Coventry PEACE Lantern Festival is Dec. 11

Krista Hawthorne

The public is invited to attend the Coventry PEACE Campus Lantern Festival, a celebration of light, on Saturday, Dec. 11. The festival will begin with a lantern-making workshop, 2:30-4:30 p.m., at Coventry PEACE Campus, 2843 Washington Blvd. Artful artist Jacqui Brown (Studio Cat) and Art Acts artist Tanya Gonzalez will guide participants of all ages in the creation of their own lanterns.

In addition, Lake Erie Ink will host a workshop for writing solstice-themed stories and winter-themed haiku.

At 5 p.m., workshop participants can share their creations with the community during a Lantern Procession that will step off from the building’s front entrance and wind its way through Coventry PEACE Park and the Coventry Village Business District.

Illuminated musicians, dancers, and larger-than-life puppets, created and orchestrated by Coventry PEACE Campus artist Rob VanLear, founder of Parade the Circle, will lead the way through a pathway of luminaria.

Community members can bring their own handmade lanterns and join in the fun.

The procession will terminate back at Coventry PEACE Campus, where participants and the community can partake of cocoa and cookies, courtesy of FutureHeights and Reaching Heights, and sing carols with the Singers Club of Cleveland.

Everyone is invited to join the organizations of Coventry PEACE Campus for this community celebration.

Heights alumnae bring health screenings to families

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

When we think of blood pressure and burgers together, it’s usually not for a good reason. Two Heights High graduates put a positive spin on the combo, however, at an October health-screening event held at Monticello Middle School.

Twin sisters Jen and Jessica Macklin both had participated in the Career Technical Education program in pharmacology when they were students at Heights High. They graduated in 2003, and went on to earn doctorate degrees in pharmacy.

Partnering with the CH-UH City School District, the two women launched Hands-On-Health to provide information and health screenings to families enrolled in the district’s “21st Century” grant-funded, after-school programs.

At the “Wealthy Heart” mobile event on Saturday, Oct. 9, several dozen families from Boulevard, Noble, and Oxford chose to participate, and spotlight the innovative and outstanding projects created and led by Cleveland Heights and University Heights residents over this past year.

Projects supported by the Future Heights Neighborhood Mini-Grants program include neighborhood gardening and beautification efforts, youth engagement and beautification efforts, youth engagement programs.

Heights Middle School Shorts, a summer program of Building Heights, was among 14 projects funded in 2021.

Sarah Wolf

On Wednesday, Dec. 8, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., FutureHeights will turn on the applause sign for all of the recipients of its 2021 neighborhood mini-grants. All are welcome to attend this virtual gathering that will offer an overview of the program, explain how to participate, and spotlight the innovative and outstanding projects created and led by Cleveland Heights and University Heights residents over this past year.

Projects supported by the Future Heights Neighborhood Mini-Grants program include neighborhood gardening and beautification efforts, youth engagement and beautification efforts, youth engagement programs.

Heights alumnae bring health screenings to families

Heights alumnae bring health screenings to families

Kim Sergio Inglis

In Cleveland Heights and University Heights, packed local election ballots—in which voters in each city elected a mayor, a number of city council representatives, and three school board members—failed to bring to the polls even half of eligible Heights voters.

According to the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections (BCE), the official election results, as of Nov. 16, are as follows:

In Cleveland Heights’ two-candidate mayoral contest, voters elected Kahil Seren with 6,899 votes (60.38%). Barbara Danforth received 4,502 votes (39.49%). A BOE report shows that there were 13,396 registered voters in Cleveland Heights, as of Nov. 1.

In University Heights, a city with 8,865 registered voters as of Nov. 1, incumbent Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan won re-election with 1,584 votes (40.74%), followed by Philip M. Atkinson with 1,137 votes (29.57%). Candidate Barbara Blankfeld, a close second, received 1,137 votes (29.57%), followed by Philip M. Atkin with 790 votes (20.94%), and Kim Simmons with 712 votes (18.54%).

In the CH-UH City School District Board of Education race, in which Heights voters elected three school board members from a field of seven candidates, the three incumbent candidates, Malia Lewis (3,311 votes,33.14%), Jodi Sourini (2,740 votes,27.91%), and Dan Heintz (6,014 votes,18.68%), retained their seats on the school board.

There were two separate contests and slates of candidates for Cleveland Heights City Council. In the full, four-candidate contest on page 12...
**Letters Policy**

The Heights Observer welcomes letters to the editor on non-partisan, non-adver- tisement, along with the writer’s name, phone number and e-mail address, to: www.heightsobserver.org/letters

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**Heights Observer**

The Heights Observer is a non-profit local, community newspaper published monthly by FutureHeights, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to educating and engaging our community. 

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**Heights Observer**

**CH Mayor-elect Seren on election and government transition**

**Kahlil Seren**

Thank you, Cleveland Heights. I am immensely grateful for the faith that you have placed in me, and acutely aware of the responsibility I’ve been given as the first mayor elected in Cleveland Heights.

It’s been about one month since one of the most consequential elections in our city’s history. Our community answered this historic question of leadership with resounding support for my candidacy. This support provided a clear mandate to govern and to lead our city through the necessary changes that make progress possible.

Our first mayoral election is over, now the work of creating an administration begins. As mayor-elect, I have been working with our city manager and city council to lay the foundation for our new collaborative branch of municipal government. In consultation with the current administration and several trusted advisors, I have been developing improvements in the structure of the executive branch that will help us better address the challenges, and take advantage of the opportunities, that lie ahead.

I have introduced to council a proposed salary range for the Charter-created City Administrator position, and the city will be releasing a newly developed job posting this year, so that my administration and the new council can hit the ground running next year to confirm and onboard my second-in-command with no delay.

It will be necessary to round out the team with some new Directors—job postings are forthcoming. Of note, following the election, our current chief of police has decided to stay on initially, as part of my administration. I ran on a platform of government at the front because I know our performance must improve, even as we contend with scarce public resources. Those improvements mean making changes that advance our goal of making it entirely high-quality service to our residents, inclusive and transparent decision-making that reflects common values, and earning back our reputation as a forward-thinking, interconnected, and invigorating place to live and work.

I want all of you to know that I am here for YOU. To represent you, I must know what matters to you. I expect to hear from you often; the new administration is already working to strengthen multiple new avenues for timely, unfiltered communication. I will be resuming online Sunday office hours, effective December 5, so that residents can interface with me directly now and into the new year.

We’ve waited long enough, so let’s get started—I’m looking forward to the new Cleveland Heights we create together.

Kahlil Seren is the current vice president of CH City Council, and mayor-elect of Cleveland Heights.

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**About the Observer**

The Heights Observer is not an ordinary newspaper; it is a nonprofit publication for residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

The Heights 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 must 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 submit a letter for consideration of any kind, go to www.heightsobserver.org and click on “Member Center” at the left.

For information about writing style, and how to become a member, please visit “Become an Observer” at the left. For questions that aren’t answered there, call the FutureHeights office at 216-310-1423 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

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**Opinion**

**Ohio Mayor Brennan outlines his second-term agenda**

Michael Dylan Brennan

In the November election, the voters of University Heights sent a message. They elected new and energetic council representation with diverse skills. And they gave me a decisive win, with more votes than I received four years ago.

The residents of University Heights were given a clear choice. They chose for me to continue with my agenda of progress, sustainability, and redevelopment. They elected to make the council people’s second-in-command support that agenda. With the new council, I look forward to resuming the people’s business and implementing our agenda.

Residents would seem to prefer that the mayor and council get along. But what they really care about is meaningful progress and action. Moving forward. Making University Heights an even greater place to live, work, and raise a family.

The voters gave me a mandate for my agenda. I intend to use it. I have extended my hand to our city council—join me. Work with me to implement what the residents of University Heights want.

**Together, let’s fix our streets.** We’ve got the money; let’s stop hoarding it. Not only should we fix our streets, we should fix the curbs while we’re at it. And let’s use our funds from the federal government to chin away at upgrading our sewers. My administration will continue to support strategic investment in our infrastructure while continuing to live within our means.

**Together, let’s finish University Square redevelopment.** We have a developer with a record of success. We’ve worked with the county, the school district, the bondholders, and all stakeholders to make this redevelopment happen. New apartments, stores, restaurants, and more are coming to University Heights. In 2022, we will get this done. And we will start building.

**Together, let’s update our zoning.** With a comprehensive zoning update, we can promote redevelopment and new uses, while preserving the residential character of our neighborhoods.

**Together, let’s go green.** We will continue to promote bicycling and multimodal transportation, and welcome EV charging stations, and scooters. We will make it easier for homeowners to install solar panels. We will improve (instead of eliminate) recycling pickup. New construction by the city will be green, we will purchase and dedicating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) money to sewer upgrades. We will reduce the city’s carbon emissions by 30% by 2030. Let’s build the sustainable city for decades to come.

Together, let’s build new municipal facilities. Residents need a new senior center, and community programming. Our new City Hall will be environmentally efficient and fully accessible, complete with community spaces. We will replace our obsolete and decrepit firehouse and police station. Our municipal facilities study is nearly complete, and we plan to design and begin building in the new term. Our 2022 budget will reflect the necessary investment to get started.

I’m proud of what we’ve accomplished together in my first term. Folks all around have seen the improvements we’ve made in University Heights these last four years, in serving our economic development, in building community. We’ve just begun. There’s so much more that we can and will do together in the next four years. Let’s get to work.

Michael Dylan Brennan is the mayor of University Heights. He was re-elected to a second four-year term in November.
City urges public involvement in Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook process

Eric Zamft

The redevelopment of Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook has been a long time coming. In the past 15 years Cleveland Heights has adopted new zoning, included the redevelopment in the city's Master Plan, and sought development partners more than once. Earlier this year, CH City Council selected and engaged with Flaherty & Collins (the "Applicant") to redevelop the site with a four-story, mixed-use development containing a mix of residential units, commercial, and green and gathering spaces (the "Project"). Since that time, there has been significant engagement with the community, including many community meetings and the creation of a dedicated project Web page, www.clevelandheights.com/clm.

In my discussions with various individuals over the past few months, there was uncertainty about the review and approval process, including the roles of various city boards. What follows is a summary of that process:

• The Planning Commission will be the main body to review the overall plan for the Project. It is anticipated that the Applicant will present a preliminary site plan at the Dec. 8 Planning Commission meeting.

• The Architectural Board of Review (ABR) will review the architecture, materials, and overall "look" of proposed buildings and structures. It is anticipated that the Applicant will present preliminarily on the architecture at the Dec. 21 ABR meeting.

• The project site is currently zoned C-2X Multi-Use District, which was specifically created by CH City Council in 2004 to encourage denser, mixed-use development near public parking. The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) will review and consider any variances from the current C-2X District zoning regulations requested by the Applicant. It is anticipated that the Applicant will appear before the BZA in January.

City council does not have a role in the design review of the Project; rather, it is responsible for review of the Development Agreement. The Planning Department does not have an approval role; rather, it works with the Applicant to guide the application to the various boards, and provide recommendations to those boards.

Every Cleveland Heights resident, property owner, and merchant has a role in the review of the Project through public comment. It is incumbent upon all to:

• Do your own homework in order to form your own opinions on the Project and its elements.

• Show up at the right times, since each board has a very specific role. The above meetings are public meetings and the city encourages interested parties to attend.

• Comment early and often to make sure there is ample opportunity for your comments to be reviewed and considered for integration into the Project.

I encourage everyone to check the project’s Web page for information and updates.

Eric Zampt is the planning director for Cleveland Heights.

Welcome Home, Come Celebrate Christmas With FBC!

• Dec. 19th, 4:00 PM - Jazz Christmas. A celebration featuring classic Christmas songs and carols by the Demetrius Steinmetz Trio and special guests.

• Dec. 24th, 7:00 PM - The Story of Christmas Join us in person or on our Livestream to be a part of the story of all who came to visit the newborn savior! Let this message of hope fill your heart just as candlelight and song will fill our sanctuary as we prepare for the birth of Jesus.

• December 24th, 11:00 PM - Christmas Eve Our traditional Candlelight Service is now presented entirely online. Familiar tunes are featured, along with cozy, fireside readings of the story of Christmas.

firstbaptistcleveland.org/christmas
Ken Goldberg

About the most ridiculous proposal during all my years of living in Cleveland Heights is the building of yet another park on Lee Road, smack in the middle of what should be a vibrant district of shopping, restaurants, theater, and a public library! What a waste of prime property in a commercial zone!

This has been my neighborhood for 36 years, and many pushing for the park don’t even live or work in the district. Besides the development complex’s long-term, great benefit for so many (prospective business owners, shoppers, residents), this is a personal issue for me, as I have grown extremely enthusiastic in the past 20 years about three mixed-use developments planned for the triangle, only to be devastated each time a plan dwindled down, then fizzled out altogether. How many times I’ve walked by that triangular wasteland and been disgusted—even uneasy when it’s dark. The flow of the entire district is spoiled.

Still another park? Who will maintain it, and at what cost? Let’s see: we have within two miles two mini-parks within a block; our Cain Park treasure, just a stretch to the north and available for any sort of activity; all the Shaker Heights parkland just about a mile to the south, and a University Heights mini-park and city park not far to the east.

What we really could use is an exciting new complex on Lee Road, where no commercial or residential buildings have been constructed in close to 50 years. I believe the development would even raise housing values on the neighboring streets. Bring it on! Obviously, planning major projects in Cleveland Heights has long been a delicate issue, though I see development booming in Little Italy, University Circle, Tremont and Ohio City.

The idea that, were a one-acre park to be built, the developer could go ahead with the remaining site, between Tullamore and Cedar roads, is ludicrous. If the developer cannot proceed with what has been discussed for countless hours, it will surely kill the project. The developer, Flaherty & Collins, has considered each alteration—often in response to public input—in terms of what it can accomplish for financial success, and is unlikely to be interested in any major reduction in scale. The developer has even been willing to compromise by providing a small park on the Sheffield Road end, but that doesn’t satisfy the “Lee Road Park” crowd. If somehow a larger park were to go ahead, and the developer was still able to keep the project alive, surely it would want a much taller building on the remaining parcel, which the same pro-park crowd would protest again.

This should not involve a “vote of the people”—typically undertaken when zoning changes are required. Did the people vote on such projects as construction of the Heights Center Building, or the Heights Rockefeller Building? Flaherty & Collins has every right to build this project, with all the usual public meetings and opportunities for public participation. It’s called “free enterprise.” Consider the big picture, please: Let’s promote this mixed-use development to enhance the Heights, rather than such far-off places as Solon or Strongsville. It looks like this project will finally make it. Let’s aim to keep this one!

Ken Goldberg is a semi-retired librarian, local historian, and preservation consultant.

Bustling with activity, that’s how Pat Mallik and her husband Singh describe the newest 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

Judson Park Cleveland Heights | Judson Manor University Circle | South Franklin Circle Chagrin Falls

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FocusTattoo welcomes all 1846 Coventry Road, #400 Upstairs from Guys Pizza
Wrapping up a challenging year

Heights of Democracy

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

Weather predictions to the contrary, Cleveland Heights enjoyed a sunny, if brisk, Election Day on Nov. 2, with rain holding off until shortly before the polls closed.

We are grateful to the candidates who ran in this historic municipal election. Democracy is not a spectator sport, and without viable candidates and dedicated elected officials, it cannot exist.

The 13 candidates who competed for five city council seats, the seven who ran for three school board positions, and the two mayoral finalists made these campaigns highly competitive.

Congratulations to Cleveland Heights' first-ever mayor-elect Kahlil Seren, new council members-elect Tony Cuda, Anthony Mattox and Josie Moore, returning council members Craig Cobb and Malia Lewis, and returning school board members Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis and Jodi Sourini.

Looking back over 2021, we admit we've been a little cranky. On top of the pandemic and a seemingly interminable election season, life in a city suspended between past and future makes for anxiety and impatience. Unfortunately, Cleveland Heights has been in something of a holding pattern since November 2019, when we voted to change our form of government, beginning Jan. 1, 2022.

To be fair, the city has not been at a complete standstill. Several development initiatives have seen forward motion, pleasing some residents and dismaying others. As Top of the Hill rises, planning is underway for a residential and retail complex in Cedar Lee. A contract has been signed for infill housing on 23 city-owned lots in Caledonia.

Meanwhile, the planning department spearheaded a revision of zoning codes for residential parking and garages. This flexible policy accommodates the great variation in lot sizes throughout the city, and eliminates the imperative to expand paved surfaces, allowing for continued absorption of stormwater.

As we pointed out in May, June and July, inequity persists among our neighborhoods, with amenities particularly lacking in the Noble and Severance areas. Severance Center remains a particularly thorny problem, so we are pleased to see MetroHealth Medical Center's new behavioral health unit under construction, and a Netflix film in production in the former Walmart.

Of course, city staff and Planning Commission members should have sought to preserve all of Millikin Woods early in the approval process for MetroHealth's expansion, when there was time to negotiate a better solution. But we are gratified that, at long last, our council members followed the example of their Shaker Heights peers, and voted to support the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District's plan for the Shaker parklands.

We hope that in the future all proposed city policies and initiatives will undergo scrutiny through the lenses of racial and economic justice and environmental sustainability. Last month, we wrote of waiting nearly a year for council and staff to make essential preparations for the approaching governmental change. Finally, the long-promised “transition book” has been delivered to the mayor-elect, and to the current and incoming council members. In November, the law department finally produced draft legislation updating our codified ordinances in accordance with the amended charter.

Getting back to our crankiness, we recognize the need for patience in the months ahead. Mayor-elect Seren will be building an administration virtually from scratch. Council, with three new members out of six, must reconstitute itself as a legislative and representative body, and choose a seventh member to fill Seren's seat. Due to now-ubiquitous supply-chain issues, delivery of new garbage trucks and carts is delayed at least until spring. Years' worth of pent-up frustration will not disappear overnight.

A grace period for our new government seems only fair. With great hope for the future of Cleveland Heights, we commit to it and invite you to do so as well. Happy holidays!

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg are writers, editors and longtime residents of Cleveland Heights. Contact them at heightsdemocracy@gmail.com.
**Ohio’s state education leaders reject equity; we must not**

Meryl Johnson represents District 11 on Ohio’s State Board of Education. Her district covers 24 school districts, including ours, in Cuyahoga and Lake counties. Johnson, a retired 40-year public school teacher, is a visible and determined advocate for children, equity, public education and the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District (CH-UH).

“I ran for the state board to make a difference. I wanted to make it more possible for children of color to have the same opportunities as white children,” said Johnson. She is in the first year of her second term on the board, which has elected and eight appointed members.

The state board oversees the implementation of education policy in Ohio. During Johnson’s tenure, members adopted a five-year strategic plan to lift aspirations and to promote high-quality education practices throughout the state. The plan made equity a core principle and presented educating the whole child as a central measure of quality. It provides a clear roadmap for making our schools work for more of our students.

Equity goes beyond saying everyone is equal. It pushes against barriers outside an individual’s control that privilege some people and discriminate against others, leading to unequal opportunities. Last year, George Floyd’s death triggered a reawakening about the powerful cost of racism paid by African Americans. Under the Black Lives Matter banner, individuals, organizations, businesses and policymakers launched efforts to examine their own participation in racism, and to unlock the doors that would fully value Black people.

This awakening reached the state board. Then-president Laura Kohler worked with Johnson and two other board members to craft a statement joining the board with other efforts to rein in hatred and promote the equal value of every student.

On July 15, 2020, the board approved Resolution 20, titled “Resolution to Condemn Racism and to Advance Equity and Opportunity for Black Students, Indigenous Students and Students of Color.” The resolution acknowledged that public education “has not been immune to racism and inequality,” and that “we have a great deal of work left to do.” It condemned “all the strongest possible terms, white supremacy culture, hate speech, hate crimes and violence in the service of hatred.”

“The resolution was a way for us to exercise some leadership and to remind local districts what they should be doing,” said Johnson, who sent the statement to all the school districts she represents.

CH-UH Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby welcomed the resolution. It inspired our district to issue a similar resolution, and it re-energized the district’s long-standing work to root out racism and remove barriers that prevent students from fully benefiting from the education we offer. Equity is the centerpiece of CH-UH district improvement initiatives.

The resolution condemned behavior that is inconsistent with a civil society and our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Sadly, racial division and hostility have been mobilized by some to gain and hold power, making it a courageous move to reject these otherwise odious behaviors.

On Oct. 13, in a politicized move, the state board’s new majority overruled leaders for social justice. With a 10-7 vote, the board repealed Resolution 20, rejecting equity as a goal of education in our state. It’s hard not to interpret this step backwards as an endorsement of, or at least indifference to, racism, white supremacy and hate.

Kirby is determined to pursue what is good for students even if state leaders have lost their nerve, and we can count on Johnson to stay in the fight. She is not deterred by the reality that racism has a way of interfering with progress toward anti-racism.

Susie Kaeser has been a proud Cleveland Heights resident since 1979. She is the former director of Reaching Heights and is active with the Heights Coalition for Public Education and the League of Women Voters.
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Cleveland Heights City Council
Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 18, 2021

Council members present were Council President Jason Stein, Council Vice President David Steiner, and Council Members David Bostian, Tanya Spore, Lisa Sirota, and Laura Melone. Absent was Council Member Greg DiPietro. The City Manager’s Report was presented by John Fleck, the City’s Finance Director.

Public comments

Diane Hallum, a member of the Citizens Advisory Committee, made recommendations for the distribution of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which were unanimously accepted. The City Manager presented the city’s financial status, which is projected to be in the black for the current fiscal year.

City manager’s report

After printing focus magazine, it became apparent that the information about the new, automated refuse-collection implementation became inaccurate. Equipment will be available to supply chain delays, and the program will not begin until spring 2022.

Council actions

Two items were passed on emergency, at first reading:
- Council accepted a grant of $39,480.50 from the Gametime Company to purchase and install new playground equipment in Denison Park. The city will match this grant with $76,999.34.
- Council amended the 2021 budget to increase city debt for the Severance Ring road. Revenue will offset the debt.

Member comments

Melody Joy Hart announced that the design for the Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook project is not final, and will be discussed at a Planning Commission meeting, which will be held either Nov. 10 or Dec. 8, on WebEx.

LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.

NOVEMBER 1, 2021

Michael N. Ungar was absent. All other council members were present, as were the city manager, clerk of council, and law director.

Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook MOU

Council approved a 30-day extension of the MOU with F&C Development Inc. for the Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook development. The group expressed its gratitude.

LWV Observer: Gail Larson.

NOVEMBER 8, 2021 – special meeting

The MOU with F&C Development Inc. for the Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook development was withdrawn because Davida Russell wanted more time to get her questions answered. According to Niemann O’Neil, this MOU expires Nov. 9. A special meeting may be held to vote on this resolution.

Council authorized the allocation, appropriation, and expenditure of ARPA funds for sewer infrastructure improvement projects. Melody Joy Hart commented that by allocating $18 million of ARPA funds now, the city could apply for matching funds from other agencies.

LWV Observer: Gail Larson.

We invite you to join us in celebration of the birth of Christ!

Friday, December 24th – Christmas Eve
4:00pm St. Ann Church
4:00pm St. Philomena Church
Saturday, December 25th – Christmas Day
12:00 Midnight St. Ann Church
10:00am St. Philomena Church
11:00am St. Ann Church
Sunday, December 26th – Feast of the Holy Family
11:00am St. Ann Church
9:00am St. Philomena Church
10:00am St. Ann Church
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Jubilee Gifts in the Heights

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Saturday, December 25th – Christmas Day
12:00 Midnight St. Ann Church
10:00am St. Philomena Church
11:00am St. Ann Church
Sunday, December 26th – Feast of the Holy Family
11:00am St. Ann Church
9:00am St. Philomena Church
10:00am St. Ann Church
St. Ann (Office) 2175 Coventry Rd. Cleveland Heights, OH
St. Philomena 1904 Euclid Ave, East Cleveland, OH

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Jubilee Gifts in the Heights
Filling CH’s next council vacancy

With Kahlil Seren, a current Cleveland Heights City Council member, set to become the city’s mayor, his council seat will become vacant in January.

According to Tony Cuda, newly elected to CH City Council, “The council vacancy and other issues will be discussed in a special Committee of the Whole meeting scheduled for Nov. 29. The meeting will be attended by the six council members who will be serving as of Jan. 1, 2022. In this meeting, we will be discussing the process by which we will move forward to fill the vacancy. So far nothing has been decided.” (The December issue of the Heights Observer went to press before news of any plans discussed at the Nov. 29 meeting could be added to this article.)

According to the new city charter amendment (Issue 30), voters approved in the November election, city council members will have 45 days in which to fill a council vacancy, from the date the vacancy occurs. Both the mayor and the majority of the council members must vote to fill the vacancy within 45 days, by a majority vote, the mayor may then have 10 days in which to fill the vacancy.

The unexpired term, to which a new council member will be appointed, ends on Dec. 31, 2023. The seat will be on the ballot in the 2022 general election; whoever wins the seat in that election, whether it is the appointee or someone else, will then serve out the remainder of the unexpired term. The seat will be on the ballot again in 2023.

Observe!

Submitting an article to the Heights Observer is a piece of cake!

1. The Heights Observer is written by people like you. So write something. Use a computer.

2. Register/log in at the Member Center (www.heightsobserver.org).

3. After logging in, click the Submit New Story button in the left-hand column (Don’t see it? It’s nested under “Writer”). Then follow the prompts. Hint: Keep your original file open so you can easily copy and paste into the text box.

4. Reward yourself: you’re about to be published. We’ll review and edit your article, and let you know if we have any questions.
Heights scouts look back on an unforgettable adventure

Christopher Jacobs

This past summer, eight boys and four adults from Boy Scout Troop 22, based at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Cleveland Heights, finally had the adventure of a lifetime, backpacking at Philmont Scout Ranch near Cimarron, N.M. “Finally” because previous attempts had been canceled—by a massive fire in 2018, and by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. These were the only two canceled seasons in Philmont’s long history of hosting scouts.

Philmont Scout Ranch (www.philmontscoutranch.org) is the Boy Scouts of America’s (BSA) largest National High Adventure Base, covering 140,177 acres of rugged mountain wilderness in the Sangre de Cristo range of the Rocky Mountains, in northeastern New Mexico. The scout ranch operates 35 staffed camps and 75 trail camps across rugged terrain that ranges in elevation from 6,500 to 12,444 feet. More than one million scouts, venturers, and adult advisors have experienced the adventure of Philmont since its first camping season in 1939.

Hiking more than 65 miles over 11 days, the Heights scouts carried on their backs everything they needed to survive in the mountains, including up to four days-worth of food. They participated in back-country programs along the way, including rock climbing, fly-fishing, black powder rifle range, archery, sweat lodge, search-and-rescue training, tomahawk throwing, and blacksmithing, as well as a conservation project in which they cleared brush in an effort to reduce the impact of future fires on Philmont’s ecosystem.

The scouts had another unique experience—traveling by train. Amtrak comes through Cleveland in the middle of the night, but the scouts were game, if a little sleepy. Amtrak took the group all the way from Cleveland to New Mexico, via Chicago. For most, it was their first experience of seeing the Chicago skyline, as well as the midwestern and southwestern American landscape they traveled through along the way.

The Troop 22 scouts, ranging in age from 14 to 18, come from many different schools and neighborhoods, and had no backpacking experience prior to joining BSA. The adult advisors were along for safety reasons, and were trained in wilderness first aid for emergencies, but the scouts were led by the boys themselves. One scout was the crew leader, and it was the scouts who made the decisions and kept the group organized and working together.

Troop 22 welcomes new scouts. Boys who are at least 11 years old, have completed fifth grade, and are not yet 18 years old are eligible to join at any time. Troop 22 meets every Monday at 7:30 p.m. at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, and typically has one weekend outing every month.

Christopher Jacobs is assistant scoutmaster for BSA Troop 22 in Cleveland Heights.

Advent Lessons & Carols
Saturday, December 11, 5 p.m.
Sunday, December 12, 5 p.m.*

Christmas Eve Pageant with Holy Eucharist
Friday, December 24, 2 p.m., & 4 p.m.**

Christmas Eve Festival Holy Eucharist
Friday, December 24, 7 p.m.*, 9 p.m., & 11 p.m.

Christmas Day Holy Eucharist
Saturday, December 25, 10:30 a.m.

Registration and masks are required. Call or visit our website to register.
*ASL Interpreted
**Livestreamed

2747 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44106
(216) 932-5815 • www.stpauls-church.org
GE holiday display to light up Noble beginning Dec. 3

Continuing a long-held holiday tradition, GE Lighting, a Savant company, will illuminate its Nela Park headquarters, at 1975 Noble Road, with a festive display beginning Friday, Dec. 3. This is the 97th year the company will have created its light show. This year’s theme, Holiday Season is in the Air, will feature nearly one million LED lights, and stretch along Noble Road for several blocks. The display will stay illuminated 24/7, through Jan. 3.

Earlier this year, the opportunity to turn on the Nela Holiday Lights was auctioned off to the highest bidder, to benefit the Greater Cleveland Food Bank’s Harvest for Hunger. For the first time ever, a special guest will step up to the podium, alongside GE Lighting President and CEO Bill Lacey, to flip the switch at approximately 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 3.

This year’s display includes nine colorfully lit vignettes that include hot air balloons and baskets filled with gifts and cards; Santa’s reindeers ready to take flight; festive snowmen and snowflakes galore; a giant iPad that controls the rotating colors of the holiday pole trees; colorful Christmas bulbs and other holiday décor that adorn the buildings; a hot air balloon selfie station where visitors can capture a festive, personalized picture to share with loved ones; and a replica of the National Christmas Tree.

For 59 years, GE Lighting, now owned by Savant Systems Inc., has provided the design and lights for the National Christmas Tree in Washington, D.C. The lights will all be LEDs, which last 10 times longer than traditional holiday lights and save up to 80% in energy costs. The entire light display will be visible from the street.

Learn more by following the company on Facebook and Twitter @ GEILighting.

Ben Sabol is the director of communications for GE Lighting, a Savant company.

Free books mailed to your young child!

If your child is 4 years old or younger and lives in Cuyahoga County Please register online at: ImaginationLibrary.com

Our digital collection is here for you, wherever you are, 24/7.

Heights Libraries offers a large collection of digital media, including books, magazines, comics, music, movies, and television shows. Visit heightslibraries.org/digital-collection and start exploring!

Heights Observer December 1, 2021
-Elation of light and hope during the darkness of winter. There is no cost to participate, but donations are welcome.

Learn more at www.coventrypeacecampus.org or on Facebook at fb.me/e/2LbtjAoSK.

Krista Hawthorne is the executive director of Reaching Heights and board president of Coventry PEACE Campus.

Cleveland Heights – University Heights Public Library Board

Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 18, 2021
Board members present were President Dana Fluegel, Vice President Gabe Crenshaw, Patti Carlyle, Tyler McEague and Vikka Turakhia. Min Gebovc and Annette Iwamoto were absent.

Family Connections presentation Joanne Federman and Charissee Holmes gave a presentation to the board about Family Connections, a program (that works) to ensure kindergarten students are on track for reading at the end of the school year.

During the 2019-20 school year, Family Connections served 77 families, conducted 377 virtual home visits, and gave families 500 books. For 65 percent of families served, the kindergarten child finished the school year reading on track.

Financial and investment report Total cash balance across the operating accounts, Bauer fund accounts, and investment accounts was $22,835,808.99.

Board resolutions The board approved the 2022 salary table, Board investment accounts was $22,835,808.99. Total cash balance across the operating accounts, Bauer fund accounts, and investment accounts was $22,835,808.99.

-Adopt a Reading Buddy Beginning readers are invited to adopt a reading buddy! These buddies need forever homes where they will be loved and read to everyday. Adoptions start Dec. 7 at 4 p.m., and will continue until all the stuffed animals have been claimed. Each buddy comes with a list of favorite books and a reading log. Return a completed reading log to the Noble Children's Desk by Jan. 7, to be entered into a raffle to win a prize book. The prize is yours to keep! University Heights Branch 1386 Cedar Road, 216-331-4700 Monday, Dec. 20, all day Gingerbread House Challenge. Attention all builders and architects! Do you have what it takes to create a sturdy, edible house out of frosting and graham crackers? Let’s find out! Stop by the University Heights Branch to pick up your Gingerbread House Kit. Registration begins Dec. 6 at www.heightslibrary.org. For ages 7 and older.

Online Tuesday, Dec. 7, 7 p.m. Online Graphic Design Alternatives. For those interested in graphic design, free online programs might be a great place to start! Join us for a virtual class, to learn the basics of websites like Canva, Pixlr, and Vectr, and start designing! A valid library card is required for registration at www.heightslibrary.org. Registration begins Dec. 7, 7 p.m. Online Graphic Design Alternatives. For those interested in graphic design, free online programs might be a great place to start! Join us for a virtual class, to learn the basics of websites like Canva, Pixlr, and Vectr, and start designing! A valid library card is required for registration at www.heightslibrary.org. Information about accessing the class will be sent prior to class.

What’s going on at your library?

Coventry Village Branch 1924 Coventry Road, 216-331-3400 Dec. 1 through Dec. 15 Take and Make Chili in a Jar. Stop by the Coventry Village branch for a take-and-make soup kit containing the dry ingredients for a tasty chili. Just add water and tomatoes. Available until Dec. 15. Kids can make chili at home with adult supervision. Registration is required at www.heightslibrary.org. For ages 6 through 18.

Lee Road Branch 2349 Lee Road, 216-392-3600 Thursday, Dec. 16, 7 p.m. Pioneers of Sci-Fi Book Club. This program explores the works of authors who pushed the genre forward. December’s title is Foundation, by Isaac Asimov.

Noble Neighborhood Branch 2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665 Tuesday, Dec. 7, 4 p.m. Adopt a Reading Buddy. Beginning readers are invited to adopt a reading buddy! These buddies need forever homes where they will be loved and read to everyday. Adoptions start Dec. 7 at 4 p.m., and will continue until all the stuffed animals have been claimed. Each buddy comes with a list of favorite books and a reading log. Return a completed reading log to the Noble Children’s Desk by Jan. 7, to be entered into a raffle to win a prize book. The prize is yours to keep! University Heights Branch 1386 Cedar Road, 216-331-4700 Monday, Dec. 20, all day Gingerbread House Challenge. Attention all builders and architects! Do you have what it takes to create a sturdy, edible house out of frosting and graham crackers? Let’s find out! Stop by the University Heights Branch to pick up your Gingerbread House Kit. Registration begins Dec. 6 at www.heightslibrary.org. For ages 7 and older.

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Heights Observer December 1, 2021

 Heights Observer December 1, 2021  www.heightsobserver.org
Heights Libraries opens local history room at Lee

Sheryl Banks

Heights Libraries is pleased to announce the opening of its new Local History Room at the Lee Road branch.

Located on the building's second floor, the room is the culmination of years of planning that began in 2016 with the library's centennial celebration. That year, staff began pulling together photos and documents to create an online historical timeline for the Heights Libraries system.

“Once we had the library’s history documented, we decided to start looking at ways we could help community members learn more about the history of the area, and do their own research,” said Jessica Robinson, local history librarian. “First, we added local history resources to our website. Then we began figuring out where we could put a local history room.”

The Local History Room occupies the former Quiet Study Room, a large, glassed-in area that once provided a silent atmosphere for customers. After the small study rooms on the second floor became reservable a few years ago, use of the Quiet Study Room decreased, and the space was deemed the perfect size and location for the library’s local history collection. The space is large enough to accommodate a flatbed scanner, microfilm readers, a desk for the library’s local history librarian, and a work space for customers.

“This work is very meaningful for me, because building a local history collection is truly sacred and serious work,” Robinson said. “Archival repositories and the archivists who maintain them play a large role in determining cultural memory, because they choose whose histories are preserved through digitization and other methods. And in doing so, they also wind up determining who will have access to those stories in the future. In essence, those of us who work with historical material are writing tomorrow’s history today.”

The room’s materials include:
- City directories for Cleveland and its eastern suburbs
- Heights High Caldron yearbooks and alumni directories
- Local history reference books
- Sun Press and Cleveland Press microfilm
- Local history lectures and Cleveland Heights city council meetings on DVD
- Archival photographs, blueprints, and other documents chronicling the history of Heights Libraries
- Microfilm reader ScanPro 2200
- Book scanner KIC Bookeye 4v2

Library visitors can access the room most weekday afternoons, from 2 to 4 p.m., or can make a special appointment by e-mailing localhistory@heightslibrary.org. Those who would like to borrow local history reference books, including city directories or yearbooks, can do so when the room is closed by requesting them from staff at the second-floor reference desk.

Sheryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.
S’Wonderful Gifts is closing

In early November, a business liquidator announced the news that, after six years, owner Bill Wort had decided to close his Cleveland Heights gift shop. Wort opened S’Wonderful Gifts at 2254 Lee Road on Nov. 17, 2015. For 32 years prior to that, he had been a buyer for various museum shops. In deciding to retire, Wort cited competition from online retailers as the main reason, COVID the second. “What I will miss the most is my customers,” Wort said. “They’ve always been so supportive, and made the extra effort to support my shop and other local businesses. What I’m most proud of is when my customers voted the store “The Best Place For Unique Gifts In Cleveland Heights” [in the FutureHeights Best of the Heights Awards]. For information about the closing sale, and to register for sale alerts, visit www.swonderfulgifts.com.

Leggings boutique opens on South Taylor

On Oct. 15, Charlie Brown, a former barber, and his brothers opened a leggings boutique at 2174 S. Taylor Road. Called Ella Tiene Piernas (She Got Legs), the shop offers a variety of legging styles, sizes and materials, for women and girls, with prices starting at $9.99. The store is open Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The phone number is 216-331-2736.

CHEERS
to 10 years... 
...and to you! 
Thank you for being here for us. 
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COURTESY FUTUREHEIGHTS  SALLY KRAMER
Bill Wort in front of his shop, S’Wonderful Gifts.

Charlie Brown, co-owner of Ella Tiene Piernas (She Got Legs).

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Bill Wort in front of his shop, S’Wonderful Gifts.

Charlie Brown, co-owner of Ella Tiene Piernas (She Got Legs).

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Pop-up holiday market comes to Coventry Village

Made Cleveland will open its Holiday Pop Up market on Friday Nov. 26, in the former City Buddha space, at 1807 Coventry Road. The market will be open until Dec. 23, and will feature the work of more than 50 local creators, including home goods, greeting cards, jewelry, accessories, apparel, self-care products, and provisions. The large space enables Larchmere Fire Works, a partner with Made Cleveland, to offer live glass-blowing demonstrations, as in the photo above. Hours are noon to 7 p.m. For more information, visit madecleveland.com, or call 216-800-8420.

Church of the Saviour
United Methodist
Christmas Eve Worship

Join Us!

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Cleveland Heights 44118
cotsumc.org/christmas

Shop Local, Shop Small!
Over 25 Local Artists and Small Businesses
Light Breakfast and Lunch purchases available, provided by
New Heights Grill and other local establishments.
Kid Entrepreneurial Fair
St. Ann’s Church
2175 Coventry Rd., Cleveland Heights 44118
TeaSpot Tutoring offers
STEM-themed workshops

Decorate the holidays!

Decorate your very own gingerbread house for the holidays! We’ll provide a link to a pre-recorded zoom class, a “how to” guide, as well as all the fixings to create your masterpiece.

$50/ pre-recorded Zoom class, house & decorations

KIT PICKUP: Friday, December 6th-19th

Think Luna for your holiday shopping - scratch made pies, hand decorated sugar cookies, French macaron gift boxes, coffee mugs, gift cards & more!

Paint a Wood Sled Door Hanger!

No experience needed. Class limited to 25 painters. December 16, 2021 — 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm
Cost is $50 per person and includes step-by-step instruction, supplies and refreshments.

To register and for event details, go to: https://conta.cc/3HvgVUW or contact djinthepaint@gmail.com

Sarah Wolf

Iteshia Bankston always loved science. Stereotypically, more boys than girls gravitate toward science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects, but Bankston remained engaged and curious about them.

As an undergraduate, she majored in biology, then became a high school science teacher who made her classes hands-on and interactive in order to make the subject matter accessible, rather than intimidating.

“Some kids just like science but don’t want to become scientists,” Bankston said. “I wanted to show them that was OK—science was for everyone.”

Now Bankston is the co-owner of TeaSpot Tutoring (2066 Lee Road), a business she opened with her husband, Seneca Bankston, in November 2020. TeaSpot Tutoring provides academic and social-emotional learning support for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. It also hosts a young men’s mentoring workshop and other programming, such as a series of STEM-focused workshops that aim to bring science to life. TeaSpot also offers hands-on STEM-themed...
Born in the ‘50s, we went to school in the ‘30s

David Budin

Heights High was overcrowded when I attended classes there—3,000 kids in just three grades crammed into the hallways and everywhere. That was one problem. Another was that in the mid-to-late ‘60s the administrators were still clinging desperately to the institutions of the 1940’s and ‘50s. It was an era of great change in terms of such things as the concept of free speech. And in free expression, which included clothing and hair styles, music and other arts. The school’s administration was pretty repressive to begin with, but that magnified mightily with its reaction to the new thinking that swept into society in the mid-’60s.

The school still employed a ridiculously strict, detailed and long-winded dress code. No pants for girls, skirts and dresses had to come to a girl’s knees or lower (often demurely demurely with its reaction to the new thinking that swept into society in the mid-’60s. The school still employed a ridiculously strict, detailed and long-winded dress code. No pants for girls, except in gym class, where they were the only shoes permitted). The list went on and on. As for boys’ hair—even in that era of the Beatles’ massive popularity, and the resultant look of all their contemporary copycat pop and rock artists, and that of much of the population of the free world—it was not allowed to touch your collar in the back, or your ears on the sides, among other rules (like no Mohawk cuts). And no facial hair.

One day I was walking in the jammed main corridor when my unit principal called my name. “What now?” I muttered. He yelled, “What’s the matter, can’t you afford a haircut?” My hair was not long, by the way. I said, “No.” He said, “Here,” pulling St. out of his pocket. “Don’t come back till you get your hair cut.”

I took the money and went across the street to Wally’s Pool Hall, beneath the Cedar Lee Theatre, and played pool till the $2 ran out. I brushed my hair back on the sides and up in the back and returned just before the end of the last period. The principal never said anything about it.

But he said a lot of other things. Enough to push me over the line about quitting school, which I did, as soon as I turned 18. I always wanted to quit school, long before I ever met that principal, but he made me count the days until I could. He certainly wasn’t the only one there who was stuck in an earlier time period, though he seemed crueller than most of the others. I had an English teacher, who had also been my mother’s teacher there, and before I even said anything to her about him, other than his name, she remembered him as “sadistic.” And he was.

Early in high school, I and three other guys from my class made plans to run away. One of our parents discovered our plan, so we abandoned that idea. Two of the guys took off later and made it to Hawaii, where they got jobs and an apartment. They were found and dragged back here. One of them quit school and the other’s family moved away and enrolled him in a different school.

Another friend, after getting yelled at a million times by our mutual unit principal, got called in to the office for having hair that was too long. As usual, the guy told my friend not to come back till he got his hair cut. That was in 1966. He hasn’t been back since.

Yet another friend grew weary of that whole experience and did get his hair cut—super short—after quitting school and joining the Army. I turned 18 in late May of my class’s senior year. I didn’t have enough credits to graduate, and there was no way I was coming back to school—not that school, anyway—so, shortly after my birthday, and after all Heights Choir activities were finished, I quit school, too. And I grew my hair as long as I wanted, wore what I wanted, did get his hair cut—super short—after quitting school and joining the Army.

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LEI creates communities

ELI MILLETT

Lake Erie Ink (LEI) believes it takes a community to foster a lifelong love of creative expression. This fall, as LEI cautiously restarted its programming for youth, the Cleveland Heights-based organization took extra steps to increase its community presence. LEI currently is partnering with more than 20 different community organizations, and is becoming involved with a total of 55 outreach and community programs, including local schools and libraries, and larger programs, such as the Maltese Museum’s “Stop the Hate” competition.

LEI hopes to continue this partnership trend by expanding relationships with other organizations to provide opportunities for creative expression and academic support for young people who may not otherwise have those opportunities.

One of the most important communities LEI has created is its Teen Editorial Board, which meets weekly through the fall and winter. This group of teens works year-round to publish an anthology of writing and artwork collected from youths across Northeast Ohio.

Currently, the board is accepting submissions for its sixth anthology, which will center on the theme Blur. Teens interested in submitting their work for publication can submit writing or artwork to https://lakeerieink.org/teen-book-project.

This community of teens, and the work they produce, has proved especially important to them in recent years. As the editorial board noted in the introduction to On the Other Side, its most recent anthology, “New circumstances bring great uncertainty, but they also bring room to learn and grow and to change . . . . words are the most important tools for growth and change and healing; never stop sharing yours because there is always something that hasn’t been said yet.”

The teen anthology makes a great gift for a young person. Copies of On the Other Side, are available for a donation of $12. Anthologies can also be found in several local independent bookstores. Learn more at https://lakeerieink.org/teen-book-project.

ELI MILLETT works as the communications and outreach director at Lake Erie Ink. He currently lives in Cleveland Heights.

Elégie presents free holiday concert Dec. 18

Elégie will present a live holiday concert at the Wiley building (2155 Miramar Blvd., University Heights) on Saturday, Dec. 18, at 7:30 p.m. Founded in 2014, the male vocal quartet comprises four classically trained soloists and professional musicians who are Heights High alumni. Michael Hives (second from left in the photo) and Caleb Wright (at far right in the photo) graduated in 2009; Brian Barron (third from left in the photo) and Mist’a Craig (at far left in the photo) graduated in 2011. All were members of the Heights A Cappella Choir, Heights Singers, Heights High Barbershoppers, Heights Gospel Choir, and Heights Honors Ensemble. They have performed at some of Cleveland’s most notable venues, including Karamu House, Cain Park, Nighttown, and Jacob’s Pavilion. For this special concert, the group will perform a holiday repertoire, celebrating the spirit of the season with original music, as well as pieces from composers ranging from Bach to Boyz II Men. Local jazz musician and Heights alumnus Phillip K. Jones II, who has accompanied the group since 2015, will perform with Elégie on Dec. 18. The concert will be free, with the audience invited to make a free-will donation to help raise funds for the group’s spring 2022 New York City tour.

Elégie will present a free holiday concert at the Wiley building (2155 Miramar Blvd., University Heights) on Saturday, Dec. 18, at 7:30 p.m. Founded in 2014, the male vocal quartet comprises four classically trained soloists and professional musicians who are Heights High alumni. Michael Hives (second from left in the photo) and Caleb Wright (at far right in the photo) graduated in 2009; Brian Barron (third from left in the photo) and Mist’a Craig (at far left in the photo) graduated in 2011. All were members of the Heights A Cappella Choir, Heights Singers, Heights High Barbershoppers, Heights Gospel Choir, and Heights Honors Ensemble. They have performed at some of Cleveland’s most notable venues, including Karamu House, Cain Park, Nighttown, and Jacob’s Pavilion. For this special concert, the group will perform a holiday repertoire, celebrating the spirit of the season with original music, as well as pieces from composers ranging from Bach to Boyz II Men. Local jazz musician and Heights alumnus Phillip K. Jones II, who has accompanied the group since 2015, will perform with Elégie on Dec. 18. The concert will be free, with the audience invited to make a free-will donation to help raise funds for the group’s spring 2022 New York City tour.

For more information on Elégie or the upcoming performance follow the group on Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube (@elegievocals). The group can be contacted by e-mail at elegievoices@gmail.com, or by phone at 216-609-5448.
kits for students to work on at home.

In October, TeaSpot hosted an “Adventures in Weird Science” lab, in which participants made models of the human brain out of gelatin. “Don’t use flavored gelatin, or your brain will fall apart,” Bankston advised with a laugh. She added, “I did put some green dye into our molds for a little color, though.” Students had the chance to hold these gelatin brains in their hands and talk about them from a three-dimensional perspective. They even had the opportunity to pretend they were doctors doing surgery before taking the brains into a room with a blacklight, to see how that changed how they looked.

“So often kids are looking at things on screens, or in books, and don’t have the chance to get hands-on. I want to provide approachable opportunities to be engaged with science,” Bankston said.

In December, TeaSpot Tutoring will be offering two STEM-themed workshops, primarily geared for third- through eighth-graders, though younger students are also welcome.

“Ideas for students to get comfortable with the practice of exploring. It helps them become better critical thinkers,” Bankston said.

For more information, visit teaspotkids.com, or e-mail admin@teaspotkids.com.

Sarah Wolf is the community-building program manager at FuturesHeights.
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