SF man returns library album 48-years overdue

Sheryl Banks

Sara Phillips, manager of the University Heights branch of Heights Libraries, was having a routine day when an oddly shaped package arrived.

“I got a package in the mail from San Francisco that was record-shaped and—as I behold—it contained a record from our collection that was due back in June 1973” said Phillips.

In 1973, when he was in eighth grade at Wiley Middle School, Howard Simon checked out Self Portrait by Bob Dylan. He recently found the record mixed in with his personal collection, sandwiched between two other Bob Dylan albums, Nashville Skyline and New Morning.

Simon included a letter with the overdue vinyl, and Phillips shared it with the library’s communications department.

“As a recent retiree, I am taking the opportunity to turn my attention to some of the many vignettes of life that, by dint of career and family, have been neglected these many years,” Simon wrote. “In that context, I am returning with this letter an overdue item (by my count, approximately 17,480 days overdue as of this writing). . . . It’s quite late, and I’m quite sorry!”

Simon’s letter goes on to explain that the record “isn’t in great shape,” and partly blames his nomadic life as of this writing) . . . . It’s quite late, and I’m quite sorry!”

Summer concert series returns to UH

Mike Cook

Summer is back, and so is the University Heights Summer Concert Series. “We’re going to avenge the lost summer of 2020 with our greatest and most eclectic lineup in city history,” said University Heights Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan.

The 2021 season starts July 1 at John Carroll University, then moves to Walter Stinson Community Park for all remaining shows. All shows begin at 7 p.m.

July 1: University Heights Symphonic Band and “Raiders of the Lost Ark.” The holiday weekend starts on Thursday night with the University Heights Symphonic Band playing a selection from their ‘70s hits, is having a routine day when an oddly shaped

University Heights Branch Manager Sara Phillips with the long-lost album.

University Heights Branch Manager Sara Phillips with the long-lost album.

Cedar Fairmount district plans summer of activities

Myra Orenstein

The Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District (SID) is moving away from its traditional one-day festival to instead offer an entire summer of activities, through August.

The district hopes to renew its pre-COVID vitality by encouraging more people to walk to Cedar Fairmount, dine at its restaurants, raise the number of people buying lunch from them.

Thursday nights, 7–8:30 p.m.,

Cedar Fairmount Business District

Cedar Fairmount district plans summer of activities

The summer’s plans and activities include Food Truck Tuesdays, Music Thursdays, and Family Arts/Entertainment Saturdays.

Food trucks will offer everything from Slyman’s corned beef sandwiches to New Orleans and vegetarian fare on select Tuesdays, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The trucks will park on Fairmount Boulevard, in front of Barrio. While district organizers hope that Food Truck Tuesdays will become a regular event, the food truck operators will be basing their appearances on the number of people buying lunch from them.

Thursday nights, 7–8:30 p.m.,

continued on page 2

continued on page 8

continued on page 8
Some thoughts on Nighttown: a love letter

Neil Sliden

It’s not an exaggeration to say that the report of the sale of Nighttown rests on early years of its existence, and the community. What was already a trying year was underscored by the transition of a legendary and community-defining institution. Most of the community—musicians and music lovers, diners, art- ists, students and former students, and residents who grew up matriculating in and through this distinguished institution—is worried.

Many things make Nighttown unique.

While the food was good, it wasn’t the focus of the club (though most every- one had their favorite “signature” dish). What Nighttown featured was an atmosphere and ambiance, emerging organically through the decades of its existence. Nighttown was the antithesis of the overproduced and overprocessed. It was a club, as in nightclub, as you imagine they were in the 1930s and 40s (or at least as they were in movies of the 1930s and 40s).

Nighttown is a serious place; it’s dark. It was “a family” restau- rant, where you parked the car with your kids and rolled over for a quick bite and junior burgers. When you wanted a night out without children, you meant without your children’s. It has low deep light- ing, walls and shelves packed with genu- ine art and artifacts; quiet background music that’s there for atmosphere, not a rock concert. At the same time, in Nighttown’s internationally recognized music room, it’s serious, not music to talk through or over.

In the best sense of the word, Nighttown’s waiters were profes- sional—knowledgeable, efficient, honest, personable. They knew the names and tastes of their customers, many of whom returned again and again, for years and years of the same stripe.

You may have recognized that my thoughts keep alternating: past/present to past/present. The truth is that no one really knows Nighttown’s future. Will it re-open with major changes? With minor changes? Will it re-open at all as a restaurant? Or, like many before it, will it succumb to some box development for shopping, or inhabiting, or become a franchise feeding-flee
care? I hope the new owners understand that they’ve come into a great gift, like a classic Jaguar or Mercedes; it’s not a Corvette or a Mustang, and certainly not a Ford or an Oldsmobile. When you get into a classic Jaguar or Mercedes, you feel special; you’re not going to do anything halfway and you’re going somewhere cool.

Let’s hope that, as the virus winds down, Nighttown continues to take us to cool places.

Neil Sliden has lived in CH since 1962, and was a waiter and bartender at Nighttown in 1986. He holds a philosophy degree from Lakeland Community College.

A tribute to Ida Bergson

Ari Klein

When my 26-year-old daughter pro- gressed from the old Heights JCC preschool program to kindergarten at Canterbury Elementary School, she ex- pected the teacher that she had for two years to follow her to her new school. Luckily for us, Canterbury needed an art teacher and hired Ida Bergson. This is really the middle of the story, so let me back up a few decades.

My mother and Ida’s mother were friends in elementary school; their re- lationship would last for over 70 years. Our family moved back to Cleveland Heights when I was born, and it turned out that Ida’s family owned a house in our neighborhood. So, Ida remembers babysitting me.

As an art teacher at Canterbury, Ida collaborated with the librarian, music teacher, later the Spanish teacher, and, until her retirement, with the physical education teacher (Julie Lustic, another Heights alumna). This creative team de- veloped lessons for an entire school year that revolved around a single theme, e.g., Elizabethan England. They covered the grade and subject requirements, but planned many of their lessons around the year’s theme. Students might learn a dance from the period in phys. ed., a song in music class, and study or try their hands at art from that period. This seemingly simple idea took an enormous amount of extra collaborative planning on the part of the team, but unifying the programs in the building was a highlight for my kids as they were going through elementary school. There was excitement as new year was announced, and a building of energy for a final presentation, before summer break, when students would transform the stage in the Canterbury gym to another era.

Doing the countless tasks that Ida took on was organizing many of the district wide art shows exhibiting student work, Julie and Ida were long- time leaders at Canterbury, serving as the union stewards, and on the building management team. Long after my kids had graduated from Canterbury, I maintain- tained regular contact with Ida. Lately, I have been the recipient of garden tips and plants from her, as my wife and I try to create a pollinator garden.

This year, both Ida and I retired from the school district we both attended as kids and served as teachers. I know that Ida will continue to produce beautiful pottery and expand her gardening (if that is all possible). Beyond that, I hope she will do whatever makes her happy.

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

In praise of David Budin’s column

To the Editor:

David Budin is a Cleveland Heights gen. His articles are the first thing I read when I open my Heights Observer. I know that you realize how lucky you are to have him writing for you.

Coreta Kutash

Cleveland Heights

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 one time.

Is there something you think should be covered in the Heights Observ- er? 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 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, click on “Member Center” at the left. For questions that aren’t answered there, call the Future Heights office at 216-320-1423 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

Articles to be considered for the next print issue. We also publish some articles online as well. To make a submission of any kind, go to www.heightsobserver.org/members. Click on “Member Center” at the left.

Letters Policy

The Heights Observer welcomes letters to the editor. Letters must be submitted in writing, and with the writer’s name, phone number and e-mail address, to www.heightsobserver.org/member.

Heights Observer Election Policy

The Heights Observer will review election-related submissions with a goal of providing fair and equitable access for those seeking office.

Candidates for office are ex- pected to discuss themselves as such when submitting anything for publication.

Candidates’ supporters and campaign representatives, and any- one writing on the basis of the candidates or election issue, are expected to disclose any personal or professional relationship they may have with any candidate, or with the subject of their submission. These disclosures are intended to inform Heights Ob- server reader, and will be disclosed to readers when relevant.

The Heights Observer will deter mine whether and when submissions will run in print, online, or both.

Contributions by and about can- didates, and any election issue, are limited to a maximum of 400 words.

The Heights Observer does not endorse candidates, nor does Future- Heights, the nonprofit community development corporation that pub- lishes the Heights Observer.
Danielle Dronet is a professional and a community activist who lives with her family in Cleveland Heights. She has operated a mental-health practice for qualifying domestic violence victims to secure the infrastructure grants that bring safety and economic stability improvements to District 9.

My platform for District 9 is a true grassroots campaign. To contact me, or read about my platform, visit www.drone4ohdistrict9.com.

Danielle Dronet is a 2022 candidate for Ohio District 9 seat

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Paula Cole 8/6
Naturally 7 8/14
Musical Memories: Best of Cain Park Theater 8/21
Back on Broadway 8/28
Indigo Girls 9/9
Tri-C Jazz Fest 9/11-12
Soul Asylum / Juliana Hatfield 9/16
Terrance Simien and The Zydeco Experience 9/17

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www.cainpark.com
The forum, Peer-to-Peer: A Small-Business Owners’ Discussion, also seeks to bring together business owners from the same district, via breakout groups during the program, so that they can discuss their districts’ unique challenges and opportunities.

“Future Heights recognizes the value of community organizing, whether it be driven by residents, community-interest groups, or business leaders,” said Fisher. “We believe bringing business owners together can lead to new energy, ideas and action.”

For more information, or to register, visit https://tinyurl.com/peatwip.

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The public good: a world apart from the private sector

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

Five years ago, Cleveland Heights embarked on an ill-conceived and seemingly endless charter review process (lasting from November 2017 to March 2019). At the time, we were struck by how often—and how admiringly—members of the Charter Review Commission compared the role of our city manager to that of a CEO. Nevertheless, it turned out that Cleveland Heights citizens wanted a city government headed by an elected mayor, not an appointed executive.

As a result, on Sept. 14 we will have the opportunity to vote in a non-partisan primary for one of four mayoral candidates. The top two vote-getters will face off on Nov. 2. While management ability is certainly an important qualification for anyone seeking to lead a city of 44,000, it is by no means sufficient.

Executives of both non-profit and for-profit corporations are hired by, and answer to, their boards of directors. A mayor is hired by the voters and must be accountable to them—or that mayor will not remain in office long.

A corporate executive, to be judged successful, must maximize profit. A non-profit leader must serve a particular constituency, while managing resources judiciously. A mayor should greet each day asking, “How can I make things better for every single person in my city?” She or he must be intimately familiar with a concept that may be only a passing thought in the for-profit sector: the public good.

Performance metrics for a mayor are defined by a volatile mix of voters, media, city employees, business owners, real estate brokers, political enemies, supporters, and sympathizers. To succeed, a mayor must convince all of these, and more, that she or he is advancing the well-being of the entire city.

Yes, Cleveland Heights needs a mayor who is adept at managing both money and people. But, we also want to know how candidates understand the concept of the public good. As we consider the candidates bidding to lead our city into this new era, we are asking these, among other questions:

• Will this person prioritize the health and safety of each Cleveland Heights resident above all else? (We include, at a minimum, just and equitable service with respect to police, fire, EMS, infrastructure, housing and the environment.)

• Who is likely to (1) halt SAFEbuild’s incursion into the housing department, (2) bring the building department back in house as a legitimate city function, and (3) reverse the continuing decline in inspectional standards noted by residents and local contractors?

• Which of the candidates will be able to jump-start historically anemic community-development efforts, re-imagine Severance, re-italize Noble, and spearhead successful infill housing initiatives—rather than hiring more consultants to produce more studies to line more shelves?

• Which will hire a great staff and appropriately delegate authority, with awareness both of those employees’ capabilities, and of her or his own limitations?

• Finally, as mayor, how would each of these individuals perform under constant public scrutiny, with every meeting, contract, letter, e-mail and official act subject to public review, criticism and potential legal action? Private-sector executives do not work under sunshine law constraints.

Without commitment to a clear vision of the public good, and without the skills and integrity to advance it, all the executive experience in the world will be useless in this job. Listening, consensus-building, attending to the needs of those with the fewest resources, while also keeping power brokers invested in the city’s progress—all these require “muscles” seldom exercised in corporate board rooms, but vital to the success of a mayor.

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg are longtime residents of Cleveland Heights. Contact them at heightsdemoc racy@gmail.com.
Hart puts forth her vision for CH
Melody Hart

When we moved here in 2005, we looked for a walkable, bikeable town, with a diverse population and restaur-
ants, shops, parks, trees, and mass transit. We found all of that in Cleve-
land Heights.

We still have all of that, but other forces have hurt our city. The mortgage foreclosures crisis impacted the north end, particularly harshly. Currently, non-local investors snap up properties online and flip or rent them without repair. The unconstitutional funding of schools causes increased taxes, driv-
ing some residents out, and creating declining population and higher taxes for those of us who stay. We have a 100-year-old sewer system that the EPA is requiring us to repair.

These are all challenges we face now and challenges that we will face into the future.

But the bones of greatness are still here, and I would build on those bones.

First, housing enforcement must be a keystone to not just fight blight, but to prevent it. Vacant lots should have infill housing or gardens.

Second, I would move forward more quickly with areas designated by the master plan for development to in-
crease the tax base, advising developers of our values, like sustainability, prevail-
ing wage, public input, and local hiring, before they put pen to paper designing a development. Development also gives an opportunity to include apprentice-
ships for residents to learn job skills.

Third, I would place top priority on Day 1 to meet the challenges and opportunities of transitioning our government and leading our city.

Danforth on leading CH’s transition
Barbara Danforth

Since it became a city in 1921, Cleveland Heights has been run by a city manager. On Jan. 1, 2022, a mayor will become the city’s first elected executive.

This change will be dramatic and difficult. An effective transi-
tion will require broad and deep executive leadership skills and experience. With a population of 44,000, a budget of $72.2 million, and more than 400 employees, Cleveland Heights is a sizable mu-
icipal operation.

This is how I will accomplish this monumental transition, if elected mayor:

• Staff interaction: I will approach staff with full respect for them and the work they do. I will meet with every employee to learn about their expertise and chal-


• Establish priorities: While go-
dering a visionary leader, I will draw

同樣性質，我將手把手地教

• Culture change: City hall cul-
ture supports a city-manager structure. Staff report up to the

manager who serves the seven council members. The new struc-
ture creates three equal branches of government: Legislative (city council), Executive (mayor) and Judicial (municipal court judge).

I will transition the culture to a resident-focus to ensure that residents’ voices are heard and they receive a response. It will be council-collaborative to under-
stand each member’s goals and facilitate timely completion of their initiatives, and undergirded by the staff support. The culture will be built on respect, integrity, and excellence.

• Establish priorities: While go-
ing house to house to personally collect 52 campaign petition sig-
natures, I learned from residents the issues that concern them. As a visionary leader, I will draw upon my decades of experience of developing processes to solve problems and get things done with timely, budget-conscious execution.

This approach will be difficult. I have been a Cleveland Heights resident for 22 years and I have 30 years of executive leadership experience. I am a lawyer who has worked in city, county and state governments. I ran the YWCA of Cleveland and was the CEO of the largest charter school system in Ohio, serving children with learn-
ing disabilities.

My campaign theme is “Experi-
ence Matters” and I will be ready on Day 1 to meet the challenges and opportunities of transitioning our government and leading our city.

Barbara Danforth is a 22-year resi-
dent of CH, living in the Forest Hill Historical District. She is the former chief prosecutor, city of Cleveland; and former CEO of YWCA Greater Cleveland.

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The COVID-19 pandemic wiped out many city-sponsored activities in University Heights in 2020. Linger on public-health orders also canceled the city’s annual Memorial Day parade this year. But the city plans to make up for lost time and lost events by hosting its first-ever University Heights Fourth of July Parade.

The July 4 parade will begin at 11 a.m. Recently retired police lieutenant Dale Orians will serve as grand marshal.

The event will feature many returning participants from past parades in University Heights, including Judge Frankie Goldberg, the Cuyahoga County Sheriff’s Color Guard, Church of the Gesu members, Steve Ostrow’s Dixieland Band, City Dogs, CH-UH Board of Education members, the University Heights Library, Pickup-stix Stilt Walkers, members of UH City Council, and Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan.

Also scheduled to appear, beat permitting, is Cooper, the University Heights brand ambassador.

War hero, Founding Father, and the first President of the United States George Washington will participate in the Independence Day celebration, as will other leading historical figures (courtesy of “We Made History”).

In addition to a Founding Father, the founder of America’s first boys’ baseball league will be celebrated. Ruth Morhard, author of Mrs. Morhard and the Boys, will appear with her husband, Al Josephine Morhard. Al’s mother and Ruth’s mother-in-law, founded the first-ever baseball league for boys in University Heights in 1947. Also appearing in the parade will be Leopold and Lenora, co-hosts of WUAB 45’s “Big Bad B-Movie Show.”

The new parade will follow the familiar route of the city’s Memorial Day parade. It will begin at the intersection of Sibby and Allison roads, travel east on Sibby, then turn right and move south on South Belvoir Boulevard. The parade will finish at John Carroll University.

Mike Cook is the communications and civic engagement coordinator for University Heights.

“On developing the Noble triangle and redeveloping Severance. Noble development could jump-start that corridor. And Severance is a blight. It must be a top priority to redevelop it using development tools and negotiations. One possibility for Severance is to build on the expanded Metro Health, and add medical offices, physical therapy facilities, and a training facility for health care professionals, along with retail and housing, including first-floor housing for seniors.

Finally, there has been an increase in gunfights in our city. This is not acceptable. As mayor, I will work closely with the residents, [the police] chief and officers to curt this activity, alleviating citizen concerns and ensuring resident safety.

I will continue to enhance what we have and step it up further. I want a vibrant community where all residents have equal access to city services, a city that is even more walkable and bikeable, more diverse and inclusive, that ensures developers incorporate our values of sustainability and public input, and is a place where everyone feels safe.

Melody Joy Hart is a current Cleveland Heights City Council member who is running for mayor. She has more than 35 years of experience in finance, and has held senior leadership positions in the private sector.
Symphonic Band playing under the stars at the quad at John Carroll University. Fresh off its 50th anniversary, the band will perform patriotic favorites, plus movie soundtrack selections.

Stay after the concert for Steven Spielberg’s classic movie, “Raiders of the Lost Ark.” See it the way it was meant to be enjoyed—with a large, joyous crowd.

**July 8: Diana Chittester.** Local singer-songwriter Diana Chittester has been building a reputation as one of the area’s most gifted guitar players, intimate songwriters, and forceful vocalists. Over the past decade, she’s released a series of albums that display her growing confidence and ability to communicate feelings that are deeply personal yet universal.

Chittester has shared the stage with Lyle Lovett, Gin Blossoms, The Accidental, Joan Osborne, Peter Mulvey, Chris Trapper, Lisa Loeb and Colin Hay.

**July 15: Aaron Malik.** Up-and-coming local rapper Aaron Malik has been productive during the pandemic, and he’s ready to unleash his new music in his University Heights debut concert. The FBB Records Group recording artist has been featured on local radio, and has been streamed more than 500,000 times on Spotify.

**July 22: Carlos Jones and the PLUS Band.** Thanks to a grant from NOPEC, the Cleveland reggae legends will return to The Wait. In 2019, they drew the largest crowd in series history, so fans are advised to arrive early for this show.

“The band’s soulful rhythms and heartfelt vocals have made it one of Cleveland’s top draws for close to a decade,” reported Cleveland Scene.

**July 29: Old Skool.** With an ever-evolving song list, Old Skool plays tribute to the ‘80s and ‘90s with hip-hop, R&B, dance, pop, rock, and funk, and even some classic disco or current hits, if the mood is right.

Voted Cleveland Scene’s Best Cover Band of 2019, Old Skool has earned the reputation of being one of the tightest, most fun, high-energy acts in Northeast Ohio.

**Aug. 5: Bóaterhead.** Escape to a time when T-tops and fine Corinthian leather were abundant, and Jovan Musk cologne lined your nasal passages, as you were gently seduced by the sounds of AM gold. Bóaterhead is a six-piece party band, celebrating the hits of the late ’70s and early ’80s, taking audiences on a musical voyage to “yacht rock” paradise.

**Aug. 13: Yiddishe Cup.** Aka Funk-a-deli, this local klezmer-Mo-town band’s concert is an annual tradition in University Heights. Boston music critic Ari Davidson said, “The band is tighter than the seal on a bottle of Manischewitz gefilte fish,” while Dr. DeMento praised its “dizzying combination of retro and contemporary references, and the hot music.”

Mike Cook is the communications and civic engagement coordinator for University Heights.

Not only did Simon return the album, he made up for all the years he deprived the Heights community of Dylan’s Self Portrait with two donations. The first was a “replacement fee” in the amount of $757 (“. . . a tithe, if you will . . .”). most of which serves as a generous donation to the library, as, according to Phillips, “The album sleeve is in rough shape but the records themselves are in great shape.” The second was a copy of one of Simon’s own albums, Western Reserve. It turns out that Simon is a musician in his own right, with several albums under his belt—no doubt inspired by Bob Dylan. Phillips sent the album on to the library’s technical services department to see about including it in the library’s music collection.

“The funny thing about this is that we don’t charge overdue fines anymore,” said Phillips with a laugh. “As long as we get the item back, we see no need to penalize people. We’re grateful that Mr. Simon returned the record. I’d said we can now call it every.”

Sheryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.
Why I am supporting Danforth for mayor

Alan Rapoport

I support the candidacy of Barbara Danforth because she will make an excellent mayor of Cleveland Heights.

Competent city managers kept Cleveland Heights financially solvent, physically intact, and well protected by safety forces. Hopefully, mayors will do the same. But the first few years of this new system will have neither experience nor history as a guide. Our city will require especially talented leadership during the initial transition period. Danforth is the candidate most likely to provide such leadership.

Danforth has experience managing large organizations. She has hired supervised talent, employed to operate them. The most important job of the new mayor will be to find a city administrator and a staff who can manage day-to-day operations. Danforth has credentials that prove her ready for this job.

Danforth has demonstrated a concept for the maintenance of basic services at a quality level and at reasonable cost. She promises more than other candidates that this will be a top priority. She will not overconcern herself with special issues, but she will not be unduly distracted by them.

Danforth has a history with municipal government that no other candidate can match. She has served as an executive member of the cabinet of a Cleveland mayor. This history distinguishes her from other candidates who claim legislative experience. She has proven skills and the right personality to work cooperatively with the legislative branch of government, as she has in the past.

Danforth understands our community. She has a detailed knowledge of commercial developments in all areas. She has strong concern for the development and maintenance of our housing stock. She appreciates the necessity of open, accessible and accountable government. Most of all, she shares our city's pride in diversity.

A new form of government will require major changes. It is not a given that the maintenance of basic services will have the same priority as before. We need assurances that garbage will get picked up on time, and that the police car, the fire truck, and the ambulance will arrive when needed. We need assurances that tax dollars will be spent wisely. Danforth offers such assurances. For this reason, she is the best candidate to lead our community as it moves away from its past.

Danforth Observer July 1, 2021     www.heightsobserver.org

CH council candidate Cuda says housing is the key

Tony Cuda

As a candidate for Cleveland Heights City Council, I hear you loud and clear; you want our government to be more accountable, responsive, collaborative, efficient, transparent, inclusive and environmentally aware. In other words, you are looking for change.

Well, we are electing the first mayor in our 100-year history this year. There are also four council seats up for election (those held by Cobb, Russell, Stein and Ungar). This is arguably the most consequential CH election in decades because there is a new governmental structure and a mandate for change.

That change needs to begin with our housing department.

The Novak Report (June 2010) commissioned by our former city manager, revealed several critical problems within our housing department that must be addressed by the new mayor and city council:

• There are currently six unfilled positions, including four housing inspectors.
• Our inspectors need to be properly trained.
• Our housing code is out of date; no major overhaul since 1983.
• We need a strategic plan for blighted, tax-delinquent properties.
• CitizenServe accessibility for our residents needs to be expanded.
• Oversight from council and our citizens must be ongoing.

(Some of the above information is combined with my own research.)

There is no doubt that Cleveland Heights was among the hardest hit municipalities in Ohio when it came to the subprime mortgage crisis of 2008. Our homes lost more value and they've been the target for recovery. CH homeowners lost more than 70% of their home’s value by 2009. Just two years ago, CH had gained back a little more than 80% of pre-crash value, but Shaker was back to 100% and Lake- wood was 135%. We obviously need to make changes if we want a different result.

It is here that I will do on council, in collaboration with my colleagues, the mayor and our community, to solve these problems:

• Separate Housing from the Safety and Health Committee. If housing is truly a priority, oversight should not be an afterthought for a committee with other priorities.
• Collaborate with housing experts such as Kermit Lind (CH resident), Sally Martin (South Euclid housing director), Greater Cleveland Congregations, local realtors, and others to find solutions.
• A 10-year strategic plan is in place, vote to fund it. Our budget should reflect our priorities.
• Create a process and a timeline to measure.
• Well-established, safe neighborhood attracts new residents and new businesses, and help sustain our existing business districts. We know what to do, so let’s get to work.

Tony Cuda grew up in Cleveland Heights, graduated from Heights High, counseled landlords and tenants for the Cleveland Tenants Organization, managed the Citizens For An Elected Mayor campaign, and is a candidate for Cleveland Heights City Council.

New CH mayor should champion police department

Reginald Evans

I moved to Cleveland Heights in 1972. Looking back over 49 years, I’ve had the opportunity to reap the benefits of living in an integrated community that celebrates its diversity, and a community that has supported our public schools by (usually) passing levies. (Full disclosure: I worked on three of those levies.)

Over that half-century, I watched East Cleveland become a “minority-majority” city overnight, due to blockshifting—and I saw how the Heights Community Congress stopped real estate agents from doing the same thing here. I also saw our police department evolve from being an “occupying army” with little civilian oversight, to a department run in a manner that demonstrates leadership.

Certainly, there are still flaws and challenges. As a Black male, I’m well-aware of the fact that there are unwritten regulations governing space, is what existed in this area before it was bulldozed in favor of construction.

If this locked and gated dog park were to be relocated toward the center of the actual TOH proj- ect, it would better serve the new residents—the only citizens to have access to this amenity—and the developer would surely be more amenable to installing landscaping screening fully surrounding the area. Such a screened off, softened veneer would minimize the visual impact of a stark patch of fake vegetation.

Consider everything that the city has provided in accommodations and benefits to the developer, I do not believe such a request would be too much to ask, and it would, in some small measure, minimize the assault on the already diminished value of The Buckingham residential community.

This message has been shared with each member of CH City Coun- cil, and read into the minutes of the March 19 city council meeting. As of this writing, there has been no official response. I understand there has been staff discussion around this topic, and it has been said in City Hall that “all residents’ concerns on the TOH project have been answered”—they have not. Currently, as a 36-year resi- dent of this community, it feels like typical government reaction—ignore, deflect, and hope we go away.

Don King served as pastor of Peace Lutheran Church. He has been a resident of Cleveland Heights since 1967, and has served congregations, and been active in the local interfaith community, since 1999.

Opinion

Tony Cuda

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Certainly, there are still flaws and challenges. As a Black male, I’m well-aware of the fact that there are unwritten regulations governing space, is what existed in this area before it was bulldozed in favor of construction. But only one of them has the experi- ence to fulfill my wishes, and that is Barbara Danforth.

Reginald Evans, a 47-year resident of Cleveland Heights, is actively involved in the school and is a former member of Reaching Heights.

Citizens For An Elected Mayor campaign, and is a candidate for Cleveland Heights City Council.

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Over that half-century, I watched East Cleveland become a "minorit...
Cleveland Heights City Council
Meeting highlights
MAY 19, 2021
Council members present were President Jason Stein, Vice President Kahil Seven, Craig Cobb, Mary Dunbar, Melody Joy Hart, Davida Russell and Michael N. Urgar. Also present were Susanna Niemann-O’Neil, city manager; Amy Hemmelon, clerk of council and finance director; and William Hanna, law director.

Council member comments
Kahil Seven suggested involving the community in planning the use of money coming to Cleveland Heights from the American Rescue Plan. He noted the current working conditions in the police department do not meet standards for a safe and healthy workplace.

Davida Russell expressed concern for the facilities in which police personnel are working, and appreciated for their honesty during the time she spent with them. She is concerned about the area around the salt dome on Noble Road, including an immense pile of yard waste, some of it contaminated. In addition to inhibiting developers, there have been calls from neighbors.

LWV Observer: Blanche Volyanc
MAY 24, 2021 - special meeting
All council members were present, as were the city manager, clerk of council/finance director, and law director.

Council approvals
• Compensation rates and benefits in the tentative labor agreement with the Fire Fighters Union for the period April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2024, and an amendment of Section 3 of the Labor Agreement “Wages and Salary Ordinance.”
• The Integrated Overflow Control Master Plan, to be submitted by June 1, relating to the 2017 consent decree between the city and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

LWV Observer: Gail Larson
JUNE 7, 2021
Council President Jason Stein was absent. All other council members were present, as were the city manager, clerk of council/finance director, and law director.

Public comments
A planning commission member recommended adoption of zoning code amendments this evening. She advised that the planning commission will be reviewing the city’s zoning codes during 2021-22, to bring them up to date.

Krista Hawthorne of Reaching Heights expressed concern that the Ohio Senate version of public school funding, authored by Sens. Hoffman and Dolan, would not do enough to address current school funding inadequacies.

Council actions
Council authorized the city to become a Power a Clean Future Ohio Community. Kahil Seven commented that Power a Clean Future Ohio is an organization that partners with communities to help cities reduce their carbon footprint.

Council approved a resolution supporting H.R. 1280, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021. Davida Russell commented that this federal legislation outlines needs for more police accountability, best practices, more police training, a national registry, and body cams for all police officers.

Council amended appropriations for the 2021 budget. The police academy has not been operating, so those funds were moved to other police department expenses. Expenses were increased for emergency repairs to the transfer station. Funds were received from the Ohio Department of Aging for COVID relief.

Council amended the zoning code to update the city’s regulations regarding private parking garages and other ancillary changes.

Council authorized an agreement with Tucker Ellis LLP to serve as counsel on the Cedarbrook Meadowbrook project.

Council repealed provisions of the “Minor’s Curfew” in the General Offenses Code.

Council member comments
Michael Urgar announced that he is not running for reelection to council in 2021. He listed his accomplishments, expressed gratitude to those with whom he has served, including city staff, and said he would miss his engagement with Cleveland Heights residents.

Craig Cobb announced the opportunities for the Racial Justice Task Force, which council approved. Shernyrie Allen-Harris, Gary Benjamin, Nate Barkey, Demetrius Cheeks, Kasra Balford, Laura Collins, Mandy Colvin, Reginald Evans, Angelique Gates, Lisa Hunt, Taylor Jones, Rosa Kovacivich, Robert Lampley, Ron Register, Lisa Smith, Randall Walker, Michael Windom, Kolbe Johnson, and Akhshai Singh. On Benjamin’s appointment, Melody Joy Hart recused herself, as he is her husband. Kahil Seven voted no, citing disapproval of having a task force member with a close tie to council. The task force will meet before the end of June.

LWV Observer: Gail Larson

Expanded reports are available online at www.heightsobserver.org.
Park Synagogue is for sale

The spectacular Park Synagogue in Cleveland Heights, now referred to as Park Main, is for sale.

The congregation of Park Synagogue, Anshe Emeth Beth Tefilo, can trace its Cleveland-area history back to 1869, when the congregation, which would become Anshe Emeth, was formed. As the congregation merged with another and expanded, a number of different locations were established, including Park Synagogue in Cleveland Heights.

The original portion of this sacred structure, designed in an expressionist style by internationally renowned architect Eric Mendelsohn, was completed in 1910. The accompanying school, also Mendelsohn’s design, opened in 1913, and the Kangesser wing, designed by Michael A. Gallis, with Bialosky and Manders as associates, opened in 1968. Park was one of the first two U.S. synagogues designed by Mendelsohn, and it became a model for religious structures across the country.

The building is located on 33 park-like acres between Euclid Heights Boulevard and Mayfield Road. Residential properties along Euclid Heights and Iyvady and Compton roads back up to the Park campus, which fronts on Mayfield.

The synagogue boasts a dramatic copper dome over the sanctuary. At 200 feet in diameter, it was one of the largest in the world when constructed. The dome was designed to symbolically unite the heavens and earth. The drum beneath the dome is ringed with windows that allow all within the building to visually connect with nature. Mendelsohn insisted on using clear glass instead of the stained glass many congregants would have preferred.

This impressive structure was the only building in Ohio designed by Mendelsohn. It earned landmark status from Cleveland Heights in 1976—one of the earliest nominations made by the city. Park Main remains an important part of Cleveland Heights’ architectural and cultural history. (Perhaps it can be adapted into a new use—with “Mikvey” remaining—that makes the most of its stunning architecture and the natural beauty that surrounds it.)

This is one complex that Cleveland Heights can claim truly draws admirers from around the world.

Margaret Lann and Ken Goldberg are members of the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, which preserves and protects buildings, works of art and other objects of historical or architectural value to the community. The commission’s seven members are appointed to three-year terms by city council.

Applications for fall FH leadership series due Aug. 31

FutureHeights (FH) invites Cleveland Heights residents who want to create positive change in their neighborhoods to apply, beginning July 15, for the 2021 Neighborhood Leadership Workshop Series.

This multidisciplinary neighborhood leadership development program is designed for individuals who are enthusiastic about positively contributing to the community in which they live, work and play. Participants will learn leadership skills and gain knowledge about best practices, tools and techniques to make their neighborhoods strong, safe and vibrant.

The program enables residents to network with other civically minded community members. Many Neighborhood Leadership Workshop Series graduates go on to join nonprofit boards, city committees and commissions, and apply and receive funding for community- or neighborhood-based projects through the FH Neighborhood Mini-Grants Program.

“I found the workshops to be extremely helpful in giving me a space to work out ideas I had, and shape them with the help of other people with similar interest in working for Cleveland Heights,” said Michael Hagesfeld, a 2018 participant. "The speakers were interesting and helped give different perspectives. I could apply to my particular situation. Working with other people who also had a drive... continued on page 19
We’re baaaaaaaack!

The CLEVELAND INSTITUTE OF ART
CINEMATHEQUE

Theatrical film screenings resume July 1!

Online screenings of select films will continue! Visit cia.edu/cinematheque for our film schedule and Covid protocols.

Cleveland Institute of Art Cinematheque
11610 Euclid Avenue Cleveland OH 44140
216.421.7450
claircrenzo@cia.edu
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Coming together builds thriving community
Jill Tatem

For most of my life I worked and volunteered in formally organized hierarchies. You know the sort of thing: organizational charts, job descriptions, three-year plans, decision-makers over here and workers over there, and spreadsheets—lots and lots of spreadsheets.

So I joined Noble Neighbors, the absence of those familiar structures was somewhat disconcerting. But I watched and I listened and I learned how much can be accomplished without rigid organizational structures.

Noble Neighbors projects happen when someone has an idea, is willing to lead that idea to implementation, and attracts enough other neighbors to help make the idea a reality.

As an all-volunteer, grassroots group, Noble Neighbors members vote with their time, talents and energy. Ideas that attract participants become projects. No formal project proposals are required, no steering committee approval is necessary—just volunteers, enthusiastic enough about an idea to make it happen.

And I think the outcomes show the value of that process. Here are just a few of our projects:

• Five public perennial gardens that beautify our neighborhood and support pollinators.
• Election forums for neighbors to learn about issues and candidates, and for candidates to learn about the issues important to us.
• Noble Gardeners’ Market for neighbors to sell plants and produce, and share gardening and cooking knowledge.
• Litter-busters who remove trash and advocate for recycling.
• Delmore Community Orchard, home to fruit trees, berries, and hundreds of daffodils.
• Annual We Are Noble weekends that celebrate our neighborhood through garage sales, scavenger hunts, bake sales, movies, plant sales, kite-making, open houses, and more.
• Two Little Free Libraries built, installed, and maintained, with more planned.
• Transforming the vacant lot at Noble and Roanoke roads into a welcoming garden with paths, trees, lighting, benches, flowers, and more.
• The thread common to all these initiatives is our affiliation for our neighborhood and our commitment to work together to foster a “safe, friendly, beautiful, and thriving neighborhood and our commitment to work together to foster a ‘safe, friendly, beautiful, and thriving neighborhood’.

But I watched and I listened. Here are some of Noble Neighbors’ projects that have been going on for a little while:

• Transforming the vacant lot at Noble and Roanoke roads into a welcoming garden with paths, trees, lighting, benches, flowers, and more.
• The thread common to all these initiatives is our affiliation for our neighborhood and our commitment to work together to foster a “safe, friendly, beautiful, and thriving place to live.”

With co-operation from the Cleveland Institute of Art, a picnic table, benches and a Little Free Library. The adjacent building complements the holiday lighting and – as a very small gathering of concernes...
2021 Ron Register scholarship recipients announced

Louisa Oliver

The Ron Register Scholarship Fund was created by the Black Caucus of Forest Hill Church in Cleveland Heights. It is designed to honor Ron Register’s leadership and commitment to the CH-UH schools, where he served on the board, and as board president, for many years. The fund is supported by members of the church and the community.

This year, the selection committee is pleased to present the 2021 Ron Register Scholarships to two outstanding Heights High graduates, Tait Manning and Asia’Lee Fair.

Manning graduated with a 3.9 grade-point average and will be attending Howard University in the fall.

In her application, she described her participation in marching band. Being chosen as the leader of the trumpet section in her junior year encouraged her to venture outside her comfort zone and become more confident. She built a team of mutually supportive band members out of freshmen just finding their way in high school.

In addition to marching band, Manning’s school activities included pep band, jazz combo, Link crew leader, and four years of varsity softball.

Manning is considering a future in journalism. An internship last summer provided her with the opportunity to research and write an article on an issue very important to her: rape culture in high schools. Manning views writing as “one of the most powerful tools to spread social awareness.” She expressed a clear goal in seeking a career in communications: to help people understand the truth.

Fair graduated with a weighted GPA of 4.1. She has been an active participant on the track team since middle school, and a team captain in high school. Her track coach and mentor described her as being “respected by her peers, teammates, opponents and coaches because she shows great integrity and class.”

In addition to taking AP courses and running track, Fair has worked part time and taken on many responsibilities at home. She is a role model for her younger siblings.

At Heights, Fair also participated in MSAN, the Minority Student Achievement Network, a national coalition of suburban and urban multiracial school districts dedicated to eliminating the achievement gap.

In her socially conscious essay, she expressed her desire to create a program to educate young people about sexual assault and its serious repercussions.

Fair’s long-range goal is to become an occupational therapist, and she is motivated to achieve and to help other people. Her first choice of college is Howard University.

The scholarship fund welcomes support to enable it to continue honoring outstanding Heights High graduates. Donations in the form of checks should be made out, and sent, to Forest Hill Church, 3031 Monticello Blvd., Cleveland Heights, 44118. (Please note “Ron Register Scholarship Fund” in the check’s memo line.)

Louisa Oliver is a member of the Ron Register Scholarship Fund selection committee. Former director of Heights Parent Center before it became Family Connections, she is a 45-year resident of Cleveland Heights.
LEI teens collaborate remotely to publish anthology

Eli Millette

In early 2020, a group of teens gathered virtually, separated physically but united with one goal—publish writing by Northeast Ohio teens in Lake Erie Ink’s (LEI) fourth anthology of teen writing. Using online platforms such as Zoom, Google Docs, and even YouTube, the teen editors slowly started to turn their goal into a reality. A theme for the anthology emerged: “On the Other Side.”

The editors share a passion for helping other teens tell their stories in their unique voices. LEI’s Teen Program Coordinator Cordelia Eddy oversaw the project. Under her guidance, the teen editorial board devised everything from submission guidelines and theme, to design, chapter sequence and organization—all while working remotely.

The editors collected more submissions this year than ever before, from more than 50 teen writers. Halle Preneta, who has been a part of the project for four years, as both a published author and an editor, believes this may be due in part to the pandemic. “People had more time on their hands, so they turned to writing and then they turned to submitting said writing because there wasn’t anything else they felt like they could do,” said Preneta. “The book is now bigger than any of the past three books Lake Erie Ink has published, which means more people’s writing is going out into the world and I love that!”

Collecting submissions is only half of the job; editing a collection of work into one complete body is another challenge altogether, and the editorial board met head on. Eddy commented, “I have a strong memory of doing a final read and seeing the story that unfolded across the pieces based on the order in which [the editors] placed them. They showed meticulous attention to matching themes and moods, to turn the individual pieces into a larger whole.”

Copies of the anthology are available for $12, at Appletree Books, Macs Backs, Loganberry Books and Lake Erie Ink (www.lakeerieink.org). LEI is hosting a Zoom release party for the anthology, as part of Literary Cleveland’s Incubator event, on Thursday, July 22, at 7 p.m. For information on the event, visit www.litcleveland.org.

Eli Millette works as the communications and outreach director at Lake Erie Ink. He lives in Cleveland Heights.

On Aug. 4, at 10 a.m., Future-Heights will partner with the Minority Business Assistance Center at the Urban League of Greater Cleveland (MBAC) to host an online pre-certification workshop for women- and minority-owned businesses, veteran-friendly businesses, and socially and economically disadvantaged businesses. MBAC representatives and local business owners will share information about the benefits of obtaining certification, and county and state representatives will share information about opportunities for certified businesses. In addition, representatives from the cities of Cleveland Heights and University Heights will discuss resources available to business owners in their cities. For more information, or to register, visit https://tinyurl.com/2vjtds6j.

Learn more about Future-Heights, the community-developopment corporation for Cleveland Heights, and its programs online at www.futureheights.org.

Sydney Chickos is the FutureHeights AmeriCorps Summer VISTA.
Heights High’s Maple Buescher named U.S. Presidential Scholar

As a Heights High senior, Maple Buescher was named a 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholar. She was one of 161 high school seniors in the country, and one of three in Ohio, to receive the award. U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona announced the names of the scholars on May 13. Each year, the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects the students “based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as evidence of community service, leadership and demonstrated commitment to high ideals.”

“I am thrilled that Maple has received this great honor. She has always been committed to education, serving her community and learning as much as she can about the world,” said CFUH City-School District Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby. “Maple has a bright future ahead of her, and Tiger Nation will always be proud of her accomplishments.”

Buescher also was named a National Merit Scholarship Finalist in February, and an AP Scholar in October 2020. Candidates for the Presidential Scholars program were able to nomi- nate a particularly influential teacher for the program’s Distinguished Teachers list. Buescher nominated Matthew Meister, social studies teacher at Heights High.

A complete list of 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars is online at www.ed.gov/naspb.

Cathie Cavanaugh is the supervisor of communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

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Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education

Meeting highlights

**May 18, 2021** – work session

Board members present were President James Pasch, Dan Hintze, Malia Lewis, Jodi Sourini and Beverly Wright. Also present were Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby and Treasurer Scott Gainer.

CTE student support

Superintendent Kirby recommended adding a new position, coordinator of school technology. The position has two key areas of focus: coordinated, focused support for Career and Technical Education (CTE), and additional professional development for CTE students. This action is consistent with the strategic plan goal to improve the graduation rate and promote post-secondary success.

Social-emotional learning (SEL)

The SEL plan is intended to help students cope with daily challenges by implementing trauma-informed care. Kirby introduced seven counselors and social workers in the Educational Services Department. They presented a plan to support students through social-emotional learning and to promote success using the post-secondary planning system. The plan meets Ohio Department of Education standards and follows procedures in the Cleveland State University School Climate 2021 document.

Pre-assessment for the plan required engaging students, parents, and teachers to collect data concerning chronic absenteeism, students who are over-whelmed with options or technology, the need for additional resources, and training for teachers and staff.

Using the pre-assessment data, social workers and counselors created trauma-informed care plans. Kirby held classes with students to discuss behavioral and educational needs. Social work-ers promote self-care. Students and families can be referred to community partners. The post-secondary planning system measures post-secondary success so the effectiveness of district SEL interventions can be determined. Individual student growth plans have been developed for academic, health, and social domains. The system is tailored to be specific to the school district. The John Hopkins University analyzed the surveys to ensure their validity.

The superintendent said that the information in the report was as important as district education metrics. In response to a question about families in trauma, the panel said that more district families were experiencing homelessness, and chronic absenteeism has increased.

Providing services or referrals to services is a component of the SEL plan. MetróHealth has operated a clinic at the high school for several years. Last April, mobile clinics also served middle and elementary schools.

Fair Schools Funding Plan

Jennifer Hogue, director of legislative services for Ohio School Boards Association, discussed advocacy for the Fair Schools Funding Plan. She provided an overview of the bienni-al budget process, and the timeline for a Sen-ate substitute bill (SB10) as it moves through committee. Hogue warned that HB290 (the “Backpack Bill”) had been introduced and is a threat to HB10. It would make vouchers universal, so any Ohio child would be eligible for a voucher to cover private-school tuition. Hogue emphasized the need to con-tact legislators in support of the Fair School’s Funding Plan.

DHV Observer: Rosemarie Fairman

**June 8, 2021**

Jodi Sourini was absent. All other board members were present, as were the superintendent and treasurer.

Public comments

Two community members expressed concerns about the lack of racial diversity on the board.

2021–22 instructional model

Superintendent Kirby introduced the instruc-tional model for next year. With the expecta-tion that COVID will remain at bay, the school district will offer two instructional approaches: fully in-person, five days a week instruction; and fully remote instruction. The board ap-proved the model for the 2021–22 school year. The board approved changes to the 2021–22 school year calendar.

State school-funding plan

Kirby reviewed the differences between the Ohio House and Senate versions of the school-funding plans.

Treasurer Gainer described school funding in the Senate version of the state biennial budget as “residual budgeting,” meaning the Senate allocates funding to schools with what is left over after other mandatory and priority budget items. The House version determines the costs of education and funds education accordingly. No monthly financial report was given, as a meeting later in June will be devoted to budget. The district’s debt is being refinanced to take advantage of improved interest rates.

Board comments

The board expressed a desire that all internal policies support transgender students’ rights to participate in sports. A board member also expressed the need to address critical race theory in the future.

DHV Observer: Robin Kistler

Documents for all board meetings can be ac-cessed at www.chhs.org/BoardOfEducation.aspx. Go to “BoardDocs” in the left menu, then “MEETINGS” in the top menu, click on “Agendas.” Board meetings are livestreamed on the district’s YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/CHUHSchools) and recorded for later viewing.

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Heights Observer July 1, 2021 15 www.heightsobserver.org
Heights Libraries seeks public input on PEACE Park improvements

Sheryl Banks

Heights Libraries is taking steps to ensure that the Heights Libraries PEACE Park remains an accessible, fun and useful public resource for the community.

The library has contracted with landscape architects Andrew Sargeant and Jim McKnight, at $9,000 each, to prepare sketches and develop an overall plan for the property, including cost estimates. They will also coordinate and gather public input about the park through three separate public events.

“Our PEACE Park is popular, and well loved, so we’re hoping we get plenty of input from our community so we can improve it, and make it an even better public asset for all,” said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director.

The first event, the Coventry PEACE Park Design Jam, took place on June 27. It encouraged community members to visit five stations and engage in activities to help Sargeant and McKnight determine what the community wants from the popular public space. The two architects will use the feedback they gathered at the event to inform their park designs.

The second event, planned for Saturday, July 24, 1-4 p.m., will be an open house at the Coventry Village Library, 1925 Coventry Road, where the library’s board of trustees’ meeting. Sargeant and McKnight will present final plans for the park, which could include an accessible playground, a walking storybook loop, an amphitheater and outdoor seating areas.

Fundraising for the project will be necessary before any construction can begin. It will be handled by the nonprofit Fund for the Future of Heights Libraries.

Since 2018, when Heights Libraries obtained the park from the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, the library has made small improvements, such as new trash cans and regular trash pickup; repair of the existing playground; new concrete walkways and pads for benches; a bicycle repair station; and parking lot upgrades, including better lighting.

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

Cleveland Heights – University Heights Public Library Board

Meeting highlights

MAP 17, 2021

Board members present were President Dana Flower, Vice President Gabe Crenshaw, Patti Carlisle, (who left early), Misia Gehrlich, Anneke Iwamoto, Tyler McCaughey and Vikas Tulsidas.

Financial and investment report

Total cash balance across the operating accounts, bomber Fund accounts, and investment accounts was $21,639,573.09.

Board resolutions

• Transfer of $4 million from the general fund to the building and repair fund.
• Approval of tax budget revenue for 2022 in the amount of $11,442,175 for the general fund.
• Contract to install touchless entry doors to restrooms in the Lee Road branch and the HKIC.
• Authorization of a new investment account with the General Fund accounts, and investment accounts was $21,639,573.09.

Public service report

• Noble Presbyterian Church is now library property.
• Youth Services Task Force will make recommendations on Dr. Seuss books that have been withdrawn from publication.
• New library protocols will be developed when COVID health orders are rescinded.
• The library continues to advocate for removal of the business district curfew law.

Library board meetings are livestreamed, recorded, and available on YouTube on the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCAmWi7Af7z5jwFvUp1ZdUu8A.

Barbara Danforth

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Heights Observer July 1, 2021

Heights Observer July 1, 2021
Free cigar-box guitar workshop is open to middle-schoolers

The Noble Cigar Box Guitar Project is offering a free summer Cigar Box Guitar workshop for middle-schoolers.

Many practitioners say that the first rule of cigar-box guitars is that there are no rules. Cigar-box guitars are versatile. They incorporate a range of materials, including cigar boxes and cookie tins as bodies, and paint-can lids or pie plates as resonators. They suit a range of musical styles, from rock and blues to jazz and folk. In the hands of creative people, cigar-box guitars demonstrate how successfully commonplace, throw-away objects can be re-purposed into impressive musical instruments.

The workshop consists of four sessions, Aug. 2-5, 1:30-3:00 p.m., at Disciples Christian Church, 3663 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights. Participants will build their own three-string cigar-box guitars from a kit that will be provided. They’ll learn how a guitar makes music, the basics of playing the guitar, and where cigar-box guitars came from. At the end of the workshop, participants will take home the guitars they built.

For additional information, visit www.noblecigarboxguitarproject.com. Registration is required and space is limited.

The Noble Cigar Box Guitar Project is a collaboration between Hum & Strum (Cleveland Heights Senior Center) and Noble Neighbors, and is partially funded by a FutureHeights Neighborhood Mini-Grant.

Don McBride, a 49-year Cleveland Heights resident, is part of the Noble Cigar Box Guitar Project, and is a member of Hum & Strum and Noble Neighbors.

Friends of Cain Park celebrates 30 years

Lisa Manzari

Since 1991, Friends of Cain Park (FCP) has donated nearly $200,000 in support of artists, actors, musicians and programming at Cain Park.

This year brings a shorter season and limited seating to Cain Park’s 2021 programming. FCP members will receive early access, special seating, and reduced ticket prices to performances at the Evans Amphitheater (with some restrictions for Tri-C Jazz Fest and Multi-Music Fest). Memberships can be purchased at FCP’s booth at the Cain Park Arts Festival, July 9-11, or online at www.friendsofcainpark.com.

“The vision of our founder, Chessie Bleick, was to raise funds and awareness of Cain Park so that everyone could enjoy our local gem,” said Molly McGuigan, president of the board of directors of FCP. “We are in full swing this year, with a new website and added membership benefits.”

FCP is an all-volunteer, nonprofit membership organization that sponsors family programming, cash artist prizes for participants in the annual arts festival, and stipends to actors performing at the Alma Theater.

FCP also awards scholarships to Heights High students pursuing an education in the arts.

“We are so excited for the incredible performances coming this summer, and hope our membership is stronger than ever to mark our 30th anniversary,” said McGuigan.

To find out more about FCP, purchase a legacy brick, or become a member, visit www.friendsofcainpark.com.

Lisa Manzari, a 15-year resident of Cleveland Heights, is a Friends of Cain Park board member.

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The Noble Cigar Box Guitar Project, part of the Noble Neighbors Community Foundation, is a collaboration between Hum & Strum Cleveland Heights Senior Center and Noble Neighbors. This project is supported by a FutureHeights Neighborhood Mini-Grant.

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Lisa Manzari, a 15-year resident of Cleveland Heights, is a Friends of Cain Park board member.
2020 YEAR IN REVIEW

- **total sales volume**: $18 million
- **homes sold**: 72
- **average days from list to close**: 29
- **list to sale price**: 99%
- **list to buy price**: 97%

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**Student describes StudioCat’s Homeschool Art Exhibition**

On May 21, StudioCat at Artful held a homeschool art exhibition. The exhibitors ranged in age from elementary school to high school, and their original works included landscapes and portraits, and 2-D and 3-D pieces. Most of those who participated have attended StudioCat’s homeschool classes. Logan Fribley, a 15-year-old homeschool student, spoke with two other exhibitors about their work: “When I asked Chiara Koonce what she found valuable about submitting art to the exhibition, she replied, ‘I find it valuable seeing other artists’ work in person, instead of seeing it on social media.’ She added that, in Jacqui Brown’s summer program, she learned how to use a palette knife, and now she uses it regularly. Kate Porter said that it was rewarding to submit a piece of art to the exhibit because she had the opportunity to ‘meet new people, and talk to them about their art, and where they got their inspiration.’ I also asked her why she submitted pieces to the exhibit, and she answered, ‘I wanted to showcase my updated skills in landscape paintings.’”

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LISTENING • Sponsored legislation to save trees at MetroHealth expansion site based on input from the community

DEVELOPMENT • Supported In-fill housing in Noble neighborhood

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and love for Cleveland Heights inspired me, in addition to giving me ideas I could apply to my concept and help them with theirs.”

Donna Johnson, a 2019 participant, said, “Participating in the FutureHeights leadership program was the perfect resource to help me rally and engage my neighbors.”

The program takes an assets-based community-development approach, which means that it seeks to build on a neighborhood’s strengths.

“We have several principles that guide the program,” said Mark Chupp, an assistant professor at Case Western Reserve University’s Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences and member of the FH Civic Engagement Committee, which developed the sessions. “We believe that institutions lead best by stepping back and supporting residents and voluntary groups, and that everyday people have the power to do extraordinary things right where they live.”

The program is funded by the city of Cleveland Heights through a Community Development Block Grant and by individual contributions to FutureHeights.

The 2021 workshop series will take place on Sunday afternoons, 3-6 p.m., on Sept. 6, Oct. 3, Oct. 17, and Nov. 14, at the FutureHeights offices, 2843 Washington Blvd.

Topics are Individual Leadership; Asset-Based Community Development; Planning Your Project; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Policy & Advocacy; Learning the History of Cleveland Heights and Your Neighborhood; Leveraging Community Resources; and Building Community.

All Cleveland Heights residents are encouraged to apply; free childcare is provided during sessions.

Applications are due by Aug. 31, at 5 p.m. The simple, two-page application can be found at www.futureheights.org/programs/community-building-programs.

For additional information, contact Sruti Baz, director of community-building programs. Call 216-320-1423 or sbasu@futureheights.org.

Sydney Chick is the AmeriCorps Summer Vista at FutureHeights.

Nobles Neighbors continued from page 12

doings things if they weren’t fun! The vast majority of our support is from volunteers’ time, energy and sweat. We are enthusiastic about promoting our neighborhood, meeting new neighbors, and having a favorable effect on those with whom we interact.

We want the Noble Neighborhood to continue to be a nice, safe and attractive place to live and raise a family. But we couldn’t do all of these things without the help, cooperation, and sometimes financial support of the city of Cleveland Heights, Heights Libraries, FutureHeights, and other donors to whom we are very grateful. Thank you to everyone for your support! If you live, work or are otherwise interested in the Noble neighborhood, visit us at www.nobleneighbors.com, and find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Craig Hoffman is a Cleveland Heights resident and member of Noble Neighborhood volunteers. He wrote this in cooperation with Noble Neighborhood volunteers Patricia Brin, Jeanette Carr, Marlene Rink and Larry Shaw.
Some constructive criticism

There are four different big construction projects happening within a few blocks of my house. I usually pass at least one of them on my walks. And I usually stop and watch construction happening.

I remember some of them specifically. Like Mr. O’Neil (a similar Irish name). I lived in a side-by-side duplex on Derbyshire, near Lee. The house was within sight of Heights High—which, by the way, is why I thought it was somewhat suspicious when my Heights High 10th reunion committee listed me as “unable to locate” in its program book (especially when my parents’ phone number hadn’t changed since I had been in high school!). But that probably says more about me than about them. They, obviously, were not anxious to find me. And, honestly, I couldn’t blame them.

But, anyway, I lived in this duplex, with a few friends in each half of the house. Next door to our house was another side-by-side duplex. In that one, an older woman lived alone in one half, and Mr. and Mrs. O’Neil lived in the other half—with their 17 kids. I just did the math: That’s 17 people in one half of the house. Plus, Mrs. O’Neil babysat other kids every day as well. She told me that it didn’t matter; a few more kids was not significant.

A lot of noise emanated from that house. A great deal of activity: The constant thumping of basketballs on the driveway. Some kid crying, pretty much all of the time. Yelling in play. Yelling in argument. Non-stop Hot Wheels and wagons and toy cars and trucks. Baseball cards stuck onto bike frames to become “motors” in between spokes. And just the normal conversation of a bunch of kids.

Then Mr. O’Neil would come home from work. I assume he would eat a quick dinner, because very soon he’d head outside to walk. And walk. Every day. He walked all over the neighborhood. And he kept walking until after dark. Then I guess he went to bed. I would see him walking everywhere. And I would see him at any construction project around. Most were not in motion by the time he arrived, but he could still take account of their progress. I could understand his motivation, but I laughed at him, anyway. Because I was young and I didn’t get it.

I remember another old guy, too. There were a lot of old guys walking around, but I recall some specifically. I thought they were funny. I’d shake my head and snicker. Look at this old guy. I figured they were killing time looking at this boring stuff because they had nothing better to do.

But now I do it myself. But, of course, it’s different. I mean, I’m walking, anyway—you know, for health. And, the thing is, these projects are happening right in my neighborhood, so, naturally, I’m interested in what’s happening around me. And I’m also fascinated by the construction process—it’s educational, seeing a plot of land go from a big hole in the ground to a whole house or building.

So, in my case, it’s . . . Oh, wait—now that I think of it, maybe they were, too . . . all of those things.

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