

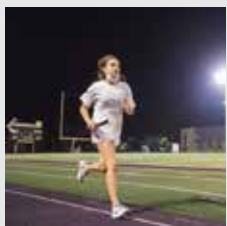


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Use the handy
Music Hop
map and guide
on the back
page

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

Heights Music Hop is Sept. 18

Jason Patrick Meyers

The eighth annual Heights Music Hop, a celebration of a diverse community through music, returns on Saturday, Sept. 18, from 5 to 11 p.m. This free music festival features a stellar lineup of artists on three outdoor community stages in the Cedar Lee Business District of Cleveland Heights.

The University Heights Symphonic Band, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary, will open the festival at 5 p.m. on the Flaherty & Collins - City Architecture Mainstage @ Lee & Meadowbrook. The evening continues with music from acapella group Elegie (R&B, Soul, and Gospel), Ms. Reec Pearl and the Groovemasters (Jazz, Blues, and R&B), Top Hat Black (Blues and Rock), and Dan Bruce's Beta Collective (Jazz). Apostle Jones (high-energy Rock and Soul) will cap off the evening.

The North Stage @ the Cedar Lee Mini-Park will feature performances by Jesse Jukebox (fun music for kids and adults), Kiss Me Deadly (Rock, Punk, and R&B), and OPUS



Members of the Noble Cigar Box Guitar Project are among the performers this year.

216 (classical).

Noble Cigar Box Guitar Project will open the South Stage @ Kensington Road. This group of middle-schoolers and their adult mentors from Cleveland Heights' Noble neighborhood is a FutureHeights

Neighborhood Mini-Grant recipient.

The stage will also feature performances by SpYder Stompers and Sugar Pie (Americana/Folk), Eric Everett Jazz: Elation (Jazz), and C-Level (unique blend of Funk, Punk, Reggae,

continued on page 8

Dunbar resigns from CH City Council

Kim Sergio Inglis

Long-serving Cleveland Heights City Council Member Mary Dunbar resigned at council's Aug. 16 meeting, effective immediately.

Nine days later, CH City Council announced that a special election will be held on Nov. 2, to fill the vacancy.

Dunbar stated that she had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, explaining, "When I was re-elected for a third four-year term on city council, in November of 2019, I expected to be serving on city council until the end of 2024. Something unexpected has come up." The rest of her statement follows:

"At the end of January 2020, I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Ever since, I have been trying to understand the disease and how best to cope with it. I have studied up on Parkinson's, done a lot of physical therapy,



Mary Dunbar

participated in three clinical trials, and started taking medicine for the disease this year.

"Parkinson's is a progressive disease, meaning it gets worse over time. There is no timetable for whether it progresses rapidly or slowly; each case is individual. I feel my case has been going fairly fast, and find I am unable to do as many things as I used to be capable of. There is presently no cure for Parkinson's.

continued on page 13

CH's Green Team meets with city's mayoral candidates

Deborah Van Kleef

On three evenings this summer, Cleveland Heights mayoral candidates met individually with a group of residents assembled by the Cleveland Heights Green Team. The meetings were planned as dialogues: candidates Barbara Danforth, Melody Hart and Kahlil Seren would each present their environmental platform. The sustainability professionals and environmental activists present would then ask questions and, hopefully, educate the candidates.

With the climate crisis well underway, the group wanted to hear that sustainability policies and actions would be a top city priority beginning in January 2022, regardless of who takes office. The Green Team advocates applying an "environmental overlay," incorporating equity considerations, to all proposed policies and actions.

Peggy Spaeth and 37 co-signers described this vision in a recent letter to the editor ("Residents ask candidates to embrace environmental policy platform," *Heights Observer*, May 2020): "Each decision affecting the people and lands of our cit[y] should have a documented and transparent review of how this overlay is applied. [It] should include the impact on natural resources, environmental quality, and climate change." They noted that the mayor and council will inherit responsibility for implementing climate-related actions included in the city's 2016 master

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Library partnership aims to bridge digital divide

Sheryl Banks

Heights Libraries is partnering with the nonprofit PCs for People to distribute free or low-cost computers, laptops and hot spots to qualifying customers.

PCs for People is a national 501(c)3 organization that recycles business electronics and provides refurbished tech to low-income households at a reduced cost or at no cost, helping them access technology previously out of their reach.

In August, the HKIC computer lab at the Lee Road Branch became a



Heights Libraries Technology Trainer Nia Turner with a refurbished computer from PCs for People.

pick-up location for PCs for People's clients. This means people who live in the Heights and other nearby

communities, who qualify for the program, can select the HKIC/Lee

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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.
2843 Washington Blvd. #105,
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
216-320-1423
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The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the *Heights Observer*, its publisher and staff, or of FutureHeights, its staff and board of directors.

Seed funding for the *Heights Observer* generously provided by the Cyrus Eaton Foundation, the Dominion Foundation, and the Katherine and Lee Chilcote Foundation. Powered by the 9th Estate.

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 October issue must be submitted by Sept. 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.

Sept. 14 is first of two important CH elections

Tony Cuda and Jack Newman

We—Tony Cuda and Jack Newman—do not agree on much, but we are both passionate about the importance of Cleveland Heights voters getting to the polls on Sept. 14, to weigh in on the city’s first-ever mayoral primary election.

You see, Newman is the former chair of the city’s Charter Review Commission (CRC), and Cuda is the former campaign manager for Citizens For An Elected Mayor (CEM).

The CRC was assembled in 2017 to review the Cleveland Heights charter and make recommendations to city council. After 18 months, the CRC voted, by an overwhelming margin, to keep the city manager form of government. CEM then turned around and put the issue [of changing the city’s form of government] on the ballot in November 2019. Cleveland Heights voters decided, with 64 percent voting yes, to change the charter to an elected mayor government.

We do both agree, however, that in order for this new government to be successful, voters must make their voices heard. We have two elections coming up:

Sept. 14 – The CH mayoral primary

Moore suspends her campaign for CH mayor

Josie Moore

It is with a heavy heart but clear eyes that I announce the suspension of my campaign for mayor of Cleveland Heights.

For a while now I have gone back and forth about whether staying in the race and pushing issues and ideas into the dialogue through the platform of a mayoral candidate was good for Cleveland Heights. And for a while, I believe it was. However, I no longer think that’s the case.

I ran for mayor because I wanted to present a cohesive, long-term, progressive vision for Cleveland Heights that prioritizes our people and our environment. I have watched so many elections in which the conversation around what’s at stake—and what’s possible—feels so limited. I wanted to be a candidate who would talk about issues that are on people’s minds, but might not be treated as priorities in mainstream talking points.

And I ran because I see at the root of so many of our issues a deficit of communications—not just providing information, but also coordination, collaboration, and community engagement. After all, we are having this election because, in addition to leadership, our people want transparency, responsiveness, and accountability. I hope our future mayor will define communication much more expansively, and bring a dynamic and innovative approach to community engagement.

Cleveland Heights needs a mayor with both a forward-thinking vision for our city—and one that embodies our community’s values—as well as the ability to make

election. Four CH mayoral candidates will be on the ballot, though one, Josie Moore, withdrew from the race. The top two vote-getters will go on to face each other in the Nov. 2 general election.

Nov. 2 – The general election. Along with two CH mayoral candidates, four city council seats and three school board seats will be on CH ballots.

Below are the names of the four individuals who will be on the Sept. 14 primary ballot, as well as the websites of the three active candidates:

- Barbara Danforth - www.barbaradanforthforchmayor.com
- Melody Joy Hart - www.melodyjoyhart.com
- Kahlil Seren - www.serenformayor.com
- Josie Moore – Moore withdrew from the race on Aug. 5, but her name remains on the Sept. 14 ballot.

There are at least two upcoming opportunities in September for voters to attend forums and hear from the candidates:

- Thursday, Sept. 9, 7 p.m.: In advance of the primary election, Noble Neighbors will host a forum for the three CH mayoral candidates at Disciples

that vision a reality. And while it’s true that our city faces many challenges, I believe that within each challenge is a seed of opportunity. With leadership capable of identifying possibilities where others only see problems, we can transform our city into one that looks beyond the one-, five-, and 10-year plans, and begins to also think generationally.

I want to express my deepest gratitude and humility to everyone who has supported my campaign. Our donors, my team and our volunteers, those who hosted meet and greets, and those who supported me in myriad other ways—I am honored by you.

Cleveland Heights is home. Our family has put down roots, found our forever home, and built community. Like it or not, I’m not going anywhere. I will continue to work toward creating an equitable, sustainable, and community-led Cleveland Heights. But now, I’ll be taking a different path.

Josie Moore is a proud Cleveland Heights resident, mother, wife, and small-business owner.

Christian Church, 3663 Mayfield Road. For more information, and to submit questions in advance (by Aug. 24), go to www.nobleneighbors.com.

- Thursday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m.: The League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland – Heights Chapter, will host a general election forum at the CH Community Center, 1 Monticello Blvd. This forum, to be held after the Sept. 14 CH mayoral primary election, will feature the two remaining CH mayoral candidates, and the six candidates for CH City Council. For more information, go to <https://my.lwv.org/ohio/greater-cleveland/chapters/cleveland-heights-university-heights-chapter>.

[Editor’s note: Tony Cuda, co-author of this piece, is one of the six candidates for CH City Council. The other five candidates are: Lee Barbee II, Craig Cobb, Anthony Mattox Jr., Davida Russell, and Allosious K. Snodgrass.]

Please help spread the word about these two important elections so we can get this new government off to a great start.

Tony Cuda and Jack Newman are longtime residents of Cleveland Heights.

GCC asks CH mayoral candidates about housing

To the Editor:

Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) Cleveland Heights Housing Team [of which the author is a member] has developed a new website to assist Cleveland Heights voters in choosing the city’s first elected mayor: chhousingteam.wordpress.com.

The CH Housing Team is focused on issues of housing and economic development in underserved areas of Cleveland Heights. Since 2016, its members have been building knowledge and expertise for new approaches to the housing problems that plague the health of the city.

The new website provides responses from the three CH mayoral candidates to four questions about the current state of housing and economic development in underserved areas in our city, including blighted and investor-owned (not maintained) properties.

The website also includes information about GCC’s CH Housing Team, and actions it has taken thus far.

Sally Lambert
Cleveland Heights

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 expected to identify themselves as such when submitting anything for publication.

Candidates’ supporters and campaign representatives, and anyone writing about any candidate 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 Observer* review, and will be disclosed to readers when relevant.

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

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

The *Heights Observer* does not endorse candidates, nor does FutureHeights, the nonprofit community-development corporation that publishes the *Heights Observer*.

Horseshoe Lake: taking the long view



HEIGHTS OF
DEMOCRACY

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

The future of Horseshoe Lake is very much in doubt. The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS) recommends permanent removal of the failing dam that has held back the waters of two branches of Doan Brook since the North Union Shaker community constructed it, about 170 years ago.

The Shakers were not thinking of recreation or beauty when, in the 1850s, they built the dams that created the lakes later named for them. They were thinking of industry, of powering grist, lumber and woolen mills to serve and support their community. It took real estate developers, 50 years later, to preserve the area as parkland, and build upscale residential subdivisions adjacent to it.

Seventy years after that, the garden clubs of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights banded together to save the Shaker Parklands from obliteration by county engineer Albert Porter's freeway scheme. The

"housewives" Porter derided established the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes on the site of a proposed interchange.

The future of the parklands themselves is secure, but it is time to rethink the particular configuration of earth, stone and water known as Horseshoe Lake.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources classifies dams based on size, storage volume, and potential effects should they fail. The Horseshoe Lake dam is designated Class I, meaning that a breach would likely cause not only serious damage to structures, roads and utilities, but also the loss of human life.

According to Frank Greenland of NEORS, the dam is in "an active state of failure," so the lake has been drained since 2018. This summer Shaker Heights city staff observed cracks in the walkway along the top of the dam, a six-to-eight-inch gap in the spillway, and "significant voids, as deep as 14 feet," in the earthen material under the walkway. The walkway is now fenced off for safety.

Since 2007, NEORS's Regional Stormwater Management Program has been charged with identifying and solving problems related to stormwater runoff, specifically "flooding, erosion, and water-quality issues." This

work is funded by the stormwater fees we pay as part of our regional sewer bills.

Having determined that there would be no downstream benefit to building a new dam, NEORS staff have indicated that the only solution they will fund is restoring to a more natural condition the streams that have fed the lake. They are seeking community input on how to redesign this section of the parklands.

Understandably, some people are upset at the idea of losing Horseshoe Lake, a source of daily pleasure and lifelong memories for many. But even at its most beautiful, it is not a living body of water. Originally about 25 feet deep, decades of sludge have accumulated to reduce it to six feet. It is inhabited mainly by non-native carp.

The restored streams and banks could draw birds, fish, amphibians, aquatic mammals, and—with the introduction of native plants—insects and other pollinators. A winding stream rippling over rocks has its own kind of beauty.

Horseshoe Lake and its history should be commemorated by historical displays and structures incorporating the locally quarried stone used by its creators. Also documented should be the indigenous peoples who may have used this area for hunting.

Our bioregion owes its character to the glaciers which retreated around 14 thousand years ago. One hundred seventy years is just the blink of an eye. By all means let us mourn Horseshoe Lake; but let us also look ahead and envision the gift we can give to the natural world and future generations.

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg are writers, editors and longtime residents of Cleveland Heights. Contact them at heightsdemocracy@gmail.com.



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Public schools are for all



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

A banner in front of Heights High reads "Public is for all!"

The proclamation is both an invitation and a reason to enroll.

A hallmark of our democracy is the guarantee of a free public education. Universal access to a publicly funded education expresses the equal value and rights of all children and appreciation for the relevance of education to self-governance. It serves the common good. Because a community benefits from the education of its children, public schools unite communities in common purpose.

Education is enhanced by the presence of all those who live in a school district: the more, the merrier. The higher the participation rate, the stronger the community bonds. The more inclusive the school population, the greater the impact education has on uniting the community and building understanding among diverse neighbors.

But not every family takes advantage of the public system.

In July, eight members of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union participated in "Bring Our Chil-

dren Back," a project funded by the American Federation of Teachers to recruit school-district families to their neighborhood public schools. The team contacted 59 families who had either enrolled their kindergartners in, or transferred older children to, a charter school. It also included some homeschoolers.

The timing makes sense. According to the Ohio Department of Education, 401 students from the Heights enrolled in charter schools during 2020-21, the first significant increase after four years in which charter enrollment had hovered between 335 and 349 students.

Union president Karen Rego invited Lisa Husain and Yvonne Wallace to co-chair the campaign. Both live in the community. Husain, whose kids are students in the district, is a gifted-intervention specialist at Canterbury and Noble elementary schools. Wallace is a media ancillary at Noble and a 1981 graduate of Heights High. They have the conviction and the knowledge to make a compelling connection. As Husain explained, "I know firsthand how amazing the district is, and how dedicated the staff is to making sure every child has success."

Together they recruited other staff, trained the team, worked on the scripts, organized the follow-up and analyzed the results. The school district supplied the target list and contact information.

The campaign included home visits, literature drops, phone calls and e-mails. The public-school promoters shared information about the district and invited families to reconsider their decision to go elsewhere. For Husain, regardless of the outcome, it was important to "promote our district and all that is offered to students who choose the Heights schools." Having district staff take the message into the community also sent another important message: We care about our students and would love to have them back in our classrooms!

The campaign leaders were pleased by the results. Several families had moved, but they were able to make a personal connection with 35 of the 59 target families. Team members felt that returning one student would make the outreach worthwhile. For-

tunately, seven families committed to returning, and eight more were inclined to do so, while 11 declined. If all 15 families follow through, there will be 27 public school students enrolled in our district because of this project. The team plans to stay in touch with the families.

The schools are at their best when they include everyone who is eligible. In the past, racially motivated fear drove flight, but today, with the rise of the ideological emphasis on "choice," the threat is different. It's about dismantling the public system.

I am grateful to the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union for organizing face-to-face encounters with parents. Personal connections take effort, but they also drive progress.

Susie Kaeser is a 40-year resident of Cleveland Heights and the former director of Reaching Heights. She is active in the Heights Coalition for Public Education and the League of Women Voters.

Hart is ready to be CH's new mayor

To the editor:

I am writing to endorse Melody Hart for mayor of Cleveland Heights. My reasons are simple and straightforward: She is ready!

Melody spent four years following every council meeting to gather information and to research the issues that were and were not being addressed. Following that period of time, she took a leap of faith to run for an open council position. She won that race with a landslide.

Melody is not afraid to quietly speak up and stand her ground on important decisions. She is not one for fanfare. Quite simply, she just steps up, collaborates with others to get things accomplished.

I am confident that Melody will bring these skills to the forefront as mayor for Cleveland Heights. She clearly has the skills, knowledge, and contextual background to move our city forward—something our residents all voted for when they voted for a strong-mayor form of government.

Jean Sylak
Cleveland Heights

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The Heights need Horseshoe

Penny Allen

Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights are poised to lose Horseshoe Lake, a precious and beloved historical, natural and recreational landmark.

In the late 1960s, citizens protested and rallied to save the Shaker Lakes from freeway construction. Some 2,000 Heights residents crowded into a public meeting at Byron Junior High on a cold January day in 1970 to demand a stop to Albert Porter's freeway plans. Gov. Rhodes saw the writing on the wall and scrapped the project.

Today, however, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD) and "environmentalists" have found just the right triggers to inspire citizens to go along with destroying the lake and "re-meandering" the stream: It'll be "natural, the way it was thousands of years ago;" saving Horseshoe will cost more than Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights can possibly afford; "rich folks" who live there will be the ones who benefit.

We should be skeptical.

Achieving some pre-settlement state for Doan Brook is a romantic notion that can't be achieved in the modern world. Published ecological research shows that "restored" urban streams do not approach the quality of woodland streams and are often no better than their degraded, unrestored stream counterparts. Is that worth an enormous, costly effort to plant native vegetation and remove non-native species every year?

The lakes provide habitat that supports and increases species diversity, especially the approximately 25 species of waterbirds and osprey and eagles that prefer lakes over streams on their way to nesting or wintering grounds through this designated Audubon Important Bird Area.

If plans for concessions, boating and more at Lower Lake are implemented, these birds will need Horseshoe Lake to avoid the disturbance.

Will it really take \$28 million from Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights to save this gem? In the first public meeting on Zoom, attended by a tiny portion of the "public," NEORSD presented four options, with the one saving Horseshoe costing \$6 million more—not high for public works and potentially achievable with grants.

But now, NEORSD says, because Horseshoe has no value for flood control, the cities would be

liable for all Horseshoe-related costs. That's a strong-arm tactic, as are NEORSD's cries about immediate danger. We need to know if NEORSD would have a legal obligation for that fourth option, and what the costs might be, based on independent engineering and environmental evaluation.

Restoring the dam and saving Horseshoe Lake will not only preserve wildlife habitat and a lake environment that so many people

continued on page 7

Danforth will help CH arts and business

To the Editor:

We love music and enjoy sharing it with our neighbors. This summer, we were fortunate enough to host a front-yard concert with Moises Borges and Dylan Moffitt. It is a privilege to live in an area that supports live music and to invite neighbors to come and listen to a free concert. We enjoy living in a community where people value the arts. With Cain Park, Dobama Theatre, the Grog Shop, the Cedar Lee Theatre, Nighttown and so many other community treasures, Cleveland Heights has always been a regional leader for arts appreciation. For decades this community has provided a forum and venues for artists.

Yet, as a community we have not focused on telling our story and the story of the wonderful arts opportunities in the Heights.

Electing a mayor gives us the opportunity to look to one executive for leadership in maintaining and strengthening our arts community. Barbara Danforth has proposed a commission of artists who will help determine the future of Cleveland Heights as a vibrant city that welcomes creativity of all kinds.

The challenge of renewing Nighttown as one of the foremost jazz venues in the country will require creativity and the leadership only a proven executive can provide. Focus on expanding the arts is good for our neighborhoods, good for our children, and a good revenue generator for the community.

It is clear to us that electing a mayor who understands the vital role arts play in creating a strong community and a strong business and tax base is vital. It is also clear to us that Barbara Danforth is that person.

Ann Harlan and Ronald Neill
Cleveland Heights

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County council’s Stephens endorses Seren

Cheryl Stephens

In August 2019 I encouraged the residents of our city to vote to change our municipal charter so that the community could elect a mayor, not have one appointed by the members of city council. The issue to amend the charter was approved by more

than 60% of the voters in that election. At that time, I wrote that I would not seek election to the office of mayor in 2021, and I haven’t. It was my sincere hope that the rich diversity of people who are the residents of Cleveland Heights would encourage several members of the community who are smart,

intelligent, hardworking, and strong leaders to run for the office of mayor. That came true, in that there were some incredibly positive discussions about who should run and what were good criteria for the evaluation and selection of a mayor.

Since the beginning of this year, I have been committed to supporting a vibrant election process. I have been willing to talk with candidates who wanted to talk with me, share my experiences in public and nonprofit administration freely, listen to new ideas from some candidates, and respond to requests for information on current development and housing issues. I want to thank the candidates (Danforth, Hart and Seren) who reached out to me, more than once, to show their willingness to talk, learn and listen for the good of our community.

As I said two years ago, “Cleveland Heights needs a robust and accountable leader, with an agenda for the future, and a commitment to engage and act on behalf of our residents.” I have chosen who I will support; from my perspective the most robust, responsible, accountable and reliable of the candidates for mayor of Cleveland Heights is Kahlil Seren.

Kahlil can and will stay strong on issues that will help develop a better future for Cleveland Heights. He will never be a yes man; when people of higher profile, wealth and community influence would try to change the city’s priorities, he will look to our residents for the best answers and stand his ground on community issues. Most importantly, he will defend our community and search for the best investments, not stand to the side and wring his hands saying there is nothing he can do. Kahlil’s youth, energy, and commitment to the community are the best assets for mayor of Cleveland Heights. Join me in voting for him.

Born into a military family, raised on three continents, educated in Europe and the U.S., Cheryl Stephens developed a career in economic development and housing. She has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1989 and represented Cleveland Heights as an elected official since 2010, serving on CH City Council and, currently, Cuyahoga County Council.

FH supports Cedar Lee development

To the Editor:

The following statement was presented to Cleveland Heights City Council at its Aug. 2 meeting: FutureHeights supports the proposed mixed-use development at the Cedar Lee Meadowbrook site and urges Council to move forward with the project:

- The proposed project fills a large gap in the Cedar Lee Business District by strengthening the “retail/building wall,” which will increase pedestrian foot traffic and consumer spending at our locally owned businesses.
- New housing will add more residents to increase our tax base.
- The proposed green space at Lee and Meadowbrook and the Cedar Lee Mini-Park will enhance the district and meet residents’ needs for green space.

Developing this site has been an objective of the city for over a decade. A qualified developer has stepped forward to work with the city to make this happen. Let’s keep this process in motion.

Deanna Bremer Fisher, FutureHeights executive director (Publisher of the *Heights Observer*, Bremer Fisher signed this letter on behalf of FutureHeights.) Julie Sabroff, FutureHeights board president

Hart has my vote

To the Editor:

Why is Melody Hart the best choice for mayor of Cleveland Heights? She believes in responsiveness. She returns phone calls and insists those who work under her do the same. She listens to all sides of an issue, but she’s not afraid to make a decision: these are character traits that are most important to me in choosing a mayor.

And, of course, experience and deep knowledge of Cleveland Heights are my next two values. Remember when MetroHealth [announced] plans to build a mental health facility [at its Severance facility]? Some staunch environmentalists in Cleveland Heights were opposed to the location of this project because many old trees would have to be sacrificed. As a member of Cleveland Heights City Council, Melody had to make a hard decision. She wanted to support the mental health facility, but negotiated that a minimal number of trees be sacrificed rather than all originally planned.

In this time of many political advertisements and promises, it’s important to find a person who demonstrates through actions and expertise how she will perform in a leadership capacity. Melody has my vote. Please take a look at her website, www.melodyjoyhart.com, and see if you agree with me.

Marlene Goldheimer
Cleveland Heights

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LIBRARIES continued from page 1

Road Branch as a location to pick up their equipment. Previously, clients had to travel outside the Heights to libraries in other Cuyahoga County cities, such as Cleveland or Parma.

PCs for People is an income-based assistance program, and eligibility requirements include income documentation for program qualification. Interested residents should visit www.pcsforpeople.com/eligibility/ to find out if they are eligible for a device. Preference is given to seniors, job seekers and families with school-age children that attend school in Cuyahoga County.

"A little more than 18 percent of Cleveland Heights residents live in poverty," said Nia Turner, Heights Libraries technology trainer and staff member, who oversees the partnership with PCs for People. "Judging by the number of customers who come in regularly to use our computers to write résumés and apply for jobs online, people in our community need access to low-cost technology to keep up with the world around them."

"Access to low-cost computers, laptops and hot spots will allow them better access to the Internet so that they can work, attend school, write résumés, apply for jobs and access the library's digital collections and computer classes."

To apply for equipment, visit www.pcsforpeople.com/ohio. From the event registration page, select "Cuyahoga County" and "Heights Library Distribution."

"I've seen firsthand how the digital divide in our community has been widened by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Turner. "I'm grateful and excited for this partnership with PCs for People."

For any issues regarding the device after pickup, contact PCs for People for assistance at 216-930-5741.

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

HORSESHOE continued from page 5

love, but also Shaker history, which our and future generations should learn from.

Not just "rich folks" want this lake. Harry Volk, publisher and editor of the *Sun Press* at the time of the freeway fight, was no friend to the elite, but he kept up the fight for the lakes—and for racial integration—throughout the 1960s. We must also preserve the history of the local Shakers, who were staunch abolitionists, had Black members, thwarted bounty hunters, and sent slaves on their way to freedom. Black lives mattered to them.

If we lose this natural gem, its historical lessons, and its beauty, somewhere Albert Porter will be laughing.

A retired scientific and medical editor and writer, Cleveland Heights resident Penny Allen is a longtime Shaker Lakes birder. As a teenager, she participated in the freeway fight to save Shaker Lakes and in the Doan Brook Project, a study of pollution in the lakes and brook.

Let's talk about the 'T' word

Melody Hart

When I moved here, I was struck by two things. First—what a great town with walkable, bikeable streets; great housing; great business districts; a wonderful park system; and more. This was my dream city.

But then there is the T word—Taxes. Sticker shock! In Michigan and in Chicago, my property taxes were far less than my mortgage payment. I had no municipal income tax, and city services were comparable to Cleveland Heights services.

Here the property tax bill was greater than the mortgage payment, and I had to pay an income tax.

When the city increased the income taxes, I decided to move. I looked at homes in Chagrin Falls, Solon, and Hudson. But I would have been forced to drive my car everywhere instead of walking or biking. And, being an avid bicyclist, I wouldn't feel safe riding on those two-lane roads. None of these cities had all those things I had grown to love about Cleveland Heights. So, I decided I would rather stay in my dream city.

I understand being distressed by our high tax burden. I know people who moved out because the amenities were not enough to outweigh that burden.

So, what should we do?

First, we must look at the bud-

get carefully with an eye toward efficiency and careful spending. I pledge to do just that. I will also work on what can be regionalized.

Second, I am committed to protect our housing stock to increase values in every part of our city. Rising values mean that the tax rate need not rise. Our inspection program must be robust, especially for run-down, investor-owned properties that drive down values for those of us who live here.

Third, I will expand the tax base by economic development which brings in new residents. In the past we made up for the lost tax dollars when people moved out by raising taxes on those who remained. The more people we lost, the more tax rates rose. That is not sustainable! People need to feel they are getting their money's worth!

Finally, we must market our city. We are diverse! We are welcoming! That makes us unique—and "cool."

I have my plan. But I am open to other ideas from residents—as long as they will lead to moving CH in a positive direction for another 100 years.

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.

Another life tragically lost

Barbara Danforth

On Aug. 9, a 13-year-old boy from Wisconsin was shot and killed while visiting family in Cleveland Heights. This tragic loss breaks my heart and I offer my deepest condolences to his family and friends.

According to Police Chief Mecklenburg, this was not a random or accidental event. A 14-year-old boy has been arrested in connection with this crime and a 16-year-old, who is also wanted, remains at large.

Whenever there is the loss of a young life, several questions arise, but none have easy or simple answers.

First, we have to wonder, how did a 14-year-old gain access to a gun? With no blame being suggested for this current tragedy, there is the larger question about the ease with which young people can get guns. Let's allow this case to be a reminder to gun owners who are parents, and all adults who have children of any age in their homes, to put locks on their guns and store them away safely.

When I was the senior legal counsel for the Cuyahoga County Department of Children & Family Services, and chief prosecutor for the city of Cleveland, I witnessed too many cases where children found a gun that a parent thought had been carefully hidden; the gun caused injury to the child or someone else. If you think your child does not know where your gun is—think again. Put a lock on it.

Second question: What went through the mind of a 14-year-old to make him think that shooting was a solution to anything? Did he play too many violent video games—maybe. Were there too few recreational opportunities to occupy his time and energy—probably.

As a city, we need to make a commitment to increase our investment in facilities and programs that provide attractive and constructive outlets for youthful energy and curiosity. We need to ensure that parents and teens are aware of the activities in our community that they would enjoy. We must invest more in our children.

For the most part, Cleveland Heights is a safe city. When I last spoke with Chief Mecklenburg, she said she had 11 vacant positions for officers. Recruiting, screening and hiring police officers has become a nationwide challenge. We must attract more young people, women, and minorities to these important public service positions. A diverse, well-trained police force helps ensure a safer community.

Barbara Danforth is a 22-year resident of CH, living in the Forest Hill Historical District. A candidate for Cleveland Heights mayor, she is the former chief prosecutor, city of Cleveland; and former CEO of TWCA Greater Cleveland.

State Rep. Boyd endorses Seren

Janine Boyd

Long before and after Issue 26 passed in 2019, we all weighed in on what and who Cleveland Heights will and won't need. The time has come now for us to choose who among us will lead our beloved, diverse, tattered but not torn, inner-ring suburb to the next phase of our reinvention.

Our votes on Sept. 14 will represent who we know we can be, and who we believe can effectively, knowledgeably, and unabashedly launch us and lead us on our journey.

That is why I support Kahlil Seren's candidacy.

When I left city council for the statehouse in 2015, I knew Cleveland Heights was in good and capable hands with Kahlil.

Since that time, I've watched him grow into a conscientious leader and emerge a seasoned legislator with invaluable institutional knowledge.

While I had hoped he'd consider succeeding me at the statehouse, I understand that his commitment to Cleveland Heights must take precedence at this time. Timing is, indeed, everything.

First, his professional and civic record is unrivaled in this race.

Second, his values and temperament are Cleveland Heights'. And, perhaps most importantly, Kahlil can compassionately, confidently and competently lead government-transition work.

Kahlil has been immersed in local government and policy work for over a decade.

He's taught government finance at Notre Dame College, and he is frequently the author of the balanced and citizen-informed legislation that council passes.

Kahlil has designed and run programs for the county that eclipse our budget here in Cleveland Heights. He is a nationally certified economic development finance professional, and an inspiring process efficiency champion.

I have every confidence that once he assumes this new role, we can continue to count on him to stay connected to what matters to us, and connected to all of us.

Kahlil Seren has my support and the support of my family. I hope you'll join us in electing him mayor of Cleveland Heights.

Janine Boyd, a Cleveland Heights resident and former CH City Council member, is the state representative for Ohio's 9th House District.

Parents question library's mask requirement

Maureen Lynn

When did it become the norm for our library to dictate what medical device is appropriate and necessary for children? From where is this authority granted?

The CH-UH Library Board of Trustees has again decided to make decisions regarding the health of residents. Last year's mask requirement was made in consideration that, until a vaccine was available, rules needed to be in place to protect staff. Then and now, the board did not honor a portion of the governor's executive order: allowances for medical exceptions and that the order did not apply to children under 10.

Currently, library policy requires all over the age of 2 to wear a mask. Isn't this shockingly wrong to anyone else?

Why is it acceptable for a board to tell you what medical devices are safe and necessary for your child?

Wearing a mask makes regular, deep breathing more difficult. For a small child, with a developing brain, heart, lungs, etc., impeding oxygenation is not protecting their health.

Regarding the board's authority, it appears to be lacking in anything substantial. This is a publicly funded institution and our property taxes fund the majority of the budget. All residents deserve the right to freely enjoy this public space.

There is no longer a "state of emer-

gency" in Ohio; it was rescinded June 30. The health and protection of staff, that the initial library rules were meant to provide, is no longer a pressing issue. Every employee who wanted a vaccine has had ample time to receive it, and all can wear a mask if they so choose.

Personal choice and responsibility, providing our own "best protection" and supporting our own health, needs to become the norm again. Happy, healthy babies will not make you sick. Children are the ones that need protection from the overreach of individuals who do not have the right to dictate their care.

With this newly re-instated library mask mandate (effective Aug. 6), a small group of families, some with medical exemptions, decided to support each other and made a visit, maskless, to the Lee Road Library on Aug. 18.

The saddest [part of the] experience was not when staff called the police to have the group removed, but when a patron sneered at our beautiful children and muttered, "Disgusting!" because they were not wearing masks. Apparently, humans breathing air and loving their babies is now looked upon by some as disgusting. This is very concerning.

Maureen 'Mo' Lynn, her husband and three children have lived in Cleveland Heights since 2011. She is a self-employed sales consultant and is running for CH-UH City School District Board of Education this fall.

Library's mask policy protects visitors

Sheryl Banks

Heights Libraries and its Board of Trustees, along with the Cuyahoga County Public Library System, the Cleveland Public Library System, and Shaker Heights Public Library, recently reinstated a face-mask requirement for all visitors over the age of 2. The decision was made for the following reasons:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued a statement that the Delta variant of COVID-19 is prevalent in all 50 states;
- According to the CDC COVID Data Tracker, Cuyahoga County has a substantial rate of COVID transmission, and county cases have increased by 23.84% in the last seven days (as of Aug. 23);
- The CDC has been recommending that people who have not received a COVID vaccine wear a mask at all times; it is now also recommending, in areas of "substantial" or high risk of transmission, that even fully vaccinated people wear a mask indoors. This includes people older than 2.
- Children under the age of 12 cannot yet receive the vaccine. Masking in the library helps keep young visitors safe.

On Aug. 18, a group of five women, along with their children, entered the Lee Road Library without face masks, and refused the masks that library staff offered them. They refused to leave the building, and refused to be served curbside. Staff explained the mask policy and offered curbside services several times,

but ultimately had to call the police for assistance when the group began arguing loudly with staff. The group eventually left after also arguing with a police officer.

None of the staff involved in the incident wants to wear masks again; nor do library customers. But they do it to keep themselves and others as safe as possible during this recent surge of the virus. Heights Libraries is grateful to those who wear masks, and appreciates the compassion and care they show by doing so.

Schools and public libraries have the authority to set their own policies about all kinds of things: prohibiting firearms in buildings, requiring that customers wear shoes, and, now, requiring that face masks be worn during pandemics, despite the fact that Ohio has no statewide mask mandate.

In 2020, Heights Libraries checked with the Cuyahoga County prosecutor's office (its legal representative) and confirmed its mask policy was legal.

Customers are welcome in Heights Libraries' four buildings, to use computers and study rooms, browse, relax, read, and enjoy the children's play areas.

Customers who cannot, or do not wish to, wear masks may call their favorite branch for curbside pickup, sign up for mail delivery of materials, and e-mail documents to staff for printing.

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

MUSIC HOP continued from page 1



The popular Rib Cage Pigroast is back for the 2021 Heights Music Hop!

Bluegrass, and Rock).

"Due to COVID, this year's festival is limited to one night, and the application process was extremely competitive," said Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights, the nonprofit community development corporation for Cleveland Heights that organizes the festival. "We received more than 120 high-quality submissions, and could only extend offers to 12 acts. We are hopeful that next year the pandemic will be behind us, and we will once again be able to host official stages inside the many unique business venues in our walkable commercial districts."

Since 2013, Heights Music Hop has featured free live music performances in a variety of genres, in restaurants, bars, shops and other unique Heights businesses. The festival, which had grown to include three nights of live music by more than 80 acts in 30 venues, did not take place in 2020 due to the pandemic.

"We've all missed live music during the pandemic," said Kelley Robinson, executive director of Cedar Lee Special Improvement District. "Keeping social distancing in mind, we look forward to a re-imagined Heights Music Hop for 2021. Featuring three outdoor stages, and a diverse mix of performances, we encourage music fans to join us for patio dining, libation, and the hospitality of our local merchants on Lee Road. We look forward to a fun night out in the community on Sept. 18."

"The event is free and open to the public," said Fisher. "Heights residents who wish to support this year's event can make a donation through our project crowdfunding page." To donate, visit <https://ioby.org/project/heights-music-hop-2021>.

FutureHeights will once again host the Chance Raffle at the Hop, with all proceeds going to support the cost of this year's event. Each \$10 donation gives attendees a chance to win one of several fabulous prize packages, featuring gift certificates or merchandise from popular, local restaurants and shops. Each \$10 donation receives one chance; each \$50 donation receives six chances. Look for the Chance Raffle at the Hop stations located at Lee and Tullamore roads, and at the Cedar Lee Mini-Park.

Heights Music Hop is presented by FutureHeights and is supported in part by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from

Cuyahoga Arts & Culture. Heights Music Hop is also made possible, in part, by state tax dollars allocated by the Ohio Legislature to the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically; and with support from The Char and Chuck Fowler Family Foundation, Flaherty & Collins, City Architecture, Best Gyros, the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District, the city of Cleveland Heights, the *Heights Observer* and A440 Sound.

"Several of this year's musicians live in the Heights, and we have several Heights High grads among them," said Fisher. "Cleveland Heights is truly 'Home to the Arts'."

View more festival information, including the performance schedule and full list of musicians, at www.heightsmusichop.com, on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, and on page 28 of this publication.

2021 Heights Music Hop Performance Schedule:

Flaherty & Collins ~ City Architecture Mainstage @ Lee & Meadowbrook

- 5:00-6:00 p.m. - University Heights Symphonic Band
- 6:20-7:00 p.m. - Elegie
- 7:20-8:00 p.m. - Ms. Reec Pearl & The Groovemasters
- 8:20-9:00 p.m. - Top Hat Black
- 9:20-10:00 p.m. - Dan Bruce's :beta collective
- 10:20-11:00 p.m. - Apostle Jones

South Stage @ Kensington

- 6:00-6:20 p.m. - Noble Cigar Box Guitar Project
- 6:40-7:40 p.m. - The SpYder Stompers and Sugar Pie
- 8:00-9:00 p.m. - Eric Everett Jazz:Elation
- 9:20-10:20 p.m. - C-Level

North Stage at Cedar Lee Mini-Park

- 6:00-7:00 p.m. - Jesse Jukebox
- 7:20-8:20 p.m. - Kiss Me Deadly
- 8:40-9:40 p.m. - OPUS 216

Jason Patrick Meyers is a Heights resident, singer-songwriter, executive director of Roots of American Music, and program coordinator for the music therapy department at University Hospitals. He has served as music liaison for numerous local festivals, including Heights Music Hop.

Danforth rises above other candidates

Michael Bennett

Three candidates want to become mayor. With early voting underway and the Sept. 14 primary nearing, to narrow the field to two for the Nov. 2 general election, it's time to compare their records, achievements and qualifications.

The mayor must bring together the administration, council, community and outside stakeholders, building consensus along the way whenever possible. Barbara Danforth has demonstrated she can collaborate and get things done. Kahlil Seren has brought an interesting and sometimes useful perspective to city council. But I have concerns how he could work effectively with council as mayor. He has a record of offering legislation without building support, which led council to take the unprecedented action of preventing anyone from introducing legislation without the support of at least two members.

Danforth is the only candidate who has been a "buck stops here" chief executive and has shown the kind of accountability voters said they wanted when they approved Issue 26. She's supervised hundreds of employees and managed multi-million-dollar budgets as the top person in charge. Melody Hart has great financial credentials, but in advisory and treasurer roles, not as CEO. Seren has not had such direct responsibility.

The arrival of a CEO heralds major

culture change in city hall. Danforth's success as an executive coach and recruiter speaks volumes about her ability to build teams, empower others and manage for success. Neither [of the] other candidate[s] has demonstrated accomplishment in this regard. Too much is at stake during this crucial transition for our first mayor to learn on the job.

Danforth is the only candidate with a public safety background, having worked in state, county and municipal governments (including a cabinet-level position in former Cleveland mayor Mike White's administration), placing her in the thick of municipal safety issues as well as operations. She understands the need for a professional police department and for the role of a safety director to work hand-in-hand with the police chief. She knows the status quo isn't acceptable, that policing must be equitable, and that more must be invested in education, financial security and social services to prevent crime.

I voted for Hart and Seren for council and welcome their continued service there. Danforth not only is a good candidate for mayor, she is the best one.

Michael Bennett is a volunteer on Barbara Danforth's campaign. He is a member of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee, and serves on the Citizens for an Elected Mayor committee. The opinion expressed here is his own, not that of either committee on which he serves.

Hart supports Heights public schools

Jan Resseger

Currently serving on CH City Council, Melody Joy Hart is experienced. As a certified public accountant, she understands finances. She has posted a platform that names the essential issues facing Cleveland Heights: strong housing, racial equity, fiscal responsibility, economic development, strong public schools, and transparent leadership.

Hart pledges to consider racial equity and the long impact of structural racism in every decision facing Cleveland Heights. She will help us continue to realize our long-held ideals of equity and inclusion.

The primary reason I will be voting for Hart for Cleveland Heights mayor, on Sept. 14, is her declared support for our public

schools. Clearly the mayor leads the city, not the school district; but on her website Hart shares the letter she sent [as a member of] city council to the community last May, explaining the importance of the Fair School Funding Plan in the state budget. She declared: "Many, if not most of the challenges facing CH-UH Schools are caused by the unconstitutional school funding process followed by the State government for decades . . . The ability to attract and retain residents . . . depends on getting control of local tax rates."

Dogged advocacy by members of the school board, the superintendent, teachers, parents, the Heights Coalition, and municipal leaders like Hart, helped force the [state] legislature to fund Ed-Choice tuition vouchers directly,

continued on page 14



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Maple Heights mayor endorses Seren

Annette Blackwell

I enthusiastically endorse Kahlil Seren for mayor of Cleveland Heights because I believe that he is the most experienced and prepared mayoral candidate. He has the transferrable skills—in advocacy and research, budget and policy, and economic development—needed to be an effective and successful CEO.

During my time as Maple Heights mayor, all of my interactions with and observations of Kahlil have left me with an admiration of his impressive professionalism, a greater respect for his commitment to public service, his voice in leadership, and his courage to make important decisions.

A strong mayor listens and lifts up the people in their city, and then acts to ensure a Return on Investment (ROI) for all the stakeholders in the city: residents, businesses and visitors. The voters should have no reservation about Kahlil’s accessibility and responsiveness to their concerns. He is expressive,

easily connects to people, and always responds compassionately.

In a life of public service, there must be a recognition of equal justice. Therefore, mayors must always work to ensure equity in economics, environment, health, and opportunities in their communities. Kahlil has the education, experience and skill set to create and execute the policy framework to achieve this justice. He is comfortable in an executive boardroom and is appropriate, organized, present, outspoken and a capable negotiator.

Cities are a big and important (corporate) business, in terms of revenue, expenses, and stakeholders, that should be led by a competent and very knowledgeable business professional—and Kahlil Seren is an incomparable businessperson. Lastly, it is my strong opinion that Cleveland Heights has a hopeful and progressive future under the leadership and vision of mayoral candidate Kahlil Seren.

Annette Blackwell is mayor of the city of Maple Heights.

College senior endorses Danforth

Hannah Gilson

Having been sent home from college in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I have had the opportunity to spend an unexpected amount of time in my hometown of Cleveland Heights. As a young adult, I have gained an increased appreciation for the unique offerings of this city: a diverse community; a vibrant arts scene (even in the time of pandemic); small businesses and restaurants within walking distance; and close proximity to big-city amenities at affordable prices, compared to what can be found in the areas surrounding Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. Such factors are why I, at times, surprise those who ask the question, “Where will you live long-term following college graduation?” by answering that, although I hope to see the world outside of Ohio after 21 years in the state, I can easily imagine returning to Cleveland and Cleve-

land Heights, and continuing to call this city my home.

In her mayoral campaign, Barbara Danforth speaks to the factors which draw me back to my hometown. She has led community-based diversity discussions for over a decade, and has considered police-reform measures that will enhance police-community relations, such as specially trained teams that respond to calls involving mental health or domestic violence. Danforth is ready to hit the ground running with researched ideas to support entrepreneurship and revitalize areas suffering from economic blight within our city. Her goal is to stop the increasing tax burden on citizens, while maintaining strong funding for city services and our schools; something I care deeply about as a proud Heights alum.

Danforth has the experience necessary to guide our city through the transition from a city manager to an elected mayor, and she has a desire to deepen her understanding of our community. I was honored to be among the Heights alumni who sat down with Danforth to discuss our experience in the CH-UH district. We discussed the role of a mayor in supporting students, concerns about school funding at the state level, and what draws young people back to Cleveland Heights. I came out of the discussion impressed by Danforth’s ability to both lead and listen, and I am certain of her genuine desire to be a true public servant—something incredibly refreshing for this student of politics and economic policy! I am accordingly confident in Danforth’s ability to enact meaningful change for this city.

Hannah Gilson is a Heights High 2018 graduate and lifelong Cleveland Heights resident. She will graduate from Denison University in May 2022 with a B.A. in political science and economics, and is currently a research assistant for the Lugar Center in Washington, D.C.



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Visit SerenForMayor.com for more information	KAHLIL SEREN	Barbara Danforth	Melody Joy Hart
The Plain Dealer/Cleveland.com	✓	✗	✗
Cleveland Building & Construction Trades Council	✓	✗	✗
Cleveland Stonewall Democrats	✓	✗	✗
Cuyahoga County Democratic Party	✓	✗	✗
Cuyahoga County Progressive Caucus	✓	✗	✗
Cuyahoga County Young Democrats	✓	✗	✗
Northeast Ohio Young Black Democrats	✓	✗	✗
Northshore Federation of Labor AFL-CIO	✓	✗	✗
Our Revolution Ohio	✓	✗	✗
Primary Ohio	✓	✗	✗
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Attending the CH centennial mural's unveiling were, from left: Laura Marks, Barbara Sosnowsk, artist Adam May, CH Council Member Davida Russell, City Manager Susanna Niermann O'Neil, and Brenda H. May.

Cleveland Heights installs centennial mural

Mary Trupo

Aug. 9, 2021, marked the 100th anniversary of Cleveland Heights officially becoming a city.

Since early 2021, "100 Years/All Are Welcome" banners have decorated the city, and various activities have encouraged residents and guests to enjoy the history and beauty of Cleveland Heights.

There have been walking tours, garden tours, webinars on the history of the city's landmarks, and more.

One of the most visible projects was a competition for a mural for the corner of Noble and Roanoke roads, at the Noble-Roanoke Mini Park.

Artists submitted designs in April and May, from which a committee of community members helped make the final selection. Cleveland Heights resident Adam May's design was the top choice, garnering the most votes.

Describing his vision, May stated, "The idea behind the mural is a field of vibrantly colored handprints forming the foundation from which beautiful flowers bloom. This is a metaphor about how a diverse collection of people is the foundation for a strong community, and by working together hand in hand we can make our world grow into something beautiful. It's a symbol that not only are all welcome here, but all are important here for the success of our community."

Community members and city officials attended the unveiling of the city's new mural on July 21.

To learn more about the city's centennial, visit www.cleveland-heights100.com.

Mary Trupo is director of communications and public engagement for the city of Cleveland Heights.

GREEN TEAM continued from page 1

plan.

Each of the three candidates stated that the environment would be an important issue for their administration, though none designated it a "day one" priority. There were both overlaps and differences among their positions.

Danforth would rely heavily on a volunteer task force composed of resident environmental experts. She would seek their recommendations on matters such as (a) how to educate city staff and residents; (b) decisions regarding housing and commercial projects; and (c) outside funding sources (possibly for sustainability staff). She would develop one-year and four-year action plans.

Hart's platform emphasizes reforestation and alternatives to automobile transportation. She would consider a sustainability committee, and possibly a sustainability director if the budget allowed. For advice, she would turn to a longtime Cleveland environmental activist who has endorsed her campaign. In making decisions, Hart would weigh "the well-being and quality of life for residents, economic viability impacts on the city, and environmental impacts to ensure a sustainable future."

Seren stated, "Whenever the city seeks to develop land, make capital improvements, make changes to our zoning regulations, or offer incentives for business creation and growth, we should proactively . . . include an environmental analysis in our decision-making process." He sponsored legislation recently passed by city council approving partnership with Power a Clean Future Ohio and setting a goal to reduce

carbon emissions by 30 percent before 2030. Seren would create a staff position to oversee and promote sustainability efforts across city departments.

A current issue in Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights is the recommendation by the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS) to remove the failing dam at Horseshoe Lake and restore the two branches of Doan Brook that converge there (www.cleveland-heights.com/1439/Horseshoe-Lake-Findings-from-NEORS). If the cities reject this proposal, they will have to build and maintain a new dam without access to NEORS ratepayer funds.

Here are the candidates' views on the sewer district's plan:

Danforth: Commission a "peer review" to determine if NEORS's conclusions are sound. Based on "sentimentality" she favors rebuilding the dam to preserve the lake.

Hart: Needs more information to decide. We should hire our own expert to assess NEORS's recommendation.

Seren: NEORS's recommendation makes environmental sense. Remove the dam permanently.

Find out how you can fight climate change and influence elected officials at www.chgreenteam.org and www.ecologicalheights.com, portals for grassroots sustainability efforts in the Heights.

(Some information above comes from the Voters Guide for the 2021 Cleveland Heights Mayoral Primary, prepared by the League of Women Voters of Greater Cleveland, CH-UH Chapter.)

Deborah Van Kleef is a writer and folksinger who lives in Cleveland Heights.



Dear Neighbors,

The endorsements below from my fellow residents are the best support a candidate could ask for. Thank you for sharing your concerns, hopes and dreams with me.

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Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

AUGUST 2, 2021

Council member present were President Jason Stein, Vice President Kahlil Seren, Craig Cobb, Mary Dunbar, Melody Joy Hart, Davida Russell, and Michael N. Ungar. Also present were Susanna Niermann O'Neil, city manager; Amy Himmelein, clerk of council and finance director; and William Hanna, law director.

Public comments

Nancy Pepler, supervisor of community and school partnerships for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, described the pilot Community Learning Center (CLC) that will start in September at Noble Elementary School. She introduced the newly appointed CLC organizer, Kristiaun Copez-Minor.

Six residents expressed support for, and seven residents spoke against, the Meadowbrook/Lee development and the memo of understanding with developer Flaherty and Collins.

Council actions

Council amended an agreement with Black and Veatch for consulting services connected to the city's Sanitary Sewer Overflow Control Project to cover increased costs.

It amended a grant agreement with Cuyahoga County to fund the Cleveland Heights-SBA Small Business Performance Grant Program.

It gave the planning commission more time to consider proposed zoning amendments.

It updated sections of the Traffic Code to include language about the proliferation of e-scooters and e-bikes.

It authorized an agreement with the Chagrin Valley Dispatch Council (CVD), a regional council of governments, to join the joint police, fire and emergency medical services, and to dissolve the Heights Hillcrest Communications Center to allow each member city council to join the CVD. Police Chief Annette Mecklenburg said 911 response time will be faster.

Council approved, on emergency, fact-finding recommendations in the matter of the city of Cleveland Heights and the Ohio Patrolmen's Benevolent Association.

It updated language in the city code to reflect that public meetings notices will be posted on the city's website and on the electronic board at City Hall.

It amended the budget to include an increase in grant revenue of \$790,000, and an increase in expenses of \$200,000 to cover additional overtime in the fire department.

Council member comments

Kahlil Seren noted that the police union contract was approved on emergency because the police had been working without a contract since April 1. The new contract is for three years, and council had to approve or deny it by today. If not approved, it would have become law without council's input.

LWV Observer: Gail Larson.

AUGUST 9, 2021 – Special joint meeting with Shaker Heights City Council re: Shaker Lakes

All Cleveland Heights council members were present, except Council President Jason Stein. Also present were the city manager, Shaker Heights Mayor David Weiss, and four or five Shaker Heights council members.



NEORSRD Proposal

About 130 residents attended this in-person joint meeting of the two city councils to discuss the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSRD) proposal for the Shaker Lakes.

CH Council Vice President Seren introduced Frank Greenland, NEORSRD director of watershed programs, who summarized NEORSRD's recommendation, which is to remove the Horseshoe Lake Dam, restore the Lower Shaker Lake Dam, and replenish both Doan Brook branches with native species of plants while removing invasive plant and fish species. Both dams are out of compliance with Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources (ODNR) regulations, and are unsafe. Recent rain events have seriously damaged the Horseshoe Lake Dam, which is failing. [According to Greenland], NEORSRD's recommendation has considered the environment, safety, and reduction of flood risk. The project would cost \$28.3 million and be underwritten by the rates residents pay to NEORSRD. The communities around the lakes would be involved in planning and development of the design. Pre-design discussions will start in August 2021, with construction of the Horseshoe Lake component in 2024, and Lower Shaker Lake construction a year later.

The need for Horseshoe Lake Dam demolition

Greenland maintained that the dam must be removed as it has been failing, with water seepage causing voids and sinkholes in the earthen structure and cracks in the concrete. ODNR ordered drainage of Horseshoe Lake. A cost-benefit analysis showed that restoring Horseshoe Dam would not provide significant flood control, whereas restoring and repairing the Lower Shaker Dam would.

Role of the cities

Seren and Weiss said the two cities could reject the project but then would be responsible for maintaining the lakes and dams, and complying with regulatory agencies.

Environmental considerations

Greenland noted that environmental experts were on the team that made this recommendation. The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership support the NEORSRD plan.

Public input

[Those in attendance were told that] there will be many opportunities for the residents of both communities to have input during the design process.

LWV Observer: Gail Larson.

Meeting packets, legislation, and other information can be found on the city website at: <https://www.clevelandheights.com/1142/2021-Agendas-and-Minutes>.

Videos of council meetings can be viewed on the "City of Cleveland Heights, OH" YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/ClevelandHeightsOH>.

Expanded reports are available online at www.heightsobserver.org.

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DUNBAR continued from page 1

“I have no family in the Cleveland area. My older son and daughter-in-law live in Hanover, N.H., and would like me to move there so that they can help me out and keep an eye on me. So, I will be moving into an assisted-living facility in Hanover, N.H., probably by the beginning of October. This is why I am resigning from city council tonight—now.

“Making this decision has been hard for me. It has been stressful. But I must do it.

“In conclusion, let me say, it has been an honor to serve the citizens of Cleveland Heights as a council member. Having lived in Cleveland Heights since 1970, I have enjoyed this wonderful city, full of many wonderful people, who love this place as much as I do. I hate to leave, and I’m sorry that I must.

“I wish you all the best. I have enjoyed working with our caring and committed council members and city staff, to make Cleveland Heights the best it can be. That’s it. And that certainly makes our earlier discussion about how to handle council vacancies [in the] Charter Amendment relevant.”

After Dunbar concluded her statement, the other council members present at the meeting—Kahlil Seren, Michael N. Ungar, Davida Russell, Melody Hart, and Craig Cobb—spoke to and about Dunbar, praising her service to the city and her legacy, and relating their experiences knowing and working with her.

Commenting on behalf of city staff, City Manager Susanna Niermann O’Neil said to Dunbar, “I can tell you

that we all depended on you for your common sense and your wonderful understanding of issues, and how supportive you have been of us, understanding the pressure that staff has, and being very attentive to giving us the time that we would need on certain projects. You are part of the fabric of who we are, and we will never forget you.”

On behalf of city council, Seren (who presided over the meeting in his role as vice president of council, in the absence of President Jason Stein) presented Dunbar with a proclamation in gratitude for her service and dedication to the city and its government. “You have provided invaluable service, and we all respect and appreciate what you’ve given us,” Seren said to Dunbar.

Before concluding the night’s meeting, Seren briefly addressed the new council vacancy, saying, “I will assure the community and council that we will work posthaste to complete the task that’s before us now, to fill the vacancy on council. We will be accepting applications starting tomorrow, to fill that vacancy.”

As of Aug. 18, there was no announcement of Dunbar’s resignation on the city’s website, though Dunbar no longer appeared on the City Council page. In the left menu of that page, a City Council Application link appeared at the top, but it was not active.

The *Heights Observer* reached out to a council representative, to inquire when the application link might be active, and to ask if council has any clear procedures, deadline or time frame for appointing someone to fill the vacant seat for the remainder of Dunbar’s unexpired term. It took Cleveland Heights

City Council members one year and 13 days to fill the last council vacancy.

The *Heights Observer* also asked if council would consider appointing the fifth-highest vote-getter in the Nov. 2 CH City Council election race. Four open council seats will be on Cleveland Heights ballots on Nov. 2. There are six candidates vying to fill those seats.

Update: As of Aug. 26, the *Heights Observer* had received no response from council regarding the questions detailed above. On Aug. 25, an announcement on the Cleveland Heights website stated that city council had that day—after consulting with the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (BOE) and reviewing the city charter—authorized a special election to occur on Nov. 2, Election Day.


The city announcement instructs

candidates interested in serving out the remainder of Dunbar’s unexpired term, through Dec. 31, 2023, to file nominating petitions containing the signatures of at least 50, and no more than 150, “qualified electors” with the BOE by Tuesday, Sept. 7, at 4 p.m.

Electors should be aware that they can sign only one candidate’s petition, as there is only one seat to be filled in this “special general election.”

The city’s announcement, as well as links to the ordinance authorizing the special election and the information sheet about it, can be found at www.clevelandheights.com.


Kim Sergio Inglis is editor-in-chief of the Heights Observer, and is a Cuyahoga County master gardener volunteer.



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GardenWalk CH looks ahead to 2022

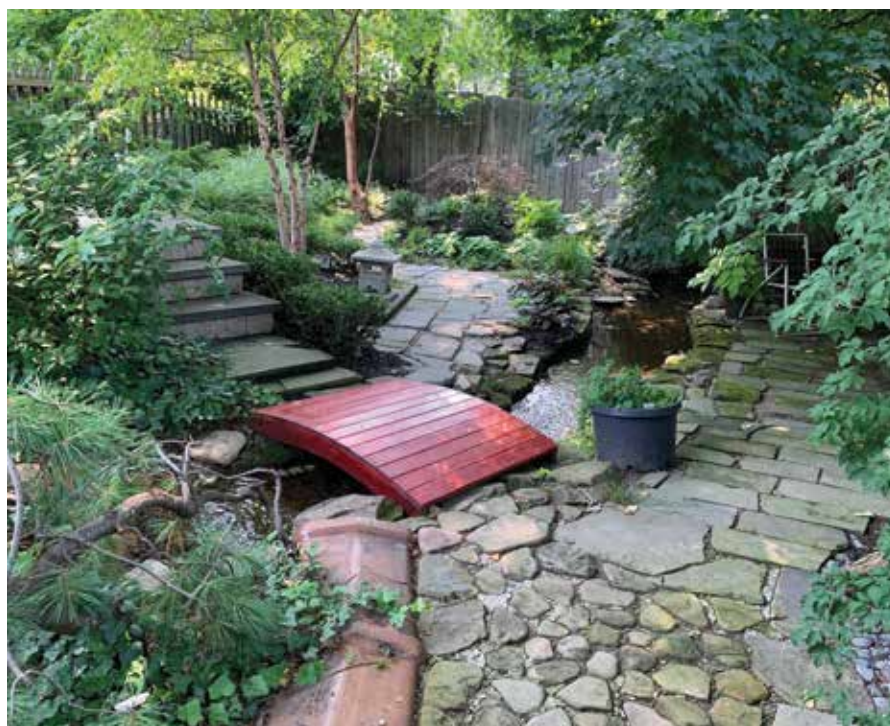
Jan Kious

This year's GardenWalk Cleveland Heights, held July 17 and 18, featured 60 Cleveland Heights gardens. It attracted visitors from California, Texas, Virginia, Utah and Colorado, as well as Russell Township, Amherst, Chagrin Falls, Hudson and North Ridgeville, and 28 Cuyahoga County municipalities.

It's difficult to accurately count participants in this free, unticketed annual event, but one gardener counted 230 guests over the weekend.

"This joyful experience was everything I'd hoped it would be!" commented one of the gardeners at the end of the weekend. The gardeners were exhausted but exhilarated after greeting guests and answering questions for five hours each day.

The variety of gardens on the walk reflected the variety of properties in Cleveland Heights—from large gardens, to pocket pollinator gardens, and intimate backyards that seemed like an extension of the house. Three young gardeners dem-



Numerous Cleveland Heights gardens with water features were on this year's GardenWalk.

onstrated how to grow edible plants throughout a garden, a GardenWalk veteran welcomed guests into his adult treehouse, and visitors saw the latest iteration in the transformation of a garden into a meadow with a birch alley.

Viewing gardens is only half of the experience of GardenWalk—the most significant part is found in the conversations and connections made.

The committee already has requests from two dozen gardeners who'd like to feature their gardens as



Delmore Community Orchard was one of several community spaces on this year's Cleveland Heights GardenWalk.

part of Cleveland Heights GardenWalk 2022, planned for next July 17 and 18. Plan to be a part of this new Cleveland Heights tradition, either as a guest or gardener. For more information, visit www.gardenwalkclevelandheights.com.

Jan Kious, a resident of Cleveland Heights since 1974, raised four children here with her husband. She founded GardenWalk Cleveland in 2010 and GardenWalk Cleveland Heights in 2019. Kious is passionate about gardening as a way to connect people, and create beauty and community.

HART continued from page 9

and stop extracting the cost of each voucher right out of the school district's budget.

However, in the new state budget, the legislature did not fund the full six-year phase-in of the Fair School Funding Plan, and its members created other potential problems for funding public school districts in the future. Cleveland Heights needs a strong municipal leader who will stand behind our city's educators striving to meet the needs of our public schools and protect the rights of all of our district's children.

Melody Joy Hart is that leader.

Jan Resseger has been a longtime advocate for the Heights Schools.

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Heights player and coach honored at Pro Football Hall of Fame game



COURTESY NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Build the Bridge participants were honored on the field prior to the Pro Football Hall of Fame game on Aug. 5 at Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium in Canton.

Margaret Kowalski

Two members of the Cleveland Heights High School football team were honored last week—not for their skills on the field, but for their selflessness and kindness off of it.

Heights High senior Fahrell Freeman and Head Football Coach Mac Stephens were recognized on the field during the Pro Football Hall of Fame (HOF) game between the Dallas Cowboys and the Pittsburgh Steelers in Canton on Aug. 5.

“The opportunity to participate in the pregame ceremonies of the Hall of Fame game was a pretty momentous occasion for not only me, but also one of my players, Fahrell Freeman, who recalls the recognition being one of the best experiences of his life,” said Stephens.

The two were honored for their participation in the Build the Bridge program for the past year.

Build the Bridge is focused on educating and inspiring local high school football players and coaches to build connection between communities and schools from different socioeconomic demographics.

The other participants that were recognized alongside Freeman and Stephens include Matt Natale of Walsh Jesuit High School, Charlie Ciolek of Olmsted Falls High School, Giles Foster of Shaker Heights High School,

Phillip LaVerde of Kirtland High School, and Reyce Perez of Lorain High School.

“I am very proud to say that one of my assistant coaches, Kahari Hicks, is the brainchild behind the Build the Bridge initiative,” Stephens said. “We both were excited to see the NFL recognize the importance of helping student athletes come together to discuss how similar they are, versus being divided over race, religion, or culture.”

The HOF game on-the-field recognition for Freeman, Stephens and other coaches and players was part of the Hall of Fame Enshrinement Week, during which hundreds of kids participated in NFL Play Football activities.

“The NFL and Pro Football Hall of Fame have provided a tremendous platform to promote Build the Bridge and show society that, through sports such as football, we can have a positive impact on the direction of our local communities and nationwide,” Stephens stated.

A former NFL player, Stephens has 17 years of high school football coaching experience, and has served as head coach for Heights High’s football team since being hired in 2015. During his NFL career, he played for the Minnesota Vikings and the New York Jets.

Margaret Kowalski is a football communications intern for the National Football League in New York City.

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Heights High's Taylor Evans wins national award



Taylor Evans

COURTESY CH-UH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Cathan Cavanaugh

Taylor Evans, a Heights High junior, has been named the GEAR UP Student of the Year by the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships. She is the lead intern/ambassador for Heights High's GEAR UP 2 New Heights program.

GEAR UP—Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs—aims to increase the college and career readiness of low-income students.

It currently serves more than 523,000 students in 46 states. The award is given to one student in the U.S. who embodies the GEAR UP mission to “Excel, Prove, and Mobilize.”

“Taylor was selected out of hundreds of thousands of GEAR

UP students across the country, and she is incredibly deserving of this honor,” said Bob Swaggard, the CH-UH City School District's director of curriculum and instruction. “She's a wonderful student and we are all so proud of her.”

According to Carmen Daniel, Heights High's GEAR UP 2 New Heights advisor, Evans proves GEAR UP works by excelling academically, participating in extracurricular activities, and demonstrating her confidence in post-secondary planning.

Evans started a GEAR UP internship at Heights High, to increase student engagement through peer-to-peer outreach. She reasoned that, by helping interns increase their college and career readiness skills through monthly meetings, research, and journaling, they would share what they learned with others. Evans held information sessions and created promotional materials for the program.

“Since the start of the internship, we have seen a surge in student engagement in GEAR UP activities,” said Daniel. “This year, we saw a record number of National Honor Society (NHS) invitations sent to 10th-grade students. To help make sure students successfully completed their applications, Taylor created a workshop for students to ask questions and receive

advice. I'm proud to say there were 51 sophomores accepted into the 2021 NHS class.”

In December 2020, Evans approached GEAR UP advisors with the idea for a virtual Black Youth Entrepreneurship Expo during Black History month. An entrepreneur herself—owner of She's Lovely, a faith-based company—Evans wanted to assist her classmates and young people across Northeast Ohio as they venture into the world of business.

“This was our first time conducting a large-scale virtual event, but Taylor was ready and prepared,” said Daniel.

To prepare for the PSAT exam, Evans came up with the idea to create a self-paced study competition. Participating students logged more than 50 total practice hours and completed nearly 5,000 recommended math and reading questions. Fifty-one Heights sophomores, the highest in school history, registered for and took the PSAT.

“I never do what I do for praise; I do it because it's something that's needed in my community and something I'm passionate about,” said Evans.

Classmate and friend Nevaeh Braxter submitted a letter recommending Evans for the GEAR UP award. Braxter recalled that, during

a difficult year of remote learning, Evans motivated her to stay focused on her future, encouraging her to join the GEAR UP internship program.

“Becoming active again in GEAR UP helped me to rediscover joy in school,” said Braxter. “Not only does Taylor take charge respectfully, she makes sure everyone understands what is happening and feels included. She encourages us to speak up for ourselves and our interests.”

Evans also participates in the Superintendent's Student Cadre, AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), and MSAN (Minority Student Achievement Network). The Metropolitan Cleveland Alliance of Black School Educators awarded Evans its 2021 Drum Major for Justice award. She plans to attend a four-year university after graduation in 2023.

“I'm not exactly sure where I want to go,” said Evans, “but I know I can do whatever it is I have a passion for because Dr. Carmen and the GEAR UP program have pushed me to learn more, and let me know the possibilities are endless.”

Cathan 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



AUGUST 3, 2021

Board members present were President James Posch, Malia Lewis, Jodi Sourini, and Beverly Wright. Dan Heintz was absent. Also present were Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby and Treasurer Scott Gainer.

Recognitions and awards

This year, the College Board is recognizing 48 Heights High students for their AP (Advanced Placement) performance: 28 AP scholars, 12 AP scholars with honor, and eight AP scholars with distinction.

Summer programming and strategic plan goals

Superintendent Kirby praised the success of the 2021 summer programming, which enrolled over 800 students. Several community organizations were involved in program activities. Evaluation metrics are being reviewed to assess student short-term and long-term educational growth.

The district website contains up-to-date information regarding the start of school on Aug. 24. It provides a link for Tiger Virtual Academy, a program similar to the Ohio Online program offered during the 2020-21 school year. At the time of this report, approximately 25 students have requested to enroll in the program.

The Noble Community Learning Center (CLC) centralizes resources for students, their families, and residents. The CLC, a component of the district's five-year strategic plan, is an approach often referred to as wrap-around services. Kristiaun Copez-Minor will serve as the CLC organizer.

COVID protocol recommendations

For the 2021-22 school year, Kirby proposed safety recommendations that align with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) guidance. Both the CDC and ODH recommend vaccination and masking. The CDC guidance stresses universal masking for all teachers, staff members, and students in schools, regardless of vaccination status. In-school instruction will be held five days a week. The district will continue with cleaning and handwashing protocols, and social distancing. Desk shields will not be used unless requested by a parent or staff member, or mandated by CDC and county board of health guidance.

Malia Lewis observed that adherence to the present protocols have met the goal of preventing an outbreak in the school buildings.

Jodi Sourini asked that nonpublic school leaders receive communication regarding mask protocols as all students must comply with district protocols when on district buses.

The board approved the superintendent's recommendations to follow CDC and ODH guidance regarding COVID protocols.

Debt refunding

The district refinanced bonds issued for work done on the high school and middle schools, resulting in interest savings and a need for less millage. (A slide presentation on this is available on BoardDocs—see below.) All bonds that were callable were refunded, which represented 21 percent in savings. Because the county sets the millage for what is needed for the debt payment, the taxpayers will see property tax savings. A one-mill reduction will occur through 2033 for general obligation bonds.

State budget impact

Scott Gainer presented a 12-minute video of Eric Resnick, Canton City School District Board of Education, who explained what is, and is not, in the state budget regarding public education. (A link to the video can be found on BoardDocs—see below). The state budget does not make permanent the enacted Fair School Funding Plan, which does not achieve goals of the original plan. Funding for nonpublic schools is a separate line item and provides a 50 percent increase in voucher net funding, but only a 1.5 percent increase in funding for public schools. Funding allotted for a public school student is \$6,100. Funding for a private school student is \$7,500, and the family receives a \$250 tax credit. There is no limit on the number of nonpublic schools that can receive public money. The legislature has folded the Fair School Funding Plan into the budget in a manner that does not provide meaningful additional funding for the public schools. In two years, educational funding from the federal pandemic relief program will end.

For 2021-22, the district will receive \$41,310 in additional funding as compared to the previous year.

Sourini agreed with Resnick's point that vouchers are public money with no accountability.

Announcements

Because meeting in the Heights High auditorium allows for social distancing and use of technology to videotape meetings, the board will continue to hold meetings at this location.

LWV Observer: Rosemarie Fairman.

[The board held brief (under five minutes) public meetings on July 15 and 20 to approve consent agendas. Beverly Wright was absent July 15, and Malia Lewis was absent July 20. The remainder of both meetings was held in executive session for discussion of personnel matters.]

Documents for all board meetings can be accessed at www.chuh.org/BoardofEducation.aspx. Video of board meetings are available on the district's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/CHUHSchools).



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Cross-country teams run 250 miles in 24 hours

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

Members of the cross-country teams at Monticello and Roxboro middle schools joined Heights High's cross-country and track runners for a 24-hour relay at Heights High on Aug. 7 and 8. Raising funds for the Cleveland Heights Running Boosters, the students ran 250 miles during the 24-hour period.

They arrived at the track on Saturday morning, carrying tents, sleeping bags, board games, and playing cards. As the clock struck 9 a.m., they began logging their miles, one or sometimes two students running four laps at a time before handing the baton off to the next runners. All participants ran more miles than they had before, and some ran faster than ever, including junior Henry Turner, who logged a personal best in his seventh mile, then beat that pace in his eighth.

The teams were led by senior captain Braedan Gallagher who kicked off the relay, running a mile every hour on the hour until he completed a full 24, logging the first 12 at a sub-5-minute pace.

Ella Bain, a Roxboro eighth-grader, spent the night at the track, running a total of 11.5 miles, her most ever. "It was kind of intimidating at first because there were juniors and seniors there," Bain said. "But everyone was super nice, and I had no idea I could push myself that hard."

Coach Scott McNulty was impressed with his kids. "Running for 24 hours is obviously a hard thing to do," he said. "But we had so much support, some kids there the entire time, some showing up in the middle of the night to help out. We more than exceeded our goal and will now be able to take both the middle- and high-school cross-country and track teams to out-of-town meets."

The Boosters raised over \$17,000 at the relay, which will help pay for indoor track fees, warm-up gear, and expanding youth running programs to the district's elementary schools.

Student runners were joined by alumni, parents, teachers, administrators and community members. Steph Buda, Heights High science teacher and coach, ran an entire marathon on the track, 104 laps, with a friend or colleague at her side. Because of the heat and humidity that day, she split her distance into a 13-mile run in the morning and another 13.2 after the sun went down.

Before the sun set, the skies opened up with rain, leaving behind a rainbow that stretched over the high school for about an hour, reinvigorating the runners as they prepared for the long night ahead.

The runners had support from



Eighth-grader Amara Rodney runs through the night.



Runners play Monopoly while waiting to run their next miles.



Junior Jayvon Pryor runs one of his laps.

the community, including parents who volunteered for overnight shifts and donated food. Dave's Cosmic Subs on Coventry provided sandwiches, The Fairmount Wine & Martini Bar donated pasta dinners, and the Cedar Lee Business District delivered much-needed Gatorade. Twenty-four Northeast Ohio businesses, including The Wine Spot and Voodoo Brew-

ery, each sponsored one of the 24 hours.

As the sun began to shine on Sunday morning over a weary bunch of teenagers, Coach McNulty gathered them on the track and sent the entire team around for one last lap. Some shuffled, many moved slowly, and a fair number were in their Crocs and pajama pants, but there was plenty of

smiling and cheering for all they and their teammates had accomplished.

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher, a long-time resident of Cleveland Heights, is a freelance writer under contract with the CH-UH City School District. Her son Braedan is a member of Heights High's cross-country and track teams.

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amazing how far we've
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On day one, we began restoring the Fire Department. We replaced a 28-year-old ladder truck, purchased a new ambulance, improved staffing and training, and reopened the Fire Prevention Bureau.

We established the Office of Community Policing. In July 2020, we established a citizens advisory committee where police and citizens work together to review and update use-of-force and de-escalation policies. These initiatives make University Heights a safer place to live.

We built the City's first bike lanes.

We paved streets that hadn't been resurfaced in over 20 years. We made special pickups available to order online. We updated our monthly printed newsletter to an e-news. We raised the City's profile on social media.

Most importantly, we persevered through the pandemic. Together.

University Heights is not just a collection of beautiful homes. There's a new sense of community and progress. We feel it on weekend mornings at The Walt, when neighbors gather for coffee. We feel it at the Summer Concert Series, the parade, the pool, and neighborhood events. We feel it with the new synagogue building coming to South Green Road.

University Heights is now so much more than home.

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Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook plan includes green space

Robert Brown

Pedestrian-oriented retail districts work best when they are continuous, encouraging shoppers to walk from storefront to storefront, from block to block. Lee Road, south of Cedar Road, is one of those vibrant, walkable retail and restaurant districts.

Placing a wide, block-long park in the middle of the Lee Road retail district would interrupt the flow of shoppers and diners walking along Lee Road and would, therefore, detract from the vibrancy of our retail district.

In contrast, smaller, more inti-

mate outdoor gathering spaces can complement a neighborhood retail district, enhancing and strengthening the walkable district, without interrupting the flow of shoppers and diners.

That kind of landscaped outdoor gathering space, occupying half of what was once a paved Ohio Savings lot, is exactly what is proposed by the Lee-Meadowbrook developer. In addition, FutureHeights has proposed revitalizing another landscaped gathering space nearby, in the space between Heights Arts and Boss Dog Brewing Company.

Trees and green space are essential for a healthy environment, but not every vacant lot in a community should be a park.

Just as important to the health of this portion of Lee Road is the fact that the developer is proposing to add a substantial number of new households in a new multi-story, mixed-use streetside building on the vacant Lee-Meadowbrook site.

This housing will add new customers who can walk to patronize existing and new Lee Road businesses, thereby reducing automobile trips, in an environmentally sustainable development scenario.

The proposed development will not require any additional parking, because it will be served by the parking garage that was built by the city several years ago, in anticipation of



The Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook development site plan above, designed by City Architecture, includes an outdoor gathering space. The currently vacant, grassy lot between Meadowbrook and Tullamore was formerly the site of a bank and a parking lot.

this very development.

Last, but not least, the development will add jobs and income-tax revenues to help relieve the tax burden on the community’s current and future residents.

Given these considerations, I encourage the Cleveland Heights City Council to proceed with the mixed-use development on the vacant Lee-Meadowbrook block in

accordance with the current concept plan, making refinements to ensure that the outdoor spaces meet the highest design standards and maximize public use.

Robert Brown is a city planner with 45 years of experience, including nine years as Cleveland’s planning director. A resident of Cleveland Heights for more than 40 years, he is a FutureHeights board member.

DEW DILIGENCE

A Cleveland Heights Podcast

Conversations about the mayoral transition, hosted by Adam Dew.

Find it at bit.ly/dewdiligence

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Phil Atkin for University Heights Mayor

I’m a builder, living here 30 years watching homes being renovated or added to; and neighborhoods changing over.

I have background in government, a master’s in Urban Planning. It’s bothered me that over the last four years issues were not addressed, matters were not being handled with decency.

It’s the residents who own the city! Their Needs matter!



WHAT I’LL DO AS MAYOR

- ✓ **Education:** Active Advocacy for Parents and Children. The children need help!
- ✓ **Police:** Support a storied department that takes care of its residents.
- ✓ **City Departments:** Work with staff to review and improve services.
- ✓ **Finances/Taxes:** Property tax rates are among the highest in Ohio, yet little comes to the city. RITA taxes are set at the highest bracket in Ohio. **Taxes have to be brought down, and the city share improved.**
- ✓ **Floundering Commercial Development:** Professional planning is needed to bolster potential and taxes to city.

I will Address Issues, Not Ignore Them – bring all the players together to address problems, including residents, staff, City Council, experts from outside.

Turning Difficulties Into Opportunities For Improvement

LET’S TAKE THIS PATH!

Cedar Lee resident and business owner supports development

Destiny Burns

I support Flaherty & Collins plan for the Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook development project. I own CLE Urban Winery in the Cedar Lee Business District, and I own a home within the district as well. My life and my life savings are both, literally, invested in Cedar Lee, so I have a great deal of personal and professional skin in this game. I am making this statement on my own, but I have discussed this with other district merchants who share and support this opinion.

I do NOT support the entire empty lot at Meadowbrook Boulevard and Lee Road becoming a park. I am STRONGLY in favor of the multi-use commercial-development plan proposed by Flaherty & Collins. Here are some facts that I believe need to be reiterated and understood about this project:

1)The empty lot at Meadowbrook and Lee is not a “green space.” The bank building that was formerly on that lot was torn down and grass grew in its place. It is also not a safe place, right on a major traffic thoroughfare, to have an “activity park.”

2)A park in the middle of a commercial district will not bring business to the district. In fact,

having this hole in the continuity of the commercial district actually interferes with business and commercial activities here. If you support the small businesses in Cedar Lee, PLEASE help us survive by supporting the economic development of our commercial district! This project is essential to our recovery from the ongoing impacts of the pandemic.

3) There is no funding to build, let alone maintain, a standalone park on that empty lot at Meadowbrook and Lee. The development proposal includes plans to create a true green space on about half of that empty lot—this IS funded as part of this crucial project. There is already another “activity park”—the Cedar-Lee Mini-Park, with plans and funding efforts in place—just a block north of that empty lot. We don’t need another park in this commercial district, especially one that is unfunded and would be a tax-dollar drain rather than an economic driver.

We have an incredible opportunity to work with this proven and committed development team to modernize and upgrade our commercial district now. We CANNOT delay or cancel this project because of fear of change or other rhetoric and political noise. We desperately need

continued on page 22

Resident recommends book on deniers of climate-change

Chaya Tabak

The following is a letter that I sent to the candidates for the Cleveland Heights mayoralty:

As you develop your policies on climate change and the carbon “foot-print,” please read *The Deniers: The world-renowned scientists who stood up against global warming hysteria, political persecution, and fraud.*

A colleague who saw me reading this book inquired if it is about the ignorant, and I had to correct him: they are not at all ignorant; they are, or were, highly trained, educated, experienced, published professionals.

In short, the book discusses the “experts” who peer-review papers on the broad topic, pointing out that there are so many aspects to climate, that one cannot be an expert in all of these fields. Data are deleted or ignored, creating a false impression. We tend to look at climate information from the last few hundred years,

where recorded history is thousands of years old, and the earth is billions of years old, so that the conclusions are skewed.

Were you aware that there was a Medieval Warming Period, followed by a Little Ice Age that ended in the 19th century? Were you aware that, in the 1970s, there was an overall drop in temperature, leading to fears of another ice age? Many highly respected researchers and directors of institutes were “canceled”, i.e., harassed, pressured to resign, or lost funding, because of questioning or challenging the current vogue.

Please read the book, available through CLEVNET libraries, and let us not have the city of Cleveland Heights simply jump on the bandwagon of popular views.

Chaya Tabak is a teacher of all ages, mainly in the sciences, who has worked both in parochial schools and in public schools.

Make Horseshoe Lake more like nature center

Marc Lefkowitz

I am excited to hear about an option to replace the dam at Horseshoe Lake, because I feel it represents a serious effort to mitigate climate change and the impact of extreme weather events that we’re seeing with more regularity, such as flooding of our local watersheds.

By removing the dam, we open up the possibility of Doan Brook supporting a more diverse ecosystem, along with more stormwater capture and a more equitable use of limited resources.

The city will need the \$34 million that is estimated [as the cost] to replace the dam if we are to address the nearly \$1 billion of infrastructure work ahead to meet the stormwater and sewer separation goals in the EPA consent decree signed by the city.

I am aware that some want to spend \$34 million because of the history of Doan Brook. I feel there are other priorities and that the history can be honored with an exhibit at the Shaker Historical Society.

We are facing a historic moment, and how we react will determine whether we have a future that is secure, sustainable and equitable—secure in the peace of mind that the banks of our lakes and rivers are functional and won’t fail; sustainable because a wetlands approach, like the one at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, is a nature-based solution. The wetlands and boardwalk at the Nature Center are an example of how to balance the needs of community access and nature. It’s more sustainable because a wetlands ecology will support a diverse group of species, both plants and animals.

It’s important that we recognize when nature is a force that cannot be

channelized or tamed into a small space, as we saw with the floods that wiped away whole villages in Germany this summer. The reaction from the villagers is inspiring. They want to rebuild in a way that respects nature; that means not building up, paving over and hardening the walls of their watershed.

Finally, it will be more equitable because, as the headwater communities of Doan Brook, Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights have a responsibility to the communities downstream, in University Circle and the Glenville neighborhood of Cleveland. They have been flooding with more regularity. It would be a waste if we were not protecting the investment of the Doan Brook Interceptor Tunnel that the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District is building, at great expense, by doing all we can, through green infrastructure, to slow stormwater from reaching those tunnels.

Also, as our rates for water and sewer have climbed, it starts to disadvantage low-to-moderate income communities in Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights and Cleveland.

For these reasons, I think we should all be excited about the new vision that has emerged to address the failed dam at Horseshoe Lake. Let’s protect both people and ecosystems, and do it in a way that’s sustainable and equitable, now and for the future.

Marc Lefkowitz is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and a sustainability advocate. He has served on the city’s Transportation Advisory Committee, the board of Home Repair Resource Center, and is currently a member of the Citizen’s Advisory Committee. His son attends the Heights schools.

In support of mayoral candidate Hart

S. Kay Dunlap

I am writing to vigorously support Melody Hart for our first [elected mayor]. This enthusiasm comes from my perspective and experience working with her on the Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC) Cleveland Heights Housing Team for seven years.

[Others] who endorse Melody have spoken [of] her solid fiscal management skills, her executive skills set, and her contextual knowledge of Cleveland Heights. I am focusing on the way I know her best: As a person for others.

Melody is a person for neighborhoods. Long before this campaign, Melody walked every street in the Noble neighborhood. In doing this she demonstrated empathy for neighbors who were seeing their housing values deteriorate. She collaborated with neighbors [on a] badly neglected, vacant, investor-owned property that had been so since 2009. Her research efforts significantly led to resolving this case.

Melody is a person for leadership. Leaders not only write policy but also can implement policy. Melody worked with GCC to move heretofore stalled and opposed foreclosure bond policy to a council that embraced this legislative change that now greatly benefits

our city. Melody accomplished this by collaboration with all stakeholders. I have witnessed this quiet strength over and over. She has leadership integrity that values the insights and contributions of others. She is a bridge builder who does not need fanfare. This will be a critical skill in the huge work ahead to move our city forward.

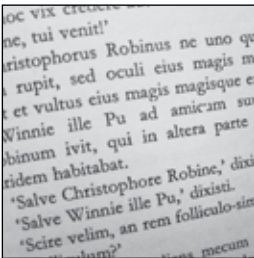
Melody is a person for others. Melody is a believer in social justice and racial equity. She lives her promises and commitment. In 2019 she worked with and housed a Haitian immigrant in her Cleveland Heights home. With two other council members, she co-sponsored the Racial Justice Task Force. Melody realizes that no one person can meet the needs of all citizens, but working collaboratively leads to better decisions. An example of this is when she worked with Metro-Health [at Severance] to minimize tree removal and at the same time promote much needed economic development.

Melody has done her homework. Please do yours. She knows what changes will move our city forward. I am confident that she is the best qualified person to be our first elected mayor of Cleveland Heights.

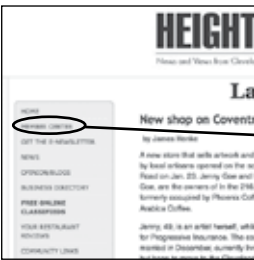
S. Kay Dunlap is a Cleveland Heights resident.

Observe!

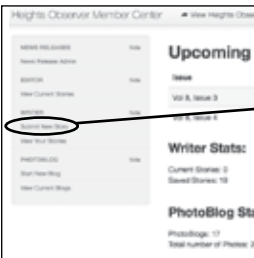
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CEDAR LEE continued from page 20

economic development, and investment in the district and in the city. Without it, both will decline, residents will move, businesses will close. Our city council needs to stand behind its correct decision to proceed, and keep this project on track.

We have plenty of green space in Cedar Lee; what we need is more customers, more residents, more tax revenue, more economic activity. Cedar Lee businesses have worked tirelessly to pivot and survive in these difficult times—please help us by moving forward with this development project now, to build and strengthen our economic futures. Killing this project will have the opposite effect.

I am aware that parking and traffic in the district are always issues. I am committed to working with the city and the developer to

ensure that a comprehensive study of traffic and parking is performed, and that all issues and concerns are addressed. We can use current lots more efficiently, implement tailored parking zones, and install modern pay stations in place of antiquated coin-operated meters.

I believe the new residents and businesses this project will bring to our walkable district is the best way to build sustainable economic activity here, increase tax revenue, and help our community compete and grow!

I am committed to doing all I can to help make this development project a success, and I urge everyone to participate in the public input opportunities in the coming months for this game-changing project.

Destiny R. Burns is owner of CLE Urban Winery and a Cedar Lee resident.

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Heights High announces 2021-22 administrative team

Cathan Cavanaugh

Cleveland Heights High School has named two new assistant principals for the 2021-22 school year—Taylor Smith and Brandon Towns. They join the schools' interim administrative principal, and two other assistant principals.

"This group is like the pieces of a puzzle coming together—they bring years of experience in top-notch organizational leadership, teaching, communication, technology, coaching, and more," said Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby. "Most importantly, these individuals have a passion for providing a high-quality education to each and every student, helping them grow into young adults ready for college and career."

Taylor Smith, 10th-grade assistant principal

Smith served the Brooklyn City School District (BCS) as the technology coordinator (2016-21), implementing professional development and technology integration across the district. Smith also was dean of students for BCS (2019-20). In that role, Smith instituted Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) for the student body, and worked with teacher teams across grade levels.

Prior to working for BCS, Smith was a social studies teacher at Lake Catholic High School and a high school wrestling coach.

"I am really looking forward to



Taylor Smith



Brandon Towns



Alisa Lawson-McKinnie



James Dubsky



John Fullerman

COURTESY CHUH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

working with students to help them become the best version of themselves that they can be," said Smith.

Brandon Towns, 11th-grade assistant principal

A former science teacher, and an assistant principal in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), Towns joins Tiger Nation excited to work with students and staff.

"I am a people person. I love meeting new people and building relationships with the ones that I already know. I am ecstatic about the opportunity to add value to such a phenomenal community," said Towns.

Towns was also a CMSD curriculum and instruction specialist (2016-18), and a 2012 Woodrow Wilson Ohio Teaching Fellow. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in urban education at Cleveland State University (CSU).

Alisa Lawson-McKinnie, interim administrative principal

Lawson-McKinnie has served the district as an administrator for eight

years, and has been instrumental in expanding Heights High's Advanced Placement, College Credit Plus, and former Early College programs.

"I am honored to be chosen to lead Heights High in the upcoming year," said Lawson-McKinnie. "It's a pivotal moment in time for our students, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to provide them with the support and guidance they need to succeed."

Lawson-McKinnie formerly worked as a high school principal in the Columbus Public Schools District (CPS) and CMSD. She earned her doctorate at CSU.

James Dubsky, ninth-grade assistant principal

Dubsky joined the principal team at Heights High in 2020, after two years as Heights High's dean of students. He first came to CH-UH in 2009 as a physical education teacher at Oxford Elementary School.

Asked what he loves about his work, Dubsky said, "I like that I get to work with an entire grade level and get to know all of the students."

Prior to working in education, Dubsky was a strength and conditioning coach with the Cleveland Indians, Texas Rangers, and an NFL Combine training group.

John Fullerman, 12th-grade assistant principal

Fullerman joined the Heights High administration team in 2015. He previously was principal of Summit Academy Secondary School in Canton, where he also was head coach of the basketball team. Prior to entering the education field, initially as a teacher, he served as a Cleveland Heights police officer (2003-09).

"My favorite thing about Heights High is the students," said Fullerman. "Greeting them as they enter the building, talking to them in the halls and eating lunch with them are some of my favorite parts of the day."

Fullerman was named the CH-UH Administrator of the Year for 2021

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

PEKAR PARK COMIC BOOK FEST

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Cleveland Heights – University Heights Public Library Board

Meeting highlights



JULY 19, 2021

Library board members present were President Dana Fluellen, Vice President Gabe Crenshaw, Patti Carlyle, Max Gerboc, Annette Iwamoto, and Tyler McTeague. Vikas Turakhia was absent.

Board resolutions adopted

- Approving Juneteenth as a paid holiday for Heights library staff.
- Approval of contract for Coventry Branch Library HVAC upgrade and interior renovations.
- Approval of amended service and administrative policies of the board, including a new appendix for a naming and recognition policy. (The policy can be found on the library's website.)

Personnel report

- Four vacancies were filled this month.
- Annual staff training in safety and security will focus on workplace violence.
- All new hires are to complete a proctored test assessment of basic computer/tech skills.

Director's report

- FRIENDS of the Heights Libraries will have a mega book sale Aug. 26–29.
- Heights libraries are distributing Learning Lunchboxes filled with hands-on science activities for children in grades K–8. The kits were prepared by The Ohio Library Council and the Center of Science and Industry.
- A library design open house for Coventry PEACE Park will be held on July 24, 2–4 p.m., at the Coventry Village branch. Another, for the Noble Neighborhood Library expansion, will be held on Sept. 9, 7–9 p.m., at the Noble Neighborhood branch.
- Ohio's two-year state budget maintains the Public Library Fund at 1.7 percent of the General Revenue Fund for the next two years.

Public service report

- Trials and Triumphs, the adult summer reading program, is off to a fast start. There were 174 adult participants with 625 badges earned so far, compared to 116 participants and 255 badges earned last summer. Each completed activity earns one raffle ticket entry into a drawing for adult

reader baskets, courtesy of FRIENDS of the Heights Libraries. Participants can also use raffle tickets towards the grand prize drawing for one Kindle Fire HD. All prize winners will be notified the week of Sept. 1.

- Youth Librarian Hannah Van Jura planned a summer reading kick-off program, Wizbang! Circus in the Park. Over 200 people came to Walter Stinson Community Park to delight in a variety of performances from clowns, jugglers, acrobats, and more.
- Youth summer reading participation got off to a strong start with 1,105 registrations in June. Two factors have helped increase numbers compared to 2020: the ability of families and teens to visit in person, and the school district's inclusion of program information in their communications.

LWV Observer: Elizabeth M. Tracy.

AUGUST 2, 2021

Tyler McTeague was absent. The other board members were present.

Board resolutions adopted

- Approval to advertise for bids for snow-removal services at a season cost not to exceed \$70,000.
- Approval of unpaid leave of absence extension for one staff member.
- Requirement of facial masks for library users over the age of 2 due to rising COVID cases, starting Aug. 6, until further notice.
- Noble branch renovations, PEACE Park plans.

At a committee meeting held prior to the board meeting, Rick Ortmeyer presented some ideas for Noble Neighborhood Library renovations, and Jim McKnight presented preliminary plans for Coventry PEACE Park. That preliminary information will be placed on the library website.

LWV Observer: Elizabeth M. Tracy.

Information about the board, board meeting minutes and audio recordings of board meetings can be found at <https://heightslibrary.org/locations/heights-libraries-board/>.

What's going on at your library?

Coventry Village Branch

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400

Saturday, Sept. 18, All Day

Pekar Park Comic Book Fest. This free festival honors Harvey Pekar, the late graphic novelist and Cleveland Heights resident, and offers an array of activities for children and adults. The festival will spotlight local, independent comic book and graphic novel writers, illustrators, artists, and comic book retailers. Activities, including vendor tables, a panel discussion, and crafts for kids, will run from noon to 5 p.m. at the Coventry Branch Library, Pekar Park, Coventry businesses, and Coventry PEACE Park. A family-friendly movie will be shown at 8 p.m. in the PEACE Park.

Lee Road Branch

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

Thursday, Sept. 30, 6 p.m.

Recycle Right in Cuyahoga County. Learn best practices for recycling correctly in Cuyahoga County, and what you can do to make a meaningful difference in your community. Get answers to questions about curbside recycling and discuss what, where, how and when to recycle other items. And learn about Cleveland Heights' new automated trash and recycling program, rolling out in fall 2021. Registration is open.

Noble Neighborhood Branch

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665

Wednesday, Sept. 8, 7 p.m.

Noble Neighborhood Branch Renovation Open House. Heights Libraries will be exhibiting several preliminary design concepts created by the Noble branch renovation architect, Bostwick Design Partnership, showing what the future Noble branch building could look like. These designs were informed and inspired by public input from Zoom meetings in March and April, and e-mails

and phone calls received from the community. Attendees are invited to comment on what they like or don't like about these preliminary designs, and will also have an opportunity to talk with the architect.

University Heights Branch

13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

Tuesday, Sept. 14, 6:30 p.m.

Back to the Movies! Movies were meant for the big screen, and we have some catching up to do. In Judas and the Black Messiah (2021, R, 126 mins.), FBI informant William O'Neal (LaKeith Stanfield) infiltrates the Illinois Black Panther Party and is tasked with keeping tabs on their charismatic leader, Chairman Fred Hampton (Daniel Kaluuya). A career thief, O'Neal revels in the danger of manipulating both his comrades and his handler, Special Agent Roy Mitchell (Jesse Plemons). Hampton's political prowess grows just as he's falling in love with fellow revolutionary Deborah Johnson (Dominique Fishback). Meanwhile, a battle wages for O'Neal's soul. Will he align with the forces of good? Or subdue Hampton and The Panthers by any means, as FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (Martin Sheen) commands?

Online

On Zoom

Thursday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m.

Family Caregiver Support Program. Fatima Perkins of the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging will present a program to assist family caregivers. Learn how the Family Caregiver Support Team helps identify unique caregiver needs and connects individuals with resources that may help, including respite, support groups, and even financial support. Registration begins Sept. 9.

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Storefront Renovation Program provides business owner with upgrade



New signage outside the businesses in the building Franklin Myles owns.

COURTESY SARAH WOLF

Sarah Wolf

Cleveland Heights small-business owner Franklin Myles has roots here that stretch back long before he moved into his State Farm Insurance storefront, in the Mayfield Triangle area of the Noble neighborhood, in 2003. He grew up, and attended school, here, graduating from Cleveland Heights High School. Though Myles has since moved away, it is still important to him to play an active role in the community.

“I know Cleveland Heights like the back of my hand,” Myles said. “It’s always been a beautiful place to me. The thought of coming back home to my community and opening up a business and taking care of people I went to school with, and their parents and all of that, was very exciting to me.”

In 2016, Myles was able to invest in the city when he bought the building where his State Farm Insurance office is located. It is also home to Polish Me Pretty, Hair Cafe, Impact Ink Tattoo, The Design Suite, Mary J. Braids II, Jasmine Rene Studio, Charter Educational Services, and Shear Design Hair and Nail Salon.

His decision to apply for the city of Cleveland Heights’ Storefront Renovation Program began with a visit from local real estate agent and FutureHeights committee member Helen Hertz.

“Helen would come by and visit and talk about Cleveland Heights and some of the projects she was doing and the work FutureHeights was doing. Her goal was to have business owners take care of their property and bring up the appearance of the storefronts,” Myles said.

After Hertz told him about the Storefront Renovation Program, Myles contacted the city to begin the process. From there, he was connected with city representatives who explained the program and then, after his application materials were submitted and vetted, connected him with an architect, at no cost, to create a plan.

“I wanted to make [the signage] unique to this building. I wanted something cutting edge and outside of the box because it helps set me apart from the other businesses,” Myles said.

“This process is not easy and it is not quick,” Myles noted. “You have to have some patience because you’re dealing with the city and codes and

all of that kind of stuff.”

Throughout the process, Myles enabled his tenants to get involved with the design of the new signage for their individual businesses.

With the funds Myles procured through the program, he was able to add signage on metal awnings that were back-lit with color, making the businesses eye-catching and visible when it’s dark outside.

“It’s cutting edge because there’s nothing like this at the moment. I think the building looks exceptional. It makes it hard to miss when

you’re driving by,” Myles said. “We got a ton of feedback. People have never seen any type of sign like this before. I have a feeling there’s going to be a lot of copycats.”

Myles sees his role as a small-business owner as being about making connections, both with other entrepreneurs and residents.

“We have to reach out to other businesses to let them know what they are able to do within their budget,” he said.

As he worked through the process with the city, Myles was able to

negotiate an increase in grant offerings, from \$25,000 to \$40,000.

“It was stuck at a low amount for years and years and years, and we got them to increase it, which should help many other small businesses,” Myles explained. “Now you’ll have more opportunities to invest in your business, and grant money is not money you have to pay back. It’s a win-win—but you have to go through the process.”

Myles hopes to expand his real estate investment in the city in the coming years, and is excited to do his part to make Cleveland Heights—especially Noble, where his business is located—a standout place in which to live and work. “Bringing this area up would be significant,” he said.

To learn more about Cleveland Heights’ Storefront Renovation Program, visit www.clevelandheights.com/394/Storefront-Renovation-Program.

Sarah Wolf is the community-building programs manager at FutureHeights.

Bustling with activity. That’s how Pat Mallik and her husband Singh describe the newest

“There are so, so many reasons we’re happy at Judson.”

chapter in their lives. After the Malliks relocated from Seattle in 2018, their son and daughter-in-law quickly pointed them to nearby Judson Park. And for Pat and Singh, there’s been no looking back.

Gardening, reading, staying fit, and freely sharing her beauty expertise with neighbors are everyday occurrences for Pat. “We’re so busy! Just because we are retired doesn’t mean we’re going to sit in a chair and sleep. The exercise options are great, people are so friendly, and help is here if you need it,” says Pat.

Read the full story at
judsonsmartliving.org/blog

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Two Heights Arts shows explore print's range

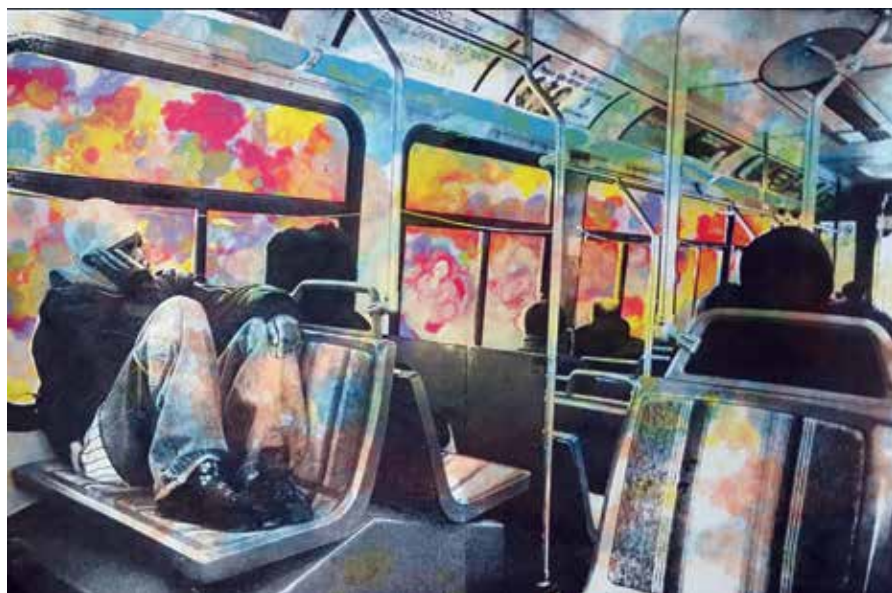
Megan Gallagher

When we think of art, we might think of a painting that hangs protected in a museum, or sculptures, ever-present in parks. But art comes in many forms, changing with the times. In a time like no other, to close out 2021, Heights Arts presents the *Printers Select* exhibition, running through Oct. 17.

Curated by artist Liz Maugans, the show features work by six artists new to Heights Arts. They were each tasked with bringing in a second artist for the exhibition—someone who made a significant impact on their lives and studies.

The participating six artists and their six partners are Hannah Manocchio and Sampson the Artist, J. Leigh Garcia and Nina Battaglia, Orlando Caraballo and Ed Lugo, Anna Tararova and Amirah Cunningham, Shadi Ayoub and Bob Kelemen, and Omid Shekari and Kristina Paabus.

“The polarities, interventions, technical processes and intersections that exist in print media; the commercial and fine art, political and protest his/herstories; the abstract, representational and unique prints—all fuel the energy of this deliberately delicious roundup of artists in their etchings, lithographs, risographs, screen prints, monotypes, and letterpress/relief prints,” said Maugans.



Anna Tararova's RTA.

The print medium has expanded over the years and continues to evolve by combining with other forms, such as painting, mixed media, and even sculpture, conveying artists' complex stories.

Featured artist Anna Tararova, for example, uses print media to make sense of the gray, disconnected areas of life.

“There is an urgent need for humanity to reconnect with nature in order to experience a harmonious and peaceful existence. I have been searching for a way to express this idea through my artwork and found it in papermaking,” she explained. “Paper made from plants and recycled materials could be a sustainable solution to many ecological and economic problems the world is facing today. Using fiber that was sourced locally also contributes to my work conceptually by creating a connection between subject and place.”

Printers Select is on view in the Heights Arts gallery. It runs concurrently with a Spotlight showcase exhibit, featuring the work of print artist Nicole Schneider. Her work explores control and perfectionism through the lens of her familial relationships with other women, and how these relationships have influenced her relationship with motherhood.

Visitors can view the exhibitions at Heights Arts' Lee Road gallery, and are invited to register to attend the accompanying Ek-



Spotlight artist Nicole Schneider's Loose Ends.

phrasy—Artists Talk and Poets Respond event on Sept. 23. For more information, visit www.heightsarts.org/exhibitions.

Heights Arts, a nonprofit community, multi-disciplinary arts organization, features exhibitions and programs by visual and literary artists, musical performers, art educators, administrators and others who make their livelihood in the visual, performing or literary arts.

Its gallery and store displays and sells work by regional artists, and it also presents chamber music and community concerts in intimate settings and public spaces.

Megan Gallagher has always been a lover of the arts and is excited to celebrate them in Cleveland Heights, working in marketing for Heights Arts. Contact Gallagher at marketing@heightsarts.org.

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Musicologie CH adds early childhood classes



Young students and caregivers at a Musicologie Junior class in Columbus.

David Budin

Musicologie, a community music school owned and operated by Pat and Kevin Richards, will bring Musicologie Junior to their Cleveland Heights school this September.

This new, early-childhood music class for kids and their caregivers develops young minds through music using a research-based proprietary curriculum.

"Each class," said Pat Richards, "is an action-packed musical journey that instills passion and excitement for music."

The program incorporates singing, melody, rhythm and movement to engage children and reinforce their natural musical instincts.

Musicologie is a neighborhood music lessons studio company specializing in private lessons for all ages and abilities. Launched in 2014, it is the largest and fastest-growing music school in Ohio, with six studios, including the one in Cleveland Heights.

Kay Barker is the curriculum director at Musicologie and developer of the Musicologie Junior program. "Musicologie Junior is a one-of-a-kind program that's fun for kids," she said, "and fun for the adults, and it also introduces high-level musical concepts in a way that even the very youngest can absorb."

Richards commented, "We've been wanting to bring early childhood music education to our community for a long time, so we're excited to finally be able to make it happen. The class is such a great way for parents to engage with their little ones and meet other like-minded families."

Musicologie Junior is a mixed-age class for kids up to age 5. The class will be offered at 9:30 a.m. on Thursdays starting Sept. 2, and Tuesdays starting Sept. 7, at the Musicologie Cleveland Heights

studio, 3473 Fairmount Blvd.

Caitlin Luck will teach the Thursday session. A voice teacher with a degree in vocal performance from Slippery Rock University, Luck has been with Musicologie since February 2021.

Deborah Van Kleef is looking forward to teaching the Tuesday session. She has been teaching guitar since 1995 and ukulele since 2008 at Musicologie Cleveland Heights (formerly the Fairmount School of Music). She specializes in working with beginners, from age 5 to adult, and teaches children ages 5-9 following a guitar and ukulele curriculum that she developed.

Interested families can register for a class at musicologie.com/junior, or request more information from Pat Richards at 216-260-6006 or pat@musicologie.com.

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

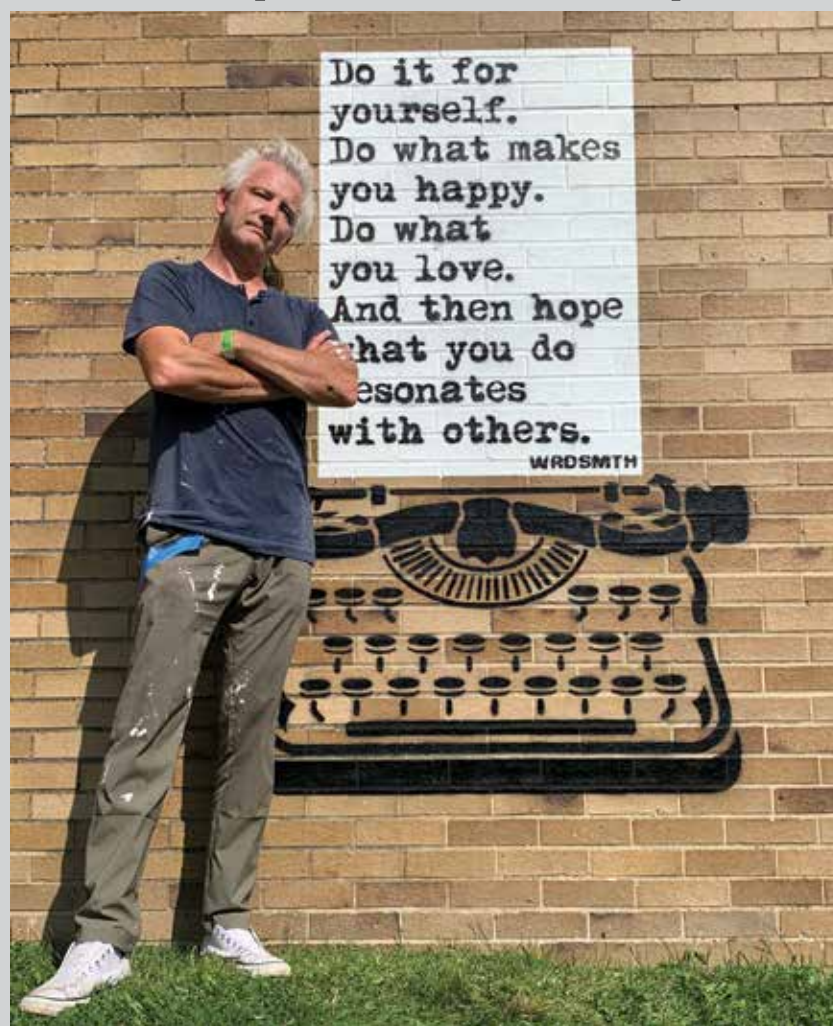
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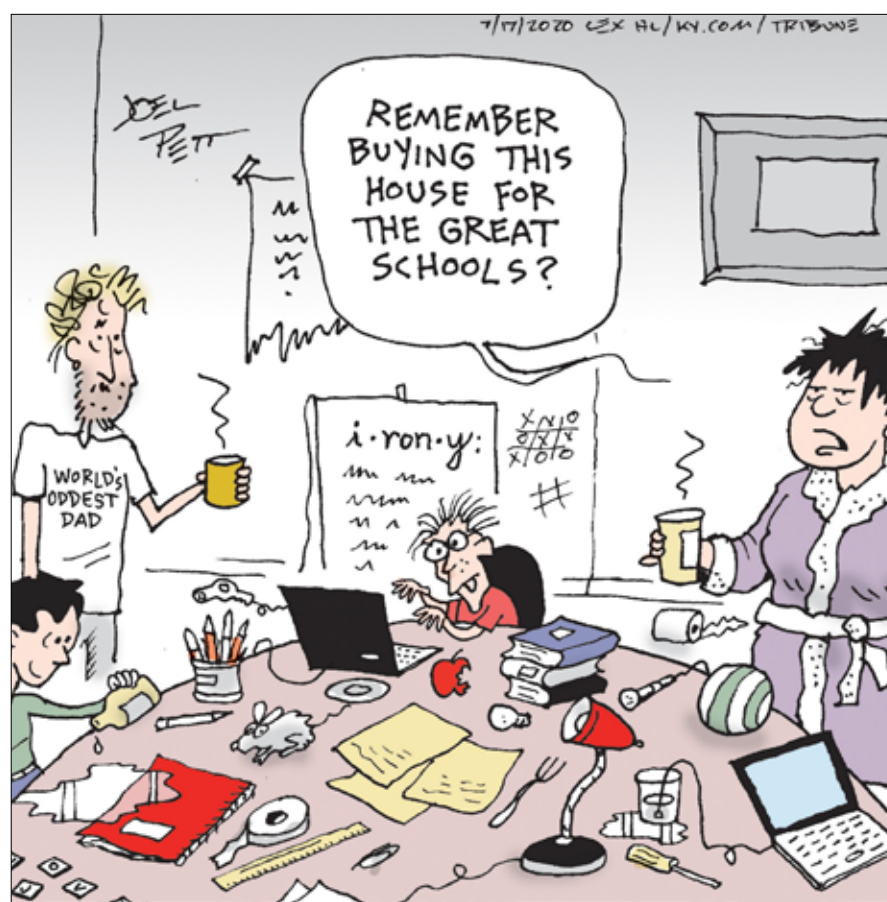
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HEIGHTS OBSERVER
Published by Future Heights

Artist installs new mural at Coventry PEACE Campus



Artist WRDSMTH has installed a mural on the Coventry PEACE Campus building, near the Lake Erie Ink entrance, as part of the "How Do I Love Thee" tour, hosted and produced by Graffiti HeArt. The tour is a series of 17 murals gifted by the artist to various spaces, walls and organizations, installed throughout Cleveland, Lakewood and Cleveland Heights in August. All of the murals are in WRDSMTH's signature style of typewriters with inspirational quotes. Learn more about the tour at www.graffitiheart.org.



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SONGS AND
STORIES

David Budin

When I was 3, my grandfather built a house on a new street. The houses were kind of small, but, at least at his end of the street, there was lots of land behind them. (Behind those properties now are the houses on Belvoir Boulevard, north of Cedar Road.) In that big backyard he created a garden for my older brother and me.

He bought us overalls, straw hats and little gardening tools. We planted vegetables and took care of them (to a degree, anyway; my grandfather did most of it). Then we harvested and ate the vegetables.

That was the last time I did any gardening, until I was 21. I moved to Columbus to continue playing music with a woman from there I'd met in New York City, and with whom I'd started a duo. I got a job on The Ohio State University landscape crew. The scene always resembled prison work-gangs in old movies. The campus comprises nearly 1,700 acres, on both sides of the Olentangy River, so there's a lot to take care of. Turnover in that department was so great that,

within six weeks of getting hired, I had already been put in charge of my own section of the campus.

What that meant was that in the morning, after the old guys had dropped off a sleepy, silent, scowling truckload of us young guys, I told everybody what to do for the day, accomplished a little of my part, and then headed into a tiny wooded area I'd discovered and spent most of the day there, reading, sleeping and eating, until the old guys came back around to collect us and take us back to headquarters so we could clock out.

Shockingly, though, I did, somehow, learn a lot about landscaping and gardening during that time. I created a garden at the house I shared with some other people, and I grew vegetables, which I put to use after getting fired from the landscape crew and learning how to cook while working in the area's only health-food restaurant. That garden lasted for a couple of years, and I enjoyed it, but then I left Columbus and forgot about gardening.

About 10 years later, I married someone who does a lot of gardening. Not vegetables, at our Cleveland Heights house with its big trees—because we don't have a large enough sunny spot for a vegetable garden—but flowers, bushes, trees and other plants, all around the front and back yards. As only the second owners (technically) of an old house, where an elderly woman had lived alone for decades, we (meaning: my wife) needed to do massive



Joanne Westin waters the Cumberland garden.



The Cumberland garden in early August.

amounts of work to make the yards nice—or even usable, at first. At times I have been called upon to use my expertise in managing such tasks as digging holes, or holding a new little tree in place till it's securely planted, or, occasionally, sticking my favorite flowers, portulaca, in pots on the deck, where we have also, in past years, grown a few tomatoes and jalapeño peppers.

That's my gardening experience. My wife is the gardener here. Our grandchildren's other grandmother, our son's mother-in-law, Joanne Westin, is also an avid gardener. In fact, she turned a little plot of land at Cumberland Pool, a long-gone rose garden, along the fence by the parking lot, into a thriving vegetable garden.

A retired biology instructor, Joanne originally used the 600-square-foot space for a program she developed, starting in 2012, to teach kids about gardening and its related sciences. That program ran for five summer seasons, but in recent years the garden has evolved into one where Joanne and a few other adults grow lots of vegetables, which are all donated to the Heights Emergency Food Center,

located at Disciples Christian Church on Mayfield Road. There was no garden in 2020, because of the pandemic, but in 2019 the garden produced nearly 500 pounds of vegetables to donate.

"When we took over the space," Joanne said, "the rose garden had been gone for several years. The city covered it with mulch every year, which undoubtedly contributed to the great soil there now. And that empty garden was just calling out to me as a goldmine site for a garden."

So now, between their two grandmothers, my grandchildren are learning a lot about gardening. And without knowing about the garden my grandfather made for me and my brother, Joanne has created a garden for the grandchildren at her house, where they each grow their favorite vegetables. And, like a lot of gardens, and a lot of other things in life, this has come full-circle.

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



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