



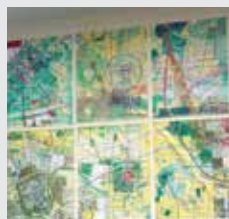
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FutureHeights
2843 Washington Blvd. #105
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Heights Music Hop kicks off Sept. 13

Julie Hullett

The sixth annual Heights Music Hop, a free live-music festival, kicks off on Thursday, Sept. 13. This three-day weekend of more than 60 musical performances takes place in more than 28 venues across three business districts in Cleveland Heights. Each night of the Hop takes place in a different neighborhood: in Coventry Village on Sept. 13, in Cedar Fairmount on Sept. 14, and in Cedar Lee on Sept. 15.

This annual event offers a variety of musical genres at each free concert, such as classical, rock, rap, country, reggae, bluegrass and American roots.

Since it started in 2013, Heights Music Hop has attracted more and more concert-goers, adding more venues and performers.

"It's a festival of local talent," says Heights Music Hop Coordinator Ann



Heights Music Hop 2017.

Koslow. "It just keeps getting bigger and better."

Last year, nearly 7,500 people attended Heights Music Hop, with an estimated economic impact of \$200,000.

The concerts take place in an assortment of Cleveland Heights businesses, including restaurants, bars and small shops. On Thursday, in

Coventry Village, the venues are Mac's Backs, B-Side Liquor Lounge, Grog Shop, the Coventry Village branch of Heights Libraries and Panini's Bar & Grill.

On Friday, in Cedar Fairmount, the venues are Appletree Books, Luna Bakery Café, The Fairmount, Nighttown, Pavilion Home & Floral,

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Memorial at Noble honors Steve Kanner

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

Steve Kanner loved creating spaces that brought people together and fostered a sense of belonging and community. That is exactly what his memorial at Noble Elementary School is designed to do.

Kanner, a Heights High graduate (1978) and father of Mira Whitaker-Kanner, a Heights Middle School seventh-grader, was treasurer of the Noble PTA when he died unexpectedly in August 2015.

The PTA worked with his wife, Karly Whitaker, to install a memorial—a weeping cherry tree and a bench—on the school playground. "To see people sitting on that bench, listening to kids laughing and watching them play—there's nothing that would make Steven happier," said Whitaker.

The dedication of the memorial was held at Noble Elementary School on Sunday, July 1, the morning after Mira's bat mitzvah, which included many out-of-town family and friends. The community was also invited to celebrate the life and legacy of Steven



The dedication ceremony on July 1.

Kanner, a man who was deeply committed to his neighborhood public school.

"Steve believed that schools aren't just for the children; they're community centers for everyone," said Whitaker.

Kanner's involvement at Noble included establishing a scholarship fund so that all students could participate in after-school activities, spearheading a potluck dinner to engage the families of refugee students,

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Library seeks public input on Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus

Sheryl Banks

Heights Libraries is surveying the community to gather public input about the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus. The short survey covers topics that include safety, sustainability, parking, the playground, and possible improvements to the park. It also encourages community members to write in their own ideas with a variety of open-ended questions. Survey results will be published in the fall.

The survey is available online, at www.heightslibrary.org/coventry-peace-campus-project, and on paper at Heights Libraries' Coventry Village branch, at 1925 Coventry Road.

"The P.E.A.C.E. Campus is a community resource," said Heights Libraries Director Nancy Levin, "so it's crucial that we hear the community's opinions and ideas about it before any decisions are made about its future."

Heights Libraries recently formed a committee to plan the programming, facilities and future uses of the park. The committee—comprising representatives from the city, the former Coventry School building's tenants, P.E.A.C.E. Park representatives, citizens, and library representatives—will be involved in creating a master plan and fundraising for park improvements.

Earlier this summer, building tenants signed leases with a base rent of \$3.50 per square foot, and additional fees for shared amenities such as Wi-Fi and security systems. They have agreed to fund a reserve for the maintenance of and repairs to the building. Heights Libraries reports on the expenses and revenues associated with the building every month at its regular board meetings.

Heights Libraries took over the

continued on page 13

CH City Council undertakes branding study

Julie Hullett

Cleveland Heights City Council approved a promotional branding initiative at its July 2 meeting. The branding study is intended to define and refine the Cleveland Heights (CH) story, to help tell prospective homeowners and business owners why CH is a great place in which to work and live. The study is expected to begin by early August.

The city hired Align2Market, an Ohio-based branding and consulting firm, to conduct the study, collect and review the data, and create a strategic mar-

keting plan. Data collection is expected to take about two to three months, with the analysis, message development, creative design and rollout expected to take another four to five months. The cost of the study is not to exceed \$85,000.

Align2Market will also study five other cities, not yet chosen, that compete with CH to attract residents and businesses.

The study will consist of focus groups and surveys, as well as one-on-one interviews. The city wants to hear from residents and business owners regarding why they chose to

live, work, and open businesses in CH, and what they feel differentiates it from other cities. It plans to convene four or five focus groups, each limited to around 12 people, including residents and business and community leaders.

"We want to [be] collaborative with the residents and businesses," said Mary Trupo, CH's director of communications and public engagement. "We are trying to reach as many people as we can through as many avenues as we can."

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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

The *Heights Observer* is a citizen-based news source published monthly by FutureHeights, a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to civic engagement and quality of life.

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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 September issue must be submitted by Aug. 13. 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.

The hardest issue we've ever produced



OPENING
THE OBSERVER

Bob Rosenbaum

Of all the issues, the most difficult was August 2014, which covered the community's response to the shooting death of Jim Brennan, owner of the Colony on Lee Road.

There were layers of grief—for the man, for the business and its employees, and the community itself.

The *Heights Observer* didn't actually cover the crime, which had taken place on June 30—even as we were distributing the July issue. That's because the *Observer* has been different from other newspapers in three ways:

- It only comes out once a month, so when news happens, TV and the Internet will have the immediate details well before we get out the next issue.
- We don't have a staff of reporters who are paid to cover stories simply because they happen. Our writers are volunteers—community members who typically write about things that have meaning to them. Meaning takes time to emerge.
- We're non-profit and mission-based; the impact to the community of what we publish is always top-of-mind for those of us who work on every issue.

I raised my hand to write the main story in the August 2014 issue because somebody had to.

It ended up being about the way we were dealing with the grief, including the "We are a Colony" campaign that put the Colony logo on T-shirts (I still have mine) and car magnets.

The headline on that story was **Brennan's 'colony' comes together over T-shirts and a beer**. It's what journalists call a second-day story—reflecting the realities of our monthly frequency and volunteer contributors.

It demonstrates the *Observer's* optimism—a quality that doesn't exist by design or intent, but rather as a reflection of the people who show up every month to fill its pages. There are some who feel this quality is a weakness—that newspapers should be more confrontational and less boosterish.

There are times when I agree. But the *Observer* is driven by its community. Our writers set the tone of our content, and I'm glad to live in a place where the default mood seems to be determined optimism.

That lead story wasn't the only coverage the issue contained about Brennan's murder.

Letters, essays and blog excerpts from community members talked about Brennan himself, about crime, about the coming together to share our grief, and about the narrative being spun reflexively by some other media—of Cleveland Heights as a city in unstoppable decline.

I still hold a grudge against the *Plain Dealer* for leading that charge, and today more than ever I think our volunteer contributors

got the second-day story more right than the *PD's* professionals. I've since come to realize how important it is that the *Observer* exists to tell our story authentically, continually, one drip at a time.

I knew Brennan only superficially, but I felt the loss as if part of my own family had been taken from me—and everyone else seemed to feel the same way.

Producing the issue felt very much like carrying on; it was something that had to be done, and that *could* be done.

Not every community could sustain an *Observer* as ours has for the past decade. It takes an advertising base of independently owned businesses that are as involved in the community as they are in commerce—because chains and franchises don't buy advertising in community media. It takes a culture of activism, which we have in abundance. It takes a sense that there's something here to fight for.

In August 2014, the *Heights Observer* showed ours as one of those communities that's at its best right after its worst.

If you want to see it yourself, you can find it on our website, www.heightsobserver.org > Latest Issue (PDF) > Volume 7/Issue 8.

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

Charter Review Commission happy with status quo

To the Editor:

The Charter Review Commission endorsed the status quo, deciding at-large council/hired city manager government is just fine. What a missed opportunity to create badly needed change for a better future.

After months of interviews and input, there was little discussion before voting. The few who wanted an elected mayor and possible council changes had no chance of turning this Titanic in a bathtub; the majority apparently came into the process with minds made up.

Maybe they think everything is fine. Key questions before them were "what is the problem, and how will a change in government solve it?" Advocates for change answered both. Advocates for the status quo did not say how keeping government the same would make

the city better.

The commission still can create change as it dives into details. They could revise council's powers, the city manager's role or how department heads get their jobs. Let's hope they don't settle for more status quo.

Michael E. Bennett
Cleveland Heights

CH doesn't need trash bins

To the Editor:

My response to Tom Diamond ("CH can do better with garbage," *Heights Observer*, June 2018) is NO—we do not want those huge bins littering our tree lawns all day on trash day. I, and most people on our street and nearby streets, don't have tons of trash each week. In fact, I usually have two small bags, one with recyclables in it. The ugly

huge bins are usually left out on people's tree lawns all day, sometimes tipped over, looking messy because homeowners don't return until late afternoon after work. If Mr. Diamond and others would not put tasty treats in their bags and set them out the night before pickup, rodents wouldn't try to rip the bags open. Meat scraps can be put in [garbage] disposals and vegetable scraps can be put in a compost pile. If I have pieces of chicken skin or bones, I put them in a little bag in the freezer and then into the trash bag the morning of pickup. Frozen meat scraps don't attract animals. The day I read Mr. Diamond's tirade about trash pickup, I drove around our neighborhoods and didn't see one ripped-open trash bag, but I did see lots of bins on neighboring cities' tree lawns.

Those big bins can be cumbersome. My 92-year-old neighbor who lived alone and had minimal trash couldn't have toted two bins out to the tree lawn every week. Also con-

continued on page 3



LETTERS continued from page 2

sider able-bodied folks who could do that, but have snow-filled driveways during the winter.

We already pay quite high taxes. How much more would we pay if, as he suggests, we purchase high-end garbage lift trucks? And I would prefer to keep our trash collectors employed rather than ditch them for new trucks.

One of the blessings of living in Cleveland Heights is that we can put usable items in our tree lawns and “trash pickers” come by and take them, thus giving some items new life rather than throwing them away.

Anne Billington
Cleveland Heights

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CH judge provides court update

James Costello

What is the status of that abandoned house around the corner? We here at the Cleveland Heights Municipal Court have recently updated our web-site, www.clevelandheightscourt.com, to make it more user-friendly and to give it more functionality. One update that may be of interest to Cleveland Heights residents is under the Record Search tab. You can now search by house number and street name to determine if the city has filed a criminal case with the court for that property. If it does turn up in the search result, you will be able to see the court docket and find out the status of that case.

I hear all housing code violation cases, generally on Tuesday mornings starting at 9 a.m. If a case you are interested in is set for an upcoming hearing, I encourage you to come to court to watch and, if you would like, make a statement on the record concerning the property. If you wish to make a statement, when you arrive at court let the bailiff know why you are there, and he/she can let you know if you will be able to make a statement on the record—cases that are set for sentencing or are in the status hearing stage are examples of times when it may be appropriate for a community member to make a comment.

If there is no case pending, the court does not have any power to affect that property. In such a case, the appropriate next step may be to contact the Cleveland Heights Law Department or Housing Department and report the nuisance.

In addition to the updates to the website, I have also drafted proposed new local rules. The Supreme Court of Ohio promulgates rules such as the Rules of Superintendence, Rules of Criminal Procedure, Rules of Civil Procedure, as well as others meant to eliminate unnecessary expenses and delay, and to secure the fair, impartial, speedy, and sure administration of justice. Those rules, in

turn, require local rules of practice that, while they cannot be inconsistent with the rules promulgated by the supreme court, promote procedures to facilitate the administration of justice and the expeditious disposition of cases. With that guidance in mind, several of the rules are being updated.

Some of the rule changes deal with developments in technology. For example, the rule concerning decorum in the courtroom now prohibits not just cell phones and beepers, but the use of all electronic devices. On the more substantive end, with the software upgrade that is currently underway, and which will make electronic filing available, the proposed rules set forth the procedure on how litigants will be able to utilize that option for filing. Some of the proposed changes will facilitate cases moving through the court more efficiently, such as allowing 30 days leave to plead in civil cases, and allowing a written not guilty plea in many criminal cases.

There are also changes aimed at making the judicial process more transparent and fair. For example, there is a proposal for a brand-new rule that would require a landlord in an eviction case to attach to the initial filing a valid, current Certificate of Occupancy for the premises that is the subject of the eviction action.

You can find a copy of current rules and proposed rules under the Court Information tab on the court's website. You can comment on a proposed rule by sending an e-mail to chlocalrules@gmail.com.

It is my sincere hope that improvements to the website and the local rules will allow the court to be more transparent and accountable, and allow us to be fair, impartial, and resolve cases without unnecessary delay.

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

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A 'Fool on the Hill'

Paul Volpe

The hill I am referring to is the near legendary "Top of the Hill" in the Cedar Fairmount neighborhood. Is it a place, a property, or maybe even someday a project? For me, and probably many others, is it more likely a dream that never seems to end? Can this dream become reality?

Looking back over two years ago, the city distributed requests for proposals, seeking a development partner. Five interested teams responded. (Full disclosure: I, along with my former architectural firm, submitted a detailed proposal in partnership with a local develop-

ment group. We were not selected and moved on.)

Fairmount Properties was first chosen. About a year later, for undisclosed reasons, Indianapolis-based Flaherty and Collins replaced Fairmount Properties. In July 2017, a Memorandum of Understanding was executed, and three months later, promising transparency, the city held the first public meeting to solicit public comments on the development. Unfortunately, due to limited planning information and project details, there was little of consequence to comment on.

The vocal public was mostly supportive and offered thoughts re-

lated to mixed-income and for-sale housing, compatible new businesses, and high-quality design. Density was considered acceptable and important. A call was made for the planners to consider urban design/placemaking implications, such as pedestrian connections, public space, building scale, streetscape, distributed parking, traffic movement, and other community priorities. The city promised transparency and an open public process.

So "now" arrives, and, almost nine months later, the city arranged the second public meeting in June. With anticipation and enthusiasm, we arrived at the community center to see and hear the updated planning for Top of the Hill. After introductions, history, schedules and other minutia from city officials, we were unfortunately treated to very little new or encouraging progress from the developer.

Flaherty and Collins's attorney spoke in aspirational generalities and basically said the firm did not have time to produce any meaningful design or planning. The architects showed vague site plan diagrams, which were less compelling than

the one produced at the first public meeting. This was followed by nebulous perspective images of nondescript building forms that could have been anywhere.

Apparently, the current thinking includes limited retail space, no hotel, no office space, an enlarged parking garage with a driveway adjacent to Nightown's garden room, no identifiable public space, no townhomes, no for-sale housing, and an interconnected building filled with "resort-style" apartments. Maybe I missed something?

The meeting wrapped up with viewing stations lined up for the city, developer and consultants to answer questions. Comment cards were also provided. There was no open public commentary, no discussion, and no real sense of positive, productive timing or direction.

I must be the fool, because even after all this, I remain an ardent supporter of redeveloping the Top of the Hill property. I live in the district, get groceries, enjoy restaurants and bars, hear music, eat great pastries, visit my dentist, buy gas, purchase jewelry for my wife, meet friends, and live a nice life in Cleveland Heights. Why change anything?

I am absolutely convinced that well-conceived change, stimulating positive growth, can and will be very good for everyone. This gateway site into our city is an enormous opportunity to invest in a vital neighborhood main street district and infuse renewed identity and vitality. But we first need to establish the primary goal to plan it right, with the unwavering objective to get it done.

Our remarkable neighbor University Circle, working in partnership with many others, set a high target for development which it has achieved over the last 10 years. Within the greater regional framework, there is currently a serious and timely discussion about Northeast Ohio's future. Our collective response to the challenge was simply stated by the *Plain Dealer*: "Let's get together and headed in the right direction".

Maybe, with a collective will, this could begin in Cleveland Heights. Or maybe not.

Paul Volpe is an architect and community planner, Cleveland Heights resident, and proud FutureHeights member.



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Pre-emption of local control



HEIGHTS OF
DEMOCRACY

Carla Rautenberg and Deborah Van Kleef

5G wireless technology is coming. Municipalities throughout the country have been suing state governments to try to retain some local control over the placement of small cell antennas and associated equipment. According to *Crain's Cleveland Business*, the telecommunications industry wants to install 100,000 antennas a year nationally over the next five years. Wireless companies, however, have been unhappy about the labyrinthine task of securing permits from tens of thousands of local governments.

Enter ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council. According to the Center for Public Integrity, the corporate-funded, self-described think tank is only too happy to supply model state legislation pre-empting local ordinances to regulate the permits, fees and aesthetics of wireless equipment. And the Ohio General Assembly appears only too delighted to have had ALEC's help.

In 2017 the state of Ohio passed a law overriding local governments' home rule rights to regulate telecommunications

equipment in public rights of way. In response, the Ohio Municipal League (OML) and cities around the state swung into action, launching multiple lawsuits. Both Cleveland Heights and University Heights joined a suit initiated by the city of Hudson. The law ultimately was found unconstitutional because it was tacked onto a bill regulating pet shops, thereby violating the Ohio Constitution's single-subject rule for legislation.

Months of negotiations followed, as—at the legislature's behest—attorneys for the cities and the OML conferred with the telecommunications industry to achieve a solution: House Bill 478, which Gov. Kasich signed into law. It is better than the ALEC version, but the “telcos” still hold almost all the cards.

Before its August recess, Cleveland Heights City Council passed legislation adding Chapter 943 to the city's Codified Ordinances. Entitled “Use of Public Ways for Small Cell Wireless Facilities and Wireless Support,” it regulates, to the extent permitted by HB 478, the installation and operation of wireless small cell technology within the city. In July, University Heights passed its own version of legislation conforming to HB 478.

Increasingly, as this issue exemplifies, state legislation reflects corporate, not public interests. Ac-

cordingly, state laws pre-empt the ability of cities to make even the most basic local decisions.

As fish do not analyze the nature of water, for the past century few Americans have questioned the power that private corporations have come to exert over many aspects of our daily lives. That began to change with the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizen's United decision in 2010.

Early Ohio settlers knew the dangers posed by corporate power. The English monarchy's imperial ambitions had been pursued largely through corporations chartered for that purpose. Ohioans fought in the American War of Independence to seize sovereignty from the monarchy and entrust it, not to governments or corporations, but to the people.

Early Ohio legislation stipulated that corporations be created one at a time through petitioning the General Assembly, under rigid conditions. Corporate privileges, not rights, included limits on duration of charters (or certificates of incorporation), extent of land ownership, and amount of capitalization or total investment by owners, plus restriction of each corporate charter to a specific purpose. What did the Ohio General Assembly do to a corporation that violated these terms? It revoked its charter.

How dismayed the founders of our state would be if they dropped in on the Ohio Statehouse today, and witnessed proposed laws ac-

tually being written by private, corporate-funded entities, such as ALEC. Citizens must reclaim Ohio's proud history of reining in corporate abuse.

To learn more about the history of corporate vs. people's power in Ohio, e-mail us. We'll send you Cleveland Heights resident Greg Coleridge's *Ohio Democracy vs. Corporations History Quiz*.

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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A TEACHER'S VOICE

Ari Klein

In June, Superintendent Dixon invited me to attend racial equity training. I have to admit that I was not thrilled. Still, I decided that it would be helpful to see what this training was all about. I am not sure if my reluctance to attend was because I believed I had nothing new to learn about racial equity, or because I sometimes feel worn out by the racial issues facing our community and our nation.

The workshop was a collaborative effort by the city of Cleveland Heights and the CH-UH City School District. The Racial Equity Institute, based in North Carolina, presented a session on "Measuring Racial Equity: A Groundwater Approach." It turned out to be one of the most worthwhile workshops that I have attended and I am really glad that I participated.

Examples of research given during the workshop clearly showed that in several distinct systems a person's race often correlates with outcomes in disturbing ways. When compared with other racial groups, African Americans have poorer outcomes in child welfare, health care, juvenile justice, education and economic development. They are more likely to die from diabetes, have a higher infant death rate, are suspended from school more often, have a higher rate of incarceration, have more children in foster care, have higher rates of unemployment, and more.

The studies presented to us showed that when you compare people of the same socio-economic class but different racial groups, these same disparities occur. I have always thought that a socio-economic disaggregation would show that race is not the main factor in these outcomes, but my preconceptions proved wrong again and again. For example, a white woman without a high school diploma or GED has the same chance of losing an infant

in childbirth as an African-American woman with a master's degree. This is startling!

To me, this information points to obvious systemic issues that even some of the most enlightened people fail to see or acknowledge. What made the presentation so powerful is that it did not place blame or dictate what anyone should do going forward. It was a presentation of facts and studies that make a compelling case for the need for more open conversations about equity.

Another eye opener concerned economic development opportunities and wealth attainment for African Americans. For example, when a job seeker's name on his or her resumé has a white-sounding name, that person has a far better chance to be selected for an interview than someone with an African American-sounding name.

This type of discrimination is compounded by the fact that African Americans had little chance to build any wealth before the 1950s. The workshop presented an excellent example using the study "When the Rules Are Fair, but the Game Isn't" (Jost, Whitfield, and Jost, 2005). Basically, if a group of people have opportunities to advance over a longer period of time, they are more likely to have something tangible to show for it. Imagine starting a 100-yard dash five seconds after the other runners, and you don't have shoes. For me, this study validated how uneven the playing field is.

I believe if more people are open to participate in this kind of training, then we have a better chance to have meaningful conversations about taking action to find solutions. Leaders from both the city of Cleveland Heights and the school district are committed to improving our community. This type of information, followed by open and honest dialogue, might be the key toward a better understanding of what we are all up against. The first step to solving a problem is recognizing that the problem exists.

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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THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

For more than 30 summers my family has spent two or three weeks at our cottage in northern Wisconsin. The closest town is Boulder Junction. Each day starts with an eight-mile drive to town to pick up the morning newspapers from Milwaukee, Madison and New York. Sometimes it includes a stop at the bakery. We devour the news and then use the papers to start fires on cold summer days.

This summer was different. Newspaper distributors no longer deliver papers north of Route 70, a crossroad about three quarters of the way up the state. To get a paper we must drive more than 25 miles south of our summer retreat. It's not environmentally acceptable or a good use of precious vacation time to travel that far for the news, and, because our cottage does not have reliable phone or Internet service, there is simply no way to read the news!

While this deprivation certainly falls short of being lost in the desert without water, there is something threatening about living in the woods without access to legitimate, consequential, ethical journalism. We are on vacation in a news blackout, which in many ways is a relief. Purposefully ignoring the news for two weeks, though, is quite different from not having access to the information that lets us know what is taking place in the world and how to understand and interpret what is happening. Without a newspaper, the president can tell a lie and go unchallenged. Without a newspaper, it is hard to learn how people are affected by public policies like zero-tolerance immigration or standardized tests.

Editorials provide important insights and provoke readers to be thoughtful about policies and events. When policymakers do not have to stand up to the public scrutiny that investigative reporters offer, a powerful piece of public accountability is gone. How do you make a decision about candidates if you don't know how they conduct themselves in public or what actions they have taken? It's hard to be

an informed citizen without this kind of information, and informed citizens are the central players in a democracy.

While northern Wisconsin is suffering from a distribution problem, some major cities no longer have any newspaper. No one is reporting about what is happening in those places, some of which are quite important.

The media is under attack from many directions, which is a threat to all of us. Powerful voices like to discredit the media to protect their interests, but the loss of access to the news because of the cost of producing or distributing it is also a serious threat to our need for reliable information.

A free press is essential to the free exchange of ideas and meaningful public discourse about our communities. Without it there is less accountability, and our electoral process is weaker. Citizens have less power. Democracy is diminished.

It often takes losing something to make you aware of its value. The loss of easy access to the news on my summer vacation clarified the significance of the free press. These days, being informed is exhausting, but being uninformed is terrifying. It makes you vulnerable and powerless and disables your capacity to participate as an informed citizen.

In Cleveland Heights we are lucky to have access to a full spectrum of written reporting. We can easily find the best newspaper reporting on national and international news. We have a daily newspaper that reports on state news and metropolitan Cleveland, and we have the *Observer*, which covers very local concerns.

For the last five years I have had the pleasure and honor of sharing my understanding of the many forces that shape public education in our community. My bias is explicit: My priority is the common good. My writing is opinion, but I try my best to share credible information that allows readers to draw their own conclusions.

So I submit this column with renewed appreciation for journalism. I'm glad to write and to once again read the news.

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

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A complaint-driven housing policy isn't enough to save our neighborhoods

Kermit Lind

Few places have as much potential for attracting residents as the racially and culturally vibrant Heights suburbs east of Cleveland. Yet, like most aging suburban communities, these suburbs are confronting the residue of disruptive, predatory home sales and financing practices, along with persistent middle-income wage stagnation. Although recovery is evident in many upscale neighborhoods, reported data shows most neighborhoods still face dire realities.

These realities pose a serious threat to housing quality and neighborhood sustainability. Increasing code compliance failures tend to normalize more negligence, abandonment and distress, leading to lower housing values, more absentee-investor home ownership, and

property tax-base erosion. Communities cannot afford to stand by and watch their most affordable housing stock turn into solid waste. Virtually all candidates for municipal office in the Heights said so in their 2016 election campaigns.

But preventing and addressing neighborhood blight is beyond the capacity of municipal authorities alone. Code enforcement by itself is essential, but is not sufficient now for keeping neighborhoods healthy. Traditional housing maintenance policing that starts with complaints about individual properties—the whack-a-mole approach—is not working.

We need strategic code compliance—a collaborative, data-driven, communitywide commitment to organize fragmented components into coordinated systems of code-compliance policies, practices and programs.

Detecting trends and breakdowns early, in order to respond with compliance solutions quickly, is a distinctive feature of this process. Some cities already have improved individual departments, code policies and programs. However, those isolated improvements are rarely coordinated in a collaborative system connecting bureaucratic silos and community organizations concerned with residential property across jurisdictional boundaries.

Coordinating the work of institutions and code enforcement professionals requires access to reliable and credible data sources. Sharing knowledge is itself a means of coordination—between policymakers and policy administrators, as well as between various public and public-interest partners. An integrated Web-based facility that curates all available information about real property parcels is essential for managing code compliance strategically.

Fortunately, information technology provides new processes and devices that produce more and, better, information faster. Getting them to work well together is the trick. Although technology can be expensive to maintain and requires special skills—and convincing various government agencies to collaborate on obtaining and sharing information can be difficult—it is essential to do so now.

The Vacant Abandoned Property Action Council (VAPAC) is a 13-year-old gathering of community development practitioners and public officials that does just that. VAPAC members rely on data from the NEO CANDO website at the Case Western Reserve University Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, along with information gathered by neighborhood organizations. The group examines code compliance in the context of the full range of data relative to residential property maintenance to facilitate trend analysis and the consideration of causal factors that enable strategic thinking and planning. The Heights needs to do more of this.

Organized and sustained community action is an essential ingredient for strategic code compliance to work well. Neighborhood and community organizations need to develop competency in order to work alongside municipal enforcement agencies to obtain more voluntary compliance. They can often see emerging neighborhood problems before those problems rise to a crisis level. They can operate programs designed

to inform homeowners and assist in violation prevention, property maintenance and repair. They can conduct studies, share information, advocate constructively and appear in court to provide evidence. Residents, after all, are those with the greatest stake in compliance with home safety and neighborhood quality-of-life regulations. They must be ready and competent to act accordingly.

Strategic code compliance is a community-based approach to smarter, more effective code compliance that joins government and non-government actors into a coherent system for creating just and sustainable neighborhoods now and in the future.

Kermit Lind is a Cleveland Heights resident and clinical professor of law emeritus at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. To view some of his many publications visit https://works.bepress.com/kermit_lind/.

BRANDING continued from page 1

All residents who are on the city's e-mail list, will receive a survey. [To sign up, go to www.clevelandheights.com.] The survey will also be available on all of the city's social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor.com.

CH is putting together a promotional branding steering committee that will provide guidance throughout the study, participate in a brand alignment workshop, review research, help develop the brand narrative and review strategic implementation. The committee will comprise members of various city departments, including economic development, parks and recreation and public relations, as well as three representatives from community organizations, three residents and three business owners.

All of the information gathered will be compiled into a singular brand intended to give residents pride in their city, attract new residents and encourage new or expanding businesses to choose CH. The city expects to use the study to determine messaging for use in speeches and interviews, and to review new, creative designs for the city logo.

Anyone interested in the study can follow CH on Facebook, and on Twitter at the handle @ClvHtsGov.

Julie Hullett is a 2018 graduate of John Carroll University and a summer intern for the Heights Observer.

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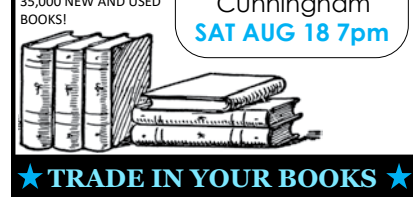
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University Heights City Council Meeting highlights

JUNE 18, 2018

Present were Mayor Michael D. Brennan, and council members Pamela Cameron, Phil Ertel (who left at 8:45 p.m.), John Rach, Michele Weiss and Mark Wiseman. Vice Mayor Susan Pardee and Councilman Steven Sims were absent. Also present were Luke McConville, law director, and Kelly Thomas, clerk of council. The meeting was held from 7–9:50 p.m.

Honoring Walter Stinson

Mayor Brennan presented a declaration to Walter Stinson on his 90th birthday, honoring his many years of continuing service to the community. Stinson was hired in 1976 as the city's first community coordinator and served in that role for 30 years. He is still actively involved, organizing the senior program held at the University Heights Library.

Rental permits

During public comments, many owners of rental properties made statements protesting council's recent fee increase, from \$300 or \$400 biannually, to \$600 or \$800 annually. Several stated that the decision seems to have been made in secret, and that it received much less publicity than the chicken ordinance. Ben Greenberg, who owns a home on Ashurst Road, said that, although he understands council's concerns, raising the fee would reduce the means for property owners to make improvements and would make the property more difficult to rent if the fee is passed on to the renter. Donna Simons suggested that council conduct a study to determine a better way (and offered the help of her husband, a professor at Cleveland State University's Levin College). She noted that although the rental fee in Beachwood is \$500 annually, property taxes there are much lower and the communities aren't comparable. She also said that the city should embrace rental properties as the housing market remains soft. Shelby Hersh of Beachwood owns three properties, all rented to John Carroll University students. He noted that these homes are owned by individuals, not real estate developers, and the fees feel punitive. Tony D'Agostino of Highland Heights asked what percentage of owners create problems. He noted that these fees are far higher than [in] surrounding cities, and inspections are short and don't justify the cost. He said that owners will respond by increasing the number of students that they fit into each house. Bob McClintock of Novelty said he owns four houses that he is in the process of selling because they were not a good investment. Michael Halpern of Brentwood Road owns 10 houses and said he is still a proud investor because he believes council will find a better solution. He was advised not to invest in University Heights, but he has friends and family here and has no regrets. Jeff Muller of



Elmdale Road expressed frustration, anger, and also concern. He believes council is trying to do the right thing but there is a lack of transparency. He suggests the city work with the owners to find solutions for problems. He asked council to postpone the legislation and give the owners time to work with the city to find a resolution. During the committee reports, Councilman Wiseman noted that he would schedule a meeting of the Housing Committee, and Councilwoman Cameron noted that the Government Affairs Committee would join them to further review this legislation, which was to go into effect on June 20. [Since this meeting, the city has postponed implementation of the new fee structure while it reviews the issue.]

Home declared a nuisance

Council declared the home at 3765 Meadowbrook Blvd. to be a public nuisance. The house itself seems to be in sound condition but will require extensive cleaning. The taxes and mortgage have been paid but the city has been unable to determine who actually owns the property. The roof was replaced three years ago. This official declaration is the first step in getting the property owner to come forward.

Community Reinvestment Area

Councilwoman Weiss reported that council has submitted a request to Ohio to establish the city of University Heights in its entirety as a Community Reinvestment Area. If approved, it will authorize the city to offer a 10–15 percent tax abatement on all new construction or additions. The city has to submit a substantial housing report to show that investment has been discouraged. Investments from \$2,500 to \$25,000 would be eligible for abatement on the increase in the assessed value of the property for a certain number of years. Ordinance 2018-33 was presented on first reading.

LWV Observer: Wendy S. Deuring.

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

To receive regular e-mail postings of full reports, send an e-mail to mbarnes9515@gmail.com or join through Google groups using "lwv-chuh observer reports" as a search phrase.

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

MEMORIAL continued from page 1

and organizing a speaker series for Women's History Month that included female judges, business owners, and elected officials to engage students and present examples of what women can accomplish. As someone who majored in women's studies and childcare at Miami of Ohio, Kanner was a "passionate feminist," according to his wife.

He was also everybody's cheerleader, said Summer Watterson, who took over the PTA treasurer job following Kanner's death. "Steve believed in every bad idea," she said. "He would always say, 'How can we make this work?'"

His constant desire to bring people together, combined with his free-spirited approach to life, will be well represented by the memorial.

"Karly nailed it with this idea," said Watterson. "The tree, a living thing that will bring beauty to this space, and the bench, a place for

people to sit and be together. To me, that's who Steve was."

The school's PTA helped Whitaker organize an online fundraiser to purchase the tree, bench, and the accompanying plaques. The tree bears a bronze image of the famous "War is not healthy for children and other living things" painting, while the bench features a Bruce Springsteen quote that was a favorite of Kanner's: "It ain't no sin to be glad you're alive."

Whitaker hopes the space will be a comfort to her daughter, a place she can visit and think of her father. "Mira was definitely a daddy's girl," said Whitaker.

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, a graduate of the Heights schools and a former Coventry School teacher. She is a freelance journalist under contract with the CH-UH communications department.

MUSIC HOP continued from page 1

Parnell's Pub and Still Point Gallery.

On the final night of the Hop, the confirmed venues in Cedar Lee are CLE Urban Winery, Dewey's Pizza, Lopez, New Heights Grill, Phoenix Coffee, Heights Arts, Heights Music Shop, Marotta's, Mitchell's, Rudy's Pub, The Rib Cage Smokehouse & Bar, The Social Room, Washington & Lee Service, Stone Oven, The Tavern Company and Boss Dog Brewing Company. CLE Urban Winery, 2908 Lee Rd., will again host a local music showcase.

While most of the action takes place south of Cedar Road, Washington & Lee Service, 2080 Lee Rd., will host a garage party beginning at 7:30 p.m. Then, from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m., The BottleHouse Brewery and Meadery, 2050 Lee Rd., will host an after-party—a last "hurrah" for festival attendees and volunteers. Featured bands at the after-party are SamFox, Outside Voices, and The Bush Administration. While attendance at all of the venues is free, the after-party has a ticket price of \$10. Advance tickets are available on the FutureHeights website, and tickets will be sold at the door.

Among the many performers scheduled for this year's event are Eric Everett Jazz, DJ Guilty Pleasures, p.stoops, Dark Water Rebellion, Shawn Brewster and the Lovelies, The Baker's Basement, Floco Torres, Corey Grand, MaAmin Collective, Orange Animal, Maura Rogers and The Bellows, Alexander Wright & The Collective, Hannah

Stak, Leaf Borbie & The Family Tree, Theta Waves, The Whiskey Hollow, M. Moody, Madeline Finn, Forager, Megan Sullivan, Joey Aich, Arms & Armour, Kent Archie, Wildcard Leader, The Village Bicycle, Only Native Sounds, C-level, Xe La Sol, Charlie Mosbrook, Mourning [A] BLKstar, The Bluegrass Sweethearts, and Cory Michaels. A full schedule and list of performers will be available on the Heights Music Hop website and its social media accounts.

In preparation for the Hop, locals should keep an eye out for the Heights Music Hop venue decal posted at official performing



This window cling can be found in the windows of official music venues for the Heights Music Hop.

venues in the three Cleveland Heights neighborhoods. The decal will inform community members about where they can find free concerts over the course of the weekend, Sept. 13–15. A different "District Sponsor" decal will identify businesses that aren't music venues but are part of the Hop with their own special events or promotions.

Heights Music Hop is presented by FutureHeights, in partnership with Heights Arts and the city of Cleveland Heights. It is supported in part by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a Cuyahoga Arts &

continued on page 20

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Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights

JUNE 18, 2018

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Cheryl L. Stephens, Jason Stein, Michael Ungar and Kahlil Seren. Mary Dunbar was absent. The meeting was called to order at 7:45 p.m. and adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Public comments

Immigration Task Force: Anne Hill of Yorkshire Road complimented Mayor Roe for creating the Immigration Task Force and urged the city to welcome immigrants, encourage more immigrants to move to Cleveland Heights, and adopt policies to protect them. She decried the federal practice of separating children and the failure of ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to free from Geauga County Jail a Haitian who has won his asylum request but is still detained.

Meadowbrook and Lee Development Proposal: Garry Kantor of Cummings Road asked council to reject the development proposals for this site because they exaggerate the economic benefits.

Year 44 CDBG awards

Council approved resolutions to award Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to seven Cleveland Heights non-profit organizations:

- \$20,000 to Family Connections for the Family School Connection program.
- \$7,000 to the Cleveland Tenants Organization to subgrant with the Legal Aid Society for telephone information to tenants.
- \$6,000 to Heights Community Congress for its diversity education programs.
- \$172,705 to the Home Repair Resource Center for operations and special grant projects to help seniors and other income-eligible homeowners with home maintenance.
- \$35,000 to the Heights Youth Club for its education enhancement program.
- \$11,966 to Open Doors Academy for year-round enrichment for youth.
- \$12,128 to Lake Erie Ink for after-school programs with youth at Noble-Neighborhood and Coventry Village libraries.

Dugway East Culvert Emergency Rehabilitation project

Council authorized the city manager to apply for participation in the Ohio Public Works Commission State Capital Improvement and/or Local Transportation program to fund the Dugway East Culvert Emergency Rehabilitation project.

Change order for skating rink

Council approved additional funds for repair work to increase energy efficiency of the south rink of the recreation center at a cost of \$194,576.

Mayor's report

Mayor Roe reported on productive meetings with the mayors of South Euclid and Shaker Heights to explore common issues.

LWV Observer: Susie Kaeser.

JULY 2, 2018

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren, Jason Stein, Cheryl L. Stephens and Michael N. Ungar. Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow was absent. The meeting lasted 52 minutes.



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Public comments

Community Development Corporation: Five residents, including several FutureHeights board members, spoke regarding the city's pending partnership with FutureHeights as a Community Development Corporation (CDC) focusing mainly on housing rehabilitation and infill. Consideration is also being given to the creation of a Community Investment Corporation (CIC) to facilitate the transfer of property. Two speakers spoke against a CIC, saying that CDCs can better attract funds, focus on community development, and allow greater citizen involvement.

Objection to liquor permit

Council passed a resolution objecting to the renewal of all current state-issued liquor permits for Noble Roman Inc., doing business as Noble Gas, 2610 Noble Road, and requesting that a hearing on the renewal be held in Cuyahoga County.

Immigration Task Force term

Council amended Resolution No. 32-2018, Immigration Task Force Resolution, to extend the task force's term from July 31 to Sept. 30. Because the group began its work later than anticipated, this will allow time for identifying and examining issues and making recommendations to council about possible future city action.

Community Reinvestment Area

Council heard a second reading of an ordinance to establish boundaries of a Community Reinvestment Area in Cleveland Heights. The measure also designates a housing officer to administer the program and creates a community reinvestment housing council and a tax incentive review council. The aim is "to assist and encourage development throughout the city of Cleveland Heights in specific areas that have not enjoyed reinvestment from remodeling or new construction." There will be a third reading of this measure at council's next meeting.

Mayor's report

Mayor Roe noted that the Immigration Task Force had its first meeting on June 27; the next is scheduled for July 12, 7 p.m. All of the meetings are being recorded and the video, like those for other city meetings, can be accessed from the city's website. The audio recording of this evening's Committee of the Whole meeting will be on the website as well, as will recordings of all such meetings going forward. The mayor stated that council meets three times each year with the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school board. Roe concluded with a mention of her recent participation in a program of Common Ground Solutions—a private entity that has developed ways to facilitate civil discourse.

LWV Observer (from video): Katherine Solender.

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CH City Council creates citywide Community Reinvestment Area

Julie Hullett

The city of Cleveland Heights passed an ordinance creating a citywide community reinvestment area (CRA), an economic development opportunity to encourage building and remodeling in the city. The CRA program, created by the state of Ohio, is a tool designed to stimulate economic growth in cities. A citywide CRA designation will provide owners of Cleveland Heights properties—whether residential, commercial, industrial or mixed-use—tax exemptions to renovate existing buildings or construct new buildings.

All property owners in Cleveland Heights who are remodeling their properties or constructing new buildings are eligible to apply for this tax exemption. There is an initial negotiation process between the property owners and the city for commercial, industrial and mixed-use properties. Residential property owners must fill out an application before beginning their renovations.

The tax exemption is not the same for all property owners. The rate fluctuates with various factors, including the location of the property, the amount of money invested in the redevelopment, and the type of construction. For example, a minimum investment of \$25,000 per unit, or \$500,000 in project costs on redeveloping multi-family dwelling units, would make the property owner eligible for a 50 percent tax exemption for seven years on the county auditor’s increased valuation of

the property. If the owner spent a minimum of \$1 million he or she would receive a 100 percent tax exemption for 10 years.

For new construction, areas in the city are designated as CRA target reinvestment criteria zones that help determine what areas are eligible for the highest level of exemption percentages and terms. Zones are scored from zero to 10, and areas scoring six or greater are eligible for the highest tax-exemption opportunities.

Areas in Cleveland Heights with high CRA scores include the neighborhoods north of Mayfield Road and east of North Taylor Road, and a section of the city east of Lee Road.

At the earliest, this program may be implemented in the fourth quarter of 2018. City council first began to consider this plan in September 2017 and has discussed it at various council meetings and with city stakeholders, including realtors and FutureHeights.

The ordinance creating the CRA passed on fourth reading by a unanimous vote at Cleveland Heights City Council’s July 30 meeting.

Now that council has passed the legislation, information about the program will run in a local newspaper for two consecutive weeks before being sent to the Ohio Development Services Agency for approval.

Julie Hullett, a 2018 graduate of John Carroll University, is thrilled to serve as a summer intern for the Heights Observer.

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Cleveland State University
Colgate University
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Dartmouth College
Defiance College
Denison University
Erie Community College
Georgetown University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Grand Valley State University
Hilbert College
Hiram College
Hocking College
Jackson State University
John Carroll University
Kent State University
Lakeland Community College
LIM College
Loyola University Chicago
Miami University
Morgan State University
North Carolina A&T State University

Northwestern University
Ohio Dominican University
Ohio University
Ohio Wesleyan University
Prairie View A&M
Savannah College of Art and Design
Syracuse University
Tennessee State University
Thiel College
The College of Wooster
The Ohio State University
The Ohio State University at Mansfield
Thomas More College
UC Blue Ash College
United States Army
United States Marines
University at Buffalo
University of Akron
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Church hosts block party

Katrice Cain

Central Bible Baptist Church will host its annual neighborhood block party on Saturday, Aug. 18. The block party will take place at the church, located at 2285 Noble Road, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is free and open to the entire community.

For the past 10 years, the church has hosted the block party to engage, educate and empower adults and children of all ages. This year's event will feature words of empowerment, food, music, games, crafts, special performances, a clothing drive, face-painting, cooking demonstrations, free Christian books and resources, and a puppet show. There will also

be free health screenings and educational materials focused on important health issues.

Free backpacks filled with school supplies for children in grades K-12 will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

For more information about the block party, contact the church at 216-291-4406. To view Central Bible Baptist Church's worship services, led by Pastor Harry Cain Jr., and weekly activities, visit the church's Facebook page.

Katrice Cain is a member of Central Bible Baptist Church.

HRRC class for women will cover exteriors

David Brock

Beginning Aug. 8, Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) will offer another course in its women's home improvement series: Exteriors and Landscapes. The six-week series will take place on Wednesdays and run through Sept. 12, at 2520 Noble Road.

Participants will learn up-close, and with their own hands. Each week will cover a new topic, including tuckpointing, exterior painting, garden and yard care, porches, and



organic lawn care. Participants will also get a chance to work with tools that may be unfamiliar, including angle grinders, cordless drills, trowels and pressure washers.

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



The new bike box at the intersection of North Park Boulevard and North Woodland Road in Cleveland Heights is the first in Northeast Ohio.

Enticing group bike rides in the Heights and NEO



Heights Bicycle Coalition

A good way to become more comfortable with riding a bicycle around town and beyond is to join a group ride. Group rides are also a way to meet like-minded people. Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) is just one group that plans bicycle rides, and Cleveland Heights is steadily adding bicycle infrastructure to make bicycling more comfortable and safe.

Infrastructure improvements: With the multipurpose trail on the south side of Cedar Glen Parkway now complete, bicyclists and pedestrians have an excellent way to separate themselves from motorized traffic along a heavily used roadway. This summer, the bicycle lanes on North Park Boulevard between Harcourt and Shelburne roads are getting painted buffers, which further separate bicyclists and cars. Going eastbound on North Park, a "bike box" has been added at North Woodland Road. Watch for signage to come soon for how to use this feature, which makes the intersection easier to navigate for all users of the road.

Group rides for your consideration: On Sunday, Aug. 5, from 1-2:30 p.m., Sarah O'Keeffe is calling all biking families and friends to "Explore University Heights by Bike." This ride

starts from the University Heights Community Park at 2339 Fenwick Road and will explore the park paths and sidewalks of the Fenwick Road neighborhood. The slow and steady ride will travel on residential roads and sidewalks, and will end back at the park with a free ice cream treat for riders, courtesy of HBC.

On Saturday, Aug. 25, Jessica Yox will lead a ride to downtown Cleveland using a combination of city streets and bike lanes to explore coffee shops. This "Biking Has Its Perks!" ride departs at 9 a.m. from the corner of Coventry Road and North Park Boulevard. It will stop at three coffee shops for some morning brew. Riders can ride back up Cedar Hill with the group or take the RTA back to Cleveland Heights.

Please note that parents must accompany children under 16 for these and all family rides. Children must be confident riding two-wheeled bikes without training wheels. Children on or in trail-a-bikes, bike trailers, cargo bikes and bikes with child seats are also welcome.

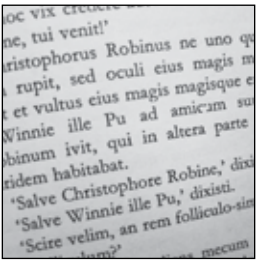
Coming in September: HBC and Heights Community Congress will once again collaborate to offer discounted tickets to those who reduce parking congestion by bicycling to see the Heights Heritage Home & Garden Tour on Sunday, Sept. 16. Bicyclist tickets will be sold on the day of the tour at the bike fix-it station at the corner of Coventry Road and North Park Boulevard. Information will be available on the HBC website as the event approaches.

For information on more local and regional rides, visit HBC's website, www.bikesintheheights.org, and Bike Cleveland's website, www.bikecleveland.org. Summer is a great time for bicycling and riding creates a nice breeze that can cool you off while you get some exercise.

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. This article was written by HBC board members Jamison Babb, Mary Dunbar and Debra Franke.

Observe!

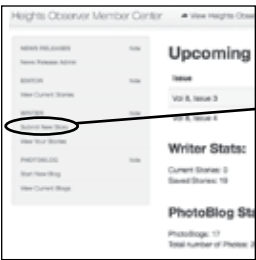
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HEIGHTS OBSERVER

Home and garden tour Sept. 16

Pam Wetherill

The 41st annual Heights Heritage Home & Garden Tour, sponsored by Heights Community Congress (HCC), is set for Sunday, Sept. 16, from noon to 6 p.m. It will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the landmark Fair Housing Act of 1968. This milestone is reflected in this year's theme "Our Fair City," with a variety of homes and gardens on display throughout Cleveland Heights.

One featured property will be Harcourt Manor (the home you catch a glimpse of while driving up Cedar Hill), which has undergone extensive and elegant renovations to honor the early 1900s' era of this historic structure. The tour will feature other architecturally lovely and unique Cleveland Heights homes of all sizes, as well as gardens—from a "Food not Lawns" concept garden to the formal Alcazar courtyard. The Alcazar will also be this year's Sunday tour refreshment stop, from 2 to 4 p.m.

A special preview party will be held the night before the tour, on Saturday, Sept. 15, at Harcourt

Manor. Patrons will be permitted to view the entirety of the property at this gala event, while listening to live music throughout the grounds, enjoying unique food tastings, and sipping on cocktails at the historic bar, in a Gatsby-like atmosphere. For tickets to this unique evening, visit www.heightscongress.org or call the HCC office at 216-321-6775.

Sunday tour tickets are on sale beginning Aug. 1. Tickets are \$20 before Labor Day and \$25 after that, until and including tour day. Tickets can be purchased online at www.heightscongress.org, or in person at Zagara's Marketplace on Lee Road, Heinen's on Green Road, Appletree Books on Cedar Road, Stone Oven on Lee Road, Dunn Hardware in Lyndhurst and Bremec's on the Heights on Cedar Road.

For information on group discounts, and additional tour details, visit www.heightscongress.org, check HCC out on Facebook or Twitter, or call the HCC office.

Pam Wetherill is a volunteer with Heights Community Congress, and a resident of University Heights.



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LIBRARY continued from page 1

operations of the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus—the former Coventry School building and the nearly six acres of land surrounding it—in April 2018 by purchasing the property from the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District for \$1.

Heights Libraries purchased the property for several reasons:

- to secure the continuing use of the parking lot, an amenity totally missing from the Coventry Village Library Branch adjacent to the property;
- to allow the tenants who represent nonprofits and arts organizations two years to organize themselves and operate the building as the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Cooperative;
- to ensure the continuity of the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park as a community asset that is open to all.

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



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So, where are you right now?

- | | |
|--|---|
| A. At home, sitting on the couch with a bad cold and an iPad, bored and cranky | E. A recent immigrant, looking for information on becoming a citizen |
| B. On the RTA, riding home from work, playing with your smartphone and wishing you could start that new John Grisham novel | F. Trying to find affordable advanced training in Photoshop to stay competitive as a freelance designer |
| C. At the kitchen table with a stressed out child who's trying to write a school report after the library has closed, and whose teacher has forbidden the use of Wikipedia | G. Just retired, wondering what to do with your new-found freedom |
| D. Just laid off, needing to sharpen up your resume and interviewing skills | H. Looking for a cozy place to read the paper |
| | I. Looking for actual books. On shelves. |

Here's what we can do for you:

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Stream a movie or audiobook directly from our website (that's the bored part covered, at least...) | F. Heights Libraries card holders get free access to Lynda.com, an extensive online learning company |
| B. Your wish is granted! Explore our digital catalog to find the eBook, and read it instantly on your phone | G. Oh, so, so many programs. Book clubs, concerts, local history, tai chi, art study, film, home improvement... |
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Communion of Saints looks back and ahead

Liz Fisher

As the coming school year approaches, Communion of Saints School would like to share some of its accomplishments during 2017-18:

Sports: The Communion of Saints Sabres seventh-grade boys won the CYO City Championship (Division II). The eighth-grade boys were the St. Francis tournament runners-up. The fourth- and fifth-grade girls team went 6-2, finishing in third place in its 10-team division.

Seventh-grade teacher Molly Moran brought the Girls on the Run program to Communion of Saints School. Principal Gerry Whiteley, eighth-grade teacher Carole Tooker,

and a parent volunteer coached the program's twice-a-week training sessions for girls in grades 6-8. The 10-week program concentrated on developing essential skills to help the girls navigate their worlds and establish a lifetime appreciation for health and fitness, and culminated in a celebratory 5K event.

Science: Seven students participated in the Northeastern Science and Engineering Fair and won top honors, including the Cleveland Clinic Award for Scientific Enthusiasm, the William R. Sweet Award for Chemistry, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Cleveland Section award, as well as many honorable mentions.

Catholic Schools Week: The theme of Catholic Schools Week was "Learn, Serve, Lead, Succeed." On Jan. 23, the school kicked off the week with Mass, followed by an open house, art show and book fair. Students cre-

ated Valentine's [cards] and collected hats and mittens for the Ozanam Center, and organized a game day. The week ended with an all-school Mass to celebrate faith.

Fundraising: The first annual Meet Me In The Middle @ MOCA, a parish and school fundraising event, was held at the Museum of Contemporary Art on March 3. The proceeds raised will benefit St. Ann's and St. Philomena's churches and Communion of Saints School.

Communion of Saints School offers preschool through eighth-grade classes. Centered on a Catholic faith-based education, the challenging curriculum inspires students to excel and prepares them for a successful future. For more information, visit www.communionofsaintsschool.org or call 216-932-4177.

Liz Fisher is marketing specialist at Communion of Saints School.

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Cleveland Heights University Heights Board of Education

Meeting highlights



MAY 15, 2018

Board President Jim Posch, Vice President Jodi Sourini, and board members Dan Heintz and Malia Lewis were present; Beverly Wright was absent. Superintendent Talisa Dixon and Treasurer Scott Gainer were also present. The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m. and was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Middle school facilities update

Project Management Consultants reported on progress in the Monticello and Roxboro middle schools. At Monticello, the plumbing, HVAC and electrical subcontractors have started temporary services and cutting and capping. At Roxboro, the electrical subcontractor has begun putting temporary power and electric services in place. At both sites, demolition and abatement are continuing. PSI (a consulting firm working with the construction company) is on site to monitor the abatement activities. Because most of the demolition is complete, no unexpected issues are likely to arise. A full report can be found on Board-Docs at the district website: www.chuh.org/boardofeducation.aspx.

Board approvals and contract awards

The board approved the Heights Libraries alternative tax budget and sent it to the county. It also approved contracts for construction of the high school baseball/softball field dugouts, repair of the Roxboro tennis courts, and improvement of the Oxford playground.

Minority participation in AP courses

Alisa Lawson-McKinnie, 10th-grade assistant principal, reported a 39 percent increase in minority registration in advanced

placement (AP) courses for 2018-19 compared to 2017-18.

OCR review of discipline practices

Karen Anderson, student services director, reported on the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) compliance review. In 2014, the district became part of an OCR compliance review concerning potential discrimination in disciplinary action taken against black students compared to white students in regard to all disciplinary practices. OCR found that the district's disciplinary practices were carried out in a discriminatory fashion because black students were disciplined more frequently and more harshly than similarly situated white students, and systemic inconsistency in disciplinary sanctions and practices was present.

In response to the compliance review findings, the district's discipline task force has developed and will implement a new Student Code of Conduct Guide, based on OCR-specified criteria. The guide was developed under the guidance of UpSlope Solutions, a consulting group with expertise in employee conduct, student behavior and special education.

After OCR and board approve the conduct guide for the 2018-19 school year, copies will be made available to students in print, online and in the central office at each school.

LWV Observer: Adele Cohn.

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Artwork 'discovered' at UH branch in donated book



Jerry's Map now hangs above the fireplace at the Heights Libraries University Heights branch.

Sheryl Banks

In April, Heights Libraries' University Heights branch received a piece of art that serves as the final

flourish in its extensive renovation: *Jerry's Map*, by artist Jerry Gretzinger.

When it reopened in November 2017, the building had a large blank

wall over the fireplace mantle in the lobby. Heights Libraries Director Nancy Levin knew the spot needed something special. "We were looking for art that would complement the geography theme of the building," she said. "I didn't want to simply cover the walls."

Enter John Jarvey, a member of the FRIENDS of the Heights Libraries who oversees the sorting room at the Lee Road branch, where volunteers sort donated books and get them ready for FRIENDS book sales. Jarvey found a book—*The Map as Art: Contemporary Artists Explore Cartography*, by Katherine Harmon. Knowing Levin was trying to find geography-related art for the University Heights library, he gave it to her.

One of the artists featured in the book was Gretzinger, whose sole work, *Jerry's Map*, is a 1,500-square-foot map of an imaginary city, composed of more than 3,200 individual 8" x 10" panels created over decades, beginning in 1963.

"I was thrilled at the effort and thoughtfulness of his work as well as the aesthetic," said Levin. "I decided it was a perfect fit for our new building, so I did what librarians do, and did some research until I found him!"

Levin worked with the artist to purchase a few reproductions of the original. The \$400 cost was covered by the Fund for the Future of Heights Libraries, the library's foundation, as a long-lasting contribution to the new building.

More information about Gretzinger and *Jerry's Map* can be found at www.jerrysmap.com. Anyone wishing to see the reproduction at the University Heights branch can do so during regular library hours: Sunday, 1–5 p.m.; Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, 1–9 p.m.; and Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights

JUNE 18, 2018

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

Financial report

The libraries' fiscal officer provided a resolution to accept the financial report for the months of April and May 2018. Contents of the report were reviewed and the resolution approved. Highlights included a report of a total cash balance from all fund accounts of \$13,698,060.89. The financial forecast through 2025 was also reviewed and approved. Highlights of this report included 2018 budgeted expenses and receipts. Some of the receipts include money from the Public Library Fund (PLF); general property taxes; sales to patrons, including passports; property rental; interest; and donations. Expenditures include salaries and benefits, supplies, and capital investments.

Ohio House Bill 292

Library Director Nancy Levin reported that the Ohio legislature passed a bill affecting libraries' ability to borrow for capital expenses. The House concurred with the Senate's changes to House Bill 292 by a vote of 86-1. The bill has been sent to the governor for his signature.

The first part of the amendment would increase the percentage of borrowing power against the PLF. This is currently set at 30 percent of the average PLF receipts for the two previous calendar years. Increasing this percentage doesn't resolve the borrowing issue for libraries that are primarily locally funded through property tax levies, but it takes into consideration a larger percentage of their ability to repay the debt. Increasing the percentage in the statute from 30 to 40 percent is a small change, but it allows for more flexibility.



The second part of the amendment would change the maximum term of the bonds, from 25 to 40 years. This would be consistent with other sections of the Ohio Revised Code that apply to counties and school districts. Under current law, there is a 25-year maximum term limitation on bonds for libraries. School districts and counties have broader authority to finance similar projects over as long as 40 years. Replacing the 25-year limitation with a longer term would extend the period of time over which library real property could be financed.

Public service highlights

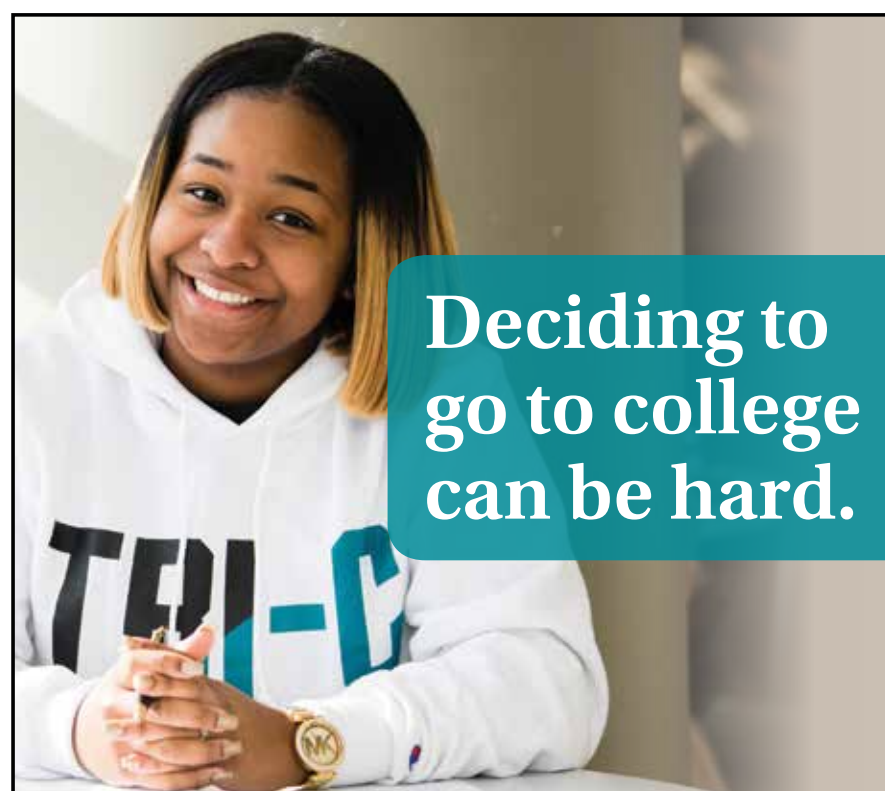
In May, Youth Services Librarian Sarah Rosenberger and Associate Colin Marshall visited Heights High and spoke with 55 students. Lee Road Library youth services staff visited 19 preschools and elementary schools to share stories with 1,350 children and promote the library's summer reading program. Youth Services librarians Sarah Biscuso and Charlotte Blasier performed the puppet show "Tales from Around the World" for 50 children and caregivers.

Wage increases and insurance

The board approved merit-based wage increases for eligible employees and the renewal of employee health care insurance.

LWV Observer: Khaliah Fisher-Grace.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 9.



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CH Senior Center News

Amy Jenkins

The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center (SAC), located in the CH Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers a variety of programming for those 60 and older. A complete schedule of programs is published in the community center's newsletter, and available online at www.clevelandheights.com.

Research has found exercise to be extremely beneficial in managing the symptoms of Parkinson's disease. SAC offers a group exercise program, Delay the Disease, designed specifically for those living with Parkinson's. There is no cost to participate, and the program takes place on the second, third and fourth Wednesdays of each month, at 2 p.m.

Individuals with Parkinson's can participate with or without their care partners, in a fun, positive, motivating environment, which promotes socialization and improved quality of life.

The program emphasizes Parkinson's-specific functional training with research-based exercise. It utilizes Delay the Disease and PWR (Parkinson's Wellness Recovery) principles to promote improved strength, balance, mobility, function,

coordination and cognition. Exercises are specifically geared toward managing the physical symptoms of Parkinson's.

Faith Gilbert, a physical therapist and senior fitness trainer, leads the class with the help of Amy Nieman, an exercise specialist.

The program is supported by the Amalia Foundation, a nonprofit organization founded to fund Cleveland-area exercise programs to help those living with Parkinson's disease.

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.

Aug. 2: Stephen Harrison, curator of the recent Jazz Age exhibit at the Cleveland Museum of Art, will partake in a conversational interview with Henry Adams, professor Case Western Reserve University.

Aug. 9: William Barrow, special collections librarian at Cleveland State University, will share historic photos of Terminal Tower, the most

iconic building in Cleveland's landscape.

Aug. 16: Megan Thompson, director of education and outreach at Cleveland Opera Theatre, will highlight some of opera's most beloved stories and melodies.

Aug. 23: Ann Heyward, vice president of Ohio Aerospace Institute, founded in 1988, will discuss its work to bring universities and federal agencies together with industry.

Aug. 30: David Calvis, math professor at Baldwin Wallace University, and an authority on "The Chronicles of Narnia" author C.S. Lewis, will discuss the celebrated writer's work.

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JAZZERCISE

Loving Hands plans Tibetan monk visits



Monks visiting Heights local merchants in 2016.

Julie Hullett

Cleveland Heights-based Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki is planning events for the Cleveland stops of two touring groups of Tibetan Buddhist monks.

The events will be held Aug. 12-18 and Oct. 17-22. Presentations, including lectures, healing rituals, empowerment ceremonies and debates, will be non-religious and open to the public, regardless of faith.

Classes on yoga, cooking, art,

calligraphy, butter sculpture and Tibetan language will be offered. The monks will also perform blessings for individuals, homes, businesses and public buildings; create mandala artwork using colored sand; and attend private lunches and dinners, for conversation and to answer questions.

Children's programs will include cultural learning, mandala artwork, chanting demonstrations and performances with traditional Tibetan instruments.

Judith Eugene, founder of Loving

Hands Yoga and Reiki, is seeking businesses, schools, churches and other organizations interested in hosting events related to the tours. Eugene previously organized events for three similar tours.

"There are suggested donations for each event, but no one is turned away for inability to pay," said Eugene. "All donations are tax-deductible. The monks will also have Tibetan and Buddhist jewelry and artifacts for sale at each event."

The monks are Tibetan refugees living in monasteries in India. The monasteries each house more than a thousand monks, and their populations continually increase.

All funds raised on the tours go directly toward housing and education for the monks, so that they may "be of service to the world community by nurturing peace, harmony, compassion and tolerance."

For more information and a program schedule, visit www.lovinghandsyoga.com/tibetan-outreach.

To host an event, call Judith Eugene at 216-408-5578.

Julie Hullett, a 2018 graduate of John Carroll University, serves as a summer intern for the Heights Observer. day, Julie hopes to connect her community through the art of storytelling.



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Heights Music Shop on Lee has closed

Julie Hullett

After three years in business, Heights Music Shop closed its doors for the last time on July 31.

According to co-owner Greg Hido, this is a difficult economic time for music shops. He explained that people have created a "society of convenience," in which people can sit at home and order everything they need for their guitars, instead of buying the items at a store. After selling guitars for 16 years, Hido said that he has never seen the market struggle more than now. "Online has destroyed the brick-and-mortar store," he said.

When Heights Music Shop opened in 2015, the owners wanted to fill the space left in the community by the closing of Heights Guitar the previous year. Heights Guitar sold similar merchandise, such as luxury guitars, and attracted the same demographic to its store.

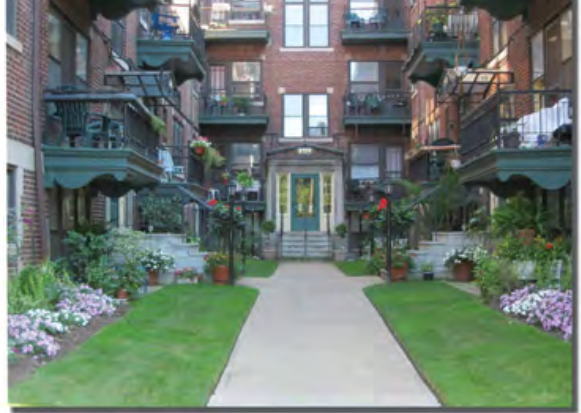
Heights Music Shop had been engaged with the community. It held jam sessions, workshops with professional guitarists, and concerts featuring local bands.

The shop's owners, Greg Hido and Rick Szekelyi, said they would like to thank everyone who shopped at their store and attended their concerts.

"This was really a community thing," Hido said, "especially with the other business owners on Lee Road. It was important to us to be a part of this. We appreciate all of the support."

Julie Hullett, a 2018 graduate of John Carroll University, serves as a summer intern for the Heights Observer.

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Meet & Greet & Take a Photo with Storm Trooper & Princess Lela
Children Activities at the Church of Cleveland Heights
Workmen's Circle Klezmer Orchestra – 1-3pm
(In front of the Cleveland Heights Church)

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Tamil Jordan Quartet – 3-5pm – Near Luna Bakery Café

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COURTESY BERT STRATON

Funk a Deli, formerly known as Yiddishe Cup, will perform at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 16, on the lawn in front of the Grasselli Library at John Carroll University in University Heights. The band will play klezmer and soul music--sometimes in the same song. And there will be free ice cream. The concert, part of the University Heights Summer Concert Series, is free. Bring a blanket or chair to sit on. In case of rain, the show will move inside to the O'Malley Center. For more information, contact University Heights City Hall at 216-932-7800, ext. 205.

'Emerging' actors bring 'Our Town' to Dobama

Colin Anderson

Dobama Theatre announces the ninth year of its Emerging Actors Program (DEAP), the summer intensive acting program for high school and college students, which culminates in the performance of a play. This year's production is "Our Town" by Thornton Wilder, co-directed by Nathan Motta and Leighann Delorenzo.

"Our Town," a Pulitzer Prize-winning American classic, is a meta-theatrical take on an American small town. The setting for the play is the fictional town of Grover's Corners, between 1901 and 1913, and concerns the everyday lives of the town's residents.

In the world of the play, the main character, called Stage Manager, guides audiences through life lessons with the use of several "guest lecturers" in addition to the



COURTESY DOBAMA THEATRE

DEAP class of 2017.

characters in the play. Ultimately, the audience faces a tough question: whether it is possible to appreciate life while actually living it.

Motta, Dobama's artistic director, is also the founder of DEAP. Now approaching its 10th year, the program has become popular among local high schools, particularly Cleveland School of the Arts, while also welcoming students from throughout the country who are attending local colleges. Dobama prides itself on its commitment to accessibility and has ensured that financial aid is available to eligible students.

This year's DEAP ensemble production of "Our Town" runs Aug. 2-5 at Dobama Theatre, 2340 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights. Admission is free and open to the public. Performances are Thursday, Aug. 2, at 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday, Aug. 3-4, at 8 p.m., and Sunday, Aug. 5, at 2:30 p.m.

For more information and to reserve tickets, call the box office at 216-932-3396 or visit www.dobama.org.

Colin Anderson is the assistant to the managing and artistic directors at Dobama Theatre.

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Heights Music Hop 2017.

Music Hop continued from page 9 Culture grant. The event is also made possible in part by state tax dollars allocated by the Ohio Legislature to the Ohio Arts Council (OAC). The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically.

The festival's goal is to enhance Cleveland Heights' reputation as a community for the arts by providing a platform for rising musical talent. The Hop also celebrates the city's diversity, introduces its unique spirit to the region and displays its vibrant business climate. In addition, Heights Music Hop generates a positive financial impact for Cleveland Heights, influences the city's image and competes with other destination neighborhoods in the region.

The event relies on volunteers throughout the weekend to staff

music venues, canvass the business districts with maps and answer questions, and assist with musician check-in. Volunteers receive an event T-shirt and their choice of a FutureHeights Chance Raffle ticket or a ticket to the after-party.

"It is a great evening to come out and enjoy all the wonderful things that Heights residents know are present in our community," said Clare Taft, 2017 Heights Music Hop volunteer coordinator. "It's an easy volunteer project; you get to be an ambassador, enjoy music and have a good time."

Sponsors include: MetroHealth; Dominion Energy; Dollar Bank; Zagara's Marketplace; The MarketFarm; Coventry Village, Cedar Fairmount, and Cedar Lee special improvement districts; Confluence; Keller National; Greg Bonanno, Bolt & Spool; Montlack Realty; *Heights*

Observer; and *Northeast Ohio Parent* and *Boomer and Beyond* magazines.

Family Connections, Ensemble Theatre, Artful and other non-profit partners, will stage additional programming for all ages in grassy areas around each business district. Interested sponsors should contact Bob Rosenbaum at brosenbaum@heightsobserver.org. Those interested in volunteering should visit www.heightsmusichop.com/volunteer.

Heights Music Hop is free and open to the public. For more information, visit the Heights Music Hop website, www.heightsmusichop.com, its Facebook page, @heightsmusichop on Instagram, and @HeightsMusicHop on Twitter.

Julie Hullett is a 2018 graduate of John Carroll University and a summer intern for the Heights Observer.

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