character and potential of Coventry Village. [Coventry Village Library, 1925 Coventry Road]

Thursday, May 12, 7 p.m., Porches: History, Design and Construction

Whether your porch is Victorian or Colonial Revival, it takes a beating in our Northeast Ohio climate. Colin Compton and Margaret Lann, of the Cleveland Restoration Society, will look at common construction and deterioration issues, and propose methods for repair and replacement of lost details. Additionally, they'll discuss the evolution of the American porch, from humble masonry stoops to fully furnished verandahs. [Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road]

Saturday, May 14, 10 a.m., May-

field Heights Historic District Walking Tour

Chuck Owen and Mark Souther will lead a walking tour around the latest Cleveland Heights district to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This is one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, and is home to the city's oldest school, church and house. [Reservations are required for this tour. To register, call 216-291-4878 after May 1. The tour starts at the Coventry Arch in front of the Coventry Village Library, and will take place rain or shine.]

Wednesday, May 18, 7 p.m., History of Cleveland Heights and University Heights Libraries, Schools and Civic Buildings

Early civic leaders saw the need to build public facilities that would serve our communities and last for generations. Celebrate Heights Libraries' centennial by attending this presentation by Amia Wheatley, Eric Silverman and Kara Hamley O'Donnell. It will feature historic photos that illustrate the history of Heights libraries, schools and other important public buildings. [Lee Road Library]

Saturday, May 21, 10 a.m., Cleveland Heights Rocks & Waters 2016: Nine Mile Creek

Roy Larick, Korbi Roberts and Jim Miller will lead a hike along the course of Quilliams Creek to where it joins Nine Mile Creek. Participants will learn local geology, ecology and history, and discuss how best to conserve this unique bluestone landscape. [Reservations are required for this tour, which is co-sponsored by Noble Neighbors. To register, call 216-291-4878 after May 1. The tour starts at Oxford Elementary School, 939 Quilliams Road, and will take place rain or shine.]

Kara Hamley O'Donnell works at the Cleveland Heights Department of Planning and Development as the city's historic preservation planner.

Roy Larick

How does a neighborhood landscape come to be? What does nature provide? Can humans live in ways that honor the gift?

Rocks and Waters walking tours seek to answer such questions by visiting local stream courses. This year, the series explores the people and places of Quilliams Creek, in Cleveland Heights's Noble Neighborhood. A May 21 Nine Mile Creek tour is part of Cleveland Heights's Preservation Month activities. [For more information and to register, see article at left.]

How does the Quilliams Creek walking tour relate to issues of environmental health and preservation?

In 1988, the Cuyahoga River Area of Concern (AOC) was founded to manage the health of Cleveland's small watersheds. Early management plans centered around Doan Brook and Euclid Creek. Recently, support has come to Dugway Brook and Nine Mile Creek. Quilliams Creek is a Nine Mile tributary.

The immediate environmental issue is polluted stormwater. Pavement and other impervious surfaces inhibit the earth's ability to infiltrate rainfall. Runoff thus flows into storm sewers. Before entering these systems, waste from roads and parking lots is absorbed. The polluted mixture must be treated before it is sent to Lake Erie.

With green infrastructure, stormwater can be infiltrated in place, before it picks up pollutants. The AOC promotes solutions made possible as a city shrinks and former greenspace reemerges.

Rocks and Waters looks for the elemental forces giving rise to natural landforms, and the intersection of natural and human actions that

make places special. Stated simply, the walks explore the deep history of small-scale Heights landscapes.

Deep history begins with the ancient geology that shaped our Portage Escarpment landforms. These included bedrock deposition, tectonic uplift and glaciation. Locally, natural forces produced the bluestone terrace, a uniquely Heights landform.

The human role in landscape change began quite early. In June 1797, the Connecticut Land Co. laid down a survey line that, by chance, skirted the deep Quilliams ravine. Early settlers used it as the longest north-south track amidst crosscutting natural ravines. Two centuries later, Quilliams Road still defines municipal boundaries, residential neighborhoods and daily commutes.

Two other local terrace constructions are historically significant. The William Quilliams house (1867) is a Cleveland Heights landmark, and Nela Park (1911) is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Rocks and Waters seeks the long perspective on the evolving Heights landscape. Can we continue to identify with treasured landmarks? Can local streams become ecological assets? Can urban planning serve to rebalance, more equitably, the life-sustaining needs of humans and nature?

May 21 Quilliams Creek tour participants will have an opportunity to explore the landscape at ground level, and help forge collaborative insights upon which Heights neighborhoods can redevelop green space and preserve their heritage.

Roy Larick, Ph.D., is the founder of Bluestone Heights, which advocates for Greater Cleveland places and their cultural ecologies.

Forest Hill Park



CLEVELAND
HEIGHTS
LANDMARKS

Mark Souther

Forest Hill Park is a diamond in the rough. Its National Register of Historic Places designation calls attention to its historic merit, but does not guarantee its preservation. Its upkeep has been a challenge for years, in part because more than half of its acreage is in East Cleveland, a struggling municipality with virtually no budget for maintenance.

Designed by Cleveland Heights native A. D. Taylor, the park reflects the landscape architect's prior work in the firm of Warren H. Manning, who worked with Frederick Law Olmsted, the father of American landscape architecture.

Taylor had a hand in designing several Cincinnati parks and the grounds of several notable estates, including Stan Hywet in Akron. Taylor's Forest Hill Park plan included a number of Olmstedian nods: inward-looking vistas framed by wooded fringes, curvilinear lanes that lent a pastoral effect, a picturesque lagoon and boathouse, and a stone footbridge spanning a valley traversed by a parkway.

Before Taylor worked on the park, Forest Hill's cultivated grounds were sculpted from the hills overlooking Dugway Brook under the watchful eye of Standard



John D. Rockefeller's summer estate stood in present-day Forest Hill Park until it burned in 1917.

Oil founder John D. Rockefeller. Rockefeller owned 700 acres of land, including the present-day 235-acre tract occupied by the park.

Originally intended as a "water cure resort," offering a commanding view of—and breezes from—Lake Erie from its perch high above its gated Euclid Avenue entrance, Rockefeller's Victorian mansion failed as a resort hotel but served him as a summer home for four decades, starting in the 1870s.

After the mansion burned to the ground in 1917, Rockefeller sold the estate to his son John D. Rockefeller Jr. in 1923. The younger Rockefeller launched a large residential development, also called Forest Hill, on the land a few years later. The Great Depression eroded his plans, but not before his syndicate had built 81 Norman-style houses on tree-lined streets and a French Norman-style gateway commercial center at the corner of Mayfield Road and Lee Boulevard.

After his garden suburb plans stalled, Rockefeller Jr. eventually deeded 235 acres of undeveloped land—the immediate grounds of his family's former summer estate—in

1939 to the cities of East Cleveland and Cleveland Heights, for use as a shared public park. Taylor's park plan was to be carried out and maintained in perpetuity through the shared effort of the neighboring communities. Using federal Works Progress Administration funds, available under the Roosevelt administration's New Deal, more than 1,000 workers set to work building the stone footbridge across Forest Hills Boulevard and a lagoon and boathouse.

In 1967, Cleveland Heights erected the Pavilion, an ice rink, on the southern end of the park. The move was controversial, as the Taylor plan purposely excluded large buildings, but Cleveland Heights needed a site for a recreational building.

While the Pavilion was later incorporated into the Cleveland Heights Community Center—turning the Cleveland Heights side of the park into what is, while not true to Taylor's wishes, a major community asset in its own right—the East Cleveland side of the park has languished, with deteriorating paths and picnic shelters, and unkempt grounds.

Forest Hill Park's history is a reflection of the fragmented nature of metropolitan areas in the United States, but it retains the potential of one day recapturing its former glory.

Mark Souther is a member of the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, which preserves and protects buildings, works of art and other objects of historical or architectural value to the community. Its seven members are appointed to three-year terms by city council.

UNGAR continued from page 1

also a strong commitment to the community of Cleveland Heights and to our City Council. We all look forward to having him as a member of our Council."

"I am honored and humbled to be chosen," said Ungar. "I'm looking forward to rolling up my sleeves and getting to work."

"The citizens of Cleveland Heights are my new bosses. I want to do what the citizens want. Certainly, there are trends and patterns developing. Economic development continues to be a focal point. There is concern for business districts, some thriving and some in need of assistance."

Asked what he deems to be his priority as a new council member, Ungar said, "So far, I've been impressed with the [city] undertaking the master strategic plan, with the county lending incredible leadership. [The city] has had input from various stakeholders, folks from various neighborhoods and business districts. As a new council member, I'm going to commit to this process."

[In 2015, the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission chose Cleveland Heights as one of four cities it would work with to develop a city master plan. The goals of the county program are "to bring older plans up to date, encourage regional collaboration and focus on action plans that have a strong potential for implementation." (The other participating cities are University Heights, Parma Heights and Olmsted Falls.)]

Ungar noted that the majority of attendees at the city's Master Plan community meeting in February indicated that Severance Town Center was a priority. "I encourage readers to provide input so that their voice is heard," said Ungar, adding that an actionable CH Master Plan will be presented within months.

"Ours is a uniquely diverse and special community with plenty of challenges and opportunities to be addressed," said Ungar. "I am excited about the future of our city and our new city leadership, and welcome the opportunity to become a member of that team."

Andrea C. Turner is the Heights Observer's managing editor.

BOXER continued from page 1

international qualifying tournaments.

Conwell has previously won numerous boxing awards and championships. He won a national Junior Olympics title in 2013. The following year, he was the Junior and Youth Open champion and the Youth Continental champion. Last year, Conwell won a national Golden Gloves championship. It was his first time competing in the event, and the first time in many years that someone from the Cleveland area had won a Golden Gloves championship. Conwell was also named the Under Armour Youth Male Boxer of the Year in 2015.

Andrea C. Turner is the Heights Observer's managing editor.

Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

MARCH 21, 2016

All council members were present.

Police department 2015 report

Police Chief Annette Mecklenburg presented the police department's 2015 year-end report. It provided statistics on staffing levels; calls for service (41,030 in 2015, up 13,000 from 2014 due to changes in the way calls are logged and labeled); calls [regarding] animals; motor vehicle accidents; arrests for operating a vehicle while under the influence; crime rates (robbery, assault, burglary and theft were all down in 2015); adult arrests (2,019, which were up slightly); and juvenile arrests (411, which were down slightly). She also described the activities of the community response team, the crime suppression team, the special response team, the juvenile diversion program, and the Cleveland Heights Police Academy.

HOME funds

Council passed a resolution to increase by \$72,737 the HOME funds—issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through Cuyahoga County and administered locally by the Home Repair Resource Center—for the city's down payment assistance program. This brings the total amount of funds available to \$160,737.

Women Out Walking (WOW)

Mayor Cheryl Stephens introduced the Women Out Walking (WOW) program, a new, 12-week healthy-lifestyle program beginning in mid-April under the auspices of the Parks and Recreation Department, and sponsored by MetroHealth and Walgreens. The program encourages women to walk daily (individually or in teams) and to log their steps on the city website. More informa-

tion is available at www.clevelandheights.com.

Bond sales

Council heard a first reading of five ordinances pertaining to the issuance and sale of bonds for the city's 2016 capital improvement program in the following maximum principal amounts:

- \$125,000 for acquiring and improving motor vehicles and related equipment for use by the fire department.
- \$110,000 for acquiring motor vehicles and related equipment for the police department.
- \$205,000 for acquiring and installing computer hardware, software, and related equipment for the city's management and administrative functions.
- \$375,000 for acquiring motor vehicles and equipment for the public works department.
- \$785,000 for resurfacing and other improvements to city-owned parking lots and driveways.

Pedestrian and bicycle transportation for schoolchildren

Council finalized authorization to the Ohio Department of Transportation to complete a project improving pedestrian and bicycle access for schoolchildren within Cleveland Heights.

RNC cooperative public safety services

Council authorized a memorandum of understanding with the City of Cleveland for intergovernmental cooperative and mutual aid for assistance in providing law enforcement services, including personnel and/or equipment, to ensure public safety during the 2016 Republican National Convention, July 18–21.

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

APRIL 4, 2016

All council members were present.



Public comments

Landscaping project: Resident Laura Marks spoke about a tree planting and sustainable landscaping project along Superior Road between Taylor Road and Washington Boulevard.

Noble Neighborhood Community Home and Yard Sale: Resident Pat Brim spoke about this [series of events] May 13 through 15. Information is available at www.nobleneighbors.com.

Citizen appointments

Council made the following appointments to citizen committees:

- Citizens Advisory Committee: Bradley Eckert, Dawn Ellis, T. Nadas and Robin Koslen for terms ending December 2016.
- Transportation Advisory Committee: Jeff Bendix, Sam Bell and Gayle Lewin for terms ending December 2017.
- Recreation Advisory Board: Jane Williams for a term ending December 2019.

City bonds issued

Council approved the issuance and sale of bonds for the city's 2016 capital improvement program. [See bond sales in second column.]

Building codes

Council amended the city's building code to adopt in perpetuity the most recent editions of the Residential Building Code of Ohio, the National Electric Code, and the Ohio Building Code. This eliminates the need to continually amend those sections of the code and complies with the Ohio Revised Code, which requires a city to identify any standard code it adopts.

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

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

See disclaimer on page 6.

May is Bike Month in Cleveland Heights

James Henke

Cleveland Heights will again celebrate National Bike Month this May, with various events that will take place throughout the month, including a Bike to School Day and a Bike to Work Week.

Cleveland Heights City Council first declared May as Bike Month in 2011. Two years later, in 2013, Cleveland Heights was declared a Bicycle Friendly Community—one of only 13 in Ohio—by the League of American Bicyclists. The other cities in Northeast Ohio that have been so designated are Cleveland, Lakewood, Oberlin and Akron.

Cleveland Heights Bike Month is organized by the Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC), a nonprofit organization that formed in the spring of 2010 with the goal of making the Heights more bicycle-friendly. Since its inception, HBC has gained the support of the City of Cleveland Heights and the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District for its bicycle-friendly initiatives. HBC has also collaborated with University Heights, Shaker Heights, Cleveland and East Cleveland to lay the foundation for improved area bicycle routes.

Since HBC formed, Cleveland Heights has created bike lanes on parts of Euclid Heights Boulevard, Edgemoor Road, Coventry Road, Taylor Road, Mayfield Road and North Park Boulevard.

Mary Dunbar, a member of the Cleveland Heights City Council, is HBC's board president and has



Ride of Silence participants last year.

helped organized the city's Bike Month activities. Bike to School Day will take place on Wednesday, May 4. (According to The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, children and adolescents should engage in one hour or more of physical activity every day; biking to school can help them reach that goal.)

Bike to Work Week will take place May 16–20. On Friday, May 20, HBC will offer free coffee and pastries in a tent at the intersection of Edgemoor and Overlook roads to those riding their bikes to work.

On Saturday, May 14, a family bike event, All Geared Up, will take place at Canterbury Elementary School. The event will run from 9 a.m. to noon, and features 2-mile and 4-mile neighborhood bike rides, a father-and-child relay race, and safety clinics.

On Wednesday, May 18, the annual Ride of Silence will take place, starting at 7 p.m. This international event honors bicyclists who have been killed or injured while cycling on public roadways. Bicyclists will meet at the John Carroll University parking lot and then ride together to University Hospitals Case Medical Center in University Circle, where a ceremony will take

Jason West scholarship fundraiser is May 22

Lita Gonzalez

On May 26, 2007, Cleveland Heights Police Officer Jason West responded to a routine disturbance call and was shot getting out of his car. His death shocked the community. In response, local residents, West's family and friends, business owners and fellow officers established a scholarship fund in his memory. Each year, graduating seniors from the Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement program at Cleveland Heights High School can apply for the scholarship.

To raise money for the fund, the scholarship committee is holding its annual Mega Raffle on Sunday, May 22, at the New Heights Grill on Lee Road. Tickets for the raffle are \$2 and can be purchased at several local businesses: Quintana's Barber & Dream Spa on Taylor Road; and Shawn Paul Salon, New Heights Grill and Parnell's Pub on Lee Road. Tickets will also be on sale at Zagara's Marketplace on May 14. Last year's raffle raised more than \$8,000.

Since its inception, the scholarship committee has awarded 11 scholarships. In 2012, Stedman Smith received the Officer Jason West Scholarship. After joining the Army and serving in Afghanistan, he returned home and applied to the Cleveland Heights Police Academy. Out of more than 150 applicants, Smith was one of only 20 to be accepted. He contacted

the committee to ask if he could use his award for academy tuition.

"Not only did we give Stedman his initial award," said Betsey Bell, committee co-chair, "but we were able to pay for the entire cost of attending the police academy." Smith graduated in 2015 and is working for the Maple Heights Police Department.

"We're so proud to see the legacy of Officer West honored by Stedman Smith's commitment to a career in law enforcement. Smith is one of many reasons we're passionate about growing this fund," said Bell.

The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Mega Raffle is the only fundraiser the committee holds, and every dollar raised goes directly to the scholarship fund. Tax-deductible contributions can also be mailed to: The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o CH-UH City School District Treasurer's Office, 2155 Miramar Blvd., University Heights, 44118.

Checks should be made payable to Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, and should mention Jason D. West Scholarship on the memo line. For more information, visit: www.facebook.com/jasonwestscholarship.

Lita Gonzalez is co-chair of the Jason West Memorial Scholarship Committee. A resident of Cleveland Heights since 1995, she recently published her family's history, Meeting the Ghosts Inside Me.

place. The participants in this event are asked not to ride faster than 12 miles per hour. In addition, they must wear helmets, follow the rules of the road and remain silent during the ride.

In the past, Bike Month has included a bicycle tune-up day on Coventry Road. This year, the tune-up event will take place on Saturday, June 4, at the Coventry Courtyard (at the northwest corner of Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard).

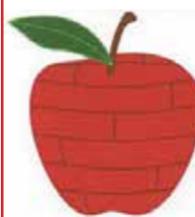
James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is also the author of several books, including biographies of Jim Morrison, John Lennon and Bob Marley. He is on the board of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

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HRRC executive director announces departure

Penelope Derethik

The Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) Board of Directors has accepted the resignation of Executive Director Ben Faller, who is leaving to take a teaching position at the Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) School of Law.

Tikeesha Allen, HRRC's program director, has been named interim director, and will be working closely with Faller, the board of directors and HRRC staff to ensure a smooth transition while the board conducts a search for a new executive direc-

tor. Information on the search process is available at www.hrhc-ch.org/search.

"Ben has been an excellent leader. I've enjoyed working closely with him, as has the entire board," said Marc Lefkowitz, HRRC board president. "Under Ben's leadership, we've seen significant growth in our program participation—in line with expansion in our capacity to meet the needs of homeowners and more thoroughly serve them through hands-on repair classes, loans and a range of technical assistance in home ownership."

Faller, a Greater Cleveland native and an attorney, joined HRRC in September 2014 as the organization's third executive director, and he raised the organization's profile throughout the region. His numerous accomplishments include securing staff to manage education programming, marketing and development, and financial counseling. He led HRRC to a financial and technical assistance investment from Social Venture Partners Cleveland, which he leveraged to update HRRC's home repair education curriculum and to implement an online course registration platform.

"I'm so proud of what we've been able to accomplish during my time at HRRC," Faller said. "It's been a



Ben Faller

COURTESY HRRC

true joy to work with the board, staff, and all those in the community who together make this organization such a powerful resource for homeowners in Northeast Ohio. I wouldn't have imagined moving on from HRRC at this point, but teaching in a clinical legal program—in particular at CWRU—is something I've hoped to do for many years, and an opportunity that I simply couldn't pass up. I'm so grateful to Marc and the board for giving me the opportunity to serve HRRC, and I look forward to continuing my involvement and support in other ways as the organization continues to grow and thrive under their guidance and care."

HRRC offers a unique model for home-ownership assistance that has served thousands of homeowners. The nonprofit has expanded its reach beyond Cleveland Heights, where it formed more than 40 years ago as a program of the Forest Hills Presbyterian Church, to serve homeowners throughout the region. Today, HRRC provides vital community services for residents across Cuyahoga County by helping homeowners keep their investment in a state of good repair through a comprehensive range of home improvement and homeowner education services.

Penelope Derethik is HRRC's communications and development coordinator.

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Beth El presents talk on fostering civil discourse

Carol Bruml

Rachel Eryn Kalish will speak on the topic of Fostering Dialogue in the Jewish Community at a Lunch and Learn at Beth El - The Heights Synagogue after services (approximately 12:15 p.m.) on Saturday, May 14. A vegetarian-friendly lunch will be served, and the public is invited. The event is free of charge, but attendees should call 216-320-9667 to make a lunch reservation.

In the San Francisco Bay area, when the topic of Israel threatened to rip apart the Jewish community, leadership teamed up with Kalish, a visionary mediator/facilitator to create The Year of Civil Discourse. A little more than a year later, the area became a model of civil discourse.

At this time of political polarization, this talk will explain how it was done, and provide some of the basic tools.

Kalish has more than 30 years of experience mediating and facilitating solutions to intractable conflicts within a wide range of organizations, communities, congregations, families and global hot spots, including the Middle East. She is a pioneer in interfaith and intracommunity dialogue, and is author of the Challenging Conversations training program.

Beth El - The Heights Synagogue is located at 3246 Desota Ave. For more information, visit www.bethelheights.org.

Carol Bruml is the communications chair and newsletter editor for Beth El - The Heights Synagogue.



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Sober Living Cleveland raises funds by 'Raising the Roof' on May 21

Peggy Spaeth

Sober Living Cleveland presents Raising the Roof for Recovery on Saturday, May 21, at 7:30 p.m. The event at the Dunham Tavern Barn will raise funds to provide a house in Cleveland Heights for women in recovery from substance abuse. Presented by the Heights Music Shop, proceeds will support the nonprofit's mission to empower people in recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs by providing safe, affordable sober housing, support for healthy habits, and a foundation for a better life.

Cleveland Heights resident Rick Szekelyi, co-owner of the Heights Music Shop on Lee Road, selected some of his favorite local singer/songwriters to perform:

Opening the concert is Rachel Brown. *Plain Dealer* pop music writer Chuck Yarborough wrote this about her in a 2013 article: "The fiery redhead with the sometimes sultry, sometimes country, sometimes bluesy, sometimes rocking and always engaging voice, had a plan. 'I graduated from high school a year early to be a professional musician and songwriter.'" Today the singer-songwriter is back in middle school as Miss Brown, the music teacher, but performs regularly in intimate regional venues, such as Music Box Supper Club and Barking Spider, either solo or with the



Singer/songwriter Rachel Brown will perform at Raising the Roof for Recovery.

Beatnik Playboys. Brown has opened for many nationally known musicians and issued several original CDs.

Brent Kirby is next, at 8:30 p.m. Kirby's peers call him one of Cleveland's hardest-working musicians. He'll arrive right after performing at the Hessler Street Fair. Kirby was voted Best Musician by Cleveland's *Scene* magazine in 2012, followed by Best Singer and Best Male Vocal in 2013. When not playing solo or with his band His Luck, he writes the tunes and fronts the Jack Fords (*Scene's* Best Rock Band in 2007 and 2009), leads a monthly revival of Gram Parsons music with his band The New Soft Shoe, and plays drums for the talented Cleveland holiday band Ohio City Singers. His weekly 10 x 3 Songwriter Showcase at Brothers Lounge encourages a vibrant local music scene of original music.

Vernon Trumbull and his Kinsmen will wrap up the evening at 9:45 p.m. The band, from Houston, with some Ohio roots, plays American music ranging from blues to country

to rock and roll. Comprised of lifelong musicians who have played in a dizzying array of bands, the group plays in Houston, Austin, New Orleans, Nashville, Belize, and now Cleveland. Former punk rock vocalist Trumbull is joined by drummer Steve Bundrick, guitarist Scott Ayers of the highly influential Pain Teens band, and bassist Michael Milsap, descended from country royalty in the Texas Permian Basin.

Throughout the night there will

be food and an inspiring silent auction and raffle of experiences and goods donated by generous local businesses.

Reservations are \$25 online or \$30 at the door. More information can be found at www.soberlivingcle.org, by e-mailing info@soberlivingcle.org, or calling 216-406-9135.

Peggy Spaeth is leading an effort to provide safe, affordable housing for people in recovery from substance abuse.

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Noble Road Presbyterian welcomes neighbors to its spring and summer activities

Meredith White

Recognizing that summer, now just around the corner, is a great time to get outside and meet one's neighbors, Noble Road Presbyterian Church will offer several opportunities for its congregation and the church's neighbors to get to know one another better during the next few months.

The church will participate in the May 13-15 Noble Neighbors communitywide event, hosting urban line dancing on Friday at 7 p.m., and a Saturday program—from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.—that will include a plant sale and bake sale, and a craft activity for the young and young at heart.

On Friday, June 3, 6-8 p.m., Noble Road Presbyterian will host its 25th annual strawberry festival.

The free event will feature strawberry shortcake and live music by Squirrel Jam.

The church also offers community garden plots to anyone in the neighborhood. The garden provides opportunities to those who want to enjoy fresh produce throughout the summer and those who want to try their hand at gardening.

Noble Road Presbyterian Church, which holds its Sunday worship service at 10 a.m., is located at 2780 Noble Road, next to the Noble Neighborhood Library. Anyone with questions is invited to contact the church office at 216-382-0660.

Meredith White, who was raised in Cleveland Heights, became pastor of Noble Road Presbyterian Church in August 2015.

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CHHS equestrian competes in nationals

Joy Henderson

Madison Rheinheimer, a Heights High freshman, competed in the Interscholastic Equestrian Association National Competition April 20-24 in Lexington, Ky. To qualify for the national competition, she placed in the top three at several regional competitions.



Madison Rheinheimer clears a fence at a recent competition.

Rheinheimer, competing as a member of the Double Deuce Farm Equestrian Team of Painesville, rode in one individual and two team events. She placed among the top 22 in her individual event, the flatting competition, in which riders are judged on their performance riding the horse at a walk, trot and canter, and on body position in the saddle.

Both of her parents work in the equestrian field, and her father is one of her trainers.

While riding is physically demanding, Rheinheimer said she finds the sport to be a stress reliever. "When I ride, I can forget about everything else and just focus on the ride," she explained.

As a team member, she competed in both the flatting and jumping competitions, in which rider and horse must clear eight two-foot-high fences. She placed fifth in the jumping event, and put points on the board for her team, which finished in third place overall, out of 21 competing teams.

Her training routine has her riding five days a week with her horse, Victor, and others. The responsibilities of an equestrian athlete also include caring for the horses. "I clean out the stalls, brush the horse and clean the hooves," she said. "I really love the connection between me and the horse."

Horse riding has been part of Rheinheimer's life for as long as she can remember. "I have been riding since I was eight years old," she said.

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

Skating club presents ice show May 7 and 8

Susan Jhirad

The Pavilion Skating Club has been a part of Cleveland Heights for more than 35 years. As a member of the U.S. Figure Skating Association, the club offers practice ice, testing, competitions, shows, camps and other activities, to support both the competitive and casual skater.



U.S. Figure Skating Sectional Dance Competitors Maria Brown and Marius Driscoll, representing Pavilion Skating Club, compete in the November 2015 Midwest Sectionals in Strongsville.

This spring, the club, along with the City of Cleveland Heights, will present its Spring Ice Show, Viva Las Vegas, May 7 and 8, at the Cleveland Heights Community Center.

On May 7, the show will begin at 7 p.m.; the May 8 show will start at 2 p.m.

The show will highlight the city's learn-to-skate program as well as some of the community's best skating, including performances by regional, sectional and national competitors. Skaters of all ages—tots, teens and adults—will perform, and the featured guest skater, Katie McBeath, is a nationally ranked Senior Ladies Freestyle competitor.

Admission is \$10 for adults and children 10 and older; \$5 for seniors and children younger than 10. For more information, call 216-691-7373.

The show will be approximately two hours long, with an intermission.

Susan Jhirad is vice president of Pavilion Skating Club.

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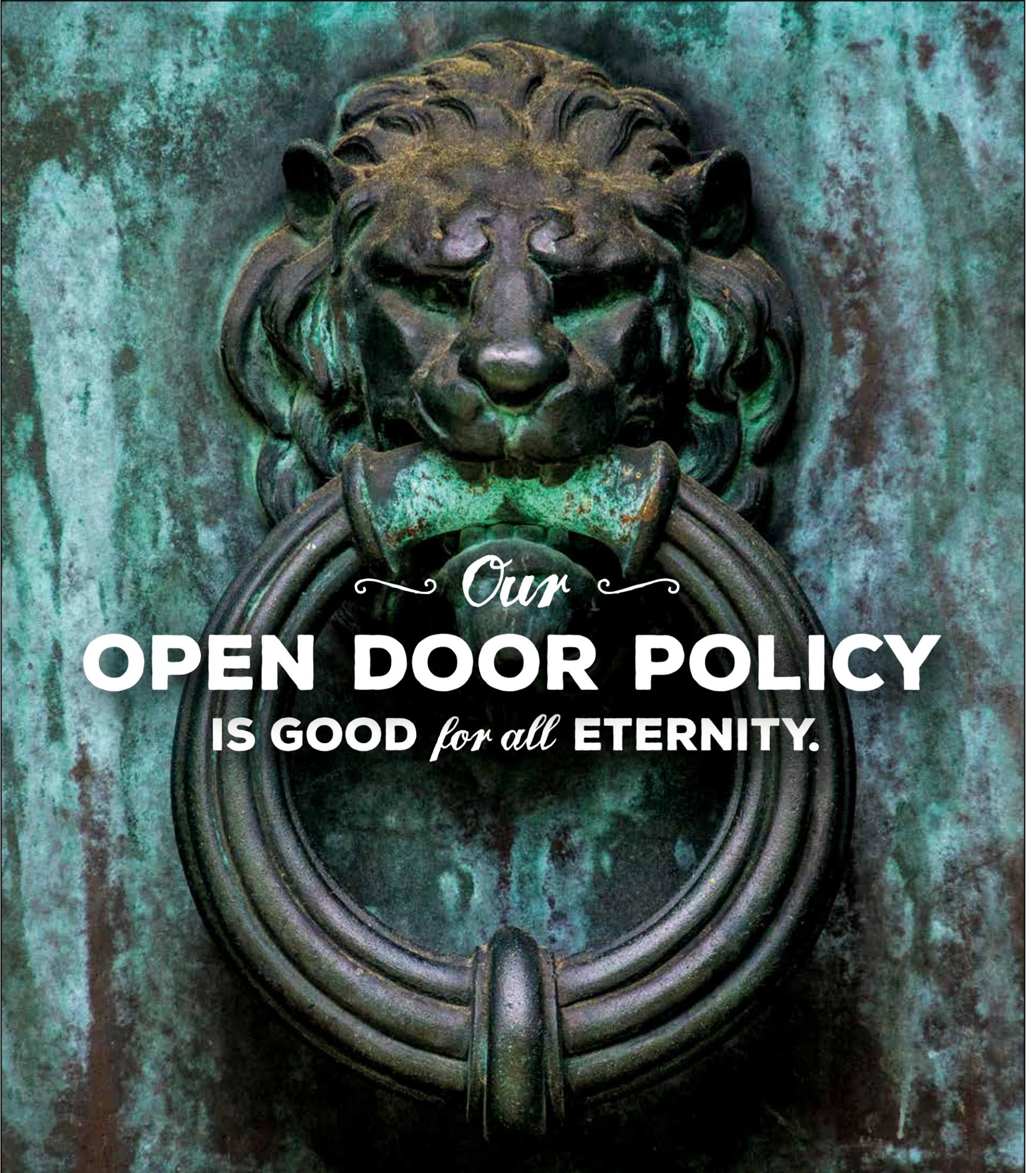
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Participants race in the 2015 Happy 5K.

Cleveland Heights will host second annual Happy 5K and Fun Run on Oct. 2

James Henke

This October, for the second consecutive year, Cleveland Heights will host the Happy 5K and 1-mile Fun Run, as well as a 1-mile family walk—new this year. The races will take place on Sunday, Oct. 2.

Last year, the event attracted 514 people, with about two-thirds of the participants coming from outside of the Heights. This year, the organizers—the City of Cleveland Heights, Cedar Lee Special Improvement District and Western Reserve Racing—hope to draw 1,000 participants.

This year's route will be the same as last year's, passing through Cedar Lee, Coventry Village and several other Cleveland Heights districts.

Participants in the 5K run will receive "cash" vouchers that can be used at participating Cleveland Heights shops, as well as drink vouchers that participants can redeem on race day. The vouchers are valued at more than the registration fee, so participants who use the vouchers will get more in return than what they pay to register.

The organizers also invite merchants to get involved by forming

teams for the event. At press time, CLE Urban Winery, Phoenix Coffee, Stone Oven, Tavern Company, Dewey's Pizza, Cleveland Running Company, Heights Arts and The Wine Spot have all committed to organizing teams.

Those interested in taking part in the races can sign up at www.westernreserve.com/events/happysk. The registration fee for the Happy 5K is \$25 through Sept. 18, \$30 Sept. 19 through Oct. 1, and \$35 on race day. The registration fee for the 1-mile Fun Run is \$10.

The 2015 races were so successful that the organizers were able to donate more than \$2,000 to the Cleveland Heights Youth Scholarship Fund. They hope to be able to donate at least that much this year.

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. He is on the board of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

Fourth annual RoxEl Run is June 4

Andrea C. Turner

The RoxEl Run, a community foot race now in its fourth year, will take place on Saturday, June 4 at 9 a.m. Starting at the Roxboro Middle School track, 2405 Roxboro Road, the race loops around the school's surrounding neighborhoods. Proceeds raised benefit Roxboro Elementary School PTA programs for students in grades K-5.

First organized in 2013 by Roxboro Elementary School PTA members to encourage healthy habits and physical fitness for elementary-age students, the race has grown into a popular competitive event that is fun for all ages. All students, parents, staff, alumni and neighbors within the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District are welcome to attend. Last year's event drew 231 runners and raised \$3,000.

More than 300 participants are expected at this year's event. As in the past, events begin at 9 a.m. with a 4-mile and 2-mile run, followed at 10 a.m. by a Kid Fun Run around the middle school track for elementary-age children. New in 2016 is a 2-mile walk, which begins shortly after the run start time and follows the same route.

Organizers encourage participants of all fitness levels. The event incorporates the tagline "Run Like it's Recess" to teach children and youth to make fitness part of a healthy lifestyle. This family event encourages parents to run alongside their children or push them in strollers. School teachers and administrators enjoy the friendly competition, and children are inspired by having role

models running with them.

"There is something for everyone at this event," said PTA parent volunteer Jing Lauengco, "whether one walks, runs, cheers or volunteers."

In order to prepare students for the RoxEl Run, Roxboro's PTA established a Run Club for Roxboro students in third through fifth grades. Twenty young participants train after school on Tuesday afternoons for an eight-week period leading up to the event. Roxanne Bain, a Roxboro parent and marathon runner, coaches the children along with other volunteers, helping them develop good running technique and build endurance for the June race.

After the race, runners and families can enjoy refreshments, healthy snacks and a DJ. Those who wish to cheer on their favorite runners can bring their own chairs or picnic blankets.

The event is made possible through the generous support of St. Paul's Episcopal Church; Chestnut Hill Realty; Farmer's Insurance; Howard Hanna Realty; Big Fun; Bruegger's Bagels; Luna Bakery and Café; Vince Nemeth, Roxboro's physical education teacher; and the Atkins, Gisell, Holland and Patterson families.

For event details, including registration and course information, visit www.runsignup.com, or contact the event co-chairs Kate Pophal, kate.pophal@gmail.com, or Christine Atkins, cpatkins@mac.com. Registration began April 4. Join the event and follow updates on Facebook.

Andrea C. Turner is the Heights Observer's managing editor. She volunteers as the media relations chair for the RoxEl Run.



RoxEl Run participants race in the 2015 Kid Fun Run.

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Teachers and supporters protest school district plan to cut staff

Andrea C. Turner

Cleveland Heights–University Heights City School District teachers, students and community members began “informational picketing” outside of the CH–UH Board of Education building on March 21, to draw attention to the administration’s proposed, and now approved, school staffing cuts, to take effect before the beginning of the 2016–17 academic year. The cuts eliminate 52 staff positions: 17.5 teacher positions at Heights High; 12.5 teacher positions between Roxboro and Monticello middle schools; 15 teachers within the seven elementary schools; plus a total of seven administration and classified (non-teaching) positions.

In a March 18 news release announcing the cuts, the district stated that the reduction in force (RIF) is due to declining student enrollment, and is necessary to bring staffing numbers in line with actual and projected enrollment, saving the district \$3.5 million annually in its operating budget.

According to the district, over the last nine years 900 fewer students have enrolled in district schools, with enrollment dropping from 6,300 in 2007 to 5,400 in 2016. Independent enrollment projections cited by the district suggest that district enrollment will decline by an additional 800 students over the next 10 years.

The picketers showed up each morning, March 21–24—the last day school was in session before spring break.

Two parents of Heights High students estimated that approximately 100 people stood outside of the Board of Education building at the beginning of the week, with signs stating, “Help Our Students! Save our Teachers!” and “Keep Calm and Keep the Arts” and “Fewer Teachers = Larger Classes.”

Scott Wortman, the district’s coordinator of communications, estimated that the number of picketers was closer to 30.

The school district has published a Q-and-A on its website, www.chub.org, explaining reasons for the cuts, what positions are affected, and state requirements for projected student caseloads.

According to the Q-and-A, special education caseloads and in-



School district teachers, students and community members picket outside the Board of Education building.

structional ratios for teachers serving cross-categorical students will increase slightly, but remain below the standards set by the State of Ohio.

“This is a very difficult but necessary action,” stated Talisa Dixon, CH–UH school superintendent, in the March 18 announcement. “This decision was not arrived at easily. However, the CH–UH school district has seen a significant reduction in enrollment in the last decade, and that is projected to continue for several more years. We simply must bring our staffing in line with our enrollment to continue operating effectively.”

According to Reaching Heights, the nonprofit that mobilizes community resources to foster highly valued public schools in the CH–UH district, many schools [statewide] have seen lower enrollment due to corresponding drops in population and the increase in charter schools, online options and school vouchers. Every year, school districts assess the number of teachers and staff needed to provide effective education, and every year communities face the results of these difficult decisions. This summer, once retirements and resignations are finalized, and programming decisions are made, some of the laid-off staff may be re-hired.

According to Ari Klein, Heights High math teacher and president of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, the high school teachers decided to picket before school hours, and were joined by some students and parents.

“I do not have any confidence that cutting [this many] positions will result in the same programming or the same attention to student needs. This is a significant cut that is way too deep,” Klein said. “I am

certain there are places where the impact might not be as severe, but by the time this is figured out, many great teachers will have found employment elsewhere.”

“We head in before our workday starts, so no instructional time is lost,” said Klein. He stated that several representatives from other district schools, including staff from Oxford and Fairfax elementary schools, showed solidarity through silent protests at their school buildings. They did not picket, but stayed in their cars until the official beginning of their workday, going in and trying to leave together. Klein noted that many teachers typically arrive early and stay later than their prescribed 7.5 hour contract workday.

“The community is struggling to accept the loss of our teachers and staff,” commented Krista Hawthorne, director of Reaching

Heights. “This year’s cuts are deeper than in the recent past, which affect more peoples’ lives and raises questions about the staff reduction process and the personnel changes in each of our schools. The district has reassured us that educational programming will remain the same, class sizes will still be well below state maximums and that the district will save \$3.5 million. All of that seems reasonable. But, we will dearly miss the people who have taught and cared for our children so well. That’s the part that doesn’t make sense yet.”

The CH–UH Board of Education approved the RIF at its April 5 board meeting.

Andrea C. Turner is the Heights Observer’s managing editor.

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Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education

Meeting highlights



MARCH 15, 2016
All board members were present.

Middle school facilities design work

The architects from Moody Nolan detailed their initial work and plans in a slide presentation. They elaborated on the following:

- At community meetings, held with school personnel, administrators and the public, there were many comments on equity, programs, auditorium, renovation vs. new construction, site issues, windows, energy considerations and gym facilities.
- Data was gathered via building walk-throughs, site surveys and traffic studies.
- The collaborative design features hybrid renovation schemes with renovated cores or new buildings. If the historic core and image are kept, then restoration is needed on many levels and includes obstacles such as aligning existing elevators and ramps.
- Enrollment projections from the Ohio School Facilities Commission (OSFC) estimate 550 students [per year] per building over 10 years. OSFC is co-funding a percentage of the Phase I renovations. The board discussed declining enrollment

and mentioned the possibility of having an upper- and lower-level middle school.

- Spaces to be included in these buildings, in addition to classroom space, such as the gym and auditorium, were determined.
- A recap was presented of the design charrette outcome; the charrette involved a cross section of people.
- Transportation scenarios (parking, drop-off by parent, by bus, etc.) were presented for Roxboro and Monticello middle schools.

The architects explained options for the renovations. With Monticello, saving the façade and core would be costly. The theater would be on the second floor, and matching funding is available for gym construction. At Roxboro, preserving the core would present fewer problems, but is also costly. Student drop-off, parking lot and ramping areas could be reconfigured, and interior courtyards could be constructed.

If the board considers a new scheme for construction, Monticello and Roxboro would have the same floor plan. The new façades would be similar to the old façades, but new construction would be more

efficient. Some board members seemed to favor new school construction.

Moody Nolan will present the costs for the hybrid and new construction floor plans at the April meeting. The board will consider the cost and make decisions in May.

LWV Observer: Lillian Houser.

APRIL 5, 2016
All board members were present.

Staff reduction

During the public comment portion of the meeting, 29 people addressed the board. Among them were teachers and other staff, students, parents and citizens. All comments were in opposition to the staff reduction of 52 people, which was on the agenda. Concerns ranged from increased class size and reduction in arts programming to loss of more families and a decline in public support and real estate values.

Each board member spoke before voting on the staff reduction. James Posch stated that the percentage of administrators to be cut is equal to, or slightly higher than, the

percentage of teachers being cut. [Posch further stated] that the levy failure in 2015 and the loss of students to charter schools created the need for reduction, and that the community expects the district to be sustainable. Eric Silverman said that the school board must make businesslike decisions and empower the superintendent. Kal Zucker, board president, noted that all programs would be maintained, to which the superintendent added that most classes would increase by only two students. All five board members stressed the difficulty of this decision, but voted unanimously to approve the elimination of 52 positions.

Renovation change orders

The board approved four change orders for the high school renovation project totaling \$753,055. The additional work included foundation waterproofing, removal of unsuitable soil, and a unanticipated removal of a section of building. Work has already been done on three of the four changes. Posch restated his discomfort with the number of change orders, even though they are correctly documented and necessary. Zucker repeated the need for timelier consideration of change orders and a specific policy for dealing with them. He asked Posch and Silverman, both members of the Lay Facilities Committee, to act as liaisons between the board and contractors. Zucker also stressed that the contractors must pay attention to the established budget and timeframe for the work.

District deficit

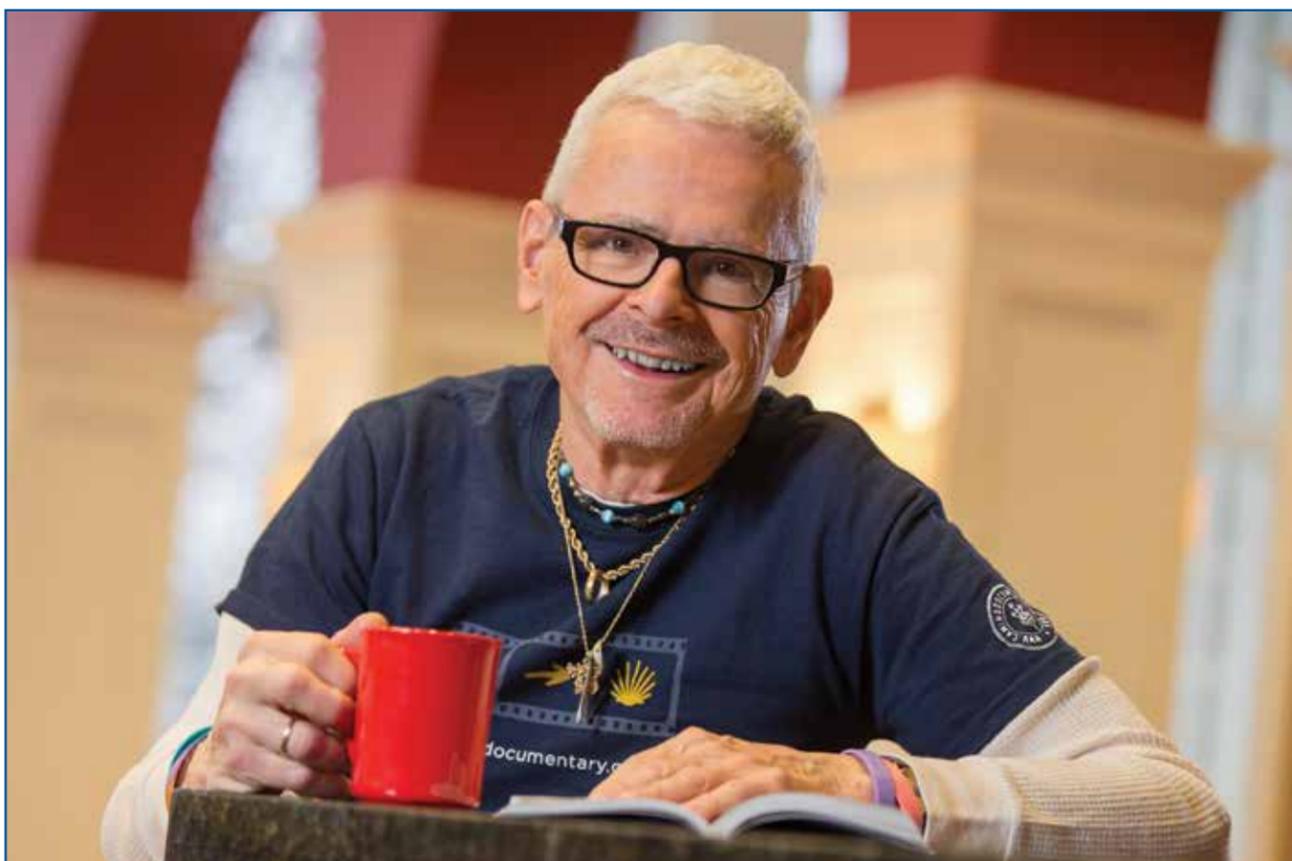
Scott Gainer, district treasurer and chief financial officer, said he responded to an Ohio Department of Education request for district plans to address a pending deficit by outlining the cuts just acted upon and the plan [to seek] an operating levy in the fall.

Board president's comment on reductions

In his president's report, Zucker noted, with regard to the staff reductions, the board's statutory obligation to address a fiscal deficit. He also described Ohio's school funding system as inequitable, unconstitutional and unsustainable.

LWV Observer: Nancy Dietrich.

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



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Students and staff attend Heights High topping out ceremony



Students signing the topping out beam (from left): Graham Ball, Emma Zordan and Akash Bartlett.

Joy Henderson

Cleveland Heights High School (CHHS), at the corner of Cedar and Lee roads, has been topped out.

On March 22, 13 students, two teachers, a guidance counselor, two board of education members, Principal Zoraba Ross and Superintendent Talisa Dixon signed the final, ceremonial white beam before it was raised and placed at the top of the building.

The students who attended the ceremony were student council representatives; the Superintendent's Cadre, students who meet regularly with Dixon; and members of the video production class, who recorded the event.

Student Sydney Watson said, "It is really awesome that we could sign the beam. I am looking forward to coming back here and being the first graduating class from the new building."

After the beam signing, Scott Bindle, Gilbane construction manager, thanked the attendees and talked about the significance of the small pine tree that was attached to the beam. "The tradition began in Scandinavian countries and continues today," he said.

Also attached to the beam is an American flag. Both items will stay on the beam until the beams are enclosed.

While CHHS is under construction, students are attending high school at the former Wiley Middle School in University Heights, which has been expanded with temporary modular classrooms.

Students will return to the permanent high school building in the fall of 2017.

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

Shop and sell at the Canterbury community yard sale on June 4

Patti Carlyle

Spring cleaning means finding no-longer-needed stuff that could become great finds for someone else.

The Canterbury Elementary School PTA has an ideal outlet for unwanted items—its community yard sale. On June 4, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., sellers can earn cash and shoppers can seek out treasures. A bake sale is also planned, and possibly tours of the school. If the weather is bad, the sale will move inside to the gym.

Booth registration is open to the public until May 25. A space with a table and chair is \$30; space with just a chair is \$25. Sellers can bring their own tents, tables or racks, as space permits. An optional donation pickup for unsold items will be available after the event.

The event is free to shoppers, and multiple playgrounds are available for children to enjoy. Bake sale proceeds and booth fees benefit Canterbury PTA. Vendors keep all proceeds from the items they sell. [Note: At this family friendly, school event, the sale of weapons, graphic or explicit materials, animals and

fireworks is prohibited.]

For more information, contact Molly Burke at mhmodz@gmail.com or 216-645-8965. The registration form is available at <http://bit.ly/canyardsalebooth>. Canterbury Elementary School is located at 2530 Canterbury Road.

Patti Carlyle is a Canterbury parent and writer living in University Heights, and is a freelance writer for the CH-UH City School District.

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Communion of Saints School presents Dahl's 'James and the Giant Peach'

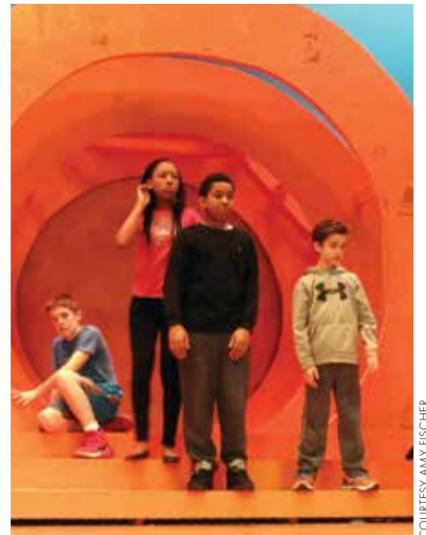
Amy Fischer

"Come with me and you will see the most amazing things," declares Ladahalord, the narrator of the musical adaptation of Roald Dahl's novel *James and the Giant Peach*. With Lydia Chanenka's direction and set design, this production at St. Ann Church will entertain audience members of all ages during its two-night run, May 13 and 14.

Students from kindergarten through eighth grade at Communion of Saints School are eager to share their talents with the audience.

Adapted for the stage by Timothy Allen McDonald, the play tells the story of James, whose parents are tragically killed in a freak zoo accident. He goes to live with his horrible aunts, Spiker and Sponge. Life is no fun until the boy accidentally drops some magic crystals near the old peach tree and strange things start to happen.

The story unfolds on Friday and Saturday, May 13 and 14, in



Communion of Saints students rehearsing.

Powers Hall at Saint Ann Church, 2175 Coventry Road, in Cleveland Heights. Both performances are at 7 p.m. Admission is \$5 for those 12 and older, and free for those under 12.

Amy Fischer is a volunteer at Communion of Saints School. For more information visit www.communionofsaintsschool.org or call 216-932-4177.

Midwest tour stops at Urban Oak

Chris Kious

Creative play, artistic expression, individualized learning and nature-based experiential learning are buzzwords used to describe Urban Oak School. This small, independent school, inspired by these Waldorf education principles, is located in the former Coventry Elementary School building.

Urban Oak has been open in Cleveland Heights since 2013, but there has been local interest in the Waldorf philosophy for more than 20 years.

On Feb. 21, Urban Oak hosted Judy Erb, a regional leader of the Waldorf School movement. As part of a Midwest tour, *Educating the Whole Child, Body, Mind & Soul*, Erb was eager to share stories of the growing educational movement, as well as how the Waldorf approach to learning affects a child's life.

While more than 100 years old—and with thousands of schools throughout the world, and hundreds in the United States—Waldorf schools in Ohio are rare. Urban Oak is only the third in the state. Schools in Akron and Cincinnati have been around for almost 30 years.

Erb shared stories of her experiences during her more than three decades of involvement in Waldorf education in Ann Arbor, Mich. There, she helped to grow a Waldorf elementary school, open a Waldorf high school, and now serves as board president of the Waldorf teacher training college.

As a young mother, Erb worried about the best way of educating her five-year-old son. He was having

difficulties staying focused and paying attention. She was a highly educated mom (a Berkeley-trained biochemist), who continued to try to reach him using reason and adult-centered ways of communicating. They weren't working.

Then she discovered a local Waldorf school. Faculty at the school helped her create a daily rhythm, eliminate television and provide more outdoor time. Her son, now in his 40s, went from struggling with traditional school environments to thriving in school, and eventually earned his Ph.D.

Waldorf is an alternative to mainstream education. Waldorf students spend considerable time creating art, working with natural materials, using movement to learn (such as stomping out multiplication tables), and using storytelling and songs as ways to learn. The focus is on developing the whole child from the inside out—mentally, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually. Reverence for the world around them is figural. The ultimate goal is freedom; each child is able to live in her or his own truth, engaging with the world from a place of personal power and grace.

There are now three lower Waldorf schools in Ann Arbor that "feed" the high school, with total enrollment of more than 1,000. Erb's story and words of encouragement provided the families and supporters of Urban Oak with enthusiasm and energy for continuing.

Chris Kious has lived in Cleveland Heights most of his life, and is now a resident of Forest Hills.

Library seeks deeper, broader understanding of the community

Sheryl Banks

This spring and summer, as part of its strategic planning process for 2016-17, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System will be gathering information from community members regarding their aspirations for themselves and their community.

“Instead of asking people what they think of the library, we are instead asking them to focus on themselves: What are their hopes, dreams and goals? What kind of community do they want to live in?” explained Kim DeNero-Ackroyd, Heights Libraries deputy director, who is managing the strategic planning process. “We want to find out what our community wants—not from the library, but from their lives, their community. We’re looking for information that will give us a deeper, broader understanding of the people we serve.”

Heights Libraries will gather the data in a variety of ways. Some staff will attend public community meetings, including those of city councils and local civic organizations, to take notes on the concerns that residents raise. Other staff will conduct brief interviews with residents, local business owners, and those who work in our community; and

hand out surveys at community events and library programs.

For those residents who don’t encounter a library staff member but want to share their feelings and ideas, the survey will be available on the library’s website, and in printed form at every branch.

Once collected, library staff will analyze the information, looking for patterns and trends to help guide the next phase of the strategic plan.

“We’re anxious to see what common ideas bubble to the top when our community is asked to think broadly about what [residents] want, not just for themselves, but for their community,” said DeNero-Ackroyd. “Then we will determine how the library can best help our community with those aspirations—maybe with new programs and services, or by expanding our collections and outreach efforts.

“The first step,” she noted, “is to listen to our community.”

For more information about the library’s strategic plan process and information-gathering project, visit www.heightslibrary.org.

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

Library’s centennial is focus of its summer reading programs

Julia Murphy

Summer will be here soon, which means summer reading will, too. The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System’s summer reading programs start June 1, and this year’s theme, 100 Years of Stories, celebrates the library’s centennial. Summer reading programs will take readers ages 0-100 through each decade of the past 100 years with book lists, events and prizes.

“The timeline for summer reading is the perfect way for us to celebrate our centennial all summer, and to personalize summer reading for our community,” said Sam Lapides, youth services manager. “It’s also the most inclusive initiative we do all year: every branch has something for every age group in our community.”

Parents of infants through pre-kindergarten-age children can participate by picking up the Summer Reading Log with suggested early-literacy activities, such as singing a song together, reading a rhyming book and playing “I spy.” If families complete 15 activities, they will be entered in a prize raffle to be drawn on Aug. 19. Families can even pick up four different Fun Packs—special take-home activities for parents and children—throughout the summer.

Children in kindergarten to fifth grade can also pick up Fun Packs throughout the summer, as well as a Summer Reading Game Board, where they will fill in a book icon for each day they read. After 40 days of read-

ing, they can return it to the library to enter an Aug. 19 prize raffle. Activities on the game board feature ideas to inspire readers to think about the past 100 years, such as reading a book that takes place before 1960, and asking someone older than them what life was like when they were the same age. Throughout summer, the Lee Road Library will host a series of children’s programs, Crafts of the Past, in which children in grades K-5 will make pinwheels and paper flowers, Scottie dog pillows (all the rage in the 1930s), lava lamps (from the 1960s and 1970s), and more.

For middle and high school students, participants will receive a prize just for signing up, and are entered into a raffle for every book review they submit to library staff.

Adults have their own program, the Centennial Summer Celebration. They can visit any Heights library to submit an entry form for each book read or listened to, making them eligible for a chance to win weekly prizes as well as one of three grand prizes: a Samsung Galaxy Tab 4 Nook, a prize package of \$100 in gift cards, and a Kindle Fire HD 6. Adults can also enter the drawing each time they attend any summer library program for adults.

Details on Heights Libraries summer reading programs will be available soon at www.heightslibrary.org.

Julia Murphy is the marketing and volunteer coordinator for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.

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Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights



MARCH 21, 2016

All board members were present.

CH recognizes library's 100th anniversary

Cleveland Heights Mayor Cheryl Stephens presented the board with a proclamation from the city, staff and community on the library's 100th anniversary. The proclamation expresses appreciation for the library staff and board members.

Library board and CH-UH school board share strategic plans

Along with key staff, the two boards met to share information. Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District Superintendent Talisa Dixon talked about welcoming the community into the schools. The library asked that summer reading be made mandatory for students, and that the schools support Library Card Sign-up Month. In

addition, the library would like the schools to be active in the community read, *On the Same Page*, to begin next fall.

Family Connections update

Joanne Federman, executive director of Family Connections, gave a summary of 2015 activities, including 3,605 visits to Little Heights, which is housed at the Lee Road Library. A survey of participants is planned, with the understanding that it will be difficult to assess the outcomes of young children. Family Connections serves children from birth through kindergarten, featuring literacy and school readiness activities.

Lynda Library subscription extension

The library has had a single-user subscription to Lynda Library and has increased that to 35 users at an annual cost of \$13,125. This source is a leading online learning company with self-paced video tutorials in the areas of business, software, technology and creative skills. The Toledo and Cincinnati public libraries have used this service with success.

Public Library Association Award for Colin Tomele

Web developer Colin Tomele received the Public Library Association's John Liff Award for technological innovation, for the creation of Book-a-Room meeting room software created for Heights Libraries. This software has been made available to the [global] library community, and is now used by many libraries.

Lee Road Library circulation desk improvements

The circulation desk will have increased visibility and space for two lines of customers, with wheelchair accessibility from both sides. The return bins will have two compartments: one for books and one for movies and music.

ALA opposes unlocking smart phones

Sari Feldman, president of the American Library Association (ALA) and director of the Cuyahoga County Public Library, issued a statement including the language, "Library patrons have a right to privacy, as many access library catalogs and databases via their mobile devices. Previously, confidential information including patrons' e-book downloads, database use and other library records [would] be open to those within our government who might not follow correct procedures."

February Public Service Report

Heights Libraries and Friends of Heights Libraries sponsored the annual African-American Read In, with participants reading short selections from their favorite authors.

- New user registrations in February were 370.
- The Coventry Village Seed Library will reopen this spring in collaboration with the Cleveland Seed Bank. Participants can "borrow" heirloom organic seeds, and will be given information about their use and area seed-swapping events.
- The Girl Power Powwow Program, led by Monica Wilson, youth services associate, enabled teen girls to talk candidly about concerns with body image, harassment and safety. As a positive spin on talking behind one's back, each participant turned away from a dry-erase board while others wrote compliments about her.
- The popularity of adult coloring books led to the Colorpalooza program. Participants asked for this to be a monthly activity.
- The training department experimented with presenting an e-media program, Digital Magazines and Movies from the Library, in the Lee Road Library lobby. This location was successful in attracting customers and giving information about the class.
- Cassandra Anselmi, youth services associate, held a Pop-Up Makerspace for the afterschool crowd in the children's room. Seven children learned how to construct circuit boards.

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.

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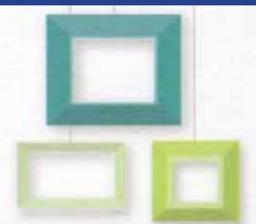
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What's going on at your library?

This month, Heights Library programs celebrate the library's first hundred years. For a complete list of events, and to register, visit www.heightslibrary.org.

for generations. This talk will illustrate the history of Heights libraries, schools and other public buildings.

Coventry Village Library

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400

Wednesday, May 4, 7 p.m.

Cedar-Coventry Author Series: Looking Back, Looking Forward: Coventry Village Through the Decades. Marian Morton, Cleveland Heights historian and author, and Bob Brown, photographer, city planner and Heights resident, explore the evolving character and potential of Coventry Village. A book signing will follow the presentation.

Noble Neighborhood Library

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665

Monday, May 9, 7 p.m.

Big Fun History of Toys, Pop Culture, and the Small Toy Store. Steve Presser, owner of Big Fun toy store, will discuss the history of toys through the ages, and the different fads, styles and changes in toys and toy stores through the 21st century. He will bring some toys from the past for an evening of reminiscing.

Lee Road Library

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

Wednesday, May 18, 7 p.m.

History of Cleveland Heights and University Heights Libraries, Schools and Public Buildings. Early civic leaders saw the need to build public facilities that would serve our communities and last

University Heights Library

13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

Monday, May 23, 6 p.m.

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Local author offers advice for family caregivers



SENIOR SCENE

Judith Eugene

Harriet Tramer is no stranger to the stress that can come with caring for an aging family member. The Cleveland Heights resident has written a book about the experiences she went through while caring for her aging mother.

Tramer wrote *Growing Up as She*

Grows Old to offer advice and helpful resources to others who are caring for aging family members. She hopes that reading about her experiences and the lessons she learned will help make the process easier for readers.

Citing statistics from The Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA), Tramer said she was prompted to write the book "because this issue is so pervasive." The FCA stated last year that approximately 34.2 million Americans had provided unpaid care to at least one adult age 50 or older in the preceding 12 months, and 82 percent of them

provided care for two adults.

"A lot of families are dealing with this issue at a huge cost," Tramer said. According to the FCA, the economic value of services provided by informal caregivers in 2013 was estimated at \$470 billion.

The stress and adverse health issues that caregiving can cause are well-documented. The Caregiver Action Network (CAN) cites studies that report 23 percent of those caring for loved ones for five years or more report their own health as fair or poor; 72 percent of caregivers do not go to the doctor as often as they should; 63 percent have poor eating habits; and 58 percent have declined or eliminated their exercise habits.

Tramer offered advice to help reduce caregiver stress. First, ask for help. "Don't try to do this alone," Tramer said. She recommended seeking care help through adult day care centers, respite care and home health aides. Her book contains precautions and checklists to follow when researching these options.

Tramer also suggested learning non-verbal ways of communicating with a loved one. People suffering from dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or stroke are not able to communicate as they once did. Art therapy and sound healing are methods for expression that do not use language. "These are ways they can still communicate," she said.

Finally, Tramer encouraged readers to reduce stress by maintaining their own physical and mental health. Her book suggests joining support groups, maintaining an exercise program and practicing mindfulness. "And be sure to get enough sleep," Tramer emphasized.

Local resources for caregiver assistance that Tramer endorses include the art therapy program at Ursuline College in Pepper Pike (440-449-4200), Peter B. Lewis Aquatic and Therapy Center exercise programs in Beachwood (216-595-7345), University Hospitals Medical House Calls program (216-844-5482), the Case Western Reserve University Mandel School of Geriatric Social Work (216-368-1655) and social workers at the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging (216-691-7342).

Growing Up as She Grows Old can be purchased through www.bibliopublishing.com and www.amazon.com. Tramer also hosts a radio show called "Aging Without Wrinkles" on the Artist First Radio Network (www.artistfirst.com). She writes a blog on aging issues at www.htramer.com and can be contacted at 216-321-8250.

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.lovingbandsgroup.com. She can be reached at 216-408-5578 or judith@lovingbandsgroup.com.

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. To receive the monthly schedule by e-mail, call 216-932-7800, ext. 205, or send an e-mail to info@universityheights.com.

May 5: Kevin Richards, founder of the Fairmount School of Music and the nonprofit Roots of American Music, has been a key figure in the Heights music scene for several decades. He'll discuss the work of his music school, which employs more than 15 instructors and offers lessons for a variety of instruments, as well as his nonprofit work to bring music into schools and senior citizen centers, thereby broadening the community's appreciation for music.

May 12: Accompanied by glorious clips from the best of traditional operetta and musical theater, Laura Neill, executive director of Ohio Light Opera (OLO), will unveil the lineup for OLO's 38th summer season: "Kiss Me Kate," "Annie Get Your Gun," "The Mikado," "Have a Heart," "La Vie Parisienne," "The Dancing Years"

and "The Little Dutch Girl." OLO performs June 18 through Aug. 13, at the College of Wooster.

May 19: Christine Moravec, assistant dean of Lerner College of Medicine at the Cleveland Clinic, will discuss her ground-breaking medical work. She was one of the first scientists to use an actual human heart in her more than 30 years of cardiology research. She pioneered the use of an electron microscope to measure calcium deposits in heart tissue, and a ventricular-assist device to help the heart recover by pumping blood while the patient awaits a transplant. John Carroll University, Moravec's alma mater, is presenting her with its 2016 Alumni Medal.

May 26: Lynn Zimmerman, chair of arts and humanities and professor of English at Notre Dame College, will critique the creative imagination of Lewis Carroll, a math lecturer at Oxford and author of *Alice in Wonderland*. In this classic children's tale, Zimmerman explores the psychology of childhood, the uncertainty of logic, and the question of what constitutes one's perception of reality.

CH Senior Center News

Amy Jenkins

The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center (SAC), located in the CH Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers a wide variety of programming for Cleveland Heights residents 60 and older.

May is Older Americans Month, and SAC will offer many special programs, including:

Thursday, May 5, 1 p.m.: Sing along to familiar folk tunes as SAC's guitar and ukulele group hosts a spring sing-along.

Tuesday, May 10, 11 a.m.: SAC's third annual Local Food Day will feature presentations and discussion on the topics of Food not Lawns, local farm markets and food scarcity. A healthy box lunch will be available following the program for those who reserve and pay in advance.

Thursday, May 12, 1:30 p.m.: A fitness talk with Tim Cavender, personal trainer at the CH Community Center, will explain the many benefits of exercise for seniors.

Tuesday, May 17, 11 a.m.: Metro Health physicians will give a wellness talk covering topics of interest to seniors.

Tuesday, May 24, 11 a.m.: Dennis R. Sutcliffe, local historian, presents Bloody Corner and Beyond: Cleveland's Prohibition Era Mob Bosses.

Thursday, May 26, 1 p.m.: An Older Americans Month forum, Women Who Inspire and Lead, will feature a panel of inspirational female leaders. (Sponsored by the Cleveland Heights Commission on Aging.)

The Senior Activity Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. A complete schedule of programs is published in the community center's newsletter, which is available at Cleveland Heights City Hall, local libraries, the community center and online at www.clevelandheights.com. For more information and to register for any program, call 216-691-7377.

Amy Jenkins is supervisor at the CH Office on Aging and the Senior Activity Center. She can be reached at 216-691-7379 or by e-mail at ajenkins@clvhts.com.

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Performances and poetry accompany openings at Heights Arts

Mary Ryan

Heights Arts has lined up a number of free events for arts lovers during the month of May. On Thursday, May 5, at 7 p.m., hear Cleveland-based chamber music ensemble Time Canvas present its third and final program of the 2015-16 concert season.

The program showcases 20th-century chamber music with strings, featuring Leo Brouwer's *Quintet for Guitar and String Quartet* (1958). Other works on the program include Sergei Prokofiev's *Sonata for Two Violins Op. 56* (1932), and Allen Krantz's *Trio Op. 27* for violin, cello, and guitar (2003). The ensemble will be joined by special guests Aniela Eddy on violin and Sarah Poe on viola.

Time Canvas's musical curiosity has culminated in performances throughout Northeast Ohio, where its members reside, and in performance spaces across the East Coast of the United States and in Bangkok, Thailand. Music clips can be heard at www.timecanvasensemble.org.

A new exhibition of drawings by Cleveland Heights artist Linda



Cleveland chamber music ensemble Time Canvas.

Ayala opens on Friday, May 6, with a public reception 6-9 p.m. in the spotlight gallery. Ayala noted about her work, "A few years ago, I became more mindful of the food I ate. My everyday reading turned to nutrition, recipes, and food as medicine. My reading led me to herbs and I became fascinated by the testimonies and studies of their medicinal qualities. This series of work is a display of these qualities, but each drawing is like a page taken out of a storybook. In this world, plants visually tell you what they heal. Animals and insects

make tinctures and teas. There's a lovely symbiosis in nature and we are invited to take part." Ayala's delicate and detailed drawings will be exhibited through June 18.

Things That Fly continues on view in the main gallery space. Exhibition artists Stephanie Craig, Maggie Denk-Leigh, Lori Kella, Peter Larson, Lynne Norwood Lofton, Lynn O'Brien and Christopher Owen Smith will discuss the nature and evolution of their work in *Ekphrastic: Artists Talk + Poets Respond* on May 19 at 7 p.m.

Christine Howey, Cleveland Heights poet laureate, has invited local poets AKeemjamal Rollins, Geoffrey Landis, Erin Gay, Azriel Johnson, Skylark Bruce and Terry Provost to respond with original poems inspired by select objects in the exhibition.

Rounding out the month is a special night just for the ladies, on Thursday, May 26. The Coventry Village and Cedar Lee shopping districts, along with Heights Arts, are planning an evening of food, fun, music, libation, fashion and activities to showcase the Heights's

unique and vibrant neighborhoods. For more details, visit www.heightsarts.org, or call 216-371-3457.

Mary Ryan is on staff at Heights Arts, a nonprofit community arts organization with a gallery shop, and exhibition and performance space, at 2175 Lee Road.



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Choral Arts Society presents Cleveland premiere

Marge Geiger

"The light shines in darkness and the darkness has not overpowered it." So begins the choral masterwork *Luminosity* by contemporary British composer James Whitbourn. Choral Arts Cleveland, under the direction of Cleveland Heights resident Martin Kessler, will perform the Cleveland premiere of this celebration of light and hope.

The concert, *Light and Shadow: Bodies and Voices in Motion*, will take place at Christ Episcopal Church, at 3445 Warrensville Center Road in Shaker Heights, at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 22. Rounding out the performance will be music by Alexandre Gretchaninoff, Morten Lauridsen, Gabriel Faure and Keith Hampton, all centered on the theme of light. The concert is funded in part by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

An innovative choral piece, *Luminosity* is a multi-media, multi-faceted experience. A salient feature of the work is the dance accompaniment that Whitbourn has made an essential and integral part of his composition. Dancers for the Choral Arts performance will be members of Cleveland's Verb Ballets, with choreography by company member Terence Greene. Choral voices and dance movement—"bodies and voices in motion"—will be accompanied by organ; viola; tam-tam, a large gong; and tanpura, a long-necked, four-stringed instrument found in various types of Eastern Indian music.

Whitbourn refers to his composition as one "conceived

with a visual counterpoint to the music in mind, coming in the form of art, dance and light as well as in the use of space. The focus in all the elements is on transcendent beauty and eternal love. It is likely to be symbolic, luminous and shapely in concept."

To create his celebration of light, Whitbourn assembled the choral sections from texts by St. John, Buddhist nun Ryonen, Isaac of Nineveh, Julian of Norwich, Theresa of Avila, and Augustine of Hippo. These texts, voices, instrumentation, and dance movements blend into a natural and harmonious whole that is both pleasing and accessible to those who avail themselves of the unique experience.

An artistic force in Cleveland Heights for 40 years, Choral Arts Cleveland, with its performance of *Luminosity*, continues its mission of bringing new artistry to its audiences. Along with staples from the classical repertoire, Choral Arts regularly introduces audiences to accessible contemporary artistic gems. Recently, these have included premieres of William Godfree's *Requiem*, Antony Pitts' *Jerusalem-Yerusalayim*, Robert Cohen's *Alzheimer's Stories*, and, in May 2015, Whitbourn's *Annelies*, an oratorio based on excerpts from the diary of Anne Frank.

Established in 1975 as a chorus comprising Cleveland Heights High School alumni and parents, Choral Arts members are predominantly residents of the Heights community. Director Martin Kessler is a graduate of Cleveland Heights High School, where he was student conductor of the Heights Choir. Retired from University School, where he served for 32 years as director of music,

Kessler is also the director of the Suburban Symphony Orchestra, an adjunct professor in Cleveland State University's Department of Music, and a composer and essayist. For more information on Choral Arts visit www.choralartscleveland.org.

Marge Geiger is a Choral Arts Society board member and singer, an English professor at Tri-C, and a 26-year Cleveland Heights resident. She is married to Joe Geiger, a retired Heights High English teacher.

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SONGS AND STORIES

David Budin

I thought of a good business to open: a dollar store. I think it would be good because I was driving around one day and I noticed a corner that didn't have one.

Remember when almost every corner had a drugstore—I guess it was in the 1980s. A Gray Drugs on one corner of an intersection, a Revco on another, a Medic on yet another. The concept was to build your store right near the other ones and just hope you'd be the eventual winner. And that was building them from the ground up, not taking over an existing space. It was a big gamble, especially when you multiplied it by, say, 100 stores around the region.

Before that, all those corners held gas stations. You know the intersection of Coventry and Mayfield, where there are two gas stations? Once there were three, the third standing on the southwest corner, where the convenience store is located now. That one was heavily damaged in the early '70s by a car bomb intended for a friend of legendary Cleveland mobster Danny Greene. The guy had become an enemy of Greene's, and evidence indicated that Greene himself detonated the bomb from a block away. The intended victim was not killed, but the garage was destroyed and then replaced by a new building housing stores. (A couple of years later, Greene was killed by a car bomb in Lyndhurst after a dentist appointment. That's why I never go to a dentist. You just never know.)

The fourth corner—where Pacific East Restaurant now stands—never was a gas station. From the '30s till the late '60s, it was a large drugstore—almost a small department store—called Coventry Drugs. (“Coventry drugs” took on new meaning in the late '60s and '70s, but that may be another column.)

When I was a kid, in the '50s and '60s, Coventry Road—the section now known as Coventry Village—featured three drugstores: Coventry Drugs, plus Uberstein's (at the corner of Coventry and Hampshire; later called Carroll Drugs, and now Hunan Coventry), and Merit Drugs at the bend (where Coventry melds into Euclid Heights Boulevard, home now of the Grog Shop and the Inn on Coventry). Merit became Ace Drugs and then the original location of Tommy's restaurant. The shopping district was also home to three bakeries, and two each of several other types of shops—fish

markets, delis, butcher shops and others. So I guess that trend of placing multiple versions of similar businesses is not any kind of new phenomenon, at least not here.

After the gas stations and the drugstores came bagel shops and then coffee shops. Or were the bagel shops after the coffee shops? Anyway, now it's dollar stores. When I was a kid, these kinds of places were called dime stores. Apparently dollar stores are 10 times better than those.

I read in a recent *Sun Press* police blotter section that a cashier at a Cleveland Heights dollar store was robbed. I guess the robber got away with a big bag of dollar bills. Danny Greene would not approve. I'm sure he'd advise the robber to think much bigger than that.

When the Dollar General opened on the corner of Lee Road and East Overlook Road, I read in a newspaper that a man was arrested while walking down the street after stealing \$72.50 worth of merchandise from that store. Well, first of all, of course you're going to get caught walking down the street with \$72.50 worth of stuff from a dollar store, because \$72.50 worth of stuff from the dollar store comes out to 72 and a half items. I did the math. And you can't hide 72 and a half items—not most of them, anyway. Anyone could see that you stole those things, if you're walking down the street with them, and without bags from the store. A smarter thief would have thought to steal some bags, too.

But a smarter thief would also know that, while \$72.50 worth of merchandise from a better store—a place like Saks Fifth Avenue—might equal one-half of a shirt, it's also true, and much more significant, that 72 and a half items from Saks Fifth Avenue could be worth \$15,000.

So, if I could talk to that thief (because Danny Greene is no longer around to counsel him), I'd tell him that if you're the kind of person who steals things, then you probably understand that there is always a good chance you'll get caught. And you understand that if you get caught, you'll get arrested—whether you're stealing from a dollar store or Saks Fifth Avenue. So if you understand that, if you know and understand the risks involved, and you're still willing to take that chance, here's my advice: Steal better stuff.

Oh, and, you know . . . don't break the law.

David Budin is a freelance writer for national and local publications, the former editor of Cleveland Magazine and Northern Ohio Live, an author, and a professional musician and comedian. His writing focuses on the arts and, especially, pop-music history.

FutureHeights presents 'The Bloodless Jungle'

Richard Stewart



Peter Lawson Jones

Peter Lawson Jones's new play, "The Bloodless Jungle," tells the story of State Senator Ethan St. John, a rising political star who is running for a pivotal seat in Congress. In the midst of the campaign, his best friend from high

school is accused of a serious crime and St. John is faced with a daunting choice: does he abandon his friend, whom he believes may be innocent, and focus on winning the election, or risk jeopardizing the campaign by supporting his friend? The play centers around the decision he makes and its consequences.

FutureHeights will present a staged reading of the play to benefit its Heights Community Development Alliance (HCDA) program on Sunday, June 5, at Ensemble Theatre. The two-

act drama, directed by Terrance Spivey, former Karamu House artistic director, features a diverse cast, including veteran Cleveland TV news anchor and reporter Leon Bibb.

Jones is well versed in the perils of politics. In a career as an elected official that spanned 22 years, he served as a Cuyahoga County Commissioner, a member of the Ohio House of Representatives, and as the vice mayor and a councilman in the City of Shaker Heights. He believes strongly in the power of local communities. "I am pleased to stage this reading of my new play as a benefit for the Heights Community Development Alliance program of FutureHeights, which is working to fill vacant storefronts in the Heights and drive more visitors to local businesses," said Jones.

A member of SAG-AFTRA and Actor's Equity, Jones has appeared in nearly 20 films, in numerous stage productions and on network television. His drama "The Family Line" has been successfully produced at Karamu as well as at Harvard University and Ohio University.

Deanna Bremer Fisher, FutureHeights executive director, said that funds raised by the reading will go toward developing a map-based database of commercial properties in Cleveland Heights that will enable its HCDA program to actively manage programs designed to fill vacancies and enhance the pedestrian climate in the 11 neighborhood-serving business districts in Cleveland Heights. "I'm delighted that Peter is supporting us in

this way," she said, "and thrilled to be hosting an event at Ensemble Theatre, our neighbor at the Coventry building."

Ensemble is a nonprofit small professional theatre founded in 1979 by Lucia Colombi. The theater is dedicated to the responsible production of works that celebrate the human spirit drawn from the rich canon of modern American classics as well as other significant contemporary plays. Receiving both audience and critical acclaim for its many productions, the theater has made its home in the Coventry school building, 2843 Washington Blvd., since 2011.

Tickets, available at www.ensembletheatrecl.com, are \$15 for the staged reading and talk-back, which begins at 3 p.m. Patron tickets, which include a 2 p.m. wine and cheese reception at the FutureHeights office, located in Suite 105 of the Coventry school building, are \$35. Attendees can also choose to sponsor the event by making a donation of \$50 or more. Sponsors receive priority seating and recognition in the event program.

Save your ticket stub after the show to enjoy a same-day discount at participating Heights restaurants. A list of participating restaurants can be found at www.futureheights.org. For more information, call FutureHeights at 216-320-1423 or Ensemble Theatre at 216-321-2930.

Richard Stewart is owner of Digizoom Media and president of the FutureHeights board of directors.

Images by CH artist keep viewers looking

Lee Batdorff

"People like order, finding patterns, seeing archetypes" said Stephen Calhoun, a 61-year-old self-trained artist from Cleveland Heights.

The Grasp of Order, a show of 15 of Calhoun's large, colorful digital works—described as "psychedelic still life"—will be on view at The Gallery at Gray's (within Gray's Auctioneers and Appraisers, 10717 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, 216-226-3300, www.graysauctioneers.com/gallery) until this fall. An opening reception will take place on Friday, May 6, 5-8 p.m.

Calhoun produces the images, some as large as 4 by 6 feet, using an ultraviolet curable inkjet large format printer at Vista Color Imaging in Cleveland. Unframed, the pieces are printed onto aluminum, brushed aluminum, or the underside of clear optical acrylic.

Most of the works start from digital photographs of select objects set amidst natural debris Calhoun finds in his neighborhood.

"I have an eye on people's tree lawns and garage sales," said Calhoun.

Calhoun arranges each collection of aged curled leaves, seedpods, sticks, found objects, and more, and then photographs them from directly above.

Next, the photographs are halved or quartered, and portions are removed. Calhoun works with the remainder and creates a mirror image, resulting in a symmetric composition.

Calhoun spends many hours on each work, manipulating individual pixels and using other techniques to arrive at the final image—most of which he then digitally enlarges by a factor of 5 to ten.



Four Observers by Stephen Calhoun.

In two of these images, rare, definable humanoid figures—an angel and a Buddha—poke forth, through a froth of natural ground cover—kitsch or psyche?

Other images are more cryptic, yet uncannily familiar to anyone who's walked down a residential suburban sidewalk amidst fallen leaves during autumn.

"Each piece is a result of an experiment," Calhoun said. "I don't do an experiment a second time. Ninety percent of the experiments don't cut it, and are discarded."

Calhoun's intention is for the viewers to be engaged in completing each experiment. (This viewer likes his work best where much is undetermined and left up to the viewer. It keeps me looking.)

To view additional images of Calhoun's work, visit www.squareone-learning.com/my-naive-art.

Lee Batdorff has been a Cleveland Heights resident since 1966, and is a friend of Stephen Calhoun.

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Pacific East owners open new fusion restaurant

Bob Rosenbaum

Freeman and Susan Ngo, owners of the popular Pacific East restaurant in Coventry Village, have opened a new restaurant in the Cedar Center North shopping plaza in South Euclid, at 13911 Cedar Road.

Named Pacific Grill, the new restaurant is not just another location of the original. It features "Asian fusion" cuisine and, to the best of Susan Ngo's knowledge, is the first in the region to offer Burmese-inspired dishes such as tea leaf salad, catfish chowder in ginseng broth, and grilled whole red snapper.

"It's a cross between fast casual



Pacific Grill restaurant at Cedar Center North offers Burmese-inspired flavors from the owners of Pacific East.

and more formal sit-down dining," Freeman Ngo said. "I started with the vision that a fast casual restaurant

is not just burgers, burritos and fried chicken. It can be healthier, better quality food, cooked to order."

The new restaurant serves lunch and dinner, and opens at 11 a.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon on Sunday.

"If you are looking for something out of the ordinary, this place will take your taste buds to the Far East with signature noodle dishes, flavored

rice and fresh grilled seafood, meat and vegetables," Freeman Ngo said.

Freeman Ngo, a native of Malaysia, opened Pacific East on Coventry Road in 2002. That restaurant is noted for its sushi and is believed to be the region's only restaurant featuring Malaysian cuisine.

Pacific Grill offers different flavors and a different experience, but the same care for fresh foods prepared well, Susan Ngo said.

Cleveland Heights resident Bob Rosenbaum is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee, and is responsible for its advertising sales and market development.

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Ten Thousand Villages plans anniversary celebrations

Laura Potter-Sadowski

This year, Ten Thousand Villages in Cleveland Heights is celebrating five years in the Cedar Fairmount district. Originally located in downtown Cleveland, Ten Thousand Villages has been bringing fair-trade handicrafts to the Greater Cleveland area for 13 years. Named "Best Place to Buy a Gift" in the 2013 Future-Heights Best of the Heights Awards, Ten Thousand Villages has become a mainstay for unique, handcrafted items.

Ten Thousand Villages supports more than 130 artisan groups in developing countries, such as Burkina Faso, Chile, Pakistan and others. Each item represents fair wages, healthcare and education for its artisans, especially women. As a nonprofit organization, Ten Thousand Villages prides itself on serving the Cleveland Heights community through educational outreach, such as school visits and community partnerships.

Over the past five years, Ten Thousand Villages has donated more than \$10,000 to organizations, including the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District, The Music Settlement, and the Dougbe River School of Liberia. The store is able to do this through community shopping

nights, in which a percentage of sales benefit a nonprofit's mission.

To celebrate the store's fifth anniversary in Cleveland Heights in May, Ten Thousand Villages has planned some special events. A sale on all jewelry runs through Mother's Day, May 8. The store will also host a clearance sale from Thursday, May 12, to Sunday, May 15.

This sale will feature an abundance of merchandise, and proceeds will fund the store's ongoing efforts to update its technology, along with other in-store improvements.

A party featuring the work of local artist Higo Gabarronordorica Muñozflores will be held on Friday, May 13, 6-8 p.m. Visitors can expect good food and many fair-trade finds at these events.

Other events are planned throughout the year, including a summer fundraiser at Nighttown on Friday, July 15, and the annual Rug Event at the Alcazar, Sept. 22-25. For more information on events and partnership opportunities, visit www.tenthousandvillages.com/clevelandheights.

Laura Potter-Sadowski is executive director of Ten Thousand Villages, and a Heights Community Congress board member.

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Culture comes to Cedar Lee corner



Inside the new Culture store on Lee Road.

James Henke

A new Cleveland Heights store opened in mid-April, at 2150 Lee Road, on the southwest corner of Cedar and Lee roads. Called Culture Footwear and Apparel, the store is located in the space that had been occupied by Abrash Gallerie for 11 years. Abrash closed on Sept. 7, 2015.

Culture sells a variety of urban apparel for both men and women, including sporting clothes and athletic boots and shoes. The Cleveland Heights store is the third Culture location to open in Greater Cleveland within the past year. The first Culture store opened last June in the Fifth Street Arcade in downtown Cleveland, and a second store opened in April, at 16832 Chagrin Blvd. in Shaker Heights.

Morad Ali, a 33-year-old who grew up in Westlake and currently lives in downtown Cleveland, owns all three stores.

After graduating from high school, Ali studied business management at Cuyahoga Community College. Neither he nor any of his family members have a background in the retail business. "But I did a lot of shopping when I was younger," he said. "I would go to Beachwood Place mall a lot, because all of the stuff I liked was there."

A few years ago, Ali opened a

store called The Walk, at East 55th Street and Superior Avenue, that sold shoes for men. About a year ago, someone came into his store and told him about the available space in the Fifth Street Arcade. He decided to close the East 55th Street store, open Culture in the arcade, and expand his offering of products.

Ali said that he had long wanted to have a store in Cleveland Heights. At one point, he said, he looked at a space next to Edible Arrangements on South Taylor Road, but he wasn't able to work out a deal.

"One day I saw that the Abrash space was available, and I instantly knew I had to have it," Ali said. "I love it here, and this was the best business decision I've ever made." Expressing his great love of Cleveland Heights, Ali said, "I love the people, and I love everything else about this city. There's nothing I don't like here." In the near future, said Ali, he plans to move from downtown to Cleveland Heights.

Ali noted that his first week of business at the Cleveland Heights store was excellent, and sales were high. While most of his customers are teenagers and young adults, he said he also has many older customers. "Our stock is a mix of athletic items and other things," he said. "We carry a lot of athletic shoes, but we also carry casual shoes."

PetPeople opens Heights store

Terri Montigny

PetPeople, a Columbus-based pet supply retailer, opened a new University Heights location on April 15, at 13932 Cedar Road in the Cedar Center South Shopping Center.

The store, PetPeople's eighth in Northeast Ohio, carries natural pet foods, treats and supplies, and features two self-service dog wash/bathing areas.

As part of its grand-opening celebration, the University Heights store donated 10 percent of its sales to Friends of the Cleveland Kennel, supporting the City Dogs Cleveland program. For more information about PetPeople, and other animal-related charities the company supports, visit www.petpeoplestores.com.

Terri Montigny is the community relations manager for PetPeople stores.



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"I always wanted to have multiple locations for my stores," he said. "That way, you get better name recognition. Already people coming into the new store ask if it's affiliated with the downtown store."

Culture is open seven days a week, and opens at 11 a.m. every day. It's open until 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and until 4:30 p.m. on Sundays.

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. He is on the board of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

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CH residents open fitness club on South Taylor

James Henke

A new fitness club opened on Jan. 15 at 2086 South Taylor Road, next to Cafe Tandoor, near Cedar Road. Called CrossFit I/O, it's owned by two Cleveland Heights residents, Michael and Jodi Meilstrup.

At CrossFit, members work out with other members. "You work out as a team," Jodi said. "We work out in a way that our bodies naturally move, to become stronger and more fit. You use your entire body for almost every exercise. For example, if you are rowing, you use your legs, your back, your stomach and your arms."

The CrossFit chain was started in 2000, and there are now more than 13,000 affiliates around the world. "I believe that a new affiliate opens every nine days," Michael said.

The Meilstrups started training at a CrossFit club in Broadview Heights about four years ago. "It was so great," Jodi said. "We were talking about it all of the time, and we kept thinking it would be great to bring it into our community. Then the opportunity came up for this space."

The Meilstrups said they added "I/O" to the name for a variety of reasons. "It stands for



Michael and Jodi Meilstrup in front of CrossFit I/O.

Input/Output and Inside/Out," Michael said. "Also, our state is OH I/O, and one of Jupiter's moons is called Io, and it's the most volcanically active body in the entire solar system."

Jodi, 45, grew up in Euclid and Kirtland and graduated from Kirtland High School. She has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1994, and she also works as a server at Nighttown. Michael, also 45, grew up in Lakewood. He has been a member of the Cleveland Heights Police Department for 14 years, and is currently a lieutenant. The Meilstrups are the parents of

six children, ranging in age from 6 to 25 years old.

Club memberships range in price: \$120 a month for a 12-month membership; \$135 a month for a six-month membership; and \$150 a month for a month-to-month membership. The club offers 30 percent discounts to members of safety forces, the military, students, teachers and couples. It also offers discounts to members of the Cleveland Heights Police Department and to owners of Heights businesses.

Classes, limited to eight members, take place at 5 a.m., 6:15

a.m., 9:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. There is also a 9 a.m. class on Saturdays, and there is an open gym on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.crossfitio.com.

The Meilstrups are considering offering free yoga classes on Sunday mornings, and hope to start offering kids' programs, for children ages 5 through 13 or 14, later this spring.

The couple, who live on Alpine Road, near Monticello Boulevard and Noble Road, love the Heights. "It's such a close-knit, diverse community," Michael said. "At CrossFit, we really cater to the diverse Heights community. And, in fact, you can't get much more diverse than our members."

"We meet so many awesome people here," Jodi said. "And it's another way to welcome people into our community. It's the best thing I've ever done."

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. He is on the board of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.



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