

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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INSIDE



New CH municipal judge recaps first quarter



April 18 spelling bee helps fund public school programs



17 Student art show opens April 17 at Lee Road Library



Business workshop to focus on signage and merchandising

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

Pocket gardens planned for Noble neighborhood

Tom Gibson

Can concentrations of pocket gardens help rejuvenate neighborhoods? That's the question a coalition of Cleveland Heights partners is trying to answer. They are working with neighbors on Langton Road, just off Quilliams Road in the Noble neighborhood, to install 10 pocket gardens this spring. The gardens will consist of either native perennials or a tree surrounded by Russian comfrey and other plants that suppress weeds and provide extra fertility.

"We want to provide sustainable beauty," said Barbara Sosnowski, who heads the beautification committee of Noble Neighbors, a local activist group. "That means that any garden we plant should look as attractive after four years as it does after one."

If the effort succeeds, the group intends to take the Langton Road model and apply it elsewhere in the



Sandy Thompson, Mani Pierce and Tom Gibson plant a plum tree in the Oxford Community Garden.

neighborhood. "The exciting thing about this project," Sosnowski added, "is that it is intended to be scalable. If we succeed with 10 private residences, we can succeed with 50, and so on."

Noble Neighbors' partners in the effort include the Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC), Cleveland Heights High School, Rust Belt Riders and Green Paradigm Partners. HRRC will provide classroom space and instruction for the Langton Road neighbors, high school students will provide paid help with construction of the garden plots, Rust Belt Riders will provide specialized compost, and Green Paradigm Partners will provide landscape design and community organizing help. Funding will come from grants and crowd funding via

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Heights High musicians meet alumnus and Super Bowl champion Jason Kelce

Joy Henderson

The annual Heights High Instrumental Music Department's (IMD) Spring Tour (Feb. 21–24) featured an athletic element this year, as band members had a chance to meet with Jason Kelce, Heights High alumnus (2006) and Philadelphia Eagles Super Bowl champion. As a student, Kelce played baritone saxophone in the school's jazz band.

Last fall, when Band Director Brett Baker learned that the spring tour would be in Philadelphia, he texted Kelce to see if they could catch up for a few hours during the band's visit to Central High School in North Philadelphia.

A few weeks before the visit, Baker asked Kelce if he would like to play baritone saxophone with the jazz band during its visit.

"He's always up for something fun," Baker said. "He was great with the kids, signing autographs and taking photos. He's still a musician; he



Junior trumpet player Xavier Thomas with Heights alumnus Jason Kelce, who is wearing his Heights High letter jacket.

even played sax in a recent Mummers parade in Philly."

Junior trumpet player Xavier Thomas was impressed with Kelce's playing, and said, "He did a great job, and he was really chill and fun."

Eva Bambakidis, who also plays trumpet, said she thought that meet-

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Rogers named UH's interim police chief

Jessica Schantz

University Heights Mayor and Safety Director Michael Dylan Brennan has formally named Sgt. Dustin Rogers as interim police chief for the city of University Heights. Rogers began his post on Friday, March 16, replacing now retired Police Chief Steven Hammett.

According to the University Heights mayor's office, Rogers joined its police department in August 2005, and in 2007 was voted the department's union director.

In the last 13 years, Rogers was promoted to corporal, then sergeant. He also revised the department's field training manual—a document adopted as a model by Northwestern University—and managed the department's field training program.

His contributions to the department's personnel policies include creating and implementing performance objectives for uniform shift officers, founding the formal recognition program, and completing a uniform bureau schedule assessment, which led to the department's implement-

ing of 12-hour shifts.

Rogers graduated from the Northwestern University Center for Public Safety

Public Safety Sgt. Dustin Rogers in 2015, specifically from its School of Police Staff and Command. He is currently enrolled at Cleveland State University as an undergraduate in its Public Safety Management program.

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Charter Review Commission plans April 19 community meeting

Robert Brown

The 15-member Cleveland Heights Charter Review Commission (CRC) plans to pose the following three questions to participants at its upcoming community meeting:

- What type of government do you prefer for Cleveland Heights and why?
- What other elements should be added or changed to improve local government?
- What are the three most important qualities you want to see in local government?

The meeting is scheduled for April 19, 7–9:30 p.m., at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, 1 Monticello Blvd. (at Mayfield Road).

The purpose of the meeting, as stated by the commission, is to provide information about the current Cleveland Heights charter, review common models of local government, and provide an opportunity for collaborative reflection on the current form of local government in Cleveland Heights and whether changing it would improve the quality of life in the city.

At its March 15 meeting, the CRC laid out a schedule for the remainder of its work, culminating in early November with the presentation of its recommendations to CH City Council. The schedule is posted online at www.clevelandheights.com/document-center/view/2731.

After receiving the commission's recommendations, city council may choose to place all, part, or none of them on the ballot for a public vote

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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 May issue must be submitted by April 11. 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.

A decade of news and views in the Heights



OPENING THE OBSERVER

Deanna Bremer Fisher

FutureHeights published the first issue of the Heights Observer 10 years ago, on April 10, 2008. To commemorate this 10-year anniversary, members of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee will take a look back at the stories that appeared in the last 10 issues for each month. I get to start us off by looking back at the 10 April issues we have published. We envisioned the Observer as a forum for Heights residents to share information about issues that were important to them. And, many of the issues we were talking about in 2008 we are still talking about, 10 years later.

The top story of the April 2008 issue mused about the future of the former Coventry school property. The school district had closed the elementary school in 2007, the building was sitting vacant, and neighbors were concerned about it attracting crime and driving down property values. A group formed to study the possibility of the site becoming an arts center. Today, April 1, 2018, the future of the Coventry property looks brighter as it is rebranded Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus and the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System officially takes possession of it, with the intention of preserving the park, the green space and the building that is now home to several arts and culture organizations.

Another story on the inaugural issue's front page was about Big Fun and how the iconic Coventry Village business left its customers smiling. In 2018, we are facing the sad news that the store's 27-year run is coming to an end. Big Fun will be closing, but Steve

Presser has at least one more trick up his sleeve: he is selling T-shirts that will help fund new public art in Coventry Village (see the story on page 19).

In 2008, Cleveland Heights city government was facing major budget cuts due to the fact that voters rejected a proposed income tax increase that appeared on the March 2008 ballot. Voters did eventually approve an increase in 2015, and the city has restored several of the services and positions it had cut, but not all. (Remember when we had an animal control officer?) It also has added positions, such as two economic development jobs, that it didn't have in 2008.

Issues of concern to Heights residents have occupied the pages of the Heights Observer, either as news stories or opinion pieces. In 2009, residents in the Oxford and Severance neighborhoods of Cleveland Heights were forming groups to address crime and other issues. The city of University Heights began a charter review process in which it considered changing from a mayoral to a city administrator form of government. (Now Cleveland Heights' charter review process is considering if that city should change from a council-manager to mayoral form.) When a ballot issue failed in 2009, Concerned Citizens of University Heights formed to promote "civic engagement through openness and transparency." Hmm. That sounds like a familiar theme.

In 2009, the future of the former Oakwood Country Club property, the majority of which lies in the city of South Euclid, with a smaller portion located in Cleveland Heights, sparked several articles, opinions and letters to the editor. In the end, Walmart moved from Severance to a major new commercial development on the South Euclid portion of the property. Not until 2015 was the future of the Cleveland Heights section settled, when Hebrew Academy of Cleveland purchased it for its pre-K through 12 boys school. We are still awaiting a new future for Severance.

Over the years, issues such as the renovation and reconfiguration of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District's facilities, crime statistics and storefront vacancies have filled the front pages of the Heights Observer. The paper also documented the opening of new businesses (Sweet Melissa in 2014; Barrio in 2017) and the closure of old favorites (Heights Guitars in 2014; Revive in 2017). Neighborhood groups, such as Cain Park Neighborhood Association, Cedar Taylor Development Association and Noble Neighbors, came into existence and promoted their activities. April is the time for Heights schools' spring concerts, and several senior soloists have been featured in Heights Observer stories over the years (check out this spring's soloists on page 21).

As I look back at 10 years of community history in these pages, I see that, yes, we are still talking about many of the same issues. I also see the hope for a bright future, one in which the community continues to renew itself, successfully tackles its challenges, and remains the kind of place that we can be proud to call home.

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

Help, before my car falls apart or I have a collision!

To the Editor:

I'm talking about Coventry Road running north and south between Euclid Heights and Larchmere boulevards. General road surface degradation here, worsened by increasingly deep, invisible (till the last instant) new potholes, has converted this stretch of Coventry Road into a daily demolition derby for my expensive, vulnerable, late-model automobile.

Examples of two recent incidents, neither unique and each recurring: 1) Being especially watchful for new potholes, I become distracted from traffic signals and almost run red lights. 2) Coventry being technically a two lane highway, when abreast of another vehicle, each of us maneuvering to miss potholes, I've had to avoid several side-swiping collisions.

So when will funds be available to repair Coventry Road? And at what point does repeated dereliction of obvious, long-standing danger cause community government to become complicit in their consequence?

Walter S. Nicholes Cleveland Heights

POLICE CHIEF continued from page 1

A press release from Mayor Brennan's office stated that, "in the time [Rogers] has been with University Heights, he has served with distinction."

Rogers will act in an interim capacity while a hiring committee seeks applicants from both within

and outside the department for the position. Details of the application process are forthcoming.

Jessica Schantz is the e-news manager at the Heights Observer and a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights.

City School District, provided the

Correction to Jan. 23 LWV CH-UH Board of Education meeting highlights

The League of Women Voters' column in the March issue of the Heights Observer, "Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education meeting highlights," for Jan. 23, contained incorrect information about the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) proposed for the Top of the Hill project. This incorrect information also appeared in the online version of the story "Cleveland Heights makes progress on economic development initiatives," by Deanna Bremer

Scott Wortman, coordinator of communications for the CH-UH

correct information in an e-mail: "At present, the schools receive \$21,000 annually on the vacant properties, which they will continue to receive through the life of the TIF. In addition, the district will receive an additional \$400,000 annually as soon as the project is completed until the 30-year TIF expires. At the end of the 30-year TIF the district will receive 100 percent of property taxes on the value of the project. Additionally, the district will receive 100 percent of any new levies passed after the project is completed."

A popularly elected, accountable mayor would be better for Cleveland Heights

Sarah Wean

As a 26-year resident of Cleveland Heights, I took great interest in community issues and learned a great deal about them through my stints as a city of Cleveland Heights Housing Service consultant; as one of a number of concerned citizens who rallied around quality of life and city planning issues by creating FutureHeights in 2000; and as a volunteer in Grant Deming's Forest Hill Historic District.

My experiences have led me to the conclusion that Cleveland Heights has not been well served by its current council-manager form of government. This structure may have worked well in the early 20th-century Progressive-era view of government needing to be placed on a business footing, but today's challenges require a new approach.

The costs of the council-manager form of government are clear.

The insular culture in which I worked at city hall in the 1990s allowed many of the internal systems that should have been modernized over time to remain archaic and inefficient.

I became even more aware of these drawbacks as my neighborhood struggled with vacant and foreclosed housing. We worked with the city over many years, including advocating [for] the adoption of a foreclosure bond that has yet to come to any meaningful discussion. We also came to see that it was ill-prepared, even on a 21st-century data level, to handle the intricacies of combating this issue.

Housing data that should have been available at the touch of a computer key was only available stuffed in a file cabinet on many pieces of paper. The housing department's go-it-alone culture didn't allow for reaching out to collaborate with existing local resources for better data collection (such as CWRU's NEOCANDO, as was pointed out at the time by our volunteers).

When FutureHeights formed in 2000 to organize citizen support for the community, the council-manager form of government created a prescription for inertia that made the city ill-prepared to work with us. This structure of no accountability encourages the administration to keep residents at arm's length. Instead of having the leadership in place to embrace organized citizen assistance, city hall was entrenched with a suspicious and defensive response. When no full-time city employee is elected by residents, it should come as no

surprise that accountability to residents (or even their entirely part-time elected representatives) might suffer.

I don't place the blame for this inertia on individuals, but on a system that doesn't encourage new ideas and proactivity to city opportunities and challenges when they present themselves.

There remains not one elected full-time person to approach to bring people and important resources in through the door, greatly hindering the city's ability to respond to its challenges, such as fighting the problem of vacant and blighted homes, accommodating the city's increasingly poor and aging population, and becoming a place where young people want to live and raise their families.

Some may take the position that the current system has worked over the years and that change would violate the old maxim "if it isn't broken, don't fix it." However, the city long questioned the need for a master plan, something FutureHeights and others consistently proposed from 2000 until 2017. Similarly, for years the city rebuffed calls for the creation of a community development corporation, which could be a municipal partner in development issues; today it is finally in talks with FutureHeights to achieve that overdue goal. Perhaps the city will also recognize the benefit of adopting the foreclosure bond legislation residents have sought for years as a way to shift the cost of vacant properties from taxpayers to the financial institutions that unnecessarily created the vacan-

All these examples reveal the belated progress of valuable ideas in a system that, while not "broken," nonetheless can miss important opportunities due to a structure that does not contain enough accountability or resident input for today's world.

Through these iterations of my life as an engaged citizen, I've come to the conclusion that accountability and progress in Cleveland Heights can better be achieved by embracing an elected mayor, accountable to the voters, with a mayor-appointed chief administrative officer, and a mix of ward representation and at-large council members.

[This is an edited version of a letter sent to the CH Charter Review Commission. For full version, visit the Charter Review page at www.clevelandheights.com.]

Sarah Wean was a resident of Cleveland Heights for 26 years.



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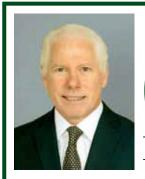
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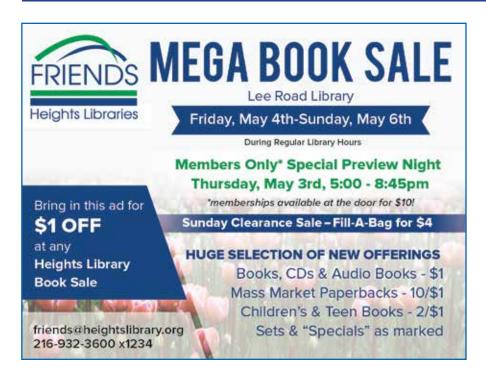
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CH judge provides municipal court update

James Costello

On or before the last day of March each year, municipal courts throughout Ohio submit a report of their operations during the preceding calendar year to the legislative authority and to the board of county commissioners of each county within their territory. The report shows the work performed by the court; a statement of receipts and expenditures of the civil and criminal branches; the number of cases heard, decided, and settled; and any other data that the supreme court, the secretary of state, the legislative authority, and the board of county commissioners requires. As I prepared the data for the report for 2017, which occurred before I took office, I found myself reflecting on the first two and a half months that I have been in office.

Let me begin by stating that it is an honor to serve Cleveland Heights as its judge. It has at times been trying, for example, setting bail for an accused who is pulled over and allegedly found to have a small amount of drugs, but also a loaded, unlicensed, semi-automatic handgun in the vehicle. The preeminent purpose of bail is to ensure that an accused appears at all stages of the criminal proceedings. It is also necessary to take into consideration the potential danger to the community of the accused. All this has to occur while affording the greatest degree of fairness to the accused, who is just that, accused, and innocent until proven guilty.

It has also been rewarding—seeing the relief on someone's face after letting [him] know that I am going to give [him] an opportunity to untangle the complicated legal web of driving under suspension. There are myriad ways to end up with a suspended license, and the costs to the BMV and others to get valid are often astonishing. That stated, driving is a privilege, and anyone who wishes to do so must follow the law. That is why it is so nice to be able to give people a way to move forward while maintaining the ability to punish if they do not take advantage of that opportunity.

Whatever the case before me, I am seeking to uphold the ideals of our judicial system and enhance our community. To that end, I have

begun making a number of changes at the courthouse. First, I have reorganized the court's schedule. The biggest change is consolidating all housing matters, both evictions and housing code violation cases, on to my docket rather than a magistrate's docket. I feel that it is critical that I, as judge, have direct contact with each of the housing code violation cases to ensure, among other things, that they are not allowed to linger unnecessarily. I have also begun conducting all jail cases through the court's video conferencing system. This both saves time and makes the courthouse safer because police officers are no longer required to escort those individuals up into the courtroom.

Finally, I have hired three parttime magistrates to replace the retiring full-time magistrate who had served the court in that capacity for many years. Because I have taken on the evictions and housing code violation cases, the total number of hours worked by the three magistrates is less than the hours formerly worked by the full-time magistrate. This saves the court, and in turn the city, money.

The newly hired magistrates bring with them a wide variety of legal experience and diversity. Gary Benjamin is a longtime Cleveland Heights resident and former advocacy director for Legal Aid; Rod Mastandrea is a graduate of Cleveland Heights High School and a practicing criminal defense attorney; and Kimberly Bolton is a former prosecutor for the city of Cleveland Heights.

There are other changes to come. The court's computer hardware and software update is underway. This will save money, make the court more efficient, allow for electronic filing, and be better for the environment by allowing it to become completely paperless. Also on the technology front, the court's website is getting completely redesigned to make it more user-friendly and give everyone access to more information.

I look forward to sharing these and other updates with you, and I thank you for entrusting me to serve as your judge. I promise that I will continue to do so with the utmost integrity.

James Costello is a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident and judge of the Cleveland Heights Municipal Court.



Courage and persistence



HEIGHTS OF DEMOCRACY

Carla Rautenberg and Deborah Van Kleef

In a democracy, and yes, in a democratic republic, real victories small and large are only won when we, the people, stand up for our rights. Elected officials do not hand us such victories; we must claim them ourselves, over and over again. Participation in a democracy can be difficult, messy, inconvenient, frustrating and even boring. Often, we take three steps forward and two steps back (and sometimes, unfortunately, vice versa). But without our active involvement, there can be no democracy at all.

In the past several weeks we have seen dramatic examples of democratic action in response to crises, as high school students in Parkland, Fla., and public school teachers throughout West Virginia have stood up to authority and demanded action.

In both of these cases, people were reacting to events that touched them personally and deeply, but in neither instance was the response simply self-serving. The teachers, striking after years of no pay raises and sharply increasing health insurance costs, were concerned about the many students who rely on school meals and extra bags of food to get through the weekend. So they pitched in, sometimes alongside school board members, preparing and delivering care packages to ensure that none of their students would go hungry during the strike.

In Florida, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School students who had lost siblings and classmates to a crazed gunman dedicated themselves to ongoing political action, resolving to save other communities from a similar fate.

By walking out of their class-rooms, teachers in all 55 West Virginia counties gave the greatest civics lesson any of them will ever teach. Out of unspeakable tragedy, the Florida students became teachers themselves, and resolved to school their elected representatives about what unregulated gun ownership means to our communities.

Most of us, thankfully, are not put to such tests. But closer to home, we can cite a small example of how individual actions can result in a more democratically run local government. A few years ago, some of your Cleveland Heights and University Heights neighbors found themselves "fighting City Hall," when CH City Council and the city manager presented a plan to privatize the CH Water Department. (About 800 UH residents were served by CH Water.)

To stay informed about city hall activity on the issue, some of those neighbors began making regular public records requests (PRRs), to obtain electronic copies of "the packet"—a collection of memos, written reports,

legislative drafts and other information that the city manager sends to city council members a few days before each weekly Committee of the Whole meeting. Upon receiving the first PRR, the city law department pushed back and attempted to deny the request; however, the individual who had submitted it happened to be a federal government attorney. The city's resistance did not last long. These are public records.

For the better part of a year, every Monday morning, someone e-mailed a PRR to the law department. In the afternoon, the requester received the packet, and shared it with others in the group. Finally, someone at city hall decided to simplify matters and post the packet on the city's website each Monday, along with the agenda for that night's meeting. Now, that information is available to every citizen, every week, at the same time—a small but significant victory for transparency.

Citizens who challenge public officials persistently may at some point be accused of rudeness, incivility, or a lack of decorum. Should that happen, we like to keep in mind the words of "It Isn't Nice" by Malvina Reynolds, a song from the Civil-Rights era:

"It isn't nice to block the doorway, it isn't nice to go to jail,

There are nicer ways to do it, but the nice ways always fail,

It isn't nice, it isn't nice, you told us once, you told us twice,

But if that is freedom's price, we don't mind."

Speaking of democracy: the city of Cleveland Heights is in the midst of a charter review process, and citizen input is needed regarding its form of government. On April 19, 7–9:30 p.m., the Charter Review Commission will hold a community meeting at the CH Community Center to solicit such input. Please plan to participate. For regular updates, go to www.cleveland-beights.com and scroll down to the Charter Review tab.

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.

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POCKET GARDEN continued from page 1

IOBY Cleveland. Look for the Noble Neighborhood pocket garden project at www.ioby.org/campaign/cleveland.

To address the problem of longterm maintenance, the group has devised a three-pronged plan. At the horticultural level, the group has selected plants that grow well in Northeast Ohio. It will test soils for mineral



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deficiencies that attract noxious, highmaintenance weeds, such as bindweed, and then add mineral amendments to correct those deficiencies. Compost with high fungal content, which reduces the need for watering during droughts, will be applied.

At the immediate neighborhood level, the beautification group is asking homeowners to take a two-session course at HRRC on plant selection and care. The intention is to bring immediate neighbors together on a common project and create a greater sense of neighborhood spirit and purpose.

At the broader neighborhood level, the support and participation of Noble Neighbors and Heights High, among others, is intended to raise the project's community profile and foster its success. "We are employing a number of approaches to community revitalization," said Brenda May, a leader of Noble Neighbors. "We see this project as one way to make pocket gardens a signature of the neighborhood, thereby enhancing both local identity and property values."

The effort has attracted wide support. Cleveland Heights Mayor Carol Roe, herself a Noble resident, called the effort "an innovative approach to building community spirit that comes at just the right moment of upswing in the Noble neighborhood." Kay Carlson, president and chief executive officer of the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, said, "We find the project's combination of cutting-edge biology and creative community involvement promising and likely to have much wider application."

Watch for more information as the project progresses.

Tom Gibson, a resident of Cleveland Heights since 1980, is a former president of Heights Community Congress, a board member of Reaching Heights, and a founding board member of Heights Arts. He is the principal of Green Paradigm Partners, a community organizing and landscape design firm.



A month of testing (or April is the cruelest month)



A TEACHER'S VOICE

Ari Klein

People generally look forward to spring as a time of renewal after a long, dark cold spell. In Ohio, April brings thoughts of a different kind to many public school teachers, because it is when students are required to take state tests. Many of my colleagues dread this time of year, and non-school folks can probably guess the reasons. I will focus this article on the lost potential that occurs when we are mandated to give state tests.

At the high school, there are four end-of-course exams given to ninth- and 10th-graders. Each test has two parts, and each part takes 90 to 110 minutes to administer. The state allows for a one-month period, usually beginning in April, for districts to give the tests.

Last year at the high school, we decided to administer the ninth- and 10th-grade tests on the same days. Four consecutive Wednesdays were set aside, during which students were tested in the morning for about three hours, with a 10-minute break between the two parts of the test.

Think about that for a minute. Imagine you are a 14- or 15-year-old sitting for three solid hours of serious concentration, knowing that your eventual graduation will depend on how well you perform on this test.

Classes following the test period were shortened. Not much teaching or learning took place on those days because so many of the students were exhausted and incapable of focusing.

This year, our plan at the high school will again combine test days, but only one section will be given each day. So, on Wednesdays and Thursdays, starting on April 11, we will test students first thing in the morning, followed by 33-minute class periods for the rest of the day (instead of the usual 46 minutes).

I hope this will help students, but I don't know if it will actually make much of a difference. The shortened classes will challenge teachers to keep the flow of lessons going during these four weeks. However we test students, there will be a huge disruption in the school day. We not only lose more than 13 hours of instruction while students take the tests, but it is also a time of tremendous stress for many of the kids.

Students with identified special needs may be allowed some accommodations during testing. Because of this, many of our special needs students will spend much more time taking the tests than the general school population, making any chance of focusing on classwork after testing a minor miracle.

In addition, our intervention specialists will be the ones providing the extra support for these students. This creates a need for separate testing locations and the hiring of substitute teachers to cover the classes the intervention specialists will miss. In the end, the students with the greatest needs will receive less instructional time and more stress from the longer testing periods.

Another concern is what to do with students in grades that are not being tested. Their regular classrooms may be used for testing and their regular teachers may be proctoring exams.

If I believed that state tests had some validity or benefit, I would feel more positive about them, but I do not. I see no value in having students show that they have memorized some standardized repertoire of knowledge at a particular point in time.

Society values the people who stand out and excel in their chosen fields. But few of us will ever need to know that the diagonals of a rhombus are perpendicular bisectors of each other.

Perhaps the real reason we test students the way we do is for the benefit of the corporations that produce and market the tests. Or perhaps the benefit goes to the politicians and pundits who point to failing public schools as a reason for privatization.

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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Political ideology is not a substitute for educational principles



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

"Keep your eye on the ball!" Those were my Dad's words of wisdom as he coaxed me to improve my tennis game.

This is also sound advice for those advocating for great public schools. It's important to keep your eye on the ball—the right ball!

Privatization and the accountability movement have cast long shadows over everyday life in our schools. The goal is to cripple public institutions. They are selling a political ideology, not a philosophy of education. They justify these policies as levers to improve schools through competition, but they don't work. It's been a distraction from paying attention to what does!

The corporate reformers are not intent on a public-school learning experience that leads all children to find their passions, their voice, and their place in making a better world. They do not want to create schools that make young people thinkers, problem solvers, engaged citizens and productive adults.

They want parents to have choices, and they want citizens who are good test-takers. This is a very low bar and cynical view of educational excellence. It is not a way to make a strong nation. This political agenda has distracted me from what matters, and what matters is what happens to the kids.

At the second Heights Coalition for Public Education forum on democracy and education, we explored the underlying values that make public schools worthy of defense, and contrasted them with the ideology of Betsy DeVos, the libertarian secretary of education. It was a great reminder: Our public system is a treasure worthy of our attention. We should not have to defend it from a laissez-faire marketplace ideology that ignores the rights of children and our common purpose as citizens.

The next step in our educational journey that night was a review of John Dewey's *My Pedagogic Creed*, which was published in 1897. Dewey saw the school as primarily a social institution and believed that education was a process of living, rather than preparation for future living. He thought that, through continual

and sympathetic observation, adults could see what a child was ready for and on what material the child could work most readily.

The discussion of Dewey's work sparked energy and excitement. It brought us back to the microcosm of the classroom—the amazing growth and joy that dedicated, professional, caring teachers create when they build a community with their young charges and engage them in activities that inspire discovery. This is what matters! It makes education worthy of our resources and stewardship.

By comparison, how do testdriven education, large classes, computerized learning, fear, and no-excuses discipline fit into this philosophy? How does education as job preparation fit into a philosophy of building on passions and empowerment? Education isn't about the free market, it's about human beings! The solution isn't in school choice or test scores. The solution is in investing in the development of every child's potential. Dewey was brilliant about human potential and the power of education. This is the stuff that we should be paying attention to!

We need to keep our eyes on this ball: what happens in children's minds and to their character as they carry out their lives as members of a community of learners. We need to pay attention to our expectations for how we ask teachers to structure time, experiences, social interactions and leadership possibilities for the children they teach. We need to embrace a broader purpose.

What if all the time and resources that went into writing tests, preparing students to take the tests and evaluating test results had gone into giving teachers time to design and implement new opportunities for students to explore their interests? What if all the resources that went into creating a parallel system of for-profit schools had gone into building bridges with parents and our communities? What if all of the energy that has gone into fighting bad policies had instead gone into mobilizing communities to work with children?

I want to keep my eye on how to make a school day a wonderful day every day.

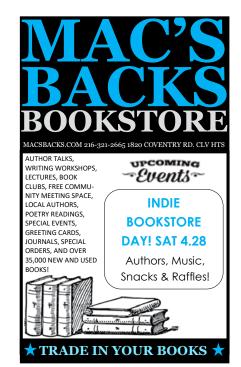
Susie Kaeser is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and former director of Reaching Heights. She serves on the national board of Parents for Public Schools. KELCE continued from page 1

ing a musician who happens to also be a star football player was exciting. "He was super nice and he was a bridge between our two schools," said Bambakidis.

Besides meeting Jason Kelce, the Heights musicians heard the Central High musicians play, and talked about music with them. "They are topnotch musicians," said Bambakidis, "and it was fun to see them play, then to talk to them. We had a lot in common."

The four-day tour also included master classes at Temple University, a Philadelphia Orchestra concert, and sightseeing.

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





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University Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

FEBRUARY 20, 2018

Present were Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan and council members Pamela Cameron, Phillip Ertel, John Rach, Steven Sims, Michele Weiss and Mark Wiseman. Vice Mayor Susan Pardee was absent.

Fair housing and planning vacancies

The city is accepting applications for those interested in serving on the Fair Housing Committee and Planning Commission. Mayor Brennan has informally nominated two people for the Fair Housing Committee, and one vacancy remains. There is one vacant seat on the Planning Commission, which will meet on March 21. Interested parties can contact the mayor at mayor@universityheights.com.

Village in the Heights

Paul Sobel gave a presentation on Village in the Heights, which serves older residents. The volunteer-run organization provides transportation, light-duty home repair and maintenance, and activities, such as books clubs and lunch and learns. All volunteers undergo background checks. Members pay between \$200 to \$350 per year, which covers programming, insurance and marketing costs.

Chicken coops

An ordinance amending a planning and zoning code to permit chicken coops in residential districts was presented on first reading. The one-year permit would allow residents to have six chickens, which can only be used for eggs. Roosters would not be permitted, and eggs could not be sold. Councilman Ertel asked if the city would implement sanitary regulations. After much discussion, Mayor Brennan suggested a second ordinance to establish the sanitary regulations for the keeping of chickens. Council approved consideration of the second ordinance, which will be added to the next meeting's agenda.

Silsby Road pocket park

Council approved a motion to advertise for bids for the Silsby Road Neighborhood Park. Community Development Coordinator Patrick Grogan-Myers said a \$100,000 Ohio Department of Natural Resources grant will be used to install a picnic bench and ramp that meet American Disabilities Act guidelines, and to install a fence. Councilman Wiseman expressed concerns about safety, and Police Chief Steve Hammett responded that the city does hourly checks of parks after dark.

Nuisance properties

Council declared 3654 Raymont Blvd. a public nuisance. Council also declared 3673 Washington Blvd. a public nuisance. The owner of the Raymont Boulevard property was advised to contact the building department in early February, but has not. There is the possibility that the Washington Boulevard property will be purchased and rehabbed.

Meeting with arborists

The service department will organize a second public meeting with the city's arborists as University Heights residents have expressed interest.

IWV Observer: Siobhan Leftwich

MARCH 5, 2018

Present were Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan, Vice Mayor Susan Pardee, and council members Pamela Cameron, Phillip Ertel, John Rach, Steven Sims, Michele Weiss and Mark

Public comments

Chicken coops: A Charney Road resident spoke against a proposed ordinance allowing residents to keep chickens. He cited



statistics from the Centers for Disease Control outlining diseases, like salmonella, that chickens carry. He asked how the city would dispose of unwanted chickens, noting that Minneapolis has had a problem disposing of chickens that can no longer lay eggs.

A Meadowbrook Road resident countered his argument, saying that people rarely get diseases from chickens if they follow basic sanitary practices. She noted that Lakewood requires prospective chicken farmers to complete a class before they can apply for a permit, and suggested that the city include the requirement in its proposed ordinance.

Kiwanis of the Heights: Mark Harris, president of Kiwanis of the Heights, said Kiwanis will implement service clubs in nine schools by the end of the year. He asked council to contact Kiwanis for help with service or fundraising projects.

Summer employment

Online applications are being accepted for summer employment at Purvis Park. Resumes should be sent to mayor@universityheights.com.

Gun control

Responding to queries from concerned residents, the mayor said that under current Ohio law, the city can't pass a ban on guns. Mayor Brennan said it can pass a resolution asking the Ohio General Assembly to take action, and recommending what that action may be.

Chicken coop ordinances

After a lengthy discussion about the pros and cons of keeping chickens in residential areas, council tabled two proposed ordinances-one amending the city's planning and zoning code to permit chicken coops, and the other regulating the keeping of chickens-until the planning commission has time to review them and provide comments. The ordinances will be presented at the next meeting, on emergency.

John Carroll partnership

The fire department has resumed a working relationship with John Carroll University's volunteer emergency medical services department. The university has invited the city to participate in emergency medical training continuing education and will participate in the city's paramedic training, when applicable.

Waterline valve leaks

There are two active waterline valve leaks at Laurelhurst Road and Washington Boulevard, and at Edgerton Road and Meadowbrook Boulevard. The leaks have been reported several times to Cleveland Water, which has yet to respond.

LWV Observer: Siobhan Leftwich.

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

stracted 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 email to mbarnes9515@gmail.com or jo through Google groups using "lwv-chuh observer reports" as a search phrase.

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



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Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

FEBRUARY 20, 2018

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren, Cheryl L. Stephens, Jason Stein and Michael N. Ungar. The meeting lasted from 7:32 to 9:10 p.m.

Public comments

Three people addressed the need to retain experienced housing inspectors, adopt a fore-closure bond policy, and consider public input and creative options in the charter review process. They thanked the city for supporting beautification plans for Noble Neighbors.

Meadowbrook and Lee site

The city manager requested and received council permission to solicit qualifications to develop the Meadowbrook and Lee site.

Public safety report

Fire Chief Dave Freeman and Police Chief Annette Mecklenburg gave presentations summarizing services to Cleveland Heights residents during 2017. The fire department made more than 5,184 calls, and 81 percent of them were for EMS (emergency medical services). Only 64 were for fires. Police intervention categories include animal complaints, motor vehicle accidents, drunk driving and criminal activity. Incidents are down in some categories and have shown modest increases in others. Both safety services are involved in cooperative programs with other communities, which is increasing efficiency and reducing costs. Diversity in hiring remains a challenge for both departments.

Ohio Fairness Act

Vice Mayor Yasinow offered, and council approved, a resolution to support Ohio Fairness Act, HB 160. This puts council on record as supporting state legislation to make sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression protected classes in anti-discrimination laws.

Replacement of traffic signals

Council authorized the Ohio Department of Transportation to replace traffic signals on Mayfield Road from Warrensville Center Road to Kenilworth Road.

Top of the Hill

Council authorized an agreement with F&C Development Inc. The resolution for the agreement, introduced by Councilmember Dunbar, creates the terms for the redevelopment of the Top of the Hill project on Cedar Road.

Mister Brisket loan

Council authorized an agreement with Mister Brisket Inc., which will set the terms for a loan for the expansion of this small business using the city's Economic Development Loan Fund Program.

New council committee structure

Council defined a new structure for its standing committees. Councilmember Ungar offered the legislation that outlines the purview of each committee.

Mayor Roe's report

Gun violence was once again the focus of



comments and concerns by council members after the school shooting in Parkland, Fla. Safety will be on the agenda at the upcoming March 12 joint meeting with the CH-UH Board of Education. Mayor Roe is participating in the PRISM racial equality leadership training program and hopes to use this experience in her role as mayor.

LWV Observer: Susie Kaeser.

MARCH 5, 2018

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren, Jason Stein, Cheryl Stephens and Michael Ungar. The meeting started at 7:39 p.m. and ended at 8:06 p.m.

Public comments

James Williams asked council to support legislation opposing euthanasia. Mark Harris reported on Kiwanis Club progress activating clubs in the Heights schools.

Committee assignments

Mayor Roe announced council committee chair assignments for this year:

- Finance Cheryl Stephens
- Housing and Transportation Mary Dunbar
- Planning and Development Melissa
 Vasinow
- Recreation, Community and External Relations Kahlil Seren
- Safety and Municipal Services Michael
 Lingar

Cedar Lee plan

Council acknowledged receipt of the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District plan for public services and improvements.

NOPEC Electricity Aggregation Plan

Council approved the new electricity aggregation program to be implemented by the Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council (NOPEC).

NEORSD easement

Council granted an easement to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) to install regulators and relief sewers for Dugway Creek on Superior Road.

City employee salaries

Council heard the new salary schedules and classifications for city employees on a first reading.

Mayor Roe's report

Mayor Roe invited citizens to participate in the Charter Review Commission meetings that are held every other Thursday. A joint meeting with the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education will be held on March 12. The March 26 Committee of the Whole meeting will include a presentation about the community development corporation.

LWV Observer: Susie Kaeser.

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

See disclaimer on page 8.

COMMISSION continued from page 1 to amend the city charter.

If the public votes to amend the charter to include, for example, a popularly elected mayor, or some ward-based council members, the earliest that an election could be held for those positions, under state law, would be November 2021.

Currently, Cleveland Heights and Bedford are the only two of Cuyahoga County's 57 municipalities that are governed by a council-manager form of government, without a popularly elected mayor.

At the March 15 meeting, CRC members expressed the tentative conclusions that each has reached based on the group's first six meetings, and related documents and research.

The 14 commission members in attendance were split on the question of whether Cleveland Heights should amend its charter to include a popularly elected mayor. While most members said that they remain open-minded at this time, seven expressed support for retaining the current council-manager form of government, three spoke in support of changing to a government with a popularly elected mayor, and four expressed no preference at this time.

Jack Newman, commission chairperson, said that he has not seen evidence that a change in the form of government would ameliorate the challenges facing the city of Cleveland Heights. He also said that there are substantial risks and major unknowns in uprooting an existing system and replacing it with one that has not yet been tested in a particular community.

Jessica Cohen, commission member, expressed support for considering a change to a local government led by a popularly elected mayor, possibly complemented by a chief administrative officer, as is the case in Shaker Heights. She said that she believes that the city manager-led government does a good job of delivering basic services but lacks real vision and leadership for the city's future and lacks accountability for citizens seeking to work with the government.

On the issue of adding wardbased city council members, the majority of commission members said that they need more information before coming to even a tentative conclusion.

In contrast to the views ex-

pressed by members of the CRC and CH City Council, the majority of citizens who have made comments to the commission, in writing or in person, have expressed support for changing the form of governance in Cleveland Heights.

The March 15 CRC meeting, and full discussion, can be viewed online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=dI4vaM QbiIo&feature=youtu.be

Citizens can e-mail comments to the commission through its facilitator, Larry Keller, at lkeller@clvhts. com. Additional information can be found on the CRC's recently updated Web page, www.clevelandheights. com/875/charter-review-commission.

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 40plus years, Brown serves on the board of FutureHeights.









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Making the Heights Home is topic of April 24 FutureHeights public forum

Sruti Basu

Coinciding with Fair Housing Month, FutureHeights invites residents to attend a free public forum, Choosing to Make the Heights Home, on Tuesday, April 24, 7–8:30 p.m., at The BottleHouse Brewing Company, 2050



Lee Road.

Speakers will include experts on current housing trends, as well as residents who have recently purchased homes in Cleveland Heights. The panel will lead an open and candid discussion about the decision-making process of buying a home.

The diversity of housing stock and walkable business districts are major assets in Cleveland Heights. The forum will explore what else drives buyers' decisions on where to purchase a home. Does Cleveland Heights have what buyers are looking for? What more could the city do to promote its amenities to potential homeowners? How can the community build on its assets to make it a more desirable place to live?

Register for this free event at https://cleheightshome.eventbrite.com.

For more information about FutureHeights' programs visit www. futureheights.org.

Sruti Basu is director of communitybuilding programs at FutureHeights.



Heights High students representing the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) posed for a team photo before the silly yet serious spelling competition at the 2017 Reaching Heights Community Spelling Bee.

Spelling bee to benefit Reaching Heights

Nicole Rossa

Join in the fun at the annual Reaching Heights Community Spelling Bee on Wednesday, April 18. This year's bee will take place on the big stage at the newly renovated Cleveland Heights High School auditorium.

Come watch your neighbors—attorneys, professors, city council

members, business owners—as they participate in a serious spelling competition to benefit Reaching Heights' public education programs.

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. for this free, family-friendly event. Prior to the beginning of competition at 7 p.m., raffle tickets and refreshments will be available for purchase.

This spelling bee is a team event in which three spellers work together to write down the letters in the word given to them and then send a teammate to the microphone to read out the team's best guess. Teams, including the Episco-spellians from St. Pauls Episcopal Church, and Upper Case from Case Western Reserve University, dress in costumes that in past years have included straw hats and feather boas, bee antennae and wings, and graduation caps and gowns.

It's not too late to form a team. If you'd like to participate, instead of just watch, find a couple of friends, raise the \$500 entrance fee, and join the fun. [For registration information, visit www.reachingheights.org.]

This annual event is a community collaboration to support Reaching Heights programs that enrich students, support teachers, and connect the Heights community to its public schools. Come make some noise, cheer for your team, support Reaching Heights, and feel the tension as brave spellers take the long walk to the microphone to S-P-E-L-L H-A-R-D W-O-R-D-S.

Nicole Rossa is this year's Queen Bee and the program manager of Reaching Heights.



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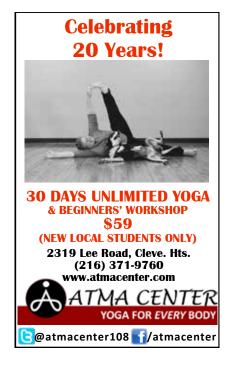
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Houser seeks to retain county council seat

Winifred Weizer

Cuyahoga County Council District 10 has two candidates vying for the Democratic nomination in the May 8 primary, current Councilman Michael J. Houser and Cleveland Heights Council Member Cheryl Stephens. The winner will face Republican Angela Bennett in the November election.

Houser was appointed to fill the county council position when Anthony Harrison was elected to Cleveland City Council. Houser won the party endorsement for the seat in January.

Houser's grandparents lived in the Heights, and he has seen the challenges and successes of this area firsthand over the years. He has combined this knowledge with his experience at the state, federal and county levels to develop and work on programs that will benefit all areas

Houser, a Cleveland resident, became interested in politics after an internship with former state Rep. Marian Harris. Since then, Houser has worked as an educational specialist for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland, as a campaign staffer for Sen. Sherrod Brown, on Capitol Hill in the office of Rep. Tim Ryan, as a field organizer for the We Are Ohio campaign, and as special assistant to Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish. He has a bachelor's degree from Kent State University and a Master of Public Administration from the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University.

Currently, Houser is vice chair of Cuyahoga County Council's Health, Human Services & Aging Committee, and serves on its Economic Development, Community Development, and Public Transportation committees.

"District 10 has one of the



most diverse pop- Michael J. Houser ulations and communities in the county, varying widely in income and needs," said Houser. "Addressing these needs requires someone who not only understands what is happening in the communities but also can work with the various county departments to help find viable solutions that can be implemented."

One of his priorities is to continue working to rebuild the district through economic development and job creation programs, utilizing the county's Skill Up program. He will continue to help lead the county's faith-based infant mortality reduction initiative in partnership with First Year Cleveland, and plans to continue to speak at local correctional institutions. What he learned there led to the creation of an event focused on at-risk teens, Choices and Consequences, in collaboration with Men Who Wish to Change and the Cuyahoga County Office of Reentry.

Houser also is committed to seeing programs like Closing the Achievement Gap Funding, which he supported for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights and Shaw school districts, thrive and expand.

Win Weizer, a 27-year resident of University Heights, is active in the community and is a member of the UH Finance Advisory Committee.

Recapping a conversation on civil rights

Jessica Schreiber

"What was your first experience of prejudice?"

That was the question posed by representatives of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) at a dinner held at Nighttown in Cleveland Heights on Feb. 22.

One participant described his terror listening to a sermon in his church that predicted that homosexuals were going to hell. Only 9 years old at the time, the participant already knew he was gay.

An African American woman remembered being shaken to the core by a speeding vehicle directed at her. The white driver slowed down only long enough to hurl a racial epithet at her.

Cleveland native Jason Jaffery, who relocated to Montgomery, Ala., to take his dream job working for SPLC, facilitated the conversation, assisted by SPLC attorney Tiffanie Purvis. Cleveland Heights resident Ernie Cahoon hosted the evening.

Virtually all of the attendees came of age during the Civil Rights era. What they shared in common was their support of the Southern Poverty Law Center, the storied civil rights organization, founded in 1971 by lawyers Morris Dees, who still heads the organization, and Joseph Levin Jr.

SPLC is perhaps best known for

winning a court victory in 1987 against the Ku Klux Klan for the lynching of 19-year-old Michael Donald. As part of the historic \$7 million verdict, the Klan was forced to turn over the keys to its headquarters to the mother of the victim.

The victory also marked the end of the KKK group responsible for, among other things, the bombing of Birmingham's 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963.

Four major programs comprise the cornerstones of SPLC:

- Fighting hate by monitoring hate groups and other extremists throughout the United States;
- Teaching tolerance in schools for today's children by providing resources and publishing *Teaching Tolerance* magazine;
- Seeking justice through the courts for the most vulnerable people in our society, with a legal staff of more than 100 lawyers and advocates; and
- Maintaining the Maya Lin-designed Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, Ala.

Participants agreed that the work of SPLC is still relevant—perhaps even more in today's hyper-partisan political climate.

For more information, go to www.splcenter.org.

Jessica Schreiber is a retired attorney and former FutureHeights board member. She also served on board of Home Repair Resource Center.

HRRC's free Home Remodeling Fair is April 14

David Brock

Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) will hold its annual Home Remodeling Fair on April 14, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Cleveland Heights City Hall. This marks the 18th consecutive year that Heights-based HRRC has produced this free event, open to residents of all cities.

Dozens of experts and contractors from diverse fields will be onhand to answer questions, talk about what they do, and provide advice on any upcoming projects you may be considering for your home or yard.

Concrete, plumbing, electrical work, financing, cabinets, landscaping

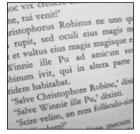


and roofs are just some of the subject areas that will be covered at the event this year. If your goal is to get free advice, find a reputable contractor, or learn more about how to upgrade, repair, or remodel your home, this event is a must.

David Brock is HRRC's education and outreach coordinator.

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Beth El luncheon to explore Buddhism and Judaism

Carol Bruml

Ellen Posman, comparative religion professor at Baldwin Wallace University, will lead a luncheon discussion on Buddhism and Judaism at Beth El – The Heights Synagogue, on Saturday, April 28, after morning services (approximately 12:15 p.m.).

The talk will examine some past interactions between Buddhists and Jews, consider the ways in which Judaism and Buddhism can enter into fruitful dialogue or be at odds, and pose questions regarding whether or why Jews should know something about Buddhism.

One may not think of Buddhism as having much to do with Judaism, yet there are areas in which the two religions intersect.

A group of Rabbis met with the Dalai Lama to discuss the experience

of exile, and there are also a growing number of JuBus (self identified as such), who practice a combination of Judaism and Buddhism, and find the two complement one another.

Some of the most prominent Buddhist meditation teachers in America have Jewish backgrounds (which has affected Buddhist social ethics in the U.S.), and Reconstructionist Judaism has incorporated aspects of Buddhist meditation into commentaries in its prayer books.

To learn more, attend the program at Beth El, 3246 Desota Ave., Cleveland Heights. It is free and open to all; non-members are asked to call ahead for luncheon reservations (216-320-9667).

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

Peace Lutheran offers free day camp

Don King

Peace Lutheran Church, carrying on the tradition of Hope Lutheran, one of its predecessor congregations, will offer its 18th annual Christian Day Camp June 18–22.

The camp is free of charge and runs daily, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the church, 3740 Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights.

As part of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Ohio, three professionally trained counselors will serve as the main staff, organized under the guidelines of the American Camping Association.

Activities include daily Bible study discussions around this year's theme, Jesus Makes All the Difference.

Children will participate in sports and games, arts and crafts, singing, storytelling, and nature education. They can also expect visits from the Cleveland Heights Police and Fire departments.

On Tuesday night of the camp, they are invited back for a neigh-

borhood and family Ice Cream Social and a lawn concert with the Hillcrest Concert Band.

On Thursday, all campers' families are invited to a special cook-out picnic and program, showing what the campers have been doing and learning.

The camp is open to all children who have completed kindergarten through grade six.

Children need to be fully registered, with medical history and drop-off and pick-up information provided.

While afternoon snacks are provided, the congregation asks that families supply each camper with lunch.

For more information, or to receive registration materials, call the church office at 216-382-4545.

Don King is pastor of Peace Lutheran Church on Mayfield Road, 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.



Heights bicycling is on a roll



LIFE CYCLE

Heights Bicycle Coalition

The Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) encourages all to come to its annual meeting for an update on progress in 2017, and plans for 2018, to make the Heights more bicycleand pedestrian-friendly.

The meeting will take place on Sunday, April 8, 4–6 p.m., at Heights Arts, 2175 Lee Road.

HBC President Steve Reinhardt will give an overview of the advocacy group's programs and plans to fulfill its mission "to educate and encourage Heights community members to use bicycles as a sustainable and healthy form of transportation and recreation." Reinhardt will also introduce committee chairs, including Deb Franke, activities and events; Evan Guar, safety; and Jamie Babb, communications.

HBC is fortunate to have a congruence with municipalities and schools that furthers its mission.

University Heights Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan will highlight

upcoming steps to make his city more bicycle- friendly; Cleveland Heights Planning Director Richard Wong will spotlight forthcoming projects; and Shaker Heights Principal Planner Ann Klavora will discuss some of the infrastructure improvements coming to that city.

Canterbury Elementary School PE teacher Julie Lustic will highlight how she has used a new bicycle fleet, acquired through a Safe Routes to School grant, to teach students how to bicycle safely.

Scott Kuboff, attorney, will provide a synopsis of current Ohio bicycle laws and issues.

Per HBC's bylaws, the meeting will include the election of directors and officers, with a slate presented by HBC Governance and Operations Committee Chair Steve Reinhardt, as well as a financial report provided by HBC Treasurer Gary Franke. Refreshments will be provided.

Heights Bicycle Coalition is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to educating and encouraging Heights community members to use bicycles as a sustainable and healthy form of transportation and recreation. Mary Dunbar, HBC member and CH council member, wrote this month's column.



Beth El plans Earth Day cleanup

Robin Koslen

Earth Day has been around for almost 50 years. (The scary part is that many of us remember that first Earth Day. We were young. We were excited. We thought that we would change the world. We wore funny clothes.)

While one's impact on the world may have some limitations, the impact is far greater when one works locally.

This Earth Day, Sunday, April 22, Beth El-The Heights Synagogue (BE-THS) invites you to participate in the celebration by cleaning up the Boulevard neighborhood, of which

BE-THS is part.

The end of winter inevitably leaves an abundance of trash to be picked up along the streets. This is an easy, productive and multigenerational activity that shows a visible commitment to the neighborhood.

The April 22 event will take place, rain or shine, starting at 1 p.m. Participants should meet at BE-THS, 3245 Desota Ave., wear gloves, and bring a friend or two. Documentation will be provided for students who have service-hour needs.

Robin Koslen is the social action chair at Beth El – The Heights Synagogue.

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Renovations begin at Monticello and Roxboro middle schools

Scott Wortman

Renovations at Monticello and Roxboro middle schools are officially underway as Turner Construction assumed control of the sites on March 12.

Turner will be renovating the buildings over the course of the next 15 months with the expected completion date sometime in the summer of 2019. Middle school students will begin the 2019–20 school year in the renovated buildings, after spending two years at the Wiley campus.

The focus of the renovations is on improving the instructional space in each building. Once complete, every classroom in each building will have new heating and air conditioning, paint, flooring, ceilings, lighting, fire alarms, a sound reinforcement system, a short throw projector, and a whiteboard.

New heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems will be installed throughout both buildings, including the auditoriums, along with new lighting. Administrative areas will receive facelifts, with new carpet, paint and reception desks. The gymnasiums will be repainted, and lockers will be refurbished and painted.

At Monticello, the renovations will include modifications to the rear main entry and the lower level locker rooms. At Roxboro, the renovations will include improvements to the main entry and the installation of restrooms in the lower level.

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

St. Paul's Cooperative Preschool finds new home in the Heights

Emily Lampe

St. Paul's Cooperative Preschool has found a new home and chosen a new name for fall 2018. After the current school year ends in May, the preschool will move to Church of the Redeemer UMC, at 2420 S. Taylor Road, a little over a mile from its current location.

The co-op's new name will be Heights Cooperative Preschool.

There will be two open-house sessions for interested families on April 23, at 9:30–10:30 a.m. and 6:30–7:30 p.m., at the preschool's current location, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. For more information, call Deb Binkofsky, director of the co-op, at 216-932-0002.

Commenting on the process of finding a new home within a short

span of time, Binkofsky said, "As we started the process of finding a new location for our school, we were not sure how successful we would be. The community showed its true colors as many reached out to us or were receptive to our inquiries. With six solid locations we began narrowing it down to just two. The decision really was easy for us; Church of the Redeemer embraced us in their love and desire to do what was the best for our community. Our children will grow and learn surrounded by their warmth and love."

Emily Lampe is an education consultant who has been a resident of Cleveland Heights since 2013. She currently has a child enrolled at St. Paul's Cooperative Preschool.

Fairfax announces IB event

Beth Sersig

Fairfax Elementary School is on a path to become an International Baccalaureate (IB) school. Parents, students, and community members are invited to the school on Thursday, April 19, to learn about, and celebrate, what it means to be an IB school. Fairfax Elementary School is located at 3150 Fairfax Road, in Cleveland Heights.

The International Baccalaureate program aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

IB learners strive to be inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk takers, balanced and reflective

The Fairfax event begins at 6 p.m. with a free multicultural dinner, followed by a student presentation and games to help children and adults learn more about the goals of IB learning, and the 10 attributes of IB learners.

For more information about the IB curriculum, go to www.ibo.org. An RSVP is strongly recommended for those who wish to attend the event. RSVP at fairfaxptachuh@gmail.com, or 216-512-1937.

Beth Sersig is a resident of Cleveland Heights and a graduate of CH schools, as is her husband and their three children. She has been a college physician and adjunct faculty member at Case Western Reserve University.

Cleveland Heights University Heights Board of Education

Meeting highlights

FEBRUARY 20, 2018

President Jim Posch, Vice President Jodi Sourini, Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis and Beverly Wright were present. Superintendent Talisa Dixon and Treasurer Scott Gainer were also present. The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. and adjourned at 10:45 p.m.

Public comments

School gun violence: Three Cleveland Heights High School students spoke on school violence and gun control, and stated they would lead a walkout of classes in March and April to protest. These walkouts would be organized and would occur with the knowledge and support of the superintendent and school personnel. The students believe that, instead of [observing] moments of silence, they should be as loud as possible on this issue.

Middle schools renovation

The board approved a Moody-Nolan contract amendment and the recommendation of the alternates for the Monticello and Roxboro middle schools. After the GMP (guaranteed maximum price) came in lower than expected, the board has \$818,000 to spend on alternates such as a sound reinforcement system, elevator upgrades, corridor tack boards, refurbishing and painting existing lockers, painting the gyms, media center flooring, science room flooring and wall bases. A contingency fund would exist in excess of \$2 million, which would allow for adding more alternates, including a fire suppression system.

ECOT, other charter school payments

The board approved the financial report, which included the five-year forecast. The board discussed the ECOT situation and whether any of the money would be returned to the district. So far, only five of 60 ECOT Cleveland Heights students have re-enrolled in the district. The board approved payment of \$3,205 to Northwest Evaluation Association for Communion of Saints Schools and \$7,000 to Conscious Discipline for Fairfax Elementary School.

Top of the Hill update

David Seed, district legal counsel, presented the TIF (tax increment financing) proposal for the Top of the Hill development. The developers would receive the taxes back to use for infrastructure projects. For TIF proposals, information on tax withholding must be presented to the city and schools.

Students' stand on gun control

Superintendent Dixon stated that she supports students' efforts to take a stand on gun control.

Resolution on automatic rifle sales

The board discussed a resolution banning automatic rifle sales. Because a community member had introduced the resolution without fact checking by the board, the board wanted time to review the resolution. The board hopes to have something to vote on after review by the next meeting. The board also asked about the dis-



trict's security procedures for school shootings and that these be made available.

LWV Observer: Lillian Houser.

MARCH 6, 2018

President James Posch, Vice President Jodi Sourini, Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis and Beverly Wright were present, as were Superintendent Talisa Dixon and Treasurer Scott Gainer. Tanisha Briley, Cleveland Heights city manager, and Tim Boland, Cleveland Heights director of economic development, were also present. The meeting began at 7:08 p.m., after an executive session, and adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Public comments

Kiwanis Club: Mark Harris, of Heights Kiwanis, gave an update of plans for a club at the high school.

School safety and student walkout: Karen Rego, from the Heights American Federation of Teachers, spoke about school safety and student actions. Three middle school students spoke about the planned student walkout on March 14, asking for action about attacks in schools. They are working with the administration concerning the walkout plans.

High school music

Both the Boys and Girls Barbershoppers won "outstanding" ratings at the Barbershop Harmony Society International Festival in California. The high school music concert will be on May 10.

Model UN participation

Middle school students Eryn Lawson, Eloni McClain and Cecilia Adams spoke about their participation in the Model United Nations program.

Top of the Hill project

David Seed, district legal counsel, explained the terms of the TIF for the Top of the Hill project. The district will receive increasing amounts in taxes as the value of the project increases. The contract was not complete at the time of the board meeting, so a special meeting for the approval will be held on March 13. [The board approved the Top of the Hill TIF agreement at the March 13 meeting, during which no other business was conducted.]

Gun violence in schools

The board approved a resolution on guns and violence in schools. It is posted in Board Docs (www.boarddocs.com/oh/chuh/board.nsf/public) March 6 agenda under "new business."

Ohio House Bill 512

The board unanimously approved a resolution to call on the Ohio governor and general assembly to reject HB 512, which would transfer most of the powers of the elected state Board of Education and Department of Education to a new a cabinet agency under the sole authority of the governor.

LWV Observer: Adele Cohn.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.

CH-UH students participate in National Walkout Day

Scott Wortman

Frigid temperatures were no deterrent for more than 1,000 CH-UH City School District students who chose to participate in National Walkout Day on Wednesday, March 14.

High school and middle school students walked outside at 10 a.m., joining the national movement to raise awareness for school safety and the impact of gun violence.

At Cleveland Heights High School, more than 700 students participated in a demonstration on the snow-covered football field. The event was student-led and voluntary. Many of the student organizers spoke at the demonstration to remember the victims of the Parkland, Fla., school shooting, and to voice a call to action for stricter gun control.

The League of Women Voters (LWV) set up in the cafeteria to help eligible high school students register to vote during their lunch period. A total of 88 students registered.

At the Delisle Options Center, students held a march around the campus to support students' right to learn in violence-free schools.

At Heights Middle School, more than 200 students walked to the athletic field at the back of the campus where they held their own demonstration, similar to that at Heights High.

PTA program will provide kids' tech-use guidelines

Joan Spoerl

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights PTA Council will host the last program in its 2017–18 Social & Emotional Speaker Series, "Guidelines for Managing Children's Use of Media & Technology," on Monday, April 23, at 6:30 p.m. in the Heights High mini-auditorium.

The program will feature child therapist Karen Farley, who has worked for 30 years as a mental health worker with children ages 5–18. and as an adjunct faculty member at Cuyahoga Community College and Kent State University. She is an associate therapist at Jay Berk, Ph.D. and Associates.

CH-UH PTA Council initiated this speaker series as a means to support parents and caregivers in their role as their child's first teacher.

This event is free and open to the community. Child care will be provided at the event for those who RSVP to chuhptacouncil@gmail. com with the number and ages of children in need of care. For more information, contact chuhptacouncil@gmail.com.

Joan Spoerl is vice president of CH-UH PTA Council. She is also Literacy Cooperative's program coordinator of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program, and a proud resident of Cleveland Heights.



Heights High students speak at their National Walkout Day demonstration on March 14.

Even the CH-UH elementary schools participated in the day. Instead of walking out, elementary school students were encouraged to "walk up" to others:

- Walk up to a student who sits alone at lunch and invite him/her to sit with their group of friends.
- Walk up to a new student, smile, and say "Hi!"
- Walk up to their teachers and thank

them

- Walk up to talk to someone whose appearance may be different from theirs.
- Walk up and talk to someone who has different views and get to know them.

The "walk ups" in each of the elementary schools focused on the power of kindness and learning how much we have in common with one another.

Canterbury Elementary School took it a step further and held a Kindness Assembly for the whole school, discussing with students how they can change the world.

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



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Visit www.judsonsmartliving.org and click Judson Park

Heights High celebrates 60 years of international exchange

Joy Henderson

The Cleveland Heights High School AFS International Exchange Program has been an active part of the Heights community for 60 years. Since 1957, Heights High families have hosted AFS international exchange students or sent their students abroad.

Heights High and the Greater



Cleveland AFS program will celebrate this history at the AFS Heights High Gala on Saturday, April 21, at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 per person, and include appetizers. Beginning March 31, tickets will be available for purchase at Zagara's Marketplace.

The April 21 benefit event will celebrate the long history of international exchanges and cultural learning at the school, and will include displays from current Heights High AFS students and performances by Heights High vocalists.

AFS was started after

World War II by volun-

teer ambulance drivers who transported wounded soldiers to safety from both sides of battle (thus, the original name, American Field Service, or AFS). They established the AFS exchange program to promote understanding among nations and build cultural awareness.

Featured guest speaker David K.



Heights High AFS students: Swalehe Mbagga (Kenya), Carolyn Pavel (AFS Club advisor), Mercy Sakayian (Kenya) (L-R, fourth row). Mariama Kabia (Sierra Leone), Luciano Delmonte (Argentina), Roberto Pastorelli (Italy) (L-R, third row). Zainab Said (Tanzania), Emmanuel Saah (Ghana), Almira Udjan (Philipines) (L-R, second row). Olwethu Zungu (South Africa), Marianella Guerrero (Paraguay), Nadia Faisal (Malaysia) (L-R, first row). Not pictured: Thitaporn (Parn) Satetapinyo (Thailand).

Ford, one of the original World War II American Field Service ambulance drivers, will talk about his experience and the importance of international exchanges.

Heights High's first AFS students, during the 1957-58 school

year, were a girl from Japan and a boy from Argentina. Currently, AFS students at Heights High are from Argentina, Ghana, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Paraguay, Sierra Leone, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania and Thailand.

"AFS students are a wonderful asset to our school," said Heights High guidance counselor Michael Murray. "In classes, they give the American students a personal 'real' lesson about life in another culture, and that is something you can't get in a book."

Volunteers lead and are the backbone of the AFS program in Cleveland Heights and in every community. The April 21 event will be held in conjunction with the AFS National Volunteer Convention in downtown Cleveland.

For more information, e-mail afs60years@gmail.com or leave a message at 440-815-1918.

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

Pancake breakfast takes place April 15

Cathan Cavanaugh

On Sunday, April 15, the community is invited to enjoy tours of the new Heights High, and a delicious pancake breakfast benefiting opportunity grants for every school in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

The annual Community and Alumni Pancake Breakfast will run from 9 a.m. until noon. Tickets, sold at the door, are \$8 for standard admission, \$5 for seniors (65 and older) and kids ages 4–12. Children 3 and younger are free.

The event is presented by the Heights Schools Foundation (formerly the Alumni Foundation). For more information about the foundation, call 216-397-3871 or visit www. heightsschoolsfoundation.org.

Cathan Cavanaugh is the communications administrative assistant for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.



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Library showcases student art

Sheryl Banks

For the third consecutive year, Heights Libraries is partnering with the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District Visual Arts Department to host the Creative Heights District-Wide Art Show at the library's Lee Road branch. The show runs April 17 to May 18, with an opening reception and awards ceremony on Tuesday, April 17, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

The exhibit will features hundreds of pieces of art created by children in kindergarten through grade 12, in media ranging from pencil and chalk, photography, sculpture, pottery and painting, to papier-mâché, printmaking and metal.

The show's pieces were selected by district art teachers and judged by a jury of community artists. Awards for first place, second place and honorable mention will be given for each school, and one award for best in show will be given for elementary, middle and high school level art.

"The artwork in this show is always extraordinary," said Nancy Levin, library director. "It's not just the skill level, which is incredible, but the creativity and energy and joy the students express in their artwork. It's truly a reflection of the hard work of both the students and the art teachers in the district."

The art will be displayed throughout the Lee Road building

in every department and on every floor so members of the community can view the pieces whenever the building is open.

"The Heights community is home to creative artists of all kinds, so we are thrilled to show how our students are carrying on the artistic spirit of our community," said Ida Bergson, art teacher at Canterbury Elementary School and one of the show's organizers. "We feel honored to be invited to use the Lee Road branch, a hub of Cleveland Heights, as our gallery. Being supported by our arts organizations and having a panel of local judges also makes recognizing our students even more meaningful."

Additional partners include Reaching Heights, the Heights Alumni Association and Blick Art Supplies.

The district's musical arts department will also participate in the show on April 17, with one of Heights High's chamber orchestra groups performing in the Lee Road lobby beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The Lee Road branch is located at 2345 Lee Road, and is open Monday though Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; and Sunday, 1–5 p.m.

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



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What's going on at your library?

Coventry Village Branch

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400

Monday, April 16, 7–8:30 p.m. Dr. Roz Rosen: Storytelling the Deaf Way. Internationally known deaf educator, advocate and leader Roz Rosen has yet another dimension of talent: author and storyteller. Rosen will share her experience as an educator and author while presenting her Deaf Culture Fairy Tales, a collection of classic fairy tales with a deaf-centric twist: all the stories have deaf characters and signers. This event will include storytelling, discussion and a book signing.

Lee Road Branch

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

Thursday, April 19, 7–8 p.m. *Race(ing) to the Movies.* Neal Hodges will presents an excursion into films made for African Americans by African Americans during the Golden Age of Cinema (1919–50).

Noble Neighborhood Branch 2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665

Wednesday, April 25, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Art Challenges. What kind of robot or puppet masterpiece can you make with a jar full of art supplies? Children in kindergarten through

grade five will be able to flex their creative muscles with a new art challenge each week.

University Heights Branch 13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

Monday, April 2, 1–9 p.m. *Peeps Diorama Contest*. Recreate a movie, book, or anything else you can imagine using the classic candy. Deadline for submissions is April 2, and winners will be announced one week later. Prizes will go to the top three creations. All dioramas will be on display at the UH Library. For kids in kindergarten through grade 12.

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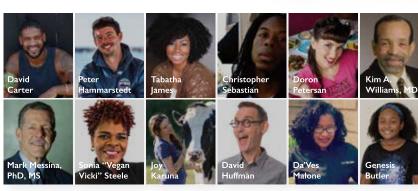
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CH Senior Center News

Amy Jenkins

This spring, performing artists Jan Bruml and Drinda Kiner return to the Senior Activity Center (SAC) with a dramatic arts class, Page to Stage, that looks at character development. Class discussion will focus on how an actor creates a role, how to bring a character from a script to the stage, how to make a character believable, and more. There will be play reading and monologues, with no need for memorization.

This class is free and held on Wednesdays, beginning April 18, 1:30–3 p.m. Advance registration is required.

Women out Walking (WOW), a fitness initiative sponsored by the Cleveland Heights Parks and Recreation Department, returns for it's third year this April. WOW is open to women of all ages, and this year hopes to encourage more seniors to participate. Walking has proven to be one of the best forms of exercise for seniors. Benefits include alleviation of arthritis symptoms, less anxiety and depression, and heart health. This free 12-week program provides participants the opportunity and structure to make regular walking a part of their lives. They'll take part in scheduled walks and activities (yoga, tai chi, self-defense and more), meet new people, and explore city parks while having fun and increasing their fitness, one step at a time.

The WOW kick-off event is Sunday, April 22, at 2 p.m. There will be T-shirts and swag bags, speakers, group exercise and a celebration walk, so bring your walking shoes. Registration is required and limited to 150, so sign up today.

SAC, located in the Cleveland Heights Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers a variety of programming for those 60 and older, and is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. A complete schedule of programs is published in the community center's newsletter, and available online at www.clevelandbeights.com.

SAC membership is \$5 for Cleveland Heights residents. To sign up, bring a recent piece of mail (such as a bill) and a photo ID.

University Heights residents who would like to join SAC must first register with Patrick Grogan-Myers, University Heights community development coordinator, at 216-932-7800, ext. 203, or pgrogan@universityheights.com. Membership is \$10 for University Heights seniors.

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

UH 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.

April 5: Peter Knox, Case Western Reserve University professor of history and director of Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities, will chronicle the development of the Baker-Nord Center, especially its Cleveland Humanities Festival, which explores the challenges and opportunities caused by the movement of people. In the history of every nation, demographic shifts (exile, immigration, deportation, migration) become part of the fabric of civic and cultural life.

April 12: Beth Edelstein, conservator of objects at the Cleveland Museum of Art, will describe the role of a conservator in protecting objects. She'll also discuss her work on the museum's recent object-centered show, *The Jazz Age*.

April 19: Rachel Kribbs, director of community programming at the Cleveland Institute of Music, will introduce instrumentalists and vocalists from the school, one of our nation's distinguished music conservatories.

April 26: Laura Neill, executive director of Ohio Light Opera, will unveil the lineup for its 40th festival season, June 16 through Aug. 11, at the College of Wooster. She'll show clips of the shows "The Pajama Game," "Babes in Arms," "Fifty Million Frenchmen," "Iolanthe," "Candide," "La Perichole" and "Cloclo."

The Great Spiritual Migration

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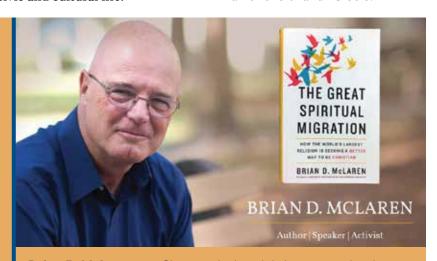


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Brian D. McLaren is a Christian thinker, global activist, and author of more than a dozen books. A former college English teacher and pastor, he is an Auburn Senior Fellow and a leader in Convergence, a mobilizing collective rooted in a just and generous Christian spirituality.

Mac's Backs hosts April 7 type-in

Quinn Hull

Typewriters. Maybe you have one you never use. Would you like to fix it up? Maybe you have one you use all the time. Would you like to meet other typewriter enthusiasts? If so, join them at Mac's Backs-Books on Coventry on April 7, 3–6 p.m., for a type-in.

A type-in is a celebration of these wonderful machines, where aficionados can connect to others who are interested in typewriters without the aid of social media or algorithms.

In our hectic modern world, with the Internet and apps and social media, it's easy to get lost in the interference. Using a typewriter allows one to rebel against this mode of living and disconnect from the digital world. A typewriter is a creative tool that does not connect to the Internet and runs solely on the power of its operator. It does not have any apps. There are no comment sections. And no emojis. It's just the writer and the writing, which opens up a whole new world of creative and intellectual spirit. Unplugging and tapping into the "typosphere" can open all sorts of possibilities.

(I became fascinated with type-writers in high school and was primarily interested in using rather than collecting them. I found a derelict Smith & Corona with a completely shot ribbon that I used to write stories. In college and after, I fell into using my laptop, but lately have had a sneaking suspicion of most things digital. I was recently gifted a type-writer that, with a new ribbon, was in perfect working condition. I now use it everyday.)

Share your enthusiasm for these machines and meet like-minded people at the type-in. Manual type-writers will be available for use, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own. There will be a speed typing contest and writing games. Registration is not required, and stationery and paper will be provided.

Unplug for an afternoon and jam on a typewriter instead. The typosphere is waiting.

Quim Hull is a Cleveland-based writer and librarian. He owes the idea of a type-in, and much of the typewriter ideology, to the documentary "California Typewriter."

FutureHeights workshop will focus on signage and merchandising

Sruti Basu

FutureHeights, in partnership with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and US Bank, will host a branding, signage and merchandising workshop for business owners on Friday, April 13, 9:30–11:30 a.m., at SBDC, located on the second floor of the Lee Road Library (2340 Lee Road).

Speakers Brad and Judy Swimmer, of AlphaGraphics, will talk about the importance of having a foundation, understanding your target market, creating a strong brand identity, the value of compelling signage, and budgeting for signs and other marketing materials. They'll present ideas for generating creative ways to help your business stand out; developing skills that will help you market yourself, your brand and your product; and creating storefront signage that boosts awareness among potential customers.

The workshop is a component of the FutureHeights Planning & Development Committee's initiatives to attract, retain and support the local businesses in Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

"Because the Heights has so many storefront businesses and they depend on sales from the pedestrian foot traffic in their districts, we thought it would be important to focus on branding, signage, window

Future Heights

displays and merchandising," said Micah Kirman, committee chair. "Many Heights businesses already do this well, but there is always more to learn, and it will give business owners an opportunity to share their own ideas and get feedback."

Register for this free event at futureheightssbw2018.eventbrite.com.

SBDC provides no-cost, confidential, one-on-one counseling for businesses that will, or currently do, employ fewer than 500 employees. Additional services include training, e-counseling, quality-based assessments, technical assistance, loan packaging guidance, and information on federal, state, and local regulations and programs. For more information, contact Katie Van Dyke, SBDC director, at k.vandyke@csuohio.edu or 216-321-1633.

Support for the FutureHeights Small Business Workshop Series is provided by US Bank. For more information about FutureHeights' programs for local businesses, call 216-320-1423 or e-mail info@future-heights.org.

Sruti Basu is the director of community-building programs at FutureHeights.

Commemorative Big Fun T-shirts will benefit Coventry district

Shari Nacson

Nothing says Big Fun like a commemorative T-shirt, with artwork by Cleveland Heights artist Jake Kelly.

According to Steve Presser, owner of Big Fun, the shirts are priced at \$25 but are included in the store's Big Final Sale, bringing the price down to \$12.50 per shirt.

Presser will donate \$2.50 of each T-shirt purchased to the Coventry Village Art Fund.

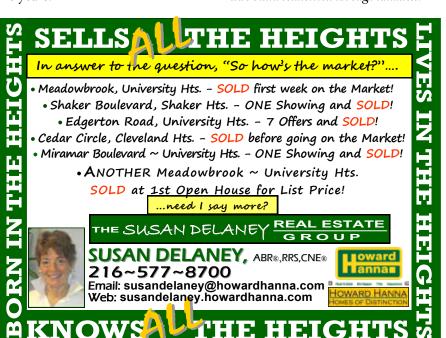
"We are thrilled and honored," said Angie Hetrick, executive director of the Coventry Village Special Improvement District. "Steve has always been a wonderful supporter of the Coventry neighborhood and the arts."

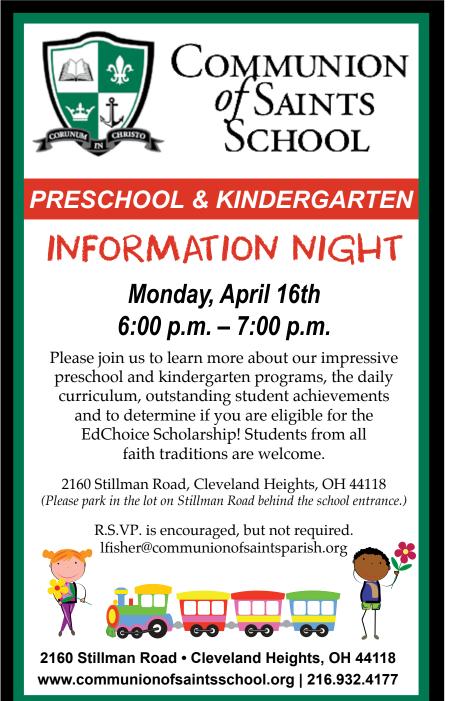
Kelly, who is known for his murals (Melt Bar & Grilled and The Grog Shop), posters, and comic book series (*The Lake Erie Monster*), has done several projects for Big Fun over the years.



Purchase a limited-edition shirt at Big Fun or order online via the Big Fun Facebook page.

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.





RoxArts benefit supports school arts programs

Nicole Tugeau

The annual ROXARTS community fundraiser, supporting arts enrichment for all CH-UH City School District students in kindergarten through eighth grade, will be held on Saturday, April 28, at the B-Side in Cleveland Heights.



The night will start grooving at 7 p.m. with a disco-themed benefit that will include food from local eateries, complimentary beer and wine, a tabled auction with more than 30 items up for bid, and a live auction. Attendees are urged to dress in disco attire.

At 9 p.m., the B-Side and Grog Shop will transform into a Silent Disco. In lieu of a speaker system, the silent disco broadcasts music via radio transmitter into wireless headsets worn by the guests. Experience live DJs and dancing, like never before.

Tickets can be purchased via the B-Side ticketing agent by following the link at www.roxarts.org. The adults-only event is \$40/person for 7 p.m. entry, benefit and auction; and \$15/person for Silent Disco entry at 9 p.m.

ROXARTS, a not-for-profit 501(c)3, dates back to 1981, when a group of Roxboro Elementary School parents committed to raise funds for children's arts and science enrichment. It grew to provide educational programs and experiences in the performing and visual arts at Roxboro Elementary School and Roxboro Middle



School, as well as an annual donation to Reaching Heights for the all-school Reaching Musical Heights concert at Severance Hall. In 2016, the ROXARTS board committed to a matching budget for Monticello Middle School.

This year's fundraiser will bring attention to ROXARTS' new partnership with the Heights Schools Foundation (HSF). RoxARTS In Tiger Nation, a fund supported by ROXARTS and managed by Julianna Senturia, HSF executive director, will ensure that each elementary school in the CH-UH district has access to funds earmarked for arts and science enrichment. Each school can access up to \$2,000 in an academic year.

Grants are awarded through an on-

line application process through HSF.

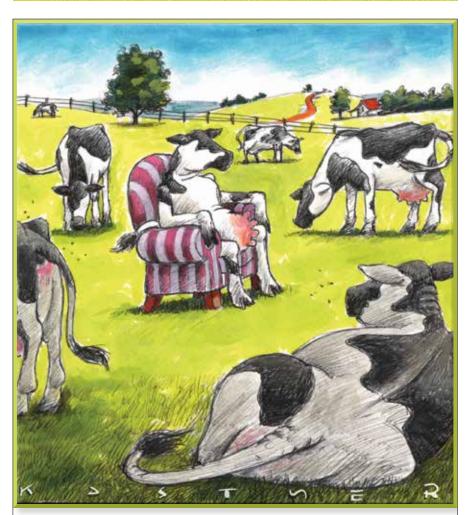
The fund was formalized in January 2018, and awarded the following grants for the 2017–18 school year: \$500 for Lego Mindstorms (grades 3–5, Gearity and Noble elementary schools); \$200 for Coding Robot (second grade, Oxford Elementary School); \$450 for Cleveland Museum of Art visit and studio class (first grade, Oxford Elementary School); \$500 for programmable mini drones (Gearity Professional Development School).

Recent ROXARTS experiences for Heights Middle School students included trips to Playhouse Square, an art project at Larchmere Fire Works, and a Women in History assembly.

More than ever before, ROX-ARTS truly is an organization for the community. For more information about ROXARTS, or to volunteer, e-mail roxarts4schools@gmail.com.

Nicole Tugeau is a ROXARTS board member. Her three children attend CH-UH elementary and middle schools.





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Ensemble Theatre continues 'Angels in America' production

Tyler Whidden

Ensemble Theatre continues its production of both parts of Tony Kushner's masterpiece, "Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes," with "Part Two: Perestroika" opening April 27 at the Cleveland Heights theater.

"Part One: Millennium Approaches" had its Ensemble run in January, beginning the story of a group of characters living and surviving during the rise of the AIDS epidemic in 1980s New York City. "Part Two" picks up right where "Millennium Approaches" left off—with the character of Prior (Scott Esposito) being visited by the Angel (Inés Joris).

It's a once-in-a-generation opportunity for fans of theater to be able to see a full production of "Perestroika," especially in conjunction with "Millennium Approaches."

Producing both shows in the same season is something that Celeste Cosentino, Ensemble's executive artistic director, sees as a necessary undertaking, given the importance of the whole story.

"I think it makes sense to produce both parts," Cosentino said of directing both plays. "It's really one big story, and I'm excited for the opportunity to provide audiences with the chance to watch the characters' entire journey."

As with all plays at Ensemble, Cosentino cast Greater Cleveland-based actors, including Derdriu Ring (Hannah), Jeff Grover (Roy Cohn), Kelly Strand (Harper), Scott Esposito (Prior), Robert Hunter (Belize), James Rankin (Joe), Craig Joseph

(Louis) and Inés Joris (Angel), to play the roles in both plays, with the entire cast returning in "Perestroika."

Both parts of "Angels in America" are considered to be two of the great American plays written in the last half-century, with "Part One" debuting on Broadway 25 years ago, quickly followed by "Part Two."

Winner of the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, "Millennium Approaches" was well received by critics and audiences alike when it ran at Ensemble in January. Long-time Cleveland critic Bob Abelman hailed the production, saying, "Cosentino has put together a talented cast and crew to generate a very memorable production of a truly monumental play. Bring on Part Two."

Roy Berko summed up the production in his piece for *Cool Cleveland*, writing, "Combine a brilliantly written play that has a compelling purpose with an adept director, a well-conceived set, sound and lighting, and an excellent cast, and you have a first-class theater experience . . . this is a must see!"

"Angels in America, Part Two: Perestroika" runs through May 20, with performances on Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m., at Ensemble Theatre, 2843 Washington Blvd.

For tickets and information, call 216-321-2930, e-mail info@ensemble-theatre.org or visit www.ensembletheatrecle.org.

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

Heights High Symphony concert will feature two senior soloists





Eva Bambakidis

Matthew Fields

Corbin Covault

Two Heights High graduating seniors, Eva Bambakidis and Matthew Fields, will perform with the Heights High Symphony, under the direction of Daniel Heim, in the CHHS Instrumental Music Department's (IMD) Season Finale Concert II, on Friday, April 27, at 7:30 p.m. Bambakidis will play the third movement of Dmitri Kabalevsky's Concerto No. 3 in D for Piano and Orchestra. Fields will perform the first movement of Concerto No. 9 in B Flat for Violoncello and Orchestra by Luigi Boccherini.

The Heights High IMD's spring concert series will begin on Wednesday April 25, with Season Finale Concert I at 7:30 p.m., featuring the Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and the Concert Orchestra. The series continues on Friday, April 27, with Season Finale Concert II, featuring the two soloists, as well as the Symphonic Winds and the symphony.

Both concerts will be held in Heights High's auditorium, and will be preceded by performances by chamber ensembles at 6:30 p.m. A reception will follow the April 27 concert, with entertainment by the jazz ensembles. Brett Baker is director of bands, Daniel Heim is director of orchestras, and Ben Ammon is director of chamber ensembles.

Bambakidis began studying piano as a 7 year old in Phoenix, Ariz. She continued her classical training in Cleveland with Mary Lambert and later with Emily Grabinski. She currently studies with Natsumi Shibagaki. Bambakidis has also played cello since fourth grade, taking lessons from Julie King at The Music Settlement. Bambakidis has been a recipient of The Music Settlement

Fund for the Continuation of Musical Study for six consecutive years. She is playing in her third season for the Contemporary Youth Orchestra at Cleveland State University, and currently sits fourth chair.

At CHHS, Bambakidis is a cellist in the Heights High Symphony, and occasionally plays piano or percussion for Symphonic Winds. During her sophomore year, she was recruited as a pianist for the jazz ensemble and began studying jazz theory under Greg Slawson. Bambakidis has also been a member of the marching band, and serves as the corporal of the trumpet section. She has participated in the Tri-M Music Honors Society for two years, and is its vice president of finance. Bambakidis is also a member of the National Honor Society, and joined swim team her senior year. She is planning to pursue a career in medicine, and is starting college this fall.

Fields began his cello studies with Pamela Kelly at the age of 6, and currently studies with Martha Baldwin, a member of the Cleveland Orchestra. He has participated in master classes with Mark Kosower, Brett Mitchell, Matt Haimovitz, Paul Kushious and Peter Salaff. Fields is in his fourth season with the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, where he has served as principal and assistant principal cello since the 2015–16 season. He is also a member of its Advanced Performance Seminar.

Fields has participated in several major instrumental groups outside of Cleveland, including the Interlochen Arts Camp, the Indiana University Summer String Academy, and the Green Mountain International Chamber Music Festival. In 2011, he was the winner of the Cleveland Cello Society Elementary Division, and in 2016 was a co-winner in the High School Division. Fields has recently performed as a soloist with the orchestras of the Cleveland Institute of Music and the Suburban Symphony. In college, Fields plans to pursue a degree in music performance.

Corbin Covault is communications coordinator of the CHHS Band and Orchestra Parents Organization (BOPO).

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Heights Arts presents first-ever members' show

Patsy Kline

This spring Heights Arts, the nonprofit community arts organization located at 2175 Lee Road, will present its first artist members' show. The exhibition opens Friday, April 27, with a community reception 6-9 p.m., and runs through June 10.



The Members' Show is an outgrowth of Heights Arts' mission to support the community by providing opportunities for artists and art audiences to discover one another. As a multi-disciplinary arts organization, Heights Arts taps into the potential of the region's creative residents to enrich community life. The nonjuried exhibition comprises works by current Heights Arts working artist members.

"One of the missions of Heights Arts from the beginning has been to encourage Heights residents to become involved in the arts, not only as audiences but as active participants," said Greg Donley, chair of the Heights Arts Exhibition Committee. "We thought a non-juried members' show would be a nice way to further that mission while at the same time thanking our artist members for their support over the years and celebrating the high level of artistic achievement in our community."

The works on view will range from photography and painting to ceramics and jewelry. Submissions are still being accepted; more information can be found at www.heightsarts.org.

On Thursday, April 5, at 7 p.m., Heights Arts presents Ekphrastacy: Artist Talk + Poets Respond. This discussion and poetry reading takes place in conjunction with the current Drawn Together exhibition, and is free and open to the public. The *Ek*phrastacy series is unique to Heights Arts and offers an opportunity for exhibition artists to share insights on their work, while regional poets respond in verse to works in the exhibition that inspire them.

On Sunday, April 22, at 3 p.m., the final Close Encounters chamber music concert of the season, "Strangers on Earth, at Home with Bach," will take place in a Shaker Heights villa. Performers include Cleveland Orchestra cellist Dane Johansen, who will present Heights Arts' first all-Bach Close Encounters concert. Johansen will be joined by Assistant Concertmaster Jessica Lee, and Omni Quartet violist Joanna Patterson. For more information, and to purchase tickets, visit www.heightsarts.org.

Patsy Kline is Heights Arts' marketing and communications coordinator.

Haiku Death Match returns April 21

Meredith Holmes

On Saturday, April 21, at 7 p.m., eight haiku poets will meet on the Ensemble Theatre stage to battle for audience approval and the 2018 Haiku Death Match Master title. This year marks Heights Arts' sixth Haiku Death Match, held in April to celebrate National Poetry Month, which raises funds for Heights Arts' literary activities.

"The fame of the Death Match is spreading," said Rachel Bernstein, executive director of Heights Arts. "Last year, the event sold out, and this year, we have new contestants from all over Northeast Ohio—some from as far away as Toledo! We're thrilled this event is getting so popular because everybody has a good time, and it helps fund Heights Arts' literary programs, like Ekphrastacy and the Cleveland Heights poet laureate."

Among the haiku warriors competing will be last year's winner, Ray McNeice. The seven other poetcontestants are Michael Ceraolo, Lorraine Cipriano, Christine Donofrio, Cordelia Eddy, Azriel Johnson, Pat Robertell-Hudson and Bill Schubert. Vince Robinson, the well-known poet, musician and actor, will be the master of ceremonies.

In the competition, pairs of poets read their original haiku aloud, and audience members vote for the poem they like best, with the lower-scoring contestants eliminated. Equal time will be given to both the rowdy and the serene aspects of haiku. In the first half, poets will read contemporary haiku on five subjects: personal relationships, politics, animals in our life, the daily grind, and all things Cleveland. The four poets with the highest scores advance to the semi-finals, in which they will read only classical, nature-oriented haiku. The two highest scorers from this round then battle to the "death," with the audience deciding the 2018 Haiku Death Match Master.



2017 Haiku Death Match contestant Dianne Borsenik delivering her 17-syllable poem.

Tickets are available online at www.heightsarts.org (go to "events" and click on Haiku Death Match). Tickets are \$15 general admission; \$10 for Heights Arts members. Tickets will be available for purchase at the door, but advance online purchase is encouraged, as the event sells out. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. on the evening of the event.

"The Haiku Death Match is a great way to involve people with poetry, as the audience cheers on the contestants," said outgoing Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate Christine Howey. "It's like an arm-wrestling contest with words."

Think it's odd that an ancient, contemplative literary form concerned with nuanced observations of nature is the subject of a bare-fisted fight to the finish? Well, there's plenty of competition in nature, as Howey pointed out: "Consider the daffodil that struggles up through a crack in concrete. Nature is tough, it can handle some competition."

This year, for the first time, the Haiku Death Match will be held at Ensemble Theatre, housed in the former elementary school at 2843 Washington Blvd., on the grounds of what is now known as the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus.

Celeste Cosentino, executive artistic director of Ensemble Theatre, said, "I am really excited to have the Haiku Death Match here. What a great new audience it will bring to our theatre!"

Meredith Holmes, a freelance writer, is a former Cleveland Heights poet laureate.



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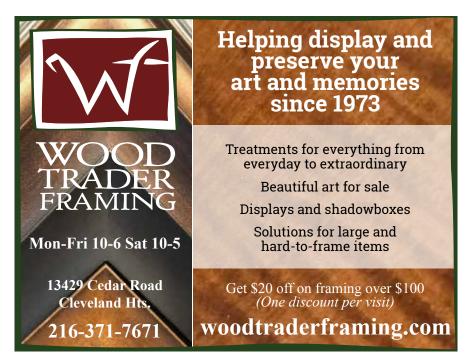
Saturdays 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

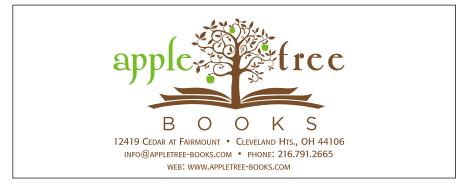
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The Second Sunday Brunch



SONGS AND STORIES

Someone recently asked my wife and me how we met, and my wife and I both answered, in unison, "Over food."

It's true. It was at a Sunday brunch at the home of mutual friends in the spring of 1978. If that sounds like it was a long time ago, that's because it was. Forty years. I did that math in my head—with the aid of four fingers. The 8 on the end helped.

A couple whom we both knew had bought a house in Cleveland Heights. They were the first of our friends to buy a house. They had a house-warming potluck brunch, to which they invited family and friends. As the day wore on, their family members left, but a group of friends stayed, and continued eating all the food that everyone had brought.

At some point, toward the end of the day, someone suggested doing this again, and everyone agreed. The next Sunday that everyone would be available was one month away, the second Sunday of the following month. So, we met again for a potluck brunch.

This time, someone suggested that we do this every month, and again, we all agreed. So, we continued to meet on the second Sunday of each month—for the next 23 years.

For the first couple of years, the brunches took place at that one couple's home. Then they suggested—actually, it was more like they begged—to move it to someone else's house, since we all owned houses by then. So, the brunch was held at a different house every month.

When that happened, the hosts would usually invite other friends. And then, some of those guests would continue coming, and some of them would begin hosting and inviting other friends, some of whom would become part of the group. Everyone lived in Cleveland Heights. Looking back, it seems like a Cleveland Heights kind of thing to do.

We never planned the food at all. Everyone just brought whatever we felt like making. It was great way to experiment with recipes, for those of us who did that kind of thing. And only once did we all bring the same type of dish. But that was dessert, so, you know—no problem there. In fact, at that brunch we feasted on about 15 fancy homemade dessert delights, then one guy arrived late with a store-bought package in hand and declared, "Pound cake!" He was somewhat taken aback by the silence that greeted his announcement.

When the Second Sunday Brunches began, none of us had children. Then we did. So, then there were babies all over. You could say the place was crawling with them. Then there were toddlers, toddling around. Then there were little kids running amok. Then there were sullen teenagers complaining about the food and huddling in the corners, plotting evil deeds. Then there were no kids at the brunches, and we were back to the way we started. But with grayer hair.

Over time, some people moved out of town. One founding member died. The original couple got divorced—though the guy started dating another brunch member, a woman who had been the partner of another founding member, and they later got married. My wife and I started dating early on in the Second Sunday Brunch era, and then we got married. Some people eventually dropped out. But the brunches kept going. And the group kept meeting. And cooking. And eating.

The Second Sunday Brunches ended almost 20 years ago. I think it was when our friend died. She was one of the people who had been a stalwart member since the beginning. I guess we just kind of lost our spirit after that.

But I recommend doing it. You can do it. And invite me. I have a nice dish I developed for those brunches—eggs baked in spinach cups and topped with Parmesan. I'll bring that. There are onions in the spinach. You can eat onions, right?

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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