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

Boss Dog is Best New Business

Deanna Bremer Fisher

In the 2018 Best of the Heights Awards contest, readers of the *Heights Observer* honored outstanding businesses in Cleveland Heights and University Heights by voting, Jan. 1 through Feb. 15, for their favorites in 12 categories. In all, 174 businesses were nominated.

Boss Dog Brewing Co. (2179 Lee Road), a craft brewery and gastro-pub owned by Josh and Jason Sweet, prevailed over finalists Barrio and Zoma Ethiopian Restaurant to win **Best New Business**. The brothers opened Boss Dog in the former Lemon Grass space in November 2017 after more than 15 months of extensive renovations.

"We are doing well," said Josh Sweet. "The community has been very supportive, and we appreciate



Jason and Josh Sweet, owners of Boss Dog Brewing Company, which was voted Best New Business in the FutureHeights 2018 Best of the Heights Awards.

that." The brothers are looking forward to the spring when they can complete the rear patio. "It may look like there is a lot more still to do, but we are all ready to go. We just need to finish up the fence and get the tables and chairs out there."

Just up the road, at 2163 Lee Road, is the place *Heights Observer*

readers dubbed **Best Place to Hang Out in a Snowstorm**, the landmark Cedar Lee Theatre, which edged out neighbors Phoenix Coffee and Stone Oven for the honor. Jonathan Forman was surprised but pleased.

Forman has owned the theater since the late 1970s. Originally from

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Steve Presser in an outfit "from Afghanistan," created by artist Debbie Apple-Presser, his wife.

Merchant of Happiness: Celebrating the end of an era at Coventry's Big Fun

Shari Nacson

"It is difficult when our iconic businesses move on, and we will deeply miss Big Fun, Steve and his staff," said Suzanne DeGaetano, owner of Mac's Backs-Books on Coventry.

"Big Fun is unique and irreplaceable, and it created important family memories for a whole generation. Its closing is part of the business cycle we will have to adjust to." This sentiment rings from merchant to

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Coventry property will transfer to Heights Libraries

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education (BOE) and the CH-UH Public Library System (Heights Libraries) have reached an agreement on the future of the former Coventry school property. On Feb. 5, the library board voted to accept from the school district the six-acre property, including the school building, playground and greenspace; on Feb. 20 the school board voted to transfer the property to Heights Libraries for \$1. The transaction will close on March 31.

In 2017, upon learning of the school district's desire to sell the property, current tenants of the building formed Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus and presented a unified vision for an arts and educational center. The library's Coventry branch abuts the property at the corner of Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard, and provides to the only free parking for the branch.

Ohio Revised Code allows school districts to transfer property to libraries in their communities. While the library is exploring the use of some of the space in the former school building for its own programs, it is also interested in maintaining the public status of the land, which Grant Deming had donated in 1917 for "public, educational use."

At a special meeting on Feb. 5, James Roosa, library board member, introduced a resolution authorizing the library to execute an agreement to purchase the property and negotiate and sign leases with the tenants. The motion passed unanimously.

Current tenants of the Coventry building have signed Letters of Interest (LOI) to negotiate leases with the library.

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Third annual Coventry Kids Day is March 11

Shari Nacson

It's that time of year. Arctic temperatures. Black ice. Snow days. Vortex days. The trifecta of snow, ice and mud. Households get a little squirrely after a few too many wintry weeks indoors. Coventry Village Special Improvement District (CVSID), as part of its mission to make Coventry Village a wonderful place in which to live, work and play, has a plan to combat the stir-crazy nature of winter in Greater Cleveland. And it's all free

of charge.

On Sunday, March 11, noon to 4 p.m., the third annual Coventry Kids Day will create a party atmosphere throughout the district.

"It's a way to celebrate the community," said Angie Hetrick, executive director of CVSID. "We wanted to create a free day of fun to celebrate the families in the Heights."

There will be balloons for kids throughout the district. Scheduled activities include a bubble party at Picadilly Artisan Creamery; Moana

(yes, Disney's Moana) giving hula lessons and hosting a dance party at The Grog Shop; caricatures at Panini's Bar & Grill; crafts at In the 216 and Mac's Backs-Books on Coventry; face painting at Cleveland Candle Company; and yoga for kids at Confluence. (Registration is required for the yoga activity. To register, go to www.coventryvillage.org).

Coventry Kids Day is one of many community-building strategies hosted by CVSID. "This is

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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.

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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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 April issue must be submitted by March 12. 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.

Thinking about Big Fun's going-out-of-business sale

Bob Rosenbaum

Big Fun is about childhood—revisiting our own, enriching our children's, and then watching our children discover nostalgia for themselves.

Big Fun is about commerce. It's a tourist attraction in an unlikely place, and an anchor for Coventry Village and Cleveland Heights—reliably drawing more than its fair share of traffic. Its presence has probably enriched other businesses more than it's enriched the owner, Steve Presser.

Big Fun is about community. Steve is everybody's close friend, whether he knows you or not. I'm not sure he's ever turned down a reasonable request to support a local cause.

Mostly, though, Big Fun is about fun. Where else in the world has had an annual pie fight? Even if you have no desire to own fake dog poop or a Hillary Clinton nutcracker, a circuit through Big Fun is always worth whatever time and money you end up spending.

When I've talked with Steve over the past few years, one of his recurring frustrations has been how online merchants were cutting into business. And more, the lengths to which people would go rub it in. They'd find merchandise in his store and then search on their smart phones to see if it was available for less online. Sometimes, they'd order it while standing right there.

We've been hearing stories like this for a decade now. But Big Fun's



In the days after people learned the store would close, the crowds inside Big Fun have been larger than usual.

demise makes it real.

I don't mean to overstate the case here; there are a variety of factors that contributed to Steve's decision to close the store, and this is just one of them.

But if you're looking for a lesson in Big Fun closing, consider this:

At a time when so many people question whether their voice matters, the money you spend is, in fact, the most effective vote you have.

It's a vote for whether you prefer the dehumanizing environment of giant retailers or the experience of shopping in any of our many unique, locally owned shops. It's a vote for the very character of this community.

I'm not suggesting a boycott of big businesses; I don't presume to tell anybody where to shop. I'm just urging people to be mindful that where they spend their money has an impact.

I could make the case for how much more pleasant it is to shop in

small boutiques. How, if you pay attention to unit cost, the prices often compare well with the big box.

I could cite research demonstrating how a dollar spent with an independent merchant does far more for the local economy than a dollar spent at a national outlet. I could point out that many of our local shop owners are also our neighbors.

But it's simpler than that. If you want our wealth of unique, independent, locally owned stores like Big Fun to stay in business, you have the power to help. Try to spend your money with them before spending it elsewhere.

We vote with our wallets. Vote wisely.

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

An ode to Big Fun

To the Editor:

I wrote this poem in response to the *Heights Observer* article about Big Fun's closing:

BIG FUN

I heard that BIG FUN is done
So where will I get another potato gun? Don't tell me that fun is over and done
Just tell me the good guys have won
Don't tell me that BIG FUN is done
Don't make me go shop at Amazon
Let's open the blinds to let in the sun
And tell me the good guys have won

BIG FUN's not ready for heaven
C'mon Steve let's do another 27
Don't close up the store we'll miss you a ton
Just tell me that BIG FUN's not done

Steve is Coventry's Adam
Debbie is Coventry's Eve
Let's keep BIG FUN open a little bit more
Don't just pick up and leave
Don't tell me that BIG FUN is done

Don't make me go shop at Amazon
We can go to Tommy's for a burger on a bun
Let's open the blinds and let in the sun
When it comes to fun BIG is the sine qua non
Oh tell me the good guys have won.

Barry Zucker
University Heights

February letter contained misguided views about Citizens United

To the Editor:

Just when I thought my level of bewilderment has peaked in regard to the political beliefs of fellow citizens, I read Robert Schwab's attempt at "educating" readers on his interpretation of Citizens United v. FEC. I'm not sure where his political or business interests lie, but to believe that this 2010 Supreme Court decision benefits democracy in our country for rank and file citizens? My amazement has reached a new level.

To be clear, I am not interested in fencing with his chosen political party. We all know that never works. I am concerned about miseducation regarding this topic to our community members and voters. The notion that giving corporations the same right to free speech as individuals is good for our democracy is a dangerous one. To allow corporations and other entities the ability to use unlimited money streams ANONYMOUSLY to fund corporate lobbying interests is a blatant attack on the residue of our democracy.

If one believes that large U.S. corporations that pay no business taxes should be given the same rights to free speech as a real person, then we have reached a new dimension

of cynicism. Using the example of shrinking unions, which now only make up 7 percent of the private sector workplace, further proves how desperately weak their point is.

Dave DiBiase
Cleveland Heights

CH should join in national discussion on gun violence

To the Editor:

In 1994 Congress passed, and President Clinton signed, a ban on the manufacture for civilian use of certain semi-automatic firearms defined as assault weapons and certain ammunition magazines. In 2004 the ban expired and was not renewed. In Ohio, some municipalities were able to withstand pressure from the NRA and the state of Ohio that was undermining local governments' authority to continue the assault weapon ban until 2010, when the Supreme Court of Ohio and the attorney general were able to preempt and invalidate the local assault weapons ban.

(The facts above are from Dennis Kucinich's website dealing with this issue.)

We do not need to enumerate the number of mass shooting incidents across the United States since

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Change the charter to directly elect CH mayor

Gary Benjamin

I drafted a statement of my opinion and submitted it to the CH Charter Review Commission (CRC). I would encourage everyone write in and let your voice be heard.

I have attended two CRC meetings. At one, a resident stood up and said that he didn't care who the elected council members wanted as mayor; he cared who he, as a voter, wanted as mayor. I thought this simple statement got to the heart of the debate between having a mayor directly elected by the voters as opposed to a "mayor" selected by four of the seven CH council members.

If we are focused on American values and the accountability of our government officials, the mayor elected directly by the people wins. It comes right out of the democratic ethos and is the dominant form of government for municipalities in Northeast Ohio.

A directly elected mayor sets the tone, or the vision, for the municipality in ways that a city manager cannot. The manager reports to seven people—each of whom may have his or her own vision—and must give equal weight to each. The skills of a CEO, such as management, public speaking, motivating, selling ideas, and a variety of other skills, are needed or at least preferred for a mayor. And we, the voters, [would] directly evaluate the skills of the [mayoral] candidates without having our judgment filtered [through] council.

The council-elected mayor needs to be a "presider" over a small group, not a CEO. That presider needs to keep four people satisfied with his or her performance. The council is electing a presiding officer over its own deliberations. These skills of a presiding officer are important, but they are not really what we need a mayor to be doing.

An elected official, like a mayor, needs to be the CEO that residents can hold accountable. The city manager should act as the COO reporting to the mayor, as CEO.

There are those who argue that "it ain't broke, so don't fix it." We have a good city manager and an active council and are well served by both. But to get a policy idea, like the Community Development Corporation, adopted took years too long. It would have been available to mitigate the damage caused by the downturn and the foreclosure crisis if it had been implemented earlier.

Our city charter was last revised in 1986, 32 years ago, when our population was 11,000 souls higher. I believe that we are losing population because of the slowed reactions of a city government that cannot respond quickly, especially to economic development opportunities. In 1986, technology was very different than it is today, and speed was not a virtue. Acting more quickly is a necessity at times. Today, the actions of the state, federal and county governments can affect us locally swiftly. An elected mayor with a vision for this city would serve us better, in my judgment, than our present, slower-to-make-decisions system.

I have worked in places where I have had more than one boss. What happens if I do something that one of my bosses likes, and the other does not? I don't do it, that's what. With seven bosses this dynamic of "inaction is safer than action" is magnified. I am unabashedly and wholeheartedly for changing to a directly elected mayor with CEO authority.

Gary Benjamin is an attorney in private practice in Cleveland Heights who has been active in local governance since 2009.

LETTER continued from page 2

1999—it's been done so many times over the last week in the media. Suffice it to say that hundreds of children and adults have been killed or injured by someone using this kind of weapon, equipped with high-capacity magazines allowing such unbelievable destruction to be committed in just a few minutes.

Can we not resolve, in the city of Cleveland Heights, that banning such weapons would serve the best interests of our community? Can we not join the national discussion that is happening now, thanks in large part to the marvelous young

people in Florida, where the latest horror happened, who are forcefully raising their voices to demand change?

Local communities and school boards across the country should join in these efforts. What is there to lose besides more children and teachers? Years ago, Cleveland Heights passed a resolution that declared the city a Nuclear Free Zone. Do we have the energy and courage to do the same regarding assault weapons?

Susan and Christopher Wood
Cleveland Heights

CH needs a full-time mayor

Tony Cuda

Cleveland Heights needs to elect a full-time mayor. Currently, our part-time city council elects a part-time mayor who has no executive power. The city manager (a full-time position) is hired by city council and runs the day-to-day operations of the city.

Our city has decent city services and a school system that is moving in the right direction. But the problems we have require a full-time elected mayor with the vision, the time and the skills to move our city forward. The problems are:

- Almost no economic development compared to our neighboring cities (look at South Euclid and University Circle). Cleveland Heights is clearly being passed over.
- 150 vacant lots; hundreds of vacant and foreclosed homes; a slower rebound in our previously declining home values; and a very, very slow response to these problems.
- A shrinking population creating a shrinking tax base which puts more of a financial burden on the rest of us.

Here is my argument:

A city manager is not charged with laying out a vision for the city. City council can hire and fire the city manager, but that is not oversight. Our city council members work full-time jobs, just like we do. When they get off work, so do the city employees. There is no day-to-day oversight by an elected official.

Cleveland Heights is a huge enterprise with all the problems that go with inner-ring suburbs. The idea that

a part-time city council can lay out and execute a vision for a city this large and complicated is not realistic. Ask any of the council members if they could do their day jobs if they could only devote one-third of the time they currently do to take care of their responsibilities. I couldn't. And no matter what they do for a living, it is less complicated and less demanding than running a large, inner-ring suburb.

City government should be the closest form of government to the people, not the farthest removed. Our country is based on the concept of federalism; that means three levels of government—federal, state and local. Currently, if you have a problem with our city, you tell an unelected, part-time mayor with no executive authority to go to our unelected city manager to resolve the issue.

I have heard people say they are worried that someone would be elected that would not be good for the city. I say, that is our responsibility! I don't care for the current president, but I still want to have a democratically elected government. We have plenty of talent in Cleveland Heights. Don't let anyone tell you that we cannot govern ourselves democratically.

Cleveland Heights has not elected a full-time mayor in more than 100 years. Our city charter has not been reviewed for more than 30 years. The Charter Review Commission needs to hear from you! It meets every first and third Thursday at CH City Hall at 7 p.m. Make your voices heard!

Tony Cuda is a Cleveland Heights resident.

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Palm Sunday: March 25th
We will worship at 8:30am and 11:00am. All children and parents are invited to join us in the narthex at the beginning of the 11:00am service for the procession with palm branches. Childcare is available for ages 0-5.

Maundy Thursday: March 29th
Join us for worship for all ages at 6:30pm. Childcare is available for ages 0-5.

Easter Worship Services: Sunday, April 1st at 9:00am & 11:00am
Easter brings festive music for brass, organ and choir. Childcare is available for ages 0-5.
*Community Easter Egg Hunt at 10:00am

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A few more thoughts on Democracy Day



HEIGHTS OF DEMOCRACY

Carla Rautenberg and Deborah Van Kleef

In our January column, we wrote about the history of Democracy Day in Cleveland Heights. Since we were writing for the *Heights Observer*, we kept our focus local. However, Robert Shwab's letter to the editor in response to that column, published in the February issue, takes a national view. That letter contained some misconceptions, which several readers have asked us to address.

Cleveland Heights Move to Amend is part of a national non-partisan movement calling for a constitutional amendment stating "that only human beings, not corporations, are legal persons with Constitutional rights, and that money is not the equivalent of speech."

The legal concept of "corporate personhood" dates back to the 19th century; but it gained national momentum after the 2010 Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission ruling by the Supreme Court.

Shortly before the 2008 presidential primary, the Federal Election Commission (FEC) prevented the nonprofit organization Citizens United from airing a film critical of candidate Hillary Clinton. Mr. Shwab stated that Clinton's supporters sought to "stop the film and/or punish the producers." In fact, the FEC's action was solely in response to the timing of the film's airing. The McCain-Feingold Act of 2002 (also known as the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act or BCRA) barred corporations (for-profit and non-profit) and unions from broadcasting election-related communication within 30 days of a primary or 60 days of a general election. Citizens United was simply too late. However, it sued the federal government and, in 2009, the case reached the Supreme Court.

On Jan. 21, 2010, the Court ruled 5-4 in favor of Citizens United. The majority held that it was unconstitutional to prohibit a corporation from paying for "electioneering communication" under the provisions of the BCRA, and further defined campaign contributions as a form of speech. To prohibit a corporation from contributing to or airing a campaign film therefore violated its freedom of speech under the First Amendment. Justice John Paul Stevens' dissent was vigorous: "Corporations have no consciences, no beliefs, no feelings, no thoughts, no desires. Corporations help structure and facilitate the activities of human beings. . . . But they are not in themselves members of We the

People by whom and for whom our Constitution was established."

Critics of the decision are by no means all "left-wing ideologues."

Dale Robertson, a founder of the Tea Party, stated, "Corporations are not like people. Corporations exist forever, people don't. Our founding fathers never wanted them, these behemoth organizations that never die. . . . It puts the people at a tremendous disadvantage."

And Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) described the ruling as "the most misguided, naïve, uninformed, egregious decision of the United States Supreme Court in the 21st century."

Abolishing corporate personhood would not abolish freedom of speech on behalf of corporations. Greg Coleridge of Move to Amend points out, "There is nothing in the We the People Amendment that prevents any individual connected to a corporation or union from using their individual constitutional rights to oppose threats against corporate property or interests. But it's individuals who have the rights, not corporations."

We agree with Mr. Shwab that "campaign finance laws have been ineffective, and have actually driven money away from political parties and toward billionaires." Why? Existing laws before and since Citizens United have never challenged the money equals free speech constitutional doctrine that dates to the 1976 Buckley v. Valeo decision.

The website www.opensecrets.org demonstrates the results of that folly with these figures from the 2016 election:

- Average winner spent: \$1,495,633 (House of Representatives); \$12,159,217 (Senate)
- Average loser spent: \$354,116 (House); \$5,796,020 (Senate)

Corporations and billionaires hire entire legal teams to defend their positions in our political system; we hardly think they need Robert Shwab to champion their claims as well. Our democracy, however, needs all of us to fight for real constitutional rights for individuals, and for the ability to regulate spending on elections.

On Jan. 25, Cleveland Heights City Council hosted Democracy Day 2018, which about 50 people attended. Testimony offered by 20 individuals addressed the widely ranging ways in which corporate constitutional rights and big money in politics negatively impact our democracy and the daily lives of Cleveland Heights citizens. For all of the details, go to the city's website, www.clevelandheights.com, click on the City Hall tab, then Government, then Agendas and Minutes, and scroll down to Public Hearings 2018.

Carla Rautenberg is an activist and a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident. Deborah Van Kleef is a musician and writer, who has lived in Cleveland Heights for most of her life. Contact them at heightsdemocracy@gmail.com.

Silence is the enemy of change



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

Five years ago, I was among 160 people making their way through snow and cold on three consecutive Wednesdays to discuss *Reign of Errors: The Hoax of the Privatization Movement and the Danger to America's Public Schools*, by public school advocate Diane Ravitch.

The book documents how wealthy ideologues captured education policymaking to promote privatization and accountability at the expense of the common good. Ill-conceived state policies that use tests to grade school districts and punish students, and which allow public funds to be extracted for unregulated charter schools and private-school vouchers, are widespread.

Choice and accountability, while sounding benign, are anything but that! They have damaged public schools, punished the most vulnerable, and violated basic principles of our democracy—specifically, separation of church and state and public oversight of public resources.

This community reading activity inspired about 40 participants to form the Heights Coalition for Public Education, to challenge what we understood to be a war on public education. This all-volunteer effort that unites community stakeholders to focus on education policy is a unique voice in Ohio.

The policies we oppose are still in place, but so are we! We are more determined, and our ranks are growing. More than 1,100 people have endorsed our position statement! This is a political process and it takes focus, clarity, anger, creativity, time and perseverance to challenge policy and, if necessary, replace the policymakers.

At times it seems impossible. The legislature is dominated by adherents to the policies that are damaging the public system. It's slow going, and it's hard to feel that our efforts have changed anything, but we have empowered more people to speak up and encouraged public-school stakeholders to use their voices. It is this collective voice that will cause change.

Our influence comes from the squeaky-wheel strategy: People with shared concerns work together to demand change. Breaking the silence is the essential first step. It makes it possible to stake out an issue, draw others to it and empower people, who may have been silenced by the policy, to begin to use their influence. As with every issue, it takes someone to challenge the status quo before others will say, "Me too."

Silence is the enemy of change. Our group started by crafting a

position statement that affirmed our commitment to public education. We invited others to express their support by endorsing our position. Those names are real people who vote and who care about this issue. They are people who come to our events, guide our work and ask others to get involved. They make it real. They are ready to do more. Add your name at www.chub.net/coalition.

As our knowledge and confidence have grown, so has the sense of urgency. We have stayed the course but with growing impatience. How do we make a difference?

Our key strategy is building an informed constituency that feels connected to others who share our concern, and is willing to advocate for change. This winter we sponsored three more public events to keep the conversation going, information flowing, and understanding and commitment growing.

Despite the weather, about 100 people came to the January forum that featured three superintendents who are fighting back. Different stakeholders are joining our chorus. This time it is superintendents!

Public-school bashers have silenced educational professionals from challenging awful policies by both blaming them and calling them apologists. Silencing the most knowledgeable and expert voices is a common tool for those whose intentions are not in the public's interest. It has worked for a while, but superintendents, after all, are education experts. Much of their work is defined by state laws. It is their job to know how policies affect their students. They are well positioned to inform policymakers if laws are meeting stated goals. Of course, challenging public policy can be risky. For these superintendents—Jim Lloyd, Walter Davis and Talisa Dixon—a supportive school board was essential to giving them the freedom to truly advocate for their students.

Dixon, CH-UH superintendent, credited the coalition for pushing her and the board to actively resist damaging policies. Our voices helped them use theirs! Advocacy is now an expected board activity, and an energetic team seems ready for it.

I was encouraged by our guests who shared their experiences with legislators. They were also clear that, even though districts are different from one another, all are threatened. Superintendents should unite.

Their final message was not really a surprise: The public holds the power to make change.

That's us, and ours is a work in progress.

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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<p>Good Friday</p> <p>March 30, 2018</p> <p>Morning Prayer—8:00 am</p> <p>St. Ann Church</p> <p>Passion of the Lord, Veneration of the Cross and Holy Communion—3:00 pm</p> <p>St. Ann Church</p>	<p>Easter Sunday</p> <p>April 1, 2018</p> <p>Mass of the Resurrection 10:00 am</p> <p>St. Philomena Church</p> <p>8:00 am—9:30 am—11:30 am</p> <p>St. Ann Church</p>

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Shaker Heights, Ohio

Learning and teaching in scouting



A TEACHER'S VOICE

Ari Klein

When I was a Cub Scout at Taylor Elementary School there was an enormous uproar because a woman wanted (was willing) to become the leader of our pack. This was new and different for the early 1970s. Once registered and trained, she did a great job, as we all expected. I stayed in scouting through high school and volunteered with a troop when I was in college.

A month after I started teaching in CH-UH, I was asked to become the scoutmaster for the troop in which I was an assistant. I accepted even though I had no sons of my own (and still don't). Over the next 25 years as a scoutmaster, I believe that I did as much teaching in scouts as I did in school. I dedicate this column to my experience in this alternative education setting.

Boy Scouts of America (BSA) recently announced that girls will be permitted to join Cub Scouts in 2019, and Scout troops in 2020. People who have known of my involvement in the organization have asked my opinion on co-ed scouting. To me, this was inevitable, although I was surprised at how quickly it happened. Groups need to evolve over time to become better, stronger, and more relevant, yet the announcement gave me hope that BSA will broaden its ability to teach the important attributes of civic responsibility and leadership.

In my first year as scoutmaster I confronted a different type of quandary. One of the boys qualifying for Eagle Scout, the highest rank, told me that he was concerned about being asked if he believed in God. At the review board determining if the high rank would be conferred, his answer could have been a barrier.

BSA requires belief in a higher power, even though the founder of scouting focused his reverence on

nature. Because the spiritual beliefs of many people are fluid or evolving throughout their lives, denying a young person his goal because of his reluctance to accept a particular belief seems completely unacceptable. The student and I discussed what he might say if asked, and what he could and could not accept. Luckily, no religious questions were asked and the young man became an Eagle Scout.

Another issue that became controversial in our troop was the national BSA organization banning gay kids and adults. I never believed it was anyone's business whether someone was gay or not. We were hosted in Cleveland Heights by a church that is inclusive of all. Many of our scouts and their families were upset with the national policy. We had our own "don't ask, don't tell" policy that was never openly discussed.

In the late 1990s, I addressed our entire group of scouts and their parents about my opposition to the national policy and declared that I would not remove or exclude gay kids or adults. Later, in 2001, one of our Eagle Scouts expressed his concern over the organization's discriminatory practices, as well. In the past few years as scoutmaster, I worked with several other scout and church leaders to figure out how to make changes to the national policy from within the organization. We were all stunned when the change happened and the Boy Scouts finally became open to all.

I was surprised, then, that the national organization has accepted girls into the program, and I am excited to see how it works out. Every other nation in the world that has scouting programs welcomes girls as members, so I am pretty sure things will be fine. As a scoutmaster, my daughters were not welcome in the troop in which I served. I wish we could have had the chance to share scouting together.

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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BEST OF THE HEIGHTS continued from page 1

New York, Forman came to Cleveland to attend Case Western Reserve University, where he majored in communications and dreamed of showing independent films. The owner of the Cedar Lee also owned the theater at Cedar Center and thought the two were too close together. Although Forman had no money, he worked out a deal that enabled him to become owner of the theater over time. He

later purchased the entire building and expanded it. A founder of the Cleveland International Film Festival, Forman's Cleveland Cinemas is now one the region's largest independent theater chains, with seven locations.

Also in the Cedar Lee district, is **Best Place to Work**. Marotta's, an intimate space at 2289 Lee Road, offers pizza and Italian specialties, along with an extensive, all-Italian wine list. Chef Alicia Marotta Lini-

han and her husband, Brian, opened the restaurant in 2000, in the city where she grew up. Linihan was known for the strong, nurturing relationship she had with many of her employees, and her untimely death in December 2016 deeply affected them and the community at large.

Alicia's niece, Alexandra Quinn, came back to Cleveland to operate the restaurant. "With four young kids, Brian can't be here all the time, and I was happy to do it," she said. She was overwhelmed by the recognition, saying that the restaurant employs many young people from Heights High, Beaumont, and other local schools.

The community's love for Alicia and Brian and the restaurant they created is evident; this year, Marotta's was also a finalist in several other categories: **Best Heights Vibe**, **Best Place to Take an Out-of-Towner**, **Best Interior Décor** and **Best Cleveland Heights Business**.

Coventry Village has a unique personality that the Heights calls its own. At the center of it all are two big winners in this year's Best of the Heights: Tommy Fello, owner of Tommy's restaurant at 1824 Coventry Road, and Steve Presser, owner of Big Fun, at 1814 Coventry Road. Tommy's was the winner in three categories in 2018: **Best Heights Vibe**, **Best Place to Take an Out-of-Towner** (an award it shares this year with Nighttown), and **Best Place to Take the Kids**, as well as a finalist in **Best Bang for Your Buck**, a category which it won last year.

Big Fun was very much on *Heights Observer* readers' minds, as Presser recently announced that he would be closing the beloved toy store this summer, after 27 years in business. Big Fun won **Best Place to Find Unique Gifts**—where else can you find fake vomit and whoopee cushions?—and **Best Exterior Appearance**, a category it also won last year. Presser has always worked with local artists to design his exterior signage, and with his "creatively inclined" employees to create the window displays, which have included Dr. Who and Star Wars themes.

For the second year in a row, Gigi's on Fairmount (3477 Fairmount Blvd. in the Fairmount Taylor Business District) has been recognized for **Best Interior Décor**. *Observer* readers love the chic, intimate feeling of the bar and restaurant with its large mirrors, fresh flowers and gorgeous chandeliers.

Heights newcomer Barrio (2466 Fairmount Blvd. in the Cedar Fairmount Business District), a purveyor of custom tacos, tequila and whiskey, has given Heights residents a new destination for cheap eats. Now with five locations in the region, the Heights location has been a big draw since it opened in early 2017. Voted **Best Bang for Your Buck** in 2018, it was also a finalist for **Best New Business**.

Also, in the Cedar Fairmount district, is Nighttown (12383 Cedar Road), a Cleveland Heights landmark and favorite institution for

more than 50 years. The internationally known Irish pub and jazz club shares, with Tommy's, this year's honor of **Best Place to Take an Out-of-Towner**. Owner Brendan Ring has said that the establishment continues to reinvent itself, and with a reputation that has attracted impromptu visits from the likes of Wynton Marsalis and Stevie Wonder, one never knows who one might run into there.

To round out this year's categories, the awards for **Best Cleveland Heights Business** and **Best University Heights Business** went to Zagara's Marketplace and Whole Food Market, respectively.

Zagara's Marketplace (1940 Lee Road), Cleveland Heights' neighborhood grocery store, is owned and managed by John Zagara. A grandson of the store's founder, Zagara's roots in Cleveland Heights run deep, and he said he was "deeply honored" to be recognized in this year's FutureHeights Best of the Heights Awards.

Since 2005, FutureHeights—a nonprofit that inspires and facilitates collaboration and empowerment in our community—has conducted the Best of the Heights awards to recognize the unique attributes of locally owned Heights businesses, and their contributions to the local economy. A complete list of 2018 Best of the Heights winners and finalists, as well as a list of businesses that voters said they would like to see in the Heights, is online at www.futureheights.org.

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

Winners and Finalists in the FutureHeights 2018 Best of the Heights Awards contest are:

Best New Business

Winner: Boss Dog Brewing Co.

Finalists: Barrio, Zoma Ethiopian Restaurant

Best Place to Hang Out in a Snowstorm

Winner: Cedar Lee Theatre

Finalists: Phoenix Coffee, Stone Oven

Best Place to Find Unique Gifts

Winner: Big Fun

Finalists: Heights Arts, S'Wonderful Gifts

Best Place to Take an Out-of-Towner

Winners: Nighttown, Tommy's restaurant

Finalist: Marotta's

Best Bang for Your Buck

Winner: Barrio

Finalists: Aladdin's, Tommy's restaurant

Best Interior Décor

Winner: Gigi's on Fairmount

Finalists: Anatolia Cafe, Marotta's

Best Exterior Appearance

Winner: Big Fun

Finalists: Anatolia Cafe, Luna Bakery Café, The BottleHouse Brewery

Best Place to Work

Winner: Marotta's

Finalists: Heights Libraries, Phoenix Coffee

Best Heights Vibe

Winner: Tommy's

Finalists: CLE Urban Winery, Marotta's, Nighttown

Best Place to Take the Kids

Winner: Tommy's

Finalists: Big Fun, Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park, Heights Libraries

Best University Heights Business

Winner: Whole Foods

Finalists: Bialy's Bagels, Geraci's Restaurant

Best Cleveland Heights Business

Winner: Zagara's Marketplace

Finalists: Marotta's, The Wine Spot

University Heights City Council Meeting highlights



JANUARY 16, 2018

Present were Mayor Michael D. Brennan and council members Vice Mayor Susan Pardee, Pamela Cameron, Philip Ertel, Steven Sims and Mark Wiseman. Council members John Rach and Michele Weiss were absent. The meeting was held from 7 to 9:06 p.m.

Cuyahoga County council member

Mayor Brennan introduced newly appointed Cuyahoga Councilman Michael Houser. Houser looks forward to continuing the relationship former Councilman Anthony Hairston had with the UH council and is interested in learning about the city's plans for University Square.

IT improvements

In late December, the city lost e-mail capacity and had to remove and replace a firewall. Most departments are without designated servers, and the phone system is more than 20 years old. The mayor is working with the finance department to solicit bids so that the city can purchase servers and update its phone system.

University Heights City Hall improvements

The mayor expressed concern that, without improvements, the city is ill-equipped to attract female firefighters and police officers, and people with disabilities. He noted that the fire department doesn't have a locker room for women, and the locker room in the police department is in the police garage. Because University Heights City Hall lacks an elevator, people with disabilities must use an antiquated chair lift. The city is creating a citizen committee that will address the best ways to improve city hall.

Housing ordinance review

Council approved a moratorium on an ordinance, effective through May 31, that prohibits three or more unrelated people from living together. The moratorium will allow the city to consult residents and landlords about how to best enforce the ordinance. Law Director Luke McConville noted that any existing violations will be unaffected by the moratorium.

YouTube page

Community Development Coordinator Patrick Grogan-Myers announced that the city now has a YouTube page. Citizens can find it, and recordings of city council meetings, on the "How Do I..." page of the city's website: www.universityheights.com/how-do-i/.

LWV Observer: Siobhan Leftwich.

FEBRUARY 5, 2018

Present were Mayor Michael D. Brennan and council members Vice Mayor Susan Pardee, Pamela Cameron, John Rach, Michele Weiss and Mark Wiseman. Councilman Steven Sims arrived after roll call. Councilman Phil Ertel was absent. Also present were Law Director Luke McConville, Finance Director William Sheehan, and Clerk of Council Kelly Thomas.

Rebuilding community relations

Mayor Brennan announced that he and some other members of the administration would be meeting with administrators of John Carroll University to reestablish college-community relations. He also noted that his meeting with the Beachwood mayor and a council member had been postponed due to scheduling conflicts, but had been rescheduled for Feb. 19, even though that is a holiday.

Guide Studio rebranding proposal

Council authorized a contract with Guide Studio for \$30,000 to develop a rebranding

strategy for the city of University Heights. Guide Studio, which has worked previously with South Euclid, North Olmsted and Lakewood, will work with officials and residents to help determine "who" the city is: what sets it apart, what are its distinct advantages, and what is its core purpose. [Guide Studio] will take six-to-eight weeks for the development process, and then several months to help with implementation.

Medical marijuana applications moratorium lifted

Council lifted the moratorium on applications for building permits, zoning approvals, or certificates of occupancy that would enable the creation of medical marijuana testing laboratories or testing facilities (Ordinance 2018-11). The [governmental affairs] committee determined that \$12,500 was a reasonable fee to charge for establishing this type of business as there is only one location in the city that would qualify to house a testing lab.

IT and phone systems upgrades

Council authorized the mayor to seek bids for upgrades and improvements to the city's IT and phone systems, and possible audiovisual capabilities for council chambers. There are no more phone extensions available, and no caller ID. Various departments are using different computer operating systems. Council would also like to have presentations projected on screens so that the audience can see what is being presented to council.

Video recordings of meetings

Council authorized the mayor to spend up to \$10,000 more this year to continue to have council meetings videotaped. He had arranged to record the first three meetings of the year as an experiment, but is quickly approaching the \$5,000 limit for mayoral expenditures without council approval. The cost for the inaugural meeting was approximately double the cost of the other two meetings due to the size and complexity of the auditorium. [The recordings of the first three meetings can be found on YouTube at tinyurl.com/uhyoutube]

Silsby Road resurfacing

Council authorized the administration to seek bids for the 2018 resurfacing of Silsby Road from Edgerton to Warrensville Center roads, and to accept \$36,000 from the Cuyahoga County Department of Public Works 2018 maintenance program, which will pay for the asphalt. The city will pay for labor costs and likely also curb replacements.

LWV Observer: Wendy S. Deuring.

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

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

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

Council members see no need to change CH’s form of govenment

Robert Brown

Is Cleveland Heights best served by its current form of government, in which seven part-time council members are elected at-large and appoint a full-time professional city manager? Or would the city be governed better by a government led by a popularly elected full-time mayor or by a council that includes some members elected by ward or district?

These are the key questions debated at recent meetings of the 15-member Cleveland Heights Charter Review Commission (CRC).

At the commission’s meetings on Jan. 18, Feb. 1 and Feb. 15, four current

Cleveland Heights City Council members, Mary Dunbar, Carol Roe, Mike Ungar and Melissa Yasinow, as well as former council member Dennis Wilcox, each told the CRC that the current council-manager form of government is working well in Cleveland Heights and that there is no need to change the city charter to allow for a popularly elected mayor or council members elected by ward.

(As of the Feb. 15 meeting, current council members Cheryl Stephens, Jason Stein and Kahlil Seren had not returned a CRC questionnaire distributed to all council members on Jan. 8; therefore, they had not yet been invited to speak

at the commission’s meetings.)

Local residents who have spoken at CRC meetings have asked the commission to consider recommending amendments to the charter that would change the form of government in Cleveland Heights. Many of them said that they needed more information before coming to any final decisions on the key governance issues.

At the commission’s Feb. 15 meeting, its fifth, 12 residents and business owners spoke at the end of the nearly three-hour evening meeting.

Kermit Lind, an attorney and professor, told the commission that the challenges facing inner-ring suburbs like Cleveland Heights have changed dramatically in the past 40 years. “Local governments now need to be more nimble, creative, collaborative and wary of external factors that cause instability and deterioration of the physical environment,” Lind said. He also stated that Cleveland Heights’ government is not as effective as it once was.

Bill Mitchell, former owner of Mitchell’s Fine Chocolates, said he believes that “the council-manager form of government is inherently undemocratic” because citizens do not elect the city’s mayor and that “there is a dichotomy between authority and responsibility.”

Jim Miller, a former city employee, spoke in favor of considering a change in city council to include members elected by ward or district, as opposed to the current structure in which all members are elected citywide. He suggested that many potential candidates lack the time or money to run for council on a city-wide basis in a city as large as Cleveland Heights.

Shaker Heights Mayor Earl Leiken attended the Feb. 15 meeting at the com-

mission’s invitation. Leiken explained that Shaker Heights is governed by a full-time mayor, who appoints a chief administrative officer, and by seven part-time city council members who are all elected at-large.

In explaining his role as mayor, Leiken said, “I have responsibility for setting a strategic direction for the city and for making major decisions.” Leiken stated that he works closely with the chief administrative officer, who is responsible for day-to-day operations of the city.

Leiken said that buy-in from council is important, as council approval is required for all expenditures exceeding \$25,000, as well as for all proposed legislation.

A number of citizens told the commission that its meetings were not well publicized, and that the opportunities for citizen participation were insufficient. Among the suggestions to the commission on this subject were that there be an online citizen survey, a mid-process community meeting, and a roundtable discussion with local business owners and developers.

The next two meetings of the Cleveland Heights Charter Review Commission, all of which are open to the public, will take place on Thursday, March 1, and Thursday, March 15, at 7 p.m., at Cleveland Heights City Hall. Citizens can e-mail comments to the CRC through its facilitator, Larry Keller, at lkeller@clvhts.com.

Robert Brown is a city planner with more than 40 years of experience, including nine years as Cleveland’s city planning director. A resident of Cleveland Heights for 40-plus years, Brown serves on the board of FutureHeights.

Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights

JANUARY 16, 2018

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren and Jason Stein. Cheryl L. Stephens and Michael N. Ungar were absent. The meeting lasted from 7:32 to 8:13 p.m.

Public comments

New Kiwanis chapter: Mark Harris announced that a Kiwanis chapter has now been established to serve Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

Water and sewer bills: Jim Cathcart expressed concern that his water and sewer bills are now much higher. In response, City Manager Tanisha Briley noted that, with the city’s change to Cleveland Water, the transition rate did not initially reflect the homestead discount for which he is eligible. The city has been working on this, and residents who have this concern and qualify for the discount should soon see a decrease in their bills and receive a credit as well. The same is true for sewer rates, for which discounts are also available.

Project bids

Council authorized the city manager to solicit bids for the following projects:

- North Park Boulevard bike path buffer striping
- 2018 refuse disposal
- 2018 street resurfacing program
- surface treating program

Before the vote, Seren noted that while Noble Road is also in need of bike path buffer striping, funding is not currently available (the North Park striping is grant-funded). Yasinow stated that funding for Noble Road is being sought.

Amendments to zoning code

On third reading, council approved a measure amending sections of the city’s zoning code, including the legal definition of “family.” Dunbar observed that these modifications are part of an ongoing effort called for in the Cleveland Heights Master Plan to continuously update and improve the zoning code to reflect technological advances that support sustainability.

Charter Review Commission

The next meeting of the city’s Charter Review Commission will be Thursday, Jan. 18, at 7 p.m. Public input is welcome. The agenda and archived videos are on the city website.

Mayor’s comments

Roe noted that a review of progress on some of council’s 2017 priorities shows that the city is moving toward fiscal sustainability, with successful efforts to build reserves across most of the city’s seven major operating funds. The Top of the Hill project, now moving forward, will help diversify and strengthen the tax base. The Noble Road corridor has been improved through road resurfacing and streetscaping. Marketing of the city’s strengths and opportunities has improved and communication with citizens has been enhanced through a revamped bi-weekly newsletter, social media outreach, a new economic development e-newsletter and business channel. Next week,



council will be looking at priorities for 2018. LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

FEBRUARY 5, 2018

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren, Jason Stein, Cheryl L. Stephens and Michael N. Ungar.

Public comments

Natural gas: Bill Bruml expressed concerns about the natural gas programs. There was agreement on council about the confusion currently surrounding the program, but the city manager said residents should be receiving “opt-out” letters soon. They will automatically begin to be charged the lower rate.

Sewer plan: Kyle Whitaker and Marty Dybiczy expressed concerns about rates. Among questions asked were:

- What is the relationship between water, sewer and utility rates?
- Can the city lower sewer rates in future budgets?

The city has posted an informational link on its website: <http://www.clevelandheights.com/index.aspx?page=570>.

FutureHeights information: Sruti Basu, director of community-building programs for FutureHeights, informed residents of two new programs offered by the nonprofit. The Neighborhood Leadership Workshop Series, designed to help people learn how to organize a project, will begin on March 11. The deadline to register is Feb. 28. FutureHeights also offers small grants of up to \$1,000. Deadline for application is April 15.

New county council member: Michael J. Houser introduced himself as the newly appointed Cuyahoga County Council member to represent Council District 10, which includes Cleveland Heights.

Zoning fees

Council approved an ordinance to add certain fees to the administration of zoning codes.

Top of the Hill

There was a first reading of an ordinance to authorize the city manager to enter into an agreement with F & C Development Inc. concerning the Top of the Hill project.

Citizen appointments

Ungar read the names of new and returning committee appointees, which council approved. There is still one opening on the Citizens Advisory Committee and two openings on the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Council comments

Many council members complimented the city’s Martin Luther King Celebration. Susanna Neirmann-O’Neil was commended for her excellent organization of this yearly event.

Roe said working with our schools will be a top priority for the city this year.

LWV Observer: Carol Gibson.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 7.

CH makes progress on economic development

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The city of Cleveland Heights is moving forward with its plans redevelop two large vacant parcels within the city: the Top of the Hill site and the Lee/Meadowbrook site.

Tim Boland, the city’s economic development director, presented a draft RFQ/RFP for the 1.07-acre Lee/Meadowbrook site to CH City Council at its Feb. 12 Committee of the Whole meeting, and requested council’s authorization to move forward. In his report, Boland stated, “Based on current economic conditions, recent significant investments by the city, school district and the private sector in and around the Cedar Lee Corridor, and the momentum for redevelopment these activities have generated, we have concluded that the timing is right to proceed with issuing an RFQ/RFP for redevelopment.”

The goal of the development would be “to create a dense, vibrant, pedestrian-friendly and unique commercial, office, residential or potentially mixed-use development that leverages the place-making opportunities of the site.” In 2007, the city constructed a 377-space parking garage nearby, with 82 spaces designed with a separate entrance, to support a future project.

Council authorized Boland to issue the RFQ/RFP, which he did on Feb. 26. April 16 is the application deadline.

On Feb. 20, CH City Council approved legislation to authorize the city manager to enter into a development agreement with Flaherty & Collins Properties (F&C) for the Top of the Hill Project, the four-acre city-owned property at the top of Cedar Hill at Cedar Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard. With passage of this legislation, the project can move into the design and construction planning stage.

The projected \$75 million project is proposed to consist of market-rate luxury apartments, retail and restaurant space, a nationally branded or boutique hotel, structured parking, and the potential opportunity to include for-sale townhomes and Class A office components.

The city and F&C are asking the school board for tax increment financing (TIF) of 100 percent for 30 years on the increase in valuation. The school board is considering the request.

More information can be found on the city’s website at <http://www.clevelandheights.com/index.aspx?page=2134>.

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

Stephens runs for county council

Melody Hart

On May 8, Heights residents will vote in the primary election for the Ward 10 Cuyahoga



COURTESY CHERYL L. STEPHENS

County Council representative, which includes Cleveland Heights, University Heights, Bratenahl, East Cleveland and two wards in Cleveland's University Circle neighborhood.

Former Cleveland Heights mayor and current CH City Council Member Cheryl L. Stephens is running for the seat against Michael J. Houser, who was chosen by Cuyahoga County Democratic precinct committee members to fill the seat vacated by member Anthony Hairston, following his election to Cleveland City Council last November. The Cuyahoga County Board of Elections website also lists Angela Bennett, a Republican, as a write-in candidate for the seat.

Stephens stated that she is running because she believes the district needs someone who has experience working on the issues. Several key issues she pointed out are economic and community development, LGBTQ rights, supporting MetroHealth System, and ensuring strong finances. "One of my key goals is to help create policies for the county development department that will help it to be more practical in programs that benefit inner-ring suburbs and the urban core," she said.

She is currently CEO of East Akron Neighborhood Development Corporation. She has also served as director of acquisition, disposition and development for the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation (commonly known as the County Land Bank) and as director of development for the city of Cleveland Heights and Cuyahoga County. She has a masters of public administration and speaks Spanish.

In addition to her service as Cleveland Heights mayor and a member of city council, Stephens has volunteered with Susan G. Komen North East Ohio and has served on the Cleveland Heights City Planning Commission.

One of the things she is proudest of is helping Cleveland Heights City Council pass legislation outlawing discrimination against LGBTQ people. Another is working with city council to put in place an ordinance that prohibits landlords from obtaining a certificate of occupancy if they have not paid their taxes.

"I will work hard," she said. "I won't just attend a meeting and pretend like I made things happen. I will have done something to help get the tasks on hand done. I am a worker/doer."

Melody Hart, a CPA and business financial consultant, is active in the community, and has lived in Cleveland Heights since 2005.

Fairhill Road Village Historic District



CLEVELAND
HEIGHTS
LANDMARKS

Margaret Lann

Designed to emulate an English hamlet, the Fairhill Road Village Historic District is a special grouping of 13 buildings that straddles the cities of Cleveland Heights and Cleveland. These residences along Fairhill Road sit in front of the Ambler Park ravine.

The stucco and stone exteriors, slate roofs, leaded glass windows, large chimneys, and gables of multiple heights reflect the picturesque Tudor Revival style chosen for this development. The combination of architectural integrity and the uninterrupted natural setting that the property occupies made the residences eligible for National Register listing.

Built between 1929 and 1936



COURTESY MAZIE ADAMS

A 1961 image of Fairhill Road Village from the Cuyahoga County tax appraisal card

(with the exception of one unit, constructed in 1971), Fairhill Road Village was designed as residences for artists, writers, musicians, interior decorators and architects. While these homes ended up attracting a wide variety of owners in and out of the arts, early residents at the village did include one of the early architects, Harold O. Fullerton, and the landscape designer for the village, A. Donald Gray.

Gray had been affiliated with the Olmsted brothers prior to his career in Cleveland. The other subdivision landscapes that he designed are the

Forest Hill Historic District and some of the Cleveland Cultural Gardens.

Landmarked in 1990, the Fairhill Road Village Historic District retains its architectural integrity and park-like setting, reflecting the ideals of the architects and designer who first planned the subdivision.

Margaret Lann 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. The seven members are appointed to three-year terms by city council.

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Graduates of the Neighborhood Leadership Workshop Series.

FutureHeights offers community-building workshops and mini-grants this spring

Sruti Basu

FutureHeights offers several tools to help Cleveland Heights residents leverage their neighborhoods' assets through its Community Capacity-Building Program, including a series of workshops for neighborhood leaders and small grants for neighborhood projects.

Since 2015, FutureHeights has awarded approximately \$13,000 in mini-grants toward 18 projects in the city. Residents can apply for up to \$1,000 for citizen-led projects and events. In addition, 39 residents from neighborhoods across Cleveland Heights have completed the workshop series, which takes place each spring.

"Community organizing is a little like planting seeds and waiting to see what emerges. A little water, fertilizer and sunlight, and strengths emerge that a community may not even know it has," said Tom Gibson of Oxford Community Garden. "The FutureHeights mini-grant to the Oxford Community Garden in 2016 has not only allowed us to purchase perennial food-forest plants—its ostensible purpose—but has brought in neighborhood volunteers not previously connected with the garden, and connected the garden with Oxford Elementary School. Those connections, in turn, have brought in almost \$6,000 in additional funding, which supports gardeners instructing fourth-graders in gardening basics."

"We have several principles that guide the program," said Mark Chupp, an assistant professor at Case Western Reserve University's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, and former chair of the FutureHeights Civic Engagement Committee, which organized the sessions. "We believe

that institutions lead best by stepping back and supporting residents and voluntary groups, and that everyday people have the power to do extraordinary things right where they live."

The program takes an asset-based community development approach, building on neighborhood strengths. "For example," said Chupp, "the Cain Park neighborhood has this tremendous asset—Cain Park—that it can leverage and build upon. The 'dog project,' in which residents came together to urge the city to allow dog-walking in the park, is a good example of this. We also see residents of other neighborhoods, such as Noble, coming together to organize neighborhood cleanups and open houses. The small grants give us a means to better support neighbor-led activities like these."

The 2018 Neighborhood Leadership Workshop Series will take place on six Sunday afternoons, between March 11 and May 20, 3–6 p.m. Topics for the sessions are neighborhood leadership, asset-based community development, policy and advocacy, the history of Cleveland Heights and its neighborhoods, leveraging community resources and building community.

All Cleveland Heights residents are encouraged to apply to participate in the workshop series. Applications for neighborhood mini-grants will be accepted twice this year, with deadlines on March 15 and Sept. 15.

For more information and applications, visit www.futureheights.org/programs/community-building-programs/, e-mail sbasu@futureheights.org or call 216-320-1423.

Sruti is director of community-building programs at FutureHeights.

BIG FUN continued from page 1

merchant, as retailers adjust to the idea of a beloved neighbor, Big Fun, closing.

Big Fun opened in 1991, first inhabiting the small building where Jimmy John's is currently located. That little building had been vacant—actually quite dismal—for years.

"I knew it had to be on Coventry," reminisced Steve Presser, owner of the beloved time capsule. "I transformed that place into something magical." With alley lanes from Kinsman-Lee Lanes and card catalogs from the library, Presser's collecting habits created a sanctuary of small pleasures. "It's been a vessel—a place where people can make themselves feel better," Presser said.

That good feeling radiated beyond the footprint of the small shop, moving across the street to 1814 Coventry Road, where everything from whoopee cushions and kazooos to collectibles and art installations piques curiosity and prompts joy.

Customers love Presser's personable nature and the undying inclusivity of the shop. Fellow merchants love the camaraderie and generosity. Community leaders are grateful for the unflinching support for the district, the city at-large, and the arts.

"Steve has been a wonderful asset to the entire neighborhood—not solely as a merchant," said Angie Hetrick, executive director of the Coventry Village Special Improvement District (CVSID). "He is a permanent active participant in the community." And that will not change.

According to Presser, the only thing that is retiring is Big Fun. The man behind that curtain, so to speak, will remain actively engaged with the Coventry district for years to come. It's what Presser wants; it's what colleagues know and expect of him. "He will always be a part of the street and this community," said Hetrick, citing various community projects for which Presser is at the table.

Amid concerns about the district losing an anchor store, Hetrick noted out that the quarter-mile district has more than 10 merchants who have been there for over 25 years. That's a lot of staying power. "It's a resilient community with longstanding businesses," she added, pointing out how many economic crises the nation has faced in those

25 years.

Presser is transparent in discussing the viability of his business model in the era of eBay and Amazon. With rent and other hard costs rising, it became clear that it was time to close the shop. "This whole idea of 'the shopping experience' is becoming a thing of the past," Presser reflected.

Presser stressed that if people want to live in communities with charming shopping districts, they need to make sure they are actually making purchases in those shops on a regular basis. Brick-and-mortar business can survive in the Amazon era, said Presser, "but for Big Fun, in Coventry, it was time."

The hardest part, Presser said, will be the change in daily connection with staff, customers, and neighboring merchants. "It's been my life for 27 years," he said.

It's going to be a big change. The same holds true for Big Fun's neighbors. Tom Fello, owner of Tommy's restaurant, shared his sadness, anticipating the absence of the day-to-day visits, banter and camaraderie. "We are so blessed to have Steve as a part of our community," said Fello. "He put his heart and soul into that place, into Coventry."

Fello described how Presser's generosity has helped the district knit together over the years, and noted that Presser has always shared the limelight. "Steve has given more than any other merchant I've ever known in my 46 years as a merchant in Coventry," Fello said. "Steve's draw and appeal to customers cannot be replaced."

Coventry merchants, CVSID members, and Presser, himself, all express a confidence that this change is part of the natural ebb and flow of retail. Legendary shops do sometimes retire. And all legendary shops also have a beginning. There is optimism that, while the shoes to fill may seem big and clown-like, the good karma of Big Fun will continue when new tenants arrive.

Mostly a mom, Shari Nacson, LISW-S, is a freelance editor, child development specialist, and nonprofit consultant who makes her home in Cleveland Heights. More than anything, Nacson is inspired by kids and adults who build connection through kindness.

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HCC appoints Dillenbeck as its new executive director

Pam Wetherill

The board of Heights Community Congress (HCC) has announced that Eric Dillenbeck is its new executive director. He assumes the role from Martha Goble, who is retiring. His first official day was Jan. 1.

Dillenbeck has been an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. for the past 15 years. He most recently served as associate pastor of Fairmount Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights. A veteran of the nonprofit world, Dillenbeck is currently the coordinator of community partnerships at Youth Opportunities Unlimited, where he works with nonprofits throughout the Cleveland area to provide workforce-readiness training and jobs for youths and young adults.

As HCC's executive director, Dillenbeck will oversee HCC's Fair Housing Enforcement Audit program, and will be responsible for the agency's diversity programming, its annual Heights Heritage Home and Garden Tour, and the volunteer management these activities entail. He will serve as HCC's main public contact and liaison with other like-minded agencies.

"HCC has a demonstrated faithfulness to building a stronger community, one that is committed and welcoming of all people, and one that helps each other see the value and gifts of our diversity," Dillenbeck explained. "These are values that grounded my work through the church and are central to my outlook on the world."

Dillenbeck believes the value of HCC's work is unquestionable, and noted, "Now more than ever, the Heights and the greater community need organizations like HCC, organizations that are devoted to building stronger communities based on mutual respect."

Looking ahead to the future, Dillenbeck is optimistic. His vision for HCC includes "engaging the com-



The Rev. Eric Dillenbeck, new executive director of Heights Community Congress.

munity in ways that help us hear more about the issues Heights residents face every day, and then building new coalitions of nonprofit organizations, faith communities, businesses, and local residents to address those concerns together."

Dillenbeck is married, and has three children who attend the Shaker Heights schools.

Heights Community Congress (HCC), founded in 1972 and incorporated in 1973, is a non-partisan, broad-based citizen coalition of organizations and individuals which monitors and supports integration and diversity in Cleveland Heights.

Among its many accomplishments, HCC helped establish and maintain city-regulated fair housing and home inspection (1974), a housing service for homebuyers (1974), and neighborhood associations. HCC sponsors programs which maintain and promote the city's proud heritage of diversity, and it produces the annual Heights Heritage Home and Garden Tour.

Pam Wetherill is a volunteer with Heights Community Congress, and serves on its Fair Housing Committee. She is a resident of University Heights.

Churches work together to host March Lenten Wednesdays

Don King

Four congregations in Cleveland Heights—Peace Lutheran, Noble Road Presbyterian, Disciples Christian, and Church of the Redeemer United Methodist—are working cooperatively to offer a creative form of fellowship and worship as Christians around the globe commemorate Lent. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, Lent marks an annual season to remember Jesus' life and death.

The gatherings are open to not only members of the four congregations, but also to all in the area who would like to deepen their spirituality at this holy time.

The four churches are sharing in what they call "Simple Soup Suppers." Attendees gather at 6 p.m., attend a program at 6:45 p.m., worship at 7:30 p.m., and are on their way by 8 p.m.

This year's program theme is the varieties of spiritual practices.

On March 7, Peace Lutheran, 3740 Mayfield Road, will host a program on healing and therapy through the use of art. March 14's program, at Disciples Christian, 3663 Mayfield Road, will provide an opportunity to learn more about the discipline of yoga and spirituality. On March 21, attendees will be back at Peace Lutheran for a look at icons, both traditional and contemporary.

The community is invited to each program; a free-will offering is taken for the dinners offered.

The Rev. Don King is pastor of Peace Lutheran Church, and an active participant in the Heights interfaith community. He has served in local congregations since 1999, and has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1985.

High School pool opens to public on March 5

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The Cleveland Heights High School indoor pool will reopen for community access on Monday, March 5. The 2018 spring swimming schedule runs through May 25.

The Heights High pool is available to the public through the City of Cleveland Heights Parks and Recreation Department. All residents within the boundaries of the CH-UH School District may purchase swim passes, which are available at the Cleveland Heights Community Center.

Community members should use the entrance on Washington Boulevard, adjacent to the football stadium, to access the pool and locker rooms. Access to the school building beyond the natatorium is restricted during

these hours. The pool is closed during the CH-UH Spring Break, March 30 - April 7.

For more information, visit the city's website, www.clevelandheights.com.

Monday - Friday

Adult Lap Swim 6-7:30 a.m.

Monday - Thursday

Adult Lap Swim 5:30-8 p.m.

Friday

Adult Lap Swim & Family Swim 5-8 p.m.

Saturday

Adult Lap Swim 8-10 a.m.

Adult Lap Swim & Family Swim 12:30-2 p.m.

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

HYC member is Youth of the Year finalist

Ken Wood

Mercedes Klouda, a four-year member of Heights Youth Club (HYC), is one of five finalists for Youth of the Year honors at Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland. The winner will be announced on March 9.

Beverly Burgess, former Heights Youth Club director, said of Klouda, "[Her] work ethic, self-esteem and personal resilience traits are inspiring to the club staff and her peers. When faced with a challenge, she works tirelessly to achieve her goals and sets high expectations for herself."

For the past nine years, Klouda

has volunteered at the Ebenezer Food Pantry at Fairmount Presbyterian Church, spending thousands of hours serving meals to community members.

In 2016, she was part of a church group that traveled to the Dominican Republic and helped build a church in one of the most poverty-stricken regions of that country.

Ken Wood is communications director for Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland.



Mercedes Klouda

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University Heights Senior Happenings

Senior 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.

March 1: Terry Allan, health commissioner with the Cuyahoga Board of Health, will provide an overview of community and family services, environmental health and safety. He'll cover three pressing issues: healthy eating and active living, the opiate epidemic, and infant mortality rates.

March 8: Romanita Vargas, executive director of the Spanish American Committee, will discuss its work in mobilizing help for the people of Puerto Rico who, displaced from their homes by Hurricane Maria, traveled to Northeast Ohio for either a temporary or permanent stay. The committee so far has helped nearly 600 people by providing for their basic needs, including winter clothing, food, medical care, jobs,

education, and housing.

March 15: Jeffrey Patterson, chief executive officer of the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, will share a powerpoint presentation identifying the authority's core values and guiding principles: commitment, accountability, respect, excellence and safety.

March 22: Rachel Kribbs, director of the Cleveland Institute of Music's community programming, will introduce a group of instrumentalists and vocalists from the school.

March 29: Lou Tansky, proprietor of Uncle Ben's Pawn Shop, on St. Clair Avenue at East 26th Street, will reminisce about the business that he started with his father more than 50 years ago. A history buff, Tansky grew to like all the people who have ventured into his shop, which is stuffed with a variety of eclectic items—jewelry, musical instruments, art work—even a squirrel monkey which his father traded for a guitar. He philosophizes that pawn is about relationships, so he treats his customers with courtesy and respect.

Heights Observer Volunteer Match

Heights Observer's Volunteer Match column lists opportunities for residents to lend their time and talent to worthy organizations and causes around the Heights.

Submit your organization's volunteer needs by calling the FutureHeights office at 216-320-1423 or e-mailing sbasu@futureheights.org.

Items submitted on or before the *Heights Observer* print issue's monthly story deadline will be considered for the next column. (To see past columns, visit www.heightsobserver.org, and search "volunteer match".)

The CARE Program is a collaboration between four senior centers: Solon Senior Services, Cleveland Heights Senior Center, Maple Heights Senior Center and Community Partnership on Aging. It needs volunteers to assist local, older adult homeowners complete tasks

(yardwork, changing batteries and lightbulbs, kitchen cleaning, first floor and interior window washing, etc.) in and around their homes in order to help them maintain safety and independence. Help make a difference in the lives of local senior citizens. For more information, call Eric McLellan at 216-970-0599 or send an e-mail to mclellane@communitypartnershiponaging.org. (Position may include background check.)

Heights Observer: FutureHeights publishes the *Heights Observer* and delivers it throughout Cleveland Heights and University Heights on or around the first of every month. Volunteers are needed to assist with deliveries to local businesses and institutions. Most routes take about an hour to complete. For more information, contact FutureHeights at 216-320-1423 or info@futureheights.org.

KIDS DAY continued from page 1

how we improve the life of the neighborhood, the residents, and the merchants," Hetrick explained.

Other beloved traditions created and hosted by CVSID include the Coventry Holiday Festival, Movie Nights in the Park, and the Summer Series. CVSID also pays for the flowers that line the mer-

chant district, hosts the Coventry Village website, and coordinates the plowing of the sidewalks during the winter. Art installations funded by CVSID include Coventry's signature benches and iron gates, as well as the banners in Pekar Park.

While kids ultimately benefit

from beautification, plowed sidewalks, and a smart website, they probably will get more instant gratification from the dance party, hula lessons, and standing inside a human-sized bubble at the creamery.

For more information, and a complete schedule of events, visit

at www.coventryvillage.org.

Mostly a mom, Shari Nacson, LISW-S, is a freelance editor, child development specialist, and nonprofit consultant who makes her home in Cleveland Heights. More than anything, Nacson is inspired by kids and adults who build connection through kindness.



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Kiwanis returns to the Heights

Mark Harris

Kiwanis International has returned to the Cleveland Heights-University Heights community with a new club, Kiwanis of the Heights. It intends to continue the work that the old Cleveland Heights and Cedar Center clubs started years ago, providing service to the community's children and adults with disabilities.

Spearheaded by the club president (the author), the new club achieved charter status last November. Yvonne Conner serves as treasurer, and Cassandra Swift serves as secretary. Dee Ann Long Marsky, Cindy Seaman and Eva Bekes serve as the club's board.

Kiwanis of the Heights' commitment to service will begin by establishing Key and Builders Clubs in the local school system, and an Aktion Club for disabled adults. These clubs should be fully active by fall 2018.

The school clubs are designed to teach high school and middle school students about leadership, community and service in a structured program of self-government, fundraising, and volunteering for community projects.

Future near-term plans include K-clubs in the various public elementary schools, appropriate clubs in the community's private primary

and secondary schools, as well as Circle-K Clubs at John Carroll University and Notre Dame College.

Kiwanis of the Heights seeks to break away from antiquated, traditional social outreach with new and innovative ways to engage with the community. As an example, the second club meeting of every month, usually the third Friday, takes place at a local dining establishment rather than a meeting hall.

The club already has held fundraisers in collaboration with several entertainment establishments. As momentum takes hold, and weather cooperates, there are plans for outdoor, family-oriented events.

Kiwanis of the Heights is always looking for new members and corporate sponsors in the community to aid in the goal of serving Cleveland Heights and University Heights, and it welcomes your involvement. You are invited to attend any of the club's upcoming social events, and its next official meeting on March 7 at the Cleveland Heights Community Center. For more information, visit www.kiwanisoftheheights.org, Facebook (@KiwanisoftheHeights), or send an e-mail to contact@kiwanisoftheheights.org.

Mark Harris is president of Kiwanis of the Heights.

COVENTRY continued from page 1



Heights Libraries Coventry branch is next to Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus.

Coventry building tenants Brady Dindia, president of the Artful Board of Directors, and Jack Valancy, Ensemble Theatre board member, expressed their gratitude and presented the LOIs and peace symbol cookies to the library on behalf of Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus member organizations. Erick Kauffman, president of Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park, the nonprofit that built and maintains the Coventry playground, said he was looking forward to working with the library as it seeks to rebuild and refresh the playground and park.

Another tenant, Amy Rosenbluth, director of Lake Erie Ink (LEI), expressed her appreciation to the library, stating that it was Heights Libraries Director Nancy Levin who, when she was teen services librarian, had partnered with Rosenbluth's organization to bring about the first teen poetry slam. She also noted that the library had given LEI its first home, at its Lee Road branch, before it was able to secure office space of its own.

Several community members spoke in favor of the transfer, saying that the

arts center will attract young families and add to the vitality of the neighborhood. Longtime Heights resident Ray Lesser, who owns the *Funny Times* along with his wife, Sue Wolpert, commended the library's action, saying that the library board had the vision to "reimagine what a library can be in the 21st century."

Heights resident Charles Drake asked if the library board was prepared to cover the costs of operating the building, and Regina Kupecky expressed concern about the condition of the building. Library Board President Abby Botnick replied that the board had done its due diligence and was prepared to address the issues. Levin stated that, although the roof of the building had been known to leak and would need to be fixed, the concrete block and steel structure was both safe and sound. She added that "the playground was a priority."

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer. FutureHeights is a tenant in the Coventry building and a member of Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus.

HRRC offers women's electrical repairs series

David Brock

In March, Home Repair Resource Center's (HRRC) Home How-To Electrical Series is starting up again. Each Wednesday, March 7 through April 11, 7-9 p.m., attendees should get ready to be enlightened.

This series has been immensely popular in the past, and this time, HRRC is adding a little something different. Participants will learn how to wire a house, and thus gain a full understanding of how electricity and wiring works throughout the whole home. Switches, outlets, circuits and more will also be covered.



Register for the class, and find out how to safely tackle electrical repairs yourself. The series costs \$150, and income-based discounts of 50 to 100 percent are available. For more information, and to see a complete listing of HRRC classes, visit www.hrrc-ch.org.

David Brock is education and outreach coordinator for Home Repair Resource Center.

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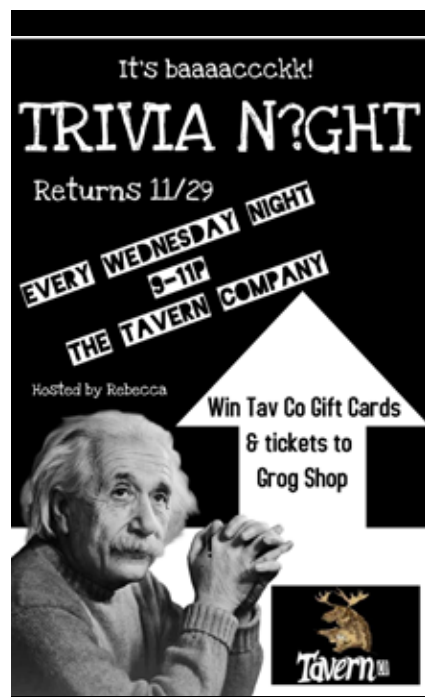
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Thursday, March 29: Maundy Thursday

5:30 p.m. Service of Foot Washing, Agape Meal & Holy Eucharist

7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Stripping of the Altar & Tenebrae

Friday, March 30: Good Friday

12 to 3 p.m. Community Ecumenical Service

The Seven Last Words of Christ

Music: *Stabat Mater* by F. Lachner, w/ female voices & strings

5:30 p.m. Journey to the Cross for All Ages

7:30 p.m. The Good Friday Liturgy

Saturday, March 31: Easter Vigil

8:00 p.m. The Great Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter

Sunday, April 1: Easter Day

7:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

9:00 a.m. Festival Eucharist with choirs, trumpet & organ
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11:15 a.m. Festival Eucharist with choir, trumpet & organ



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Heights High athletes commit to colleges



Heights High seniors signed their college letters of intent before a large audience in the school's gymnasium on National Signing Day.

Scott Wortman

On Feb. 7, 12 Cleveland Heights High School student-athletes signed their official college letters of intent at a National Signing

Day ceremony held in front of a large crowd inside Heights High's gymnasium.

The group comprised 11 football players and one girls lacrosse player who, combined, received

more than \$1.1 million in college scholarships.

The students were girls lacrosse standout Lauren Iott (Grand Valley State University), and football standouts Grayson Green (Central State University), Isaiah Higgins (Hocking College), Kylan McCracken (Ohio University), Mekhi Patterson (Thomas More College), Shamar Rhodes (West Liberty University), Peter Rouse (Erie Community College), LeMaro Smith (University of Buffalo), Tyreke Smith (The Ohio State University), Jared Wilson (Ohio Dominican University), Zaire

Webb (Georgetown University) and Ahmad Webber (West Virginia Wesleyan College).

Feb. 7 was the day that high school senior football players could officially sign with college or university athletic programs.

Heights High regularly has many student-athletes who go on to play collegiately. The signing period for other interscholastic sports is in April.

Scott Wortman is the supervisor of communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

Heights High re-dedicates Cappelletti Court



Hall of Fame coach Jim Cappelletti with current Heights High basketball players.

Scott Wortman

Cleveland Heights High School dedicated its new basketball court in honor of legendary former coach Jim Cappelletti during a pre-game ceremony on Feb. 9. The Heights High gymnasium now has a "Cappelletti Court" insignia on each of the baselines.

The Tigers' previous home court, replaced during the high school renovation, was also named in honor of Cappelletti, who spent 45 years in the CH-UH district, and won 539 games in his coaching career.

Cappelletti attended the ceremony, and a number of his former players came back to honor their

coach.

A true Heights legend, Cappelletti led the Tigers to the State Final Four six times (1975, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997, 2003). In 1975 and 1995, Cappelletti's team finished as State Runner-Up. In 1997, his team won the Division I State Championship, and he was named Ohio Coach of the Year. Coach Cap's teams also won the Lake Erie League title 11 times.

Cappelletti was inducted into the Ohio High School Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2011.

Scott Wortman is the supervisor of communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

March 19 fundraiser will benefit girls lacrosse



Heights Girls Lacrosse will host its annual fundraiser at Lopez restaurant in Cleveland Heights on Monday, March 19, 5-9 p.m. Delicious food and drinks will be served, with all tips—along with proceeds from live raffle items and a 50-50 raffle—going to support Heights Lacrosse programs. For more information, go to Facebook and search Heights Girls Lacrosse fundraiser.

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Barbershoppers receive 'outstanding' rating



The senior members of the Barbershoppers (from left): Azhara Robinson, Remi Goddard, Peyton Marshall, Evan Pitts, Malana Lovett, Tedd Byers, Mikaiah Truitt, Roberto Pastorelli, Clare Peppler, Gerald Shazor, Lily Kerr-Jung and Grant Heineman. Not pictured: Kiarah Balfour.

Joy Henderson

If you've heard them you already know: The Heights High Barbershoppers are outstanding. And now, it's official. Both the Boys and Girls Barbershoppers received a rating of Outstanding at the Barbershop Harmony Society International Festival in Costa Mesa, Calif.

More than 600 students from 18 schools attended the event, Jan. 17 through 20. Barbershop music is unaccompanied (a capella) vocal music with four-part harmony.

This is the first year that the girls have attended the competition. The boys have attended for several years. The possible ratings of Good, Excellent, Outstanding and Superior are awarded by a panel of international vocal experts.

The Heights students performed without their director, Jesse Lange. "Our students were one of the few groups performing without a direc-

tor," said Lange. "That requires the singers to be more self-reliant and to depend on each other."

Besides performing for a panel of judges, the students also attended workshops and watched performances by other groups, including college, adult and senior citizen ensembles.

The Girls Barbershoppers are: Marin Alcorn, Kiarah Balfour, Sydney Ball, Imani Bruce, Arianna Gonzales-Lowe, Laynie Gosselin, Jessica Gross, Caroline Imka, Isabella Johnson, Lily Kerr-Jung, Malana Lovett, Judea Lowe, Peyton Marshall, Clare Peppler, Charlotte Pizsel, Azarah Robinson, Lila Shubert, Olivia Sormaz, Alyssa Smith and Mikaiah Truitt.

The Boys Barbershoppers are: Tedd Byers, Myles Byrd, William Davis, Remi Godard, Nathan Henninge, Christian Hall, Nareus Hardin, Grant Heineman, Jonah Kerr-Jung, Charlie King, Michael Lee, Jackson Marshall, Samuel Mitchell, Roberto Pastorelli, Andrew Pecaroro, Evan Pitts, Gerald

Shazor, Rowan Trammell and Sukito Truitt.

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

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Penguins invade Gesu School



Mr. Popper and his penguin visited Gesu School to promote Gesu Reads Together.

Marjorie Gessner

At the end of January, Gesu School launched a new program, Gesu Reads Together. The school embarked on this project to promote family literacy and demonstrate connections between academic subjects across the curriculum.

During the months of January and February, students in kindergarten through fourth grade read the classic children's book *Mr. Popper's Penguins* by Richard Atwater, and class work connected to the themes of the book, covering topics such as penguins, Polar regions, and the water cycle.

Each child received a copy of the book, and the Gesu School Parent Teacher Organization arranged many activities, including a kick-off assembly featuring Mr. Popper (an actor

with Great Lakes Theater Company) reading the first two chapters of the book to the student body.

Over the course of the two-month program, an ice sculptor carved a 4-foot-tall penguin on the front lawn of the school, and students traveled to Playhouse Square to see a production of "Mr. Popper's Penguins." Students watched videos from the Akron Zoo's penguin exhibit, and the movie "Happy Feet," and a DJ taught line dancing to all the students, in kindergarten through eighth grade. There were trivia contests each day, engineering challenges, and penguins decorated the entire school.

Marjorie Gessner is STREAM coordinator at Gesu School in University Heights.

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Heights Educators Swim with the Sharks



CH-UH educators who participated in the Heights Schools Foundations's Shark Tank event on Feb. 9.

Scott Wortman

A group of 20 CH-UH educators “swam with the sharks” on Professional Development Day in order to qualify for opportunity grants courtesy of the Heights School Foundation (HSF).

In an event modeled after the reality-TV show “Shark Tank,” HSF offered grants of up to \$500 directly to teachers, who had to face a panel of sharks who determined if their proposals were investment-worthy.

Each teacher who submitted a proposal had two minutes to make the pitch, and then 60 seconds of back-and-forth with the panel. In the end, a shark had to make an offer to fund the proposal.

HSF awarded more than \$8,400 at the event, and educators from all CH-UH district schools participated. Proposals included grant

requests for alternative student seating options (wobble chairs, bicycle desks); STEM items, such as Lego Mindstorms and programmable drones; special events and field trips; a science speaker series; and educational garden supplies.

Julianna Johnston Senturia, HSF’s executive director, hosted the event. The four sharks were Susan Carver, HSF president; Meghan McMahon, HSF treasurer and CH-UH 21st-Century Grant coordinator; Rosemary Rackl-Pierce, RoxArts president; and the author of this article.

HSF plans to host another Shark Tank event during the 2018–19 school year.

Scott Wortman is the supervisor of communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.



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Cleveland Heights University Heights Board of Education Meeting highlights



JANUARY 23, 2018
President James Posch, Vice President Jodi Sourini, Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis and Beverly Wright were present. Superintendent Talisa Dixon, Treasurer Scott Gainer, Cleveland Heights City Manager Tanisha Briley, and Cleveland Heights Director of Economic Development Tim Boland were also present.

Public Education Week
Heintz presented a resolution in recognition of Public Education Week, which the board approved.

Lease for storage
The board approved an agreement for a two-year lease space to store materials from Roxboro and Monticello middle schools.

Update on Top of the Hill project
Briley reviewed the history of the property at the top of Cedar Hill. The city owns the parking lots where Doctors Hospital was demolished in 1968. The city has entered into a public-private partnership with Flaherty & Collins to build 200 luxury apartments, 15,000 square feet of commercial retail space, a boutique hotel and 525 parking spaces. The city and contractors are asking for tax increment financing (TIF) to complete this project. Flaherty & Collins is investing \$75 to \$80 million. They are asking for 100 percent deferred taxes for 30 years on the new valuation. At present the schools get \$21,218, which they will continue to receive. After 30 years, the schools will receive \$421,000, based on the currently estimated valuation of the project, as well as 100 percent of any new levies. Gainer will work with David Seed, the Board of Education’s legal adviser, and Boland to develop an agree-

ment and report to the board.

LWV Observer: Adele Cohn.

FEBRUARY 6, 2018
Vice President Jodi Sourini, Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis and Beverly Wright were present. President James Posch was absent. Superintendent Talisa Dixon and Treasurer Scott Gainer were also present. Present for the master facilities plan presentation were Project Management Consultants LLC Senior Project Consultant Doug Myers, Bond Accountability Commission Vice Chair Debbie Herrmann, and Director of Business Services George Petkac. The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. and was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Master facilities plan update
Herrmann reviewed the cost of installing a sprinkler system for the two middle schools. Because this would cost \$1.8 million, is not required in the code, and would not protect lives, the board decided not to add a sprinkler system. Myers gave some alternatives and their costs. They will be discussed at the next meeting. Petkac stated that each middle school will have six science rooms.

LWV Observer: Adele Cohn.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 7.

Spring library programs celebrate classic movies

Sheryl Banks

This spring, Heights Libraries will celebrate classic American films with film screenings, book talks, live movie music, and film talks by local experts John Ewing, Neal Hodges and Mark Dawidziak.

Original Voices Book Club: Hollywood Edition. [All programs in this series take place on Wednesdays, at 7:30 p.m., at the Lee Road branch, 2345 Lee Road.]

March 14: *The Loved One: An Anglo-American Tragedy* by Evelyn Waugh. Waugh's fictionalized account of his time in Hollywood focuses on the strange and surreal practices of the mortuary industry. This biting commentary on American culture and the film community was called a "macabre frolic filled with laughter" and "fiendishly entertaining" by *The New York Times*.

April 11: *West of Sunset* by Stewart O'Nan. In this fictional biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald, the famous author, now financially ruined and in failing health, settles in Hollywood to re-start his career as a screenwriter. O'Nan's novel is an intimate portrait of the writer's last years painted alongside a vivid cast of characters.

May 9: *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett. Named one of the "100 Best Books" by *The Guardian*, this classic novel introduced Sam Spade to the world and gave shape and substance to the image of the hard-boiled detective and the whole genre of noir mysteries. Follow in Spade's footsteps as he seeks out a statuette that brings death in its wake.

Lee Road Movie Night. [Movies in this series are shown on Fridays, at 6:30 p.m., at the Lee Road branch.]

March 16: "It Happened One Night." Frank Capra's romantic comedy stars Claudette Colbert as a spoiled heiress running away from her family and Clark Gable as

a reporter in need of a story. This early talkie won five Best Oscars: picture, actor, actress, director, and screenplay. (1934)

May 11: "The Maltese Falcon." Based on a Dashiell Hammett novel, John Huston's film follows Detective Sam Spade (Humphrey Bogart) as he gets tangled up with murder cases, eccentric criminals, a beautiful dame and the search for a priceless statuette. It also stars Mary Astor and Peter Lorre (1941)

Race(ing) to the Movies. Thursday, April 19, 7 p.m., at the Lee Road branch. Neal Hodges presents an excursion into films made for African Americans during the Golden Age of Cinema (1919-50).

The Cinematic Glories of Silent Films. Tuesday, April 24, 7 p.m., at the Lee Road branch. John Ewing, director of the Cleveland Institute of Art Cinematheque and curator of film at the Cleveland Museum of Art, discusses one of his favorite eras in film history. His talk will be supplemented by memorable clips from some great silent movies.

Monsters Are Universal: Silver Screams in Hollywood's Golden Age. Tuesday, May 15, 7 p.m., at the Lee Road branch. Largely Literary Theater Co. co-founders Sara Showman and Mark Dawidziak use lighthearted sketches, props and costume pieces to explore Hollywood's Golden Age of horror, with a special emphasis on the Universal films starring Bela Lugosi and Boris Karloff, as well as the genre's literary origins.

Music and the Movies. Wednesday, May 30, 7 p.m. Vocalist Eileen Burns and her three-piece jazz combo will present an entertaining and informative program featuring memorable songs and interesting stories from classic Hollywood films, such as "Casablanca," "Swing Time," "Breakfast at Tiffany's," "Brigadoon," "Singin' in the Rain" and more.

Classic Movie Night: "The Invisible Man." Thursday, April 5,

7 p.m., at the Noble Neighborhood branch, 2800 Noble Road. "The Invisible Man" is considered a classic horror film. An adaptation of the famous H.G. Wells novel of the same name, it was an early example of the magic that could be done on a silver screen. Come see this classic before the Johnny Depp reboot comes out in theaters. (1933)

The Sounds of Hollywood's Golden Age with Shari Hunter. Thursday, April 19, 7 p.m., at the Noble Neighborhood branch. Listen as Shari Hunter performs famous songs from classic movies from Hollywood's Golden Era, and explains what makes these songs so famous. Songs to be performed include "I Get a Kick Out of You," "Luck be a Lady Tonight," and "Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head."

H.G. Wells Film Series. [Movies in this series are shown on Tuesdays, at 6:30 p.m., at the University Heights branch, 13866 Cedar Road.]

March 27: "Island of Lost Souls" (1933); April 24: "War of the Worlds" (1953); May 29: "The Time Machine" (1960).

Sheryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.

Lent & Easter at



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Maundy Thursday 3/29

6:30 pm Community Supper
7:30 pm Tenebrae Service
of Shadows

Good Friday 3/30

12 - 3:00 pm Community
Ecumenical Service at
St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Holy Saturday 3/31

7:30 pm Easter Vigil
with Baptism &
outdoor watchfire

EASTER SUNDAY 4/1

9:00 am Chapel Service
with Communion

Children's Easter Egg Hunt
between services

11:00 am Traditional Service
with Communion &
Hallelujah Chorus

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Library accepting applications for teen music program

Jay Rosen

Heights High students who are aspiring musicians can now apply for the second installment of Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library's Teen Music Makerspace program. The library will accept applications from Heights students between the ages of 13 and 18 through March 18 for the program, which runs April 9 through May 18.

Teen Music Makerspace is a 101-style course covering everything from the history of electronic music to recording instruments, and using computer programs to create and manipulate sounds.

The course, open to 11 students, will take place in the Teen Digital Media Lab, located in the Teen Room of Heights Libraries' Lee Road branch. The lab features a sound-isolating recording booth, professional recording equipment, and computers outfitted with advanced music software.

Assistant IT Manager Matt Mancini, who also facilitated the first session of the Makerspace course, looks forward to this spring's session. "Last fall's class was a great success," Mancini said. "I was amazed by the creativity and talent each student brought to the table, and can't wait to help more Heights teens begin, or continue, their personal musical journey."

The Makerspace program features a weekly instructional session by Mancini on various elements of recording and producing music, followed by open-lab time, when students are free to work on personal projects with help from Mancini and a student intern. Instructional topics include mixing, editing audio, recording, and navigating digital music software.

Mancini emphasized that prospective students need not have any



Students Corinne Nicol (left) and Ela Passerelli mix music in the Teen Media Lab.

prior musical or recording experience, and that all musical genres and styles are welcome in the class. "What matters most is that students are willing and eager to learn," he said. "In terms of genre, during the previous session we had students interested in jazz, folk, hip-hop, rock music—they had pretty eclectic tastes. My hope is to create a course that is open to each student's musical preferences and gives them the structure and skills they need to pursue what they're most excited about."

Applications for a student intern are also open through March 18. "What we're basically looking for is someone with a bit of musical experience and a desire to help other students," Mancini said. The chosen intern will receive a \$500 stipend.

For now, the Teen Digital Media Lab is open only to graduates of and current participants in the Makerspace course. Other library customers are encouraged to use the adult Media Lab located in the Lee Road branch's HKIC (Heights Knowledge and Innovation Center), which fea-

tures many of the same amenities as the teen lab.

To download an application for both student and intern positions, go to <https://heightslibrary.org/teens/teen-media-lab/>.

Jay Rosen is communications coordinator at Heights Libraries.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

JANUARY 22, 2018

Present were President Abby Botnick, Vice President Chris Mentrek, Secretary James Roosa, Max Gerboc, Suzann Moskowitz, Vikas Turakhia and Dana Fluellen.

Financial report

The Library's fiscal officer reviewed the December financial statements. Total cash balance across the operating accounts, Bauer Fund accounts, and investment accounts at the end of December was \$11,694,681.20. The board accepted the December financial report.

Communications report

Communications Director Sheryl Banks provided an update on the libraries web and social media statistics.

For the Website Quarterly Report (October, November, December 2017):

- Unique visitors are down by 6 percent from the last quarter. This happens each year due to the holidays.
- December's unique visits were the highest seen in the last five years.
- Overall visits are also down, nearly 4 percent (21,085) from last quarter's average of 21,943. This suggests that more people are using the site and finding what they need quickly.

For the Social Media Quarterly Update (October, November, December 2017):

- Facebook fans rose about 3 percent, from 2,684 to 2,734.
- Twitter followers were up by 3 percent, from 1,481 to 1,515; favorites and retweets continue.
- Instagram followers were up by 20 percent, from 255 at the end of September to 320 at the end of December.

Sara Anne Gornick

Sara Anne Gornick has retired. A resolution honoring her 41 years of service was presented.

What's going on at your library?

Coventry Village Branch

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400

Thursday, March 8, 7-8:30 p.m.

Local Author David Giffels. Celebrating our wealth of outstanding local authors, this monthly series is presented in partnership with Mac's Backs-Books on Coventry. In March, David Giffels reads from his heartfelt memoir, *Furnishing Eternity: A Father, a Son, a Coffin, and a Measure of Life*. With wisdom and humor, Giffels confronts mortality, survives loss, finds resilience in his Midwest roots, and seeks a father's wisdom through an unusual woodworking project—constructing his own coffin. A book signing will follow.

Lee Road Branch

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

Sunday, March 4, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Green Eggs and Ham Opera. Happy birthday Dr. Seuss! The whole family is invited to celebrate his legacy through this interactive performance, which includes beautiful singing, zany acting and crazy props. Soprano Lara Troyer and her friends will perform the one-act opera "Green Eggs and Ham" by composer Robert Kapilow. Register at www.heightslibrary.org.

Noble Neighborhood Branch

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665

Thursday, March 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Recipe Swap Night. Bring in your favorite family dish to share with others and discuss why it's a family favorite, and take a few new recipes home. (No plug-in appliances or open flames allowed.)

University Heights Branch

13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

Wednesday, March 14, 3-4 p.m.

Anime Club. Join us after school to discuss your favorite animes, watch clips and episodes, and do fun crafts related to the anime world. Aspiring manga and anime artists can learn to draw their favorite characters and learn about new shows from other club members.

Passport applications

U.S. passport application processing is a new service that will be offered to patrons. The service will be delivered out of the circulation departments in all four library locations. Staff training will start in April. To meet U.S. passport provider rules and staffing, part-time circulation assistants' hours have increased from 16 hours per week to 20 hours per week.

LWV Observer: Khaliah Fisher-Grace.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 7.

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Cain Park Bicycle expands and looks to the future



Gary Schumacher behind the parts counter at Cain Park Bicycle.

Greg Donley

For generations of Americans, the local bicycle shop was a fixture of the neighborhood, a place where a kid could gain freedom and self-sufficiency by getting a bike, and where adults could continue their own involvement in cycling through commuting, recreation and competition.

Some of those storied local shops in the Heights are gone now—think Pee Wee's Bike Shop on Coventry or Al's on Lee Road—but those that remain, thanks in part to the region's increasing attention to cycling-friendly infrastructure, can be in a position to contribute to the quality of life in our communities and enjoy healthy business in the process.

One such shop is Cain Park Bicycle at 1904 Lee Road, just south of Superior Road. Owner Gary Schumacher opened the shop in 2006 in the same location that had housed Hi-Tech Cycles (whose owner, Marvin Rosenberg, had earlier owned Pee Wee's).

"What led me into this business was kind of chance," Schumacher said. "I've always been a cyclist and had thought about the possibility of a shop. Twelve years ago, I found out Marvin was interested in selling. At the time I was basically getting fed up with what I was doing—working in information technology with a huge commute over to the west side—and I looked at this and it just seemed like a better way to lead a life. It was im-

portant to me to stay in the Heights."

This spring represents another milestone, as Cain Park Bicycle is expanding into the adjacent storefront, long occupied by Dominic's Barber Shop. "Dominic retired last year and we've just been totally maxed-out space-wise," Schumacher explained. "We will be able to add about 50

bikes to the sales floor, so we'll be able to spend more time with the customer and less carrying bikes up and down to the basement."

Local bike shops face competition from online sellers and big-box discounters. Mike Bednarz, head mechanic, explained, "When the Walmart customer comes in and asks why our prices are more, I explain the higher quality of our components, our warranty that backs it up, the professional assembly that backs it up. You weigh everything and pretty soon you say, OK, I can buy a \$150 bike or a \$450 bike, but the long-term maintenance cost of the \$150 bike will quickly escalate and it won't be as reliable or, most importantly, be as much fun to ride."

Competing with mail-order retailers for decades has helped local shops prepare for the Amazon age. "Competition from the Internet is a challenge," Schumacher acknowledged. "We can't really compete on price, so we compete on service and quality and convenience. One thing we did right from the get-go was fix people's bikes, right in front of them,

and try to educate them as to what a better ride you can get. It's worked out—a lot of people have come back and got serious bikes. We even get a fair amount of business from people who bought their bike online and have us build it for them, and we're fine with that."

In all, Schumacher finds this to be a promising time to be expanding his business here. "The proximity to the universities and the hospitals is good for bike commuters, and Cleveland Heights itself is a pro-cycling community. We're pretty close to the Shaker Lakes trails. We see a lot of people coming in who want to get out and do some exploring—a lot of wives dragging their slightly overweight husbands in to get a decent bike and go out and have some fun. The university student market is good, kind of a continually refreshing customer base. We've seen much more interest in electric bikes."

Greg Donley is a member of the Heights Observer Advisory Board and a longtime cyclist.

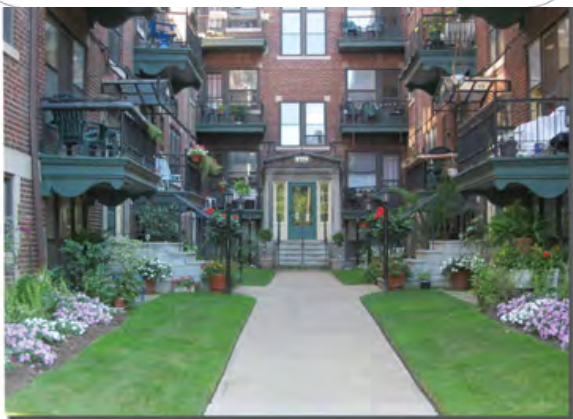
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LEI brings together kids and professionals at Kids' Comic Con



A group of students from the 2017 Comic Con show off their costumes in Artists' Alley.

Barbie Estrada

Lake Erie Ink (LEI) will host its sixth annual Kids' Comic Con on Saturday, March 17, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. At this all-day event, youths of all ages will have the chance to attend workshops with well-known comic creators.

Last year, this one-of-a-kind comic convention for young writers and artists drew nearly 150 kids and teens from across Northeast Ohio.

Workshops will cover the two aspects of comic creation—drawing and writing—and include the ever-popular activity “create your own comic character in clay.”

Doors open at 9:30 a.m., and workshops begin at 10 a.m. Admission is \$10 at the door, and scholarships are available. Register at www.lakeerieink.org/register or by calling 216-320-4757.

Costumes are encouraged, and comics, graphic novels and T-shirts will be sold. Lunch will be sold on-site, or kids may bring their own. Adults are welcome if accompanied by a child, and teachers are welcome with a staff ID.

Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth is a not-for-profit that provides creative expression opportunities and academic support to young people in the Greater Cleveland community.

The workshop is part of LEI's Weekend Ink creative expression series, which introduces young people to professional artists and writers.

Barbie Estrada is a Cleveland Heights resident and staff member at Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth.

Barbie Estrada is a Cleveland Heights resident and staff member at Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth.

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CIA



'The Effect' explores love and chemistry at Dobama Theatre

Julie Friedman

If love is a drug, can a drug make you fall in love? Lucy Prebble's provocative new play, “The Effect,” directed by Laley Lippard and opening at Dobama Theatre on March 2, wowed U.K. critics and award panels with its fascinating questions about the mysteries of the mind and the true nature of love.

“The Effect” tells the story of Connie and Tristan, volunteers in a clinical drug trial, who begin a sudden and illicit romance. However, they must ask themselves: is theirs a palpable chemistry, or merely a side effect of the new antidepressant being tested? As their relationship forces the supervising doctors to face off over the ethical consequences of their work, the story begins to unwind in a script that plays like a thriller.

The New York Daily News said

the play “asks provocative questions about the head and the heart. It also manages to appeal to both.”

The cast of Dobama's Midwest premiere of “The Effect” features Olivia Scicolone, Ananias J. Dixon, Derrin Ring and Joel Hammer.

“The Effect” runs Thursdays through Sundays, March 2–25, at Dobama Theatre, 2340 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights. Ticket prices range from \$29 to \$32, with senior, student and military discounts available. Tickets to the preview performance on March 1, at 7:30 p.m., are \$15. The pay-as-you-can performance is March 4 at 7:30 p.m. Call the box office (216-932-3396) for information, or to purchase tickets by phone. Tickets are also available at www.dobama.org.

Julie Friedman is the managing director of Dobama Theatre.

Concert honors retiring choral master Martin Kessler

Marge Geiger

Cleveland Heights-based Choral Arts Society of Cleveland continues its 43rd season with an examination of classical expressions of folk art. In a performance that director Martin Kessler calls “one chorus, two pianos, three percussion, and four hands,” Choral Arts will treat its audience to a performance that is rollicking, sassy, heartwarming, upbeat and moving, all in one entertainment package.

The concert, on Sunday, March 11, 7:30 p.m., at Disciples Christian Church in Cleveland Heights, will have added significance as Choral Arts singers honor Kessler before he retires from full-time, active directing at the end of this performance season.

Kessler, a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident, has spent the past 50 years as an educator and musician, honing and channeling the artistic abilities of students, instrumentalists and singers. During his 15 years with Choral Arts, Kessler has expanded artistic awareness and entertainment opportunities through creative and



Martin Kessler invites musicians and vocalists to take a bow at the end of a recent concert.

innovative programming. Under his directorship, singers and audiences alike have been treated to a number of premieres, including *Jerusalem-Yerushalayim* by Antony Pitts, and James Whitbourn's *Annelies*, a choral setting of *The Diary of Anne Frank*.

Drew Clemens, chorus presi-

dent emeritus and a founding member of Choral Arts, noted, “Choral Arts was a maturing, 27-year-old community chorus when Martin Kessler became its fourth music director in 2002, making it a widely respected musical resource. Marty's skilled leadership and creative program-

ming attracted committed singers through his appeal to their desire to grow as choral musicians. He is a masterful teacher, conductor and scholar of fine music, with a sly sense of humor. We are profoundly grateful for his dedicated service to Choral Arts Cleveland and to the pursuit of musical excellence.”

This performance examines the enriching relationship between music and poetry. The evening's repertoire includes Mack Wilberg's arrangements of poems by Robert Burns, Ron Nelson's musical interpretation of Alfred Lord Tennyson, and Liebeslieder Waltzes from Brahms, who used as his verbal inspiration the folk songs and love poems in Georg Friedrich Daumer's *Polydora*. The performance culminates by showcasing Carl Orff's dramatization of the romantic longings in medieval lyrics as arranged in his classic *Carmina Burana*.

John Watson, local baritone soloist and Choral Arts assistant conductor, enjoys the way composers “find a poem or a play that inspires them to take those words off the page and heighten them with melody and harmony.” He added that performers and audience alike can “view words the same way the composer did and see how those words inspire us. We are given the opportunity to experience the poetry for what it is. Then when we hear the music the composer has set to it, it gives us a better perspective of how he may have made his choices in meter, tempo and the melodic line.”

Supported in part by a grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, the concert is free and open to the public. For more information visit www.choralartscleveland.org, or call 216-381-4608.

A 30-year Cleveland Heights resident, Marge Geiger is a board member and singer for Choral Arts Society of Cleveland. An English professor at Tri-C East Campus, she is married to Joe Geiger, a retired Heights High English teacher.

Ensemble prepares for 2018 Colombi New Plays Festival

Tyler Whidden

Ensemble Theatre will host its seventh annual Colombi New Plays Festival this month, showcasing new works by local playwrights. Among this year's festival highlights is “Mama/Moon,” a new work by Cleveland Heights playwright Tom Frattare.

“Mama” and “Moon” in the title refer to Mama Cass Elliot of The Mamas & The Papas, an immensely popular folk rock group of the late 1960s, and Keith Moon, the innovative and wildly eccentric and erratic drummer of the Who. Both died at age 32.

Frattare said the impetus for his play was the rash of talented artists dying at a young age—Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Jim Morrison, and others. “It's a play about sex, drugs and rock and roll,” Frattare said. “But it's also about the whirlwind of celebrity, and the all-too-often side effects of loneliness and addiction on the road to redemption.”

The Colombi New Plays Festival is named for Ensemble Theatre's founder, Lucia Colombi, whose daughter, Celeste Cosentino, took



over as executive artistic director of the theater when Colombi died in 2009.

Many plays in this year's festival represent the culmination of a year's worth of work for the many local writers who attend Ensemble's StageWrights workshop. Curated by Ensemble's associate artistic director, StageWrights is an open-door, free workshop held on Wednesdays in the Coventry School building at 2843 Washington Blvd., in Cleveland Heights.

“StageWrights is a great way for Ensemble to encourage and support the creation of new work in our community,” Cosentino said. “With all the members who have come and gone over the years, they've all really bonded and worked together to keep the tradition of new play development at Ensemble alive.”

Festival events, including readings and workshops, will be held at Ensemble and at select loca-

tions throughout Northeast Ohio. StageWrights has already officially kicked off the festival season with a StageWrights Showcase, in which the writers were given a prompt—journey—and wrote short plays that then had staged readings.

All readings and events surrounding the production of “Mama/Moon” are free and open to the public. The play opens on March 9 and runs through March 25.

For more information, a schedule of events, and tickets, go to www.ensembletheatre.org, e-mail info@ensemble-theatre.org, or call 216-321-2930.

Tyler Whidden is a playwright and associate artistic director at Ensemble Theatre. He also co-hosts the Cleveland Stage Podcast.

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Spring show opens at St. Paul's



Origins 2, by Debbie Vail.

Robin Outcalt

With spring around the corner, it is time for a new show at the Nicholson B. White Gallery at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Visit the gallery between March 9 and early June to see *Mindful, Colorful, Artful*. This show pulls together the works of four talented local artists: a photographer, an oil painter, a printmaker and a glass bead maker. Meet the artists at a free public opening on Friday, March 9, 5 to 7 p.m.

Bill Berris carefully selected an eclectic set of photographic works that are crisp and vivid with color, with subjects ranging from people to wildlife to landscapes. Each image has a story behind it: a moment in time or a human emotion. Berris resides in Solon, where he runs a photography service company with his wife.

Working with oil paints on canvas is Debbie Vail, who paints primarily portraits. She has recently begun painting expressive and colorful abstracts as well. She strives to bring life and soul to her human subjects; the topic of immigration has found a place in her works. Her abstracts give her the chance to explore different colors and painting tools. Vail lives and works in Cleveland Heights.

Dale Goode shows embossed monoprints, some inspired by an interest in jazz music and improvisation. He has worked in a variety of media during his career as an artist. In the works he has selected to display here, Goode uses various tools, printing techniques, and materials to create interesting, colorful, and



Spoon and scoop, by Betsy Fallon.



Untitled, by Dale Goode.

curious surfaces. These monoprints are one-of-a-kind original works.

Rounding out the group is Betsy J. Fallon, of Cleveland Heights, who carefully turns colored glass rods into beautifully designed beads. She melts the rods slowly, with a keen sense of design to create her unique jewelry, as well as functional objects such as serving pieces and desk accessories. The blending of color and the smoothness of the surfaces make the pieces uniquely stunning.

Robin Outcalt is co-director of the Nicholson B. White Gallery at St. Paul's Church in Cleveland Heights.

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WRC performs two masses in 'Mass = WRC2' concert

David Gilson

This concert title pun is based on Albert Einstein's statement, "I get most joy out of music." The Western Reserve Chorale [WRC] plans to bring joy in music to the Heights with a March 18 concert of two masses: Schubert's *Mass in G* and John Rutter's *Mass of the Children*.

The approximately 100-member WRC will be joined by soprano Marian Vogel, tenor JR Fralick, baritone Matthew Brennan, and the ladies of Voices of Harmony from Beaumont School, and accompanied by an orchestra.

The concert will take place on Sunday, March 18, 3:30 p.m., at Church of the Gesu in University Heights. WRC, in its 26th year, is grateful to have been so welcomed into its new home at Gesu.

The concert is free and open to the public; a free-will offering will be taken to help support the cost of programming.

WRC will begin rehearsals for its June concert, "An American Tapestry," on the evening of Tuesday, March 20. Rehearsals take place in the chapel space at Church of the Gesu.

Anyone interested in joining WRC is invited to contact Joanne Poderis, executive director. More information about the ensemble, including contact information, is available at WRC's website, www.westernreservechorale.org.

David Gilson is artistic director of the Western Reserve Chorale, director of music at Church of the Saviour, and associate dean for student affairs at CIM.

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HYT celebrates home with 'The Wizard of Oz'

Pamela Fine

Follow the yellow brick road and join Heights Youth Theatre (HYT) for a performance of "The Wizard of Oz" at Heights Middle School (Wiley campus). The show opens on

Friday, March 9, and runs through Sunday, March 18.

Treva Offutt directs the show, Stacy Bolton serves as music director, and Jack Ina is stage manager. One hundred Greater Cleveland students in grades 1 through 12, comprise the cast. The lead cast members are Spencer Skok (Wizard), Victoria Skok (Dorothy), Brian Tuohy (Scarecrow), Keegan Polatz (Tinman), James Berner (Lion), Trinity Offutt Decker (Glinda), Grace Wilkinson (Witch), Grace Hoy (Miss Gulch), Margaretta Milgram (Auntie Em), and Joshua Mink (Uncle Henry).

"The process of helping the cast bring the music of Oz to life has been joyful and fun. From Dorothy to the Munchkins to the apple-throwing trees, every member of this cast is committed to performing to his or her absolute best, and that is a real treat, especially with such a timeless classic as this. You're definitely in for a treat," said Bolton.



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Offutt said HYT is thrilled to be returning to its theater space at Wiley. "The Wizard of Oz' reminds us to give thanks for the spaces and faces that we may take for granted and that we each have the power for change," Offutt said. "At the same time, we have so many new faces and families that have added richness and diversity to our work. There truly is no place like home!"

"The Wizard of Oz" will be

performed in the Heights Middle School auditorium, 2181 Miramar Blvd., in University Heights, Friday, March 9 and 16, at 7 p.m.; Saturday, March 10 and 17, at 2 p.m.; and Sunday, March 11 and 18, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 general admission (\$9 for seniors and children under 6). The box office opens 45 minutes prior to each show. For more information, visit www.heightsyouththeatre.org. For group seating information, call 216-410-7500.

For more than 60 years, HYT has provided quality theater education and live theater performances to thousands of children and families in Greater Cleveland. Founded in 1954, HYT produces as many as four complete musicals per year, offering participants an opportunity to gain valuable experience in theater arts. HYT's goal is to make theater affordable and accessible to people of all incomes and backgrounds in a nurturing environment that encourages social and emotional growth.

If you're interested in supporting theatrical arts in the Heights, visit www.heightsyouththeatre.org for more information.

Pamela Fine is executive director of Heights Youth Theatre.

HYT and Cain Park will offer musical theater camp



Pamela Fine

Heights Youth Theatre (HYT) is thrilled to make a summer return to the place of its origin, Cain Park. In a new collaboration, HYT will partner with Cain Park to offer a summer camp for teens who are passionate about musical theater.

The camp, open to those in grades 6-12, will take place June 11-29 at Cain Park (14591 Superior Road). No audition is necessary.

From audition techniques, scene work, character development, choreography and music intensives to interaction with professional actors, directors, tech people and stage managers, HYT campers will build a musical review in the professional setting of Cain Park, culminating with a performance on the Alma stage on June 30.

For more information, call 216-410-7500 or visit www.heightsyouththeatre.org.

Pamela Fine is executive director of Heights Youth Theatre.

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Drawn Together explores Buddhist concepts

Mary Ryan

Opening March 9 in the Heights Arts main gallery, *Drawn Together: Emotional Intelligence and the Vernacular of the Heart* explores the Buddhist concept of the brahma-viharas, also known as the four divine emotions, through drawings by Northeast Ohio artists John Carlson, Suzanne Head, Tony Ingrisano and Dana Oldfather. The community is invited to the opening reception on Friday, March 9, 6 to 9 p.m.

Drawn Together looks at the emotions of loving-kindness (metta), compassion (karuna), vicarious or sympathetic joy (mudita), and equanimity (upekkha), through the expression of visual line and imagery in a wide range of materials, including paint, charcoal, and glass.

"Drawing is so effective and efficient in its ability to convey emotion that it seemed a most appropriate medium for this subject," said Josh Werling, exhibition curator. "Each mark is a statement of expression by the artist. It is also a perfect metaphor for social interaction and relationships between individuals and the collective.



An image by Dana Oldfather, from the exhibition *Drawn Together*.

Like all of us moving through the world, reacting to and relating with each other based upon our own individual stories and experiences: marks and lines, all part of a bigger picture."

Each of the four artists has created three works based on the brahma-viharas: one representing the divine emotion and its corresponding near and far enemies. The far enemy represents the opposite of the emotion and the near enemy is an emotion masquerading as the

pure emotion.

On Thursday, April 5, *Ekphrastacy: Artists Talk + Poets Respond* offers an opportunity to hear the *Drawn Together* artists speak about their work and invited poets read original work inspired by select pieces in the exhibition.

The Same... Only Different, recent drawings by Jennifer Adams, will open in the Spotlight Gallery on Friday, March 23. Adams began working on the series, which is based on brick patterns in local architecture, in 2015. Since receiving an M.F.A. in fiber from Cranbrook Academy of Art, she has primarily focused on two-dimensional practices including drawing, print-making and photography, as well as such textile arts as quilting and knitting.

For more information on Heights Arts community programs and events, including house concerts, gallery performances and outreach, visit www.heightsarts.org.

Mary Ryan is a 30-year Shaker Heights resident, who recently retired from marketing and communications at Heights Arts.

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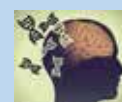
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New ceramics in the spotlight at Heights Arts



Tree House, by Sharon Grossman.

Mary Ryan

Currently on view in the Heights Arts Spotlight Gallery is a selection of new works by ceramist and founding member Sharon Grossman.

While she is best known for her

vessels, Grossman has created for this installation a suite of pieces that are all meant to be wall-hung.

Many of the works employ a technique known as *pique assiette*, that uses broken shards of dinnerware the create mosaic designs.

Previously in her creative life, Grossman was a woodworker and furniture maker, and that background informs her approach to ceramics.

"I have always loved carving," Grossman said, "and a lot of my work includes carved or inlaid elements. To me, this body of work really combines those interests that led me first to make furniture and then to take up ceramics."

The solo exhibition will be on view at Heights Arts, 2175 Lee Road, through Saturday, March 18.

Mary Ryan is a 30 year Shaker Heights resident, who recently retired from marketing and communications at Heights Arts.



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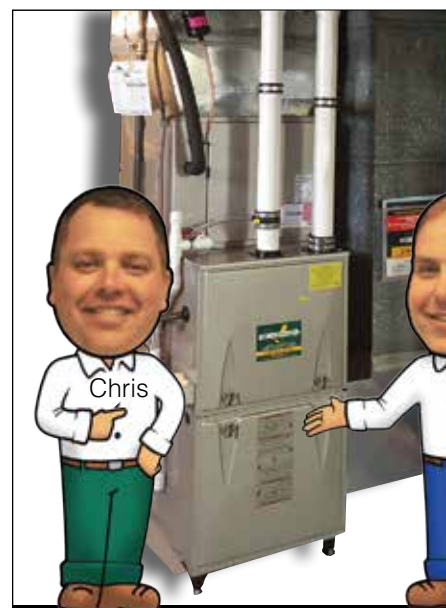
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Burning River Baroque to perform at three CH venues

Malina Rauschenfels

Early-music ensemble Burning River Baroque will return to Cleveland Heights with three performances of *Suppressed Voices: Music of the Banished*. The ensemble will perform on Wednesday, March 21, 7:30 p.m., at The Wine Spot (2271 Lee Road), and Saturday, March 24, 2 p.m., at St. Alban's Episcopal Church (2555 Euclid Heights Blvd.). Both of these concerts are free; free-will donations will be accepted.

An additional performance

will be offered on Saturday, April 24, at 7 p.m., at a private residence in Cleveland Heights. A fundraiser for the ensemble, tickets will be \$50. For reservations, e-mail rsvp@burning-river-baroque.org (address of the venue will be provided upon receipt of RSVP).

Performers will include co-directors Malina Rauschenfels (soprano) and Paula Maust (harp-sichord), with guest artists Sarah Elizabeth Cranor (baroque violin), Reynaldo Patiño (baroque violin) and Jessica Korotkin (baroque cello). Burning River Baroque will



Malina Rauschenfels and Paula Maust of Burning River Baroque in performance.

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Praised by the *Boston Musical Intelligencer* as a group that “left an indelible imprint on my psyche,” Burning River Baroque is an innovative artist-run ensemble founded

in 2012 with the goal of bringing the drama, passion, and vitality of Baroque music to life for contemporary audiences.

Malina Rauschenfels is a vocalist, cellist and baroque violinist, as well as co-director of Burning River Baroque.

Apollo's Fire presents free family concert on March 3

Melanie Emig

Cleveland Heights-based Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra will present a free family concert at Heights High on Saturday, March 3, at 2 p.m. The performance is part of a family concert series titled *Wing It*, featuring local songstress Amanda Powell with Apollo's Fire instrumentalists.

This interactive and light-hearted performance, which is open to the public, will explore the connection and similarities between jazz and Baroque music. Audience members will have an opportunity to try out the instruments, including the hammered dulcimer, percussion and guitar, during the post-concert “Instrument Petting Zoo.” The family concerts are part of the group's new Community Access Initiative, which seeks to bring world-class music to diverse audiences throughout Northeast Ohio.

In addition to the family concerts, the initiative includes free “student rush” tickets, reduced-price “Presto Seats,” and “Family Nights” wherein parents and their children from selected public



Amanda Powell

schools are invited to attend an Apollo's Fire subscription concert for free.

Apollo's Fire's eventful month also includes a Carnegie Hall performance on March 22. The debut, which sold out seven months in advance, will mark a milestone for this world-class ensemble, which is celebrating its 26th year.

Melanie Emig is the patron services associate at Apollo's Fire. She holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance and a master's degree in opera theater from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and teaches piano at The Music Settlement.

Some things that matter



SONGS AND STORIES

I'm the administrator of a Facebook group called Growing Up in Cleveland Heights. I didn't start the group. I joined the group. And my friend Jim and I used to complain, to each other, about things that people were posting. Then Jim started complaining to the founder and administrator of the group. After a while she asked him if he would take over as administrator. He did. Then he asked me to be co-administrator with him. I did. After several years, Jim died, unexpectedly. So now I'm the sole administrator. But I'll be handing that off in the near future.

One thing that has been fascinating—and frustrating—is that the same topics keep coming up, over and over. Before people join, we ask them to look through past posts, to avoid bringing up topics that have been discussed a lot already. They don't. Someone joins and immediately posts, "Does anyone remember Cumberland pool?"

Well, of course everyone remembers Cumberland pool. For one thing, it has never gone away. It's right there, right where it always was, and every year, from the end of the school year till Labor Day, the pool is open every day and full of swimmers of all ages.

But even if you moved away long ago, and you're not sure if the pool is still there, if you scroll through the group's past posts, it will not take you very long to find another recent post about Cumberland, and its 150 comments, and then another, and another.

Cumberland pool is one of those topics that people can't seem to get enough of. I see the same people commenting every time it comes up—"spent every day there;" and "I lived

at Cumberland from morning to evening;" and 37 people who say, "remember they checked between your toes and you had to walk through a solution?" and several who say, "do they still have the high diving board? that was scary;" and there's always a couple who say, "I climbed over the fence and swam naked at night;" and about 100 more comments like these.

Another topic that comes up repeatedly is Mawby's Restaurant. Even though people don't have a lot to say about it, other than about 150 variations of "best hamburgers ever," it just keeps coming up (the topic, not the burger).

Equally popular is the subject of Clark's Restaurant at the southeast corner of Cedar and Lee. Someone brings it up every couple of weeks and then a long discussion, including a few arguments, follows. One thing everyone remembers is Apple Pie Johnny's Toy Chest for members of the Clean Plate Club—if a kid ate everything on his or her plate, he or she could go pick out a toy (a tiny, cheap trinket) from a large chest.

And then the thread shoots off into several tangential discussions, and arguments, about what occupied that space after Clark's. If you're a member of the Growing Up in Cleveland Heights group, I'll tell you right now: When Clark's closed, in the early '60s, it was followed in that space by Inman's, a similar restaurant, and then, in the early '70s, by earth by april, a good vegetarian restaurant. Eventually, that space (after serving as a carpet store) was taken over by the expansion of the Cedar Lee Theatre. There. Now we won't have to talk about it any more, right? Highly unlikely.

Remember Meither's? I'm not asking you; I'm just listing another topic that comes up often. Meither's was an ice cream shop that created its ice cream in-house—many flavors, and all



A postcard from the 1940s of Chin's Pagoda, on Lee Road, between Berkshire Road and Washington Boulevard, another recurring topic.

good. It stood at the corner of Lee and Redwood roads, a block south of Superior Road, now the site of Lotus Thai House. Everyone's always asking everyone if they remember it, and everyone always does. And, soon thereafter, someone asks again. It's sort of like the definition of insanity.

And then there's "Does anyone remember sledding at Cain Park?" The answer is yes—the thousands of people who sledded there all this winter. And every winter for the past 80 years or so. Someone actually asked if the hill is still there. I considered holding a contest for creative answers to that question.

Speaking of Cain Park, another popular topic is some variation of "Who remembers seeing Bob Hope at Cain Park?" Everyone

over a certain age answers yes. Apparently, tens of thousands of people filled the 2,000-seat amphitheater. It's sort of like the Woodstock of Cleveland Heights residents born in the 1920s and '30s.

So, one reason these same topics keep returning is that people, especially new members, don't bother to check. But the other one is that these places really were meaningful to people who grew up here. And that's the thing I have to keep reminding myself.

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.

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