



Free parking continues at all Cleveland Heights meters


INSIDE



**9** Donate your extra reusable bags during the month of July



**14** Local makers market opens brick-and-mortar shop



**15** Heights High graduate Antoine Dunn to headline at House of Blues

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

## Owners seek landmark status for CH's first condo

JoAnn London and Cathy Whelan

Completed in 1971, The Victorian was the first building in Cleveland Heights to be constructed as condominiums. In May, owners submitted paperwork to have the building designated a Cleveland Heights landmark, significant to the community. And on July 28—after a one-year pandemic delay—its owners will gather to celebrate The Victorian's 50th anniversary.

Properties Development Company broke ground on the building, located at 3701 Mayfield Road, in 1969. Architect Irving Robinson designed the building under the direction of the company's principal partners, Will Sukenik and Irving Fine, who were on-site daily.

At the time, condominiums were a new concept in home ownership. The Victorian's developers marketed the building by inviting potential buyers to "Try Before You Buy," in a program that let potential buyers



Of the owners who gathered recently for this photo, the longest-tenured has lived at The Victorian for 19 year. The newest owner has lived in the historic condominium for under a year.

rent a suite for up to two years before completing the purchase transaction. (Renting is no longer an option.)

The developers advertised the 50 individual homes as "condomaximums," and declared the the large, custom units to be

"the best-kept secret in Cleveland Heights."

A "gracious living" style is integral to the interior of The Victorian, while its contemporary architecture creates a sense of timelessness. The two-story lobby features a stunning Strauss

*continued on page 2*

## After 65 years, Heights Cleaners has closed

Lee Batdorff

After 65 years in business, opening in 1957, Heights Cleaners—Coventry Village's longest-running business with a single owner—closed on Saturday, June 4.

The owner, 98-year-old Manny Dishler, has retired after being in the clothes cleaning business for about 75 years.

Soon after Dishler returned from serving in the U.S. Army Air Force as a unit headquarters clerk in North Africa and Italy in the late 1940s, he started working as a home-delivery man for his father, Nathan Dishler, who owned U-Need-A-Laundry in Cleveland.

"Those days, few people locked their doors and women were full-time homemakers," said Dishler.

"I was single," explained Dishler. "I wanted Saturday afternoon and Wednesdays off.

But management wouldn't budge. So, in 1952, when he was 28, Dishler



Longtime employee Terry Behnke at the "second business line" pay phone, and owner Manny Dishler on Heights Cleaners last day. Manny said, "It cost a dime to make a pay phone call when it was installed. Now it's 50 cents."

started Prospect Laundry at 19th and Prospect in downtown Cleveland. Being the boss of his own business, he took time off and went courting.

He and Arline Cohen married in 1954 and lived in University Heights,

*continued on page 9*

## Behavioral Health Hospital plans October opening

Angela Townsend

On Oct. 8, the MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Behavioral Health Hospital will open its doors to adults and seniors who need in-patient care. The adolescent unit will open in June 2023.

The 112-bed hospital, on the campus of the MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Medical Center at 10 Severance Circle, is designed for short-term stays for people with mood disorders, addiction, and other behavioral health needs.



MetroHealth's Bev Lozar with a prime view of the new MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Behavioral Health Hospital.

A job fair held at MetroHealth Cleveland Heights on May 20 attracted more than 50 people interested in job openings for a

dozen different opportunities. Social worker, patient care nurse assistant, registered nurse, and mental health counselor positions are among those being filled.

So far, roughly 75% of the available nursing positions and all behavioral health specialist positions have been filled. They will be among the 155 new employees at the Cleveland Heights facility, which will eventually rise to 225 employees and provide an additional \$340,000 in income tax revenue to Cleveland

*continued on page 9*

## GardenWalk CH returns July 16 and 17

Judi Miles

At first glance, two of the 40-plus gardens to be featured in this year's GardenWalk Cleveland Heights, July 16 and 17, seem quite different from one another.

The backyard garden on Northampton Road is a tranquil, secluded haven—a shaded outdoor space with natural stone paths, ground cover, flowering bushes and roses. Its owners chose to minimize manicured grass, and instead expand a stone patio.

Across the city, on North Park Boulevard, a relatively massive backyard presented the owners with both a challenge and an opportunity, because of its size. By focusing on small, manageable sections, they installed a panoply of plants, integrating art and color into multiple intimate seating areas. They describe the result as "an experience of inspiration."

Despite the apparent differences, a conversation with the four owner/gardeners revealed similarities. For example, all of them believe in working with nature, rather than against it, and all enjoy functional outdoor spaces with multiple seating areas, and water features. Their gardens, which they designed and planted themselves, are versatile enough to allow them to create, relax and entertain.

Interestingly, each of the gardeners described being inspired by birch trees.

The Northampton homeowners bought their house, in part, because of the imposing river birch that takes a prominent place in their backyard. In deciding how to create the rest of the garden, they took their cues from the

*continued on page 7*



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](http://www.heightsobserver.org/members).

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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About the Observer

The *Heights Observer* is not a conventional 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 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](http://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](mailto:info@futureheights.org).

Articles to be considered for the August issue must be submitted by July 11. We publish some articles online only. We also publish an e-newsletter each Tuesday.

Heights Observer recognized as Ohio’s best community newspaper



OPENING THE OBSERVER

Bob Rosenbaum

The *Heights Observer* was recognized as “Ohio’s Best Community Newspaper” at the 44th Annual All-Ohio Excellence in Journalism Awards, a program of the Press Club of Cleveland. The honor was announced in early June at an awards dinner at the House of Blues.

For each of the past five years, the *Heights Observer* has received an award in this category, earning top honors in 2020 and 2022, and honorable mention in 2018, ’19 and ’21.

David Budin was recognized this year for his “Songs and Stories” column, with an honorable mention in the highly competitive category for Ohio’s best columnist. He won first place in that category in 2019.

The statewide awards program recognizes quality journalism in all types of media—newspapers, magazines, websites, television and radio. Approximately 700 entries were submitted in the various categories, with judging done by working journalists affiliated with other press clubs outside Ohio. Complete results can be found at [pressclubcleveland.com](http://pressclubcleveland.com).

The “Best in Ohio” award is based

on review of three complete issues of the publication from 2021. We submitted the February, September and October editions for their content around last year’s local elections.

For the small, part-time team that works on the *Observer* every month, the honor makes for a nice moment. But it’s a bigger reflection on the community itself.

When I talk about the *Observer*, I often begin by saying it’s not an ordinary newspaper. That’s because it’s volunteer based, and everything we publish comes from community members across Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

At traditional publications, the “news package” (to use the jargon of editors) is planned, with stories assigned to reporters based on what’s happening, what’s interesting and what sells.

For us, the articles arrive with no advance notice, and we build the best “package” we can from whatever people submit.

It’s an imperfect model. Sometimes, big stories don’t get covered at all, or they only emerge over time from an accumulation of opinion pieces. We often struggle to make sense of articles submitted by laypeople on complex topics. (School finance comes to mind.)

But our model is designed for affordability in an economic environment where even major metro dailies can’t make ends meet. And

it’s designed to encourage citizen engagement in the community and government—something that rarely figures into the mission of traditional publishing ventures.

The result is a publication that, on one hand, is frustratingly less than comprehensive, and, on the other, more reflective of its community than most.

Not every community could sustain a project like the *Heights Observer*. We’re blessed with all the right attributes: a strong collection of independent business and nonprofit advertisers that support it financially; an activist citizenry that fills its pages; diversity that provides a wide range of perspectives; and an “us against the world” mentality that breathes life into it month after month. That’s the real reason I think we keep getting recognized for this award. It’s a pretty good publication that’s part of an amazing community.

Other selected winners are:

- Best large daily newspaper (75,000+ circulation): *The Cincinnati Enquirer*
- Best small daily: *The (Elyria) Chronicle-Telegram*
- Best magazine: *Cincinnati Magazine*
- Best news website: *Akron Beacon Journal*

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

Bremer Fisher deserves an article

Ruth Anna Carlson

I read with great surprise, concern and disappointment that Deanna Bremer Fisher resigned, effective immediately, from FutureHeights.

My husband and I moved to Cleveland Heights almost 16 years ago, so our experience living here has been very much impacted by the work of FutureHeights. We have supported it financially for many years.

During the more than 14 years that Bremer Fisher worked for FutureHeights, she accomplished many things, including:

- Publishing the *Heights Observer* community newspaper, which has become a trusted source of information and has received several Excellence in Journalism Awards from the Press Club of Cleveland.
- Providing leadership skills training to more than 80 residents, and funding for more than 50 neighborhood-based projects throughout our community.
- Hosting public forums on a number of important topics, including Severance and the transition to a directly elected CH mayor.
- Mentoring neighborhood groups and providing fiscal agency services for several that are doing good work throughout our community.
- Creating a signature event for Cleveland Heights—Heights Music Hop—that showcases local musicians and our wonderful business districts.

- Creating the FutureHomes program that rehabilitates vacant, abandoned homes in several distressed neighborhoods, including the area surrounding our newly renovated high school.
- Increasing the city’s focus on distressed neighborhoods, such as the Noble and North Coventry neighborhoods, and facilitating the first comprehensive planning process for the Noble Road Corridor in at least 20 years.
- Facilitating a civic engagement process and creating a redevelopment plan for the Cedar Lee Mini-Park, an underutilized and neglected city-owned site.
- Supporting our local businesses in many ways, including producing the annual Best of the Heights Awards.

I understand that, however well-intentioned, nonprofit governance can be messy and misdirected. The immediacy of the resignation and the brief boxed announcement in the May issue of the *Heights Observer* suggest that there may have been differences between Bremer Fisher and the FutureHeights Board of Directors.

Nevertheless, an article detailing her leadership and accomplishments, with a thank you and an explanation, would be appropriate and welcome.

*Ruth Anna Carlson moved to Cleveland Heights’ Cedar Fairmount neighborhood in 2006. She is a retired lawyer.*

VICTORIAN continued from page 1

crystal chandelier and marble floors, and there is a party room, library, and game room, as well as a guest suite available for owners to rent. (The suite is currently being renovated.)

There are one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, and two penthouses. The spacious suites include two full bathrooms, a wet bar, and laundry facilities. There are two elevators, parking spaces for each unit are inside a heated garage, and there are individual storage lockers on each floor.

Through the years the lobby has been redecorated and the halls newly wallpapered, and new carpeting has been laid. The landscaped courtyard was originally built as a putting green.

A *Plain Dealer* article from Oct. 15, 1972, described The Victorian as a home “where you will leave your heart. A place to live, relax, entertain, and enjoy all the recreational, social and convenient facilities this fine location has to offer.”

Its owners are proud of the building, and several have lived at The Victorian for more than 20 years. The building’s history committee members recently interviewed other owners to compile oral histories of The Victorian. Any vacancies do not remain on the market for very long.

*JoAnn London and Cathy Whelan are both resident owners at The Victorian and members of its history committee.*



# There is a cost-effective plan to save Horseshoe Lake

Jeffrey Balazs

If there [were] a plan to save Horseshoe Lake that addressed stormwater issues, controlled flooding, cost less, and also saved the lake, why wouldn't our public officials request that the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS) implement that plan?

The NEORS's plan for destroying Horseshoe Lake and turning it into wetlands is no longer the only option on the table. Now is the time to consider the alternate plan and pause before we irrevocably damage a part of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights that we will regret for generations.

Friends of Horseshoe Lake (FOHSL), a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving Horseshoe Lake, retained a team of engineering and dam experts from TRC Companies, as well as land use experts, to explore alternatives and develop a financially viable plan to preserve the lake and manage floodwater.

The experts presented this plan to Cleveland Heights City Council on June 6. TRC's team, led by engineer Shawn McGee, with decades of experience on dam projects, presented a solution that would safely manage stormwater, address environmental issues, and cost less, all while saving Horseshoe Lake.

The FOHSL plan is one where everyone comes out a winner. According to McGee, a new dam, constructed behind the historic dam, and a reconfigured spillway would meet the goals of NEORS, and protect the historic and cultural significance of Horseshoe Lake.

"The alternative dam can minimize the flooding happening downstream . . . and we could reduce overall costs by about \$1 million to \$2 million," McGee noted.

The expert testimony focused on the benefits of the plan: it's safe, reduces flood risk, manages stormwater, and costs less.

During the council meeting, dozens of supporters filled the room and spilled over into the standing-room-only hallway. Many spoke in support of Horseshoe Lake and commented on benefits of saving



Horseshoe Lake before it was drained.

Horseshoe Lake that go beyond fiscal and environmental responsibility.

Horseshoe Lake has always been a key part of Cleveland Heights, enjoyed by tens of thousands of residents for over a century.

One supporter said, "There's nowhere else in Cleveland Heights where you can go, that I can think of, that you can go and have a beautiful view."

This is what we are fighting for. I, for one, have witnessed the beauty and serenity it offers throughout the seasons, not to mention a spot to rest for migratory waterfowl.

The message to council was loud and clear from supporters: Save Horseshoe Lake.

In November 2021, council voted to destroy Horseshoe Lake because there was no clear alternative.

Now there is another option on the table, and residents, supporters, and FOHSL are urging council to pause and consider it.

Penny Allen, FOHSL vice president and secretary, asked council, "If there is a plan that's safe, controls stormwater, and costs less, but importantly saves Horseshoe Lake for its tremendous recreational, historical, wildlife, and design value, wouldn't you consider it?"

Cleveland Heights deserves a place like Horseshoe Lake. Now that there is an alternate plan, council should consider it as a viable way to address the concerns raised by the Sewer District and save Horseshoe Lake. To learn more, visit <https://savehorseshoelake.com>.

*Jeffrey Balazs is craftsman, graphic designer and collaborator. He's spent the past 30 years in Cleveland Heights, exploring and marveling at the area's natural beauty during hikes, bike rides and kayaking, and capturing it through illustration and photography.*

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# Is there a chance for PEACE?



HEIGHTS OF DEMOCRACY

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

At the front door of the Coventry PEACE Campus (CPC) building, outsized, fanciful light fixtures hang from the 18-foot ceiling, hinting at creative doings inside. Since 2011 the former elementary school has housed an eclectic mix of nonprofit organizations, devoted to empowering Heights residents of all ages through arts, education and community development.

CPC is not only a place, but an umbrella organization for the resident groups. In addition to presenting special events, in recent years the nonprofit has managed the premises and the leasing of space. CPC pays \$10,000 for utilities and \$500

in rent each month to Heights Libraries, which purchased the building from the CH-UH Board of Education in 2018 for \$1.

Tenants currently include ARTFUL, Building Bridges Arts Collaborative, Cleveland Heights Teachers Union/American Federation of Teachers Local 795, FutureHeights, Grace Communion Cleveland, Lake Erie Ink, Reaching Heights, Singers Club of Cleveland, and Studio Institute.

Unfortunately, the future of this vibrant community hub is not at all certain. In 2018, Heights Libraries Director Nancy Levin told Patch.com, “Our goal is for the tenants to be independent. . . [W]e will be acting as a kind of incubator, supporting the tenants until they can take over ownership and management of the property themselves.” Four years later relationships are strained, ill will abounds, and the goal of independence seems distant.

The two parties give notably divergent accounts, but seem to agree on this much:

In October 2020, they negotiated a 15-month lease, with the option of a long-term extension, provided CPC could meet specific organizational and financial goals, and establish a reserve fund for future contingencies. Late last year, CPC presented documentation of its progress, but was told it did not meet the library’s minimum criteria.

The library board voted to decline the long-term option, and instead hire a management company to run the building and deal with the tenants. The board also approved a \$15,000 “feasibility study” to determine rental rates. The library has since contracted with Cresco Playhouse Square for property management, and will raise rents to cover Cresco’s fees.

CPC tackled a daunting project during a pandemic, without dedicated staff, depending on in-kind labor and pro-bono professional consulting. Its member organizations are small nonprofits, running their own programs on shoestring budgets. The largest tenant, Ensemble Theatre, which had been donating bookkeeping and accounting services to CPC, departed in 2021 for South Euclid.

In comparison, the library might appear to have deep pockets and ample personnel, but Levin noted that she and other staff have put in “more [time] than on any other library project . . . during my 14 years in this position.” The library also fronted nearly \$80,000 in HVAC repair costs.

As of mid-June, the tenants await letters of intent specifying their rent increases, to be followed by lease negotiations with Cresco. How many of them will be able to afford the higher rents remains to be seen.

Internal library e-mails reveal that demolition is not off the table.

The situation is painfully complicated and disappointing. We value both our well-managed, award-winning library system, and the creative synergy CPC brings to the Coventry neighborhood.

Levin has called her institution “a facilitator of democracy,” and we agree (*Heights Observer*, October 2018). CPC, as we have written (*Heights Observer*, July 2017) represents “the very kind of place-making that enhances quality of life and makes our community a more desirable place to live.”

If CPC tenants are dispersed, some perhaps to neighboring cities, Coventry and Cleveland Heights will be the poorer for it.

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

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# Developer tasked with re-purposing Cleveland Heights' Park Synagogue

Robert Brown

With the expansion of the Park Synagogue building in Pepper Pike well underway, the future of the historic 1947 "Park Main" property and its iconic sanctuary building in Cleveland Heights remains an open question. [The congregation announced a year ago that the Cleveland Heights landmark was for sale.]

Located in a heavily wooded site between Mayfield Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard, east of Taylor Road, Park Synagogue in Cleveland Heights was designed by internationally renowned architect Eric Mendelsohn, and is considered one of the premier examples of modern religious architecture in the United States.

"We all felt a real responsibility to making the best solution for Park Main because of its architectural importance, because of Park's history, and because of our commitment to Cleveland Heights and the good relationship we have with Cleveland Heights," said Susan Ratner, president of the Park Synagogue congregation since 2019. "We didn't want to become part of the urban exodus."

In pursuing its goals for preservation, Park has entrusted local developer Sustainable Community Associates (SCA) to work with the synagogue's leadership and the local community on ideas to re-purpose the Cleveland Heights building, while enhancing and developing its 28-acre site. SCA, as the site's master developer, will then implement the ideas that come from this process.

In a major boost to the preservation initiative, the state of Ohio recently announced that it will contribute \$1 million from its capital budget to the restoration of Park Synagogue in Cleveland Heights. Additionally, the state has approved a major expansion of the historic tax credit program, which will benefit the restoration efforts.

While SCA proceeds with a master plan for the site, with new uses and new construction, it will simultaneously prepare for an historic tax credit application in March 2023.

"Time is really of the essence—with the historic tax credit expansion, the funding cap on large projects like Park will double. This is an unprecedented opportunity, and we must run to it," said Josh Rosen of SCA.

The Park Main campus has been relatively secluded and private since its construction in 1950, and many Cleveland Heights residents are



Park Synagogue in Cleveland Heights.

unfamiliar with the forested campus and iconic building.

"It's essentially as though 28 acres of new land is being added to the city," noted SCA's Naomi Sabel. "This unique circumstance requires full engagement of the city and the community in helping to define how Park fits into what CH aspires to be."

"We hope the commitments made to date underscore, for the citizens of Cleveland Heights and the city government, the enormous opportunity for a cooperative initiative to re-use and redevelop the Park Synagogue property in a manner that reflects the best of Cleveland Heights values," noted Rosen, "whether through economic development, aging-in-place housing, or nonprofit arts space."

"We believe that working with the community to affirm and implement a shared vision through a master plan stands in marked contrast to the community's recent experience at the Severance Center property," Rosen added.

As SCA pursues discussions with elected officials and city staff in Cleveland Heights, the firm plans to continue engaging community members in developing a master plan focused on how best to repurpose the synagogue, reintegrate the campus into the broader Cleveland Heights community, and maintain much of the site's green space.

To date, SCA has hosted numerous meetings and tours with neighboring residents and various civic groups regarding possibilities for the future of Mendelsohn's building and its park campus. SCA anticipates making a presentation to Cleveland Heights City Council sometime this summer.

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

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## Cleveland Heights City Council

### Meeting highlights



LEAGUE OF  
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MAY 16, 2022 - regular meeting

Present were Mayor Kahlil Seren and council members Melody Joy Hart (council president), Craig Cobb (vice president), Tony Cuda, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Josie Moore, and Davida Russell. Also present were Amy Himmelein, clerk of council and finance director, and William Hanna, law director.

#### Public comments

Four residents expressed opposition to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District's (NEORS) Horseshoe Lake Dam project. Another praised the public engagement plan.

Nine residents opposed the plan for the Wellington Mews development on the former Carmelite property at Fairmount Boulevard and Lee Road.

One resident complained about adolescents riding electric scooters at high speeds on sidewalks, and urged the city to remove the scooters.

Robin Van Lear, representing Coventry PEACE Inc., criticized Heights Libraries' recent decisions about the PEACE campus.

#### Horseshoe Lake Dam project

Frank Greenland, NEORS's director of watershed programs, reported that a \$1.5 million contract has been awarded to AECOM-Stimson for pre-design activities for the Horseshoe Lake Dam project. The next phase, development of a detailed design, is expected to happen between May 2023 and May 2024, with construction to start by the end of 2024.

#### Ordinances/charter amendments

Law Director Hanna explained that passage of Issue 10 created a conflict between the amended charter and the ordinance regarding the finance director serving as clerk of council. The resolution would resolve that conflict. Amy Himmelein, who will continue as finance director, would be relieved of clerk of council duties when the amendment is certified.

Tony Cuda outlined a potential ordinance or charter amendment to permit council to mandate: 1) that city employees and appointees to city boards or commissions respond to council requests for information without unreasonable delay or denial, and 2) that city employees attend, when requested, council and committee meetings. He provided examples of other cities with similar provisions. Both the mayor and council members expressed concerns about excessive demands on staff time, an overly broad scope, and the fact that simpler methods could provide council the information it needs. Cuda will make revisions based on feedback.

LWV Observer: Jill Tatem.

MAY 23, 2022 - special meeting

All council members were present (with

Melody Joy Hart attending virtually), as were Mayor Seren, the clerk of council/finance director, and the law director.

#### Clerk of council

Council approved a job description, compensation, and job posting for clerk of council, with a salary range of \$51,542 to \$77,313.

LWV Observer: Jill Tatem.

JUNE 6, 2022 - regular meeting

All council members and the mayor were present, as was Laurie Wagner, representing the law department.

#### Public comments - agenda items

Nine residents spoke concerning Horseshoe Lake. Those wanting to save the lake urged pursuing an alternative plan, such as that proposed by Friends of Horseshoe Lake. Another noted that the contractor will have public engagement meetings. Another stated that the NEORS plans were reasonable and sensible, and expressed skepticism of the alternative plan.

#### Other public comments

Four residents noted an increasing deer problem.

#### Horseshoe Lake presentation

Friends of Horseshoe Lake presented a progress report on its alternative proposal for a new dam. The presentation can be read on at [www.cleveland.com/community/2022/06/friends-of-horseshoe-lake-make-their-case-for-new-dam-with-cleveland-heights-council.html](http://www.cleveland.com/community/2022/06/friends-of-horseshoe-lake-make-their-case-for-new-dam-with-cleveland-heights-council.html).

#### Council actions

On first reading, council approved resolutions:

- Expressing opposition to Ohio House Bill 616, which seeks to prohibit the teaching of divisive or racist concepts in Ohio's public schools.
- Expressing council's opposition to Ohio Senate Bill 123 and Ohio House Bills 480 and 598, which will ban all abortions in the state, at any time after conception, if Roe v. Wade is reversed. There will be no exceptions.
- Condemning Ohio House Bill 454, which prohibits affirming health care for Ohio transgender and non-binary youth, denies medical and psychological gender-affirming care, and requires personnel to report the child to their parents.

LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.

Expanded reports are  
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[www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).



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GARDENWALK continued from page 1

birch, noting where its root system was and researching which plants would thrive in co-existence. Over time, they observed how and where to plant based on the position of the filtered sunlight. Now, myrtle, oakleaf hydrangeas, ornamental ginger, hellebore and other plants encircle the space.

When the owners bought it, the North Park home's massive backyard was filled with old, diseased trees and brush, and they spent several years clearing it. Inspired by the birch tree allee at Stan Hywet in Akron, they planted more than a dozen white river birch trees on each side of a lengthy stone walkway. In just four years, the trees have grown to form a canopied path that leads to a stone planter with a large mirror. Throughout the garden, they created intimate seating areas, with perennials and annuals displayed in pots and on walls.

GardenWalk Cleveland Heights is a free, self-guided tour that will take place from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday, July 16, and Sunday, July 17.

A map of participating gardens is on this page, and can also be found online at [gardenwalkclevelandheights.com](http://gardenwalkclevelandheights.com).

Signs will be posted in front of this year's participating home and public gardens. For more information, visit the GardenWalk Cleveland Heights website, or send an e-mail to [info@GardenWalkCH.com](mailto:info@GardenWalkCH.com).

*Judi Miles is a 26-year resident of Cleveland Heights who enjoys vegetable gardening. She is a little envious of gardeners who are able to create beautiful outdoor spaces.*



This North Park Boulevard garden's birch tree-lined pathway was inspired by Stan Hywet's birch tree allee.



A white birch tree is a focal point of a Northampton Road garden.



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2193 Harcourt	Manicured landscaping and shrubbery
1980 Denton	A cottage garden with annuals, perennials and a tree house
2012 Denton	Formal gardens, play structures, shrubs, perennials
2285 Delaware	Wooded 2 level oasis in the back yard
2296 Delaware	Shade garden, hosta, astilbe, ferns, hydrangeas, dogwoods
2306 Delaware	Attractive mix of shrubs and perennials–Front only
2855 North Park	See the transformation, tropical plants and yard art
3392 Meadowbrook	Garden self-designed by a novice, bottle bush, stone walls
12526/12546 Cedar	Georgian Condominiums: Signs to gardens in the back of buildings–Park in the church parking lot at 12601 Cedar Road
12537 Cedar Road	Creative use of stones, wood, vines and statues, waterfall
12541 Cedar Road	60' stream and with waterfalls, fish and frog pond
2569 Derbyshire	Unique lot with a stream running through it
2635 Derbyshire	Shade-loving plants and interesting wood structures
2077 Kent	A combination of traditional formality and organic nature
2928 Washington	Perennials, vegetables, organic, deer resistant–Front only
2995 Corydon	A variety of plants in the front flower beds, vegetable garden
3064 Corydon	Backyard retreat with bamboo, hosta, "wee" garden gnomes
3080 Corydon	Koi pond, Frank Gearhart birdbath, native pollinator plants
3114 Corydon	Stone/bricks beds in front, no lawn, vegetable beds in back
3124 Corydon	Pollinator pathway, patios and perennials in the back
3103 Edgehill	Perennial cottage garden, water feature, patio flowers

2531 South Taylor	Shade garden on the Bradford Path–Park on Bradford
3312 Bradford	99% trees, shrubs, ferns, sedges & native grasses–Sunday only
3396 Bradford	Urban oasis for family and guests
3253 East Fairfax	Cottage garden and Zen-inspired shade garden
3262 East Fairfax	Curated treasures from the curbs of Cleveland Heights
3149 East Overlook	Entire front yard of raised flower beds/vegetables–Front only
3010 East Overlook	Perennials, pollinators, shrubs, back yard shade garden/patio
3061 East Overlook	Raised beds: tree lawn; Vegetables: front lawn; Berries: back
3034 East Overlook	Perennials that provide blooms all summer
3333 Beechwood	Eclectic mix of annuals, perennials, evergreens, tchotchkes
3260 Euclid Hts	Shade garden of hostas, a grand oak and sculptures
1207 Sylvania	Annuals, perennials, hemlocks, euonymus, mop head cypress
1191 Sylvania	More of a story land than a garden w/ different themes
998 Montford	Very small vegetable garden and immaculate landscaping
800 Montford	Well maintained garden that accommodates children
1002 Englewood	100 different daylilies, fruit trees, fish pond, bird aviary
1006 Englewood	Hosta and perennials–Front only
971 Englewood	Colorful window planters on the drive, shade garden/back
972 Cambridge	Perennials, bocce court and wood burning pizza oven
883 Cambridge	Adjoining yards, one gardener, large hostas, honeysuckle statues
887 Cambridge	see 883 Cambridge
3863 Northampton	Tree lawn pollinator garden, heritage plants from her mother
3887 Northampton	Private sanctuary back garden dominated by a huge river birch

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## Wizbang's 'social circus' builds skills



COURTESY DANIELLE TILK

A scene from Wizbang Circus Theatre's Free Circus Day at Coventry PEACE Campus.

Sarah Wolf

On May 21, Danielle and Jason Tilk of Cleveland Heights' Wizbang Circus Theatre, a 2021 FutureHeights Mini-Grant recipient, brought their third Free Circus Day for kids and teens to Coventry PEACE Campus. There, 16 kids, ages 8-15, spent the day learning prop balancing, plate spinning, hula-hoop tricks, juggling, stilt walking, unicycling, and aerial arts, and enjoyed a healthy lunch provided by Tommy's restaurant.

Wizbang's Free Circus Day started in 2018, in the open space on Lee Road, bringing together a large group of neighborhood kids for the first time. An hour in, those who were once strangers were laughing together while juggling. At the end of the day, e-mails, numbers, and group selfies were shared. A bond was formed—all under the umbrella of what is known as "social circus."

Social circuses have been established in schoolyards, immigration camps, and communities worldwide, utilizing circus arts as a medium for furthering social justice, individual wellness and human awareness.

Social circus practitioners support students as creative change-makers through the collective development of self-esteem, solidarity, and trust.

Circus activities are all-inclusive and non-competitive, and have been proven to increase memorization, concentration, self-esteem, social/emotional well-being, physical awareness, and focus. Juggling is scientifically proven to be helpful for those with ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia.

Danielle Tilk currently teaches at Wizbang Circus Theatre on Lee Road, and provides afterschool programs for schools in the CH-UH and Cleveland Metropolitan school districts.

She has also created programs for Ruffing Montessori and Lawrence schools, and the Jewish Family Service Association, where she developed activities for adults with cognitive impairments, mental illness, and autism spectrum disorders.

For more information about Wizbang's programs and performances, visit [www.wizbangtheater.com](http://www.wizbangtheater.com).

*Sarah Wolf, the community-building programs manager at FutureHeights, compiled this article based on information provided by Danielle Tilk.*



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## Seminar to cover assassination, songs, and a French film controversy; the falafel's optional

Bruce Hennes

On Thursday, July 14, 2-5 p.m., the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association is sponsoring a Continuing Legal Education (CLE) seminar that begins inside the Garfield Memorial at Lakeview Cemetery. The seminar is open to the public.

After a quick tour of the memorial, presidential historian James Robenalt will discuss the life of the 20th U.S. president, who was assassinated in 1881, and former U.S. Secret Service Special Agent Greg Truhan will talk about presidential assassinations.

Next up is a performance of songs from Stephen Sondheim's Tony Award-winning musical "Assassins."

From there, the seminar moves to Coventry's Centrum Theater, where Andrew Geronimo, Case Western Reserve University Law School professor will cover the 1959 arrest of theater manager Nico Jacobellis which led to *Jacobellis v. Ohio*, the

famous court decision that held that the French movie "The Lovers" was not obscene.

Seminar attendees will also hear from Kara Hamley O'Donnell, principal planner for the city of Shaker Heights, who did her master's thesis on the history of Coventry Village; and from the creator of the Coventry Village Special Improvement Tax District—the second such district in the state of Ohio.

The seminar will be capped-off by an optional dinner at Tommy's.

The seminar is free to the public. There is a fee for attorneys requesting CLE credit. For a fuller description of the event, and registration information, visit <https://tinyurl.com/CoventryCLE2022>.

*Bruce Hennes is a 47-year resident of Cleveland Heights and past president of Coventry Neighbors. He is on the board of the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association, and created the Coventry SID.*

## Green Team plans July reusable-bag drive

Catalina Wagers

After a series of delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuyahoga County's ban on single-use plastic bags went into effect on Jan. 16, 2022.

Some large chain stores, such as Giant Eagle and CVS, have already eliminated plastic bags.

"The county is actively working with stores to help them transition from using single-use plastic bags at the checkout ahead of any enforcement action," explained Sheryl Harris, director of the county's Department of Consumer Affairs. "Retailers are not facing fines yet, but are being actively encouraged and supported by the county to switch to paper bags and reusable bags before enforcement is enacted."

The Cleveland Heights Green Team (CHGT) recognizes that not all people have equal access to adequate reusable bags, and that businesses of different sizes have different levels of ability to respond to the ban.

"In the case of the plastic ban, what we ultimately want is for our residents to embrace the idea of reusing bags for all its positive outcomes, and to remember to bring them on their shopping outings," explained Gavin Andersen, a CHGT spokesperson.

"For some shoppers and business owners, the transition from single-use plastic bags can be regarded more as a burden," Andersen noted, "overshadowing all the positive effects on the environment, and long-term health benefits."

"Retailers who want to offer disposable paper bags, but aren't willing or able to eat the cost, can charge per bag, or sell reusable bags of their own. These fees can have an unfair impact on disadvantaged groups. To lessen the impact, in particular on the working class, governments should make free-



of-charge options available and accessible, for example by stocking them at grocery stores and other high-traffic places, mailing them to residents, giving them away at events, and so on."

Taking a step toward such goals, CHGT, in partnership with Heights Libraries and the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, will collect reusable shopping bags July 1-30. Heights residents are invited to drop off reusable bags at the Nature Center, and at all four branches of Heights Libraries—Coventry Village, Lee Road, Noble Neighborhood, and University Heights.

The donated bags should be clean and in good condition. Once sorted and inspected, the bags will be made available to residents in early fall.

According to Andersen, "Most people already have extra reusable shopping bags lying around in our car trunks, pantries, and garages. In the absence of a large-scale government program to distribute reusable bags, or sufficient unilateral effort by private businesses to provide them, this is a way of meeting that need on our own."

*Catalina Wagers lives in Cleveland Heights' Fairfax neighborhood, and is a co-founder of the Cleveland Heights Green Team.*

METROHEALTH continued from page 1

Heights.

"There is a great deal of interest from nurses in the community in coming to a new facility," said Beth Lozar, executive director of behavioral hospital operations. "We've attracted a lot of talented and qualified people, which is great because we can't do this without them."

Lozar joined MetroHealth in April 2021, and has been overseeing hospital construction and working to develop the operational plans for the hospital.

The added behavioral health presence will be apparent even before the new hospital's opening. MetroHealth's psychiatry residency program will be based there, beginning in early July.

Later in July, MetroHealth's partial-hospitalization program—the highest level of outpatient behavioral health care—will begin providing intensive services to adult patients five days a week.

Construction on a walkway connecting the new building to the health center began in May and will be completed in August.

The emergency department is being renovated. Space that was unused or underused is being turned into assessment rooms for behavioral health patients to facilitate the intake process.

The new hospital is designed with five separate units, for patients with different diagnoses: GeroPsych (for older adults), Dual Diagnosis, Mood Disorder, Thought Disorder,

and Adolescents. Inpatient and outpatient group therapy and other programs are being designed to address the specific needs of those different patient populations.

Kythryn Carr Harris, who joined MetroHealth in September 2021 as executive director for community behavioral health, manages MetroHealth's outpatient behavioral health services.

As director of clinical services, Robert Hammond oversees a team of clinicians developing programming and curriculum for inpatients.

Individuals who currently are brought to MetroHealth's emergency departments, at the main campus or the Brecksville or Parma locations, for assessment will be transferred to Cleveland Heights if they require inpatient care.

Individuals can be brought directly to the Cleveland Heights Emergency Department. Once there, they will undergo an assessment to make sure they're medically stable. Following an evaluation, the individual will be admitted as an inpatient or referred to intensive outpatient behavioral health services at Cleveland Heights.

"With our expansion of beds, we anticipate that we will get referrals from hospitals outside of the MetroHealth system," Lozar said. "We are establishing a process to assess those patients as well."

*Angela Townsend is a senior writer in the department of marketing and communications at The MetroHealth System.*

CLEANERS continued from page 1

then Beachwood. After 63 years of marriage, she passed away in 2017.

In 1957, said Dishler, "Cleveland State University took the building Prospect Cleaners was in." He opened Heights Cleaners, while also buying its Coventry Road two-storefront, two-apartment building.

"The first years here were difficult," recalled Dishler. "I bought an old dry-cleaning shop that hadn't been modernized. It needed change. I took over the second storefront, adding a laundry. The old dry cleaner had a stack of uncollectable receipts, so I switched to exclusively cash on delivery."

Along with serving walk-in customers, Heights Laundry, which his wife ran after their two children were raised, picked up and delivered from other small dry cleaners. The gambit paid off. During the 1960s, '70s and '80s, Heights Cleaners was processing 12,000 to 14,000 shirts a week, along with many other garments.

"We had a great crew of 30 working here," Dishler noted.

When Dishler started Heights Cleaners, the neighborhood was primarily Jewish, with many post-war European immigrants. Built in the 1910s and '20s, the district gained the "Village" moniker in the mid-late 1960s, with an influx of hippies looking for cheap apartments and storefronts. Accompanying them were some Hell's Angels who frequented a local tavern, The Cee Saw Café.

Both "the hippies and the Hell's Angels brought in leather jackets to be dry cleaned. They were courteous,"

Dishler said, adding, "I was busy here, and didn't pay attention to the scene on the street."

Around 1990, Terry Behnke started working at Heights Cleaners. He is a local live-theater actor and director who was then teaching at Wiley Middle School Youth Theater.

Behnke recalled of his job interview, "Manny asked me three questions. Each was, 'What do you want to do?' I answered three times, 'I want a job.'" Dishler accommodated Behnke's class times, and he got the job.

In the 1990s, business volume started to decline. "People got washers and driers. Wash-and-wear clothes took over the market," Dishler explained. "Now we have dress-down days and many people are working from home."

According to Dishler, the state of Ohio's mandated shutdown because of COVID-19 hurt the laundry business in Ohio "tremendously." He noted, "In Florida, where there was no shut down, it didn't hurt as bad."

Dishler said he will be taking a vacation soon. The two upstairs tenants are staying. The equipment will be donated. His son, Eric, will renovate the two storefront spaces and make them available for rent.

*Lee Batdorff has been a Cleveland Heights resident since 1966. A couple decades back, he took a jacket to a well-advertised local dry cleaner, and they didn't get a stain out. So, he took the garment to Heights Cleaners on Coventry Road—and they got the stain out.*





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# Self-portraits go beyond skin tone



CH-UH elementary school student self-portraits are on view at the Lee Road Library.

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

This spring, elementary students across the CH-UH district had an opportunity to paint self-portraits under the guidance of professional artist Debbie Apple-Presser, in a project titled “Together We Rise.” The project, funded by local arts funding organization RoxArts, was designed to show how students, despite all that they have been through over the past two years, have come out even stronger.

The children couldn’t use any of the colors traditionally associated with skin tone; there was no brown, tan, black or white paint available to them. Instead, they used red, blue, green and purple to express their inner selves—their feelings and identities that go far beyond race or skin tone.

“It was really an SEL project,” said RoxArts board member Andrea C. Turner, referring to the social-emotional learning that is common in district schools.

The project complemented the color-coded Zones of Regulation adopted by Boulevard Elementary School to help students regulate their emotions.

Apple-Presser, a mother of Heights alumni, used a pre-recorded video to lay out the project with every class, in kindergarten through grade five, in all seven of the district’s elementary schools.

Students discussed with their

teachers and classmates what emotions or characteristics different colors could represent, then moved to their art classes to create the actual portraits.

“The portraits are so revealing,” said Apple-Presser. “They’re very telling about who each child is.” She

*continued on page 12*



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# Boyd Bey and Gentry are 2022 Ron Register Scholars



At the scholarship ceremony, from left: Kenetta Boyd Bey, mother of recipient Keonshae Boyd Bey; Quentin Smith, scholarship committee member; Troy Gentry, scholarship recipient; committee members Reg. T. Evans and Diana Woodbridge. (Scholarship recipient Keonshae Boyd Bey was unable to attend.)

Quentin Smith

In late May, at an awards program at Cleveland Heights High School, two talented and accomplished Heights graduates, Troy Gentry and Keonshae “Shae” Boyd Bey, were named recipients of the 2022–23 Ron Register Scholarship Awards. Each receives a cash award of \$2,500.

Boyd Bey excelled academically, and was captain of the football and wrestling teams, and a member of student council and the track team.

He maintained a better-than-B GPA, and was involved in community activities assisting the less fortunate.

He worked with and on behalf of the homeless, helping out at a local food pantry, and organizing a winter coat drive.

Gentry was a member of the National Honor Society and class council.

His academic achievements are especially impressive considering that, outside of class, he was active in a variety of school clubs and athletics, including wrestling and MSAN, as well as community volunteering.

He juggled all of that while

maintaining a 3.9 GPA.

The scholarship is named in honor of Ron Register, who served on the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education (BOE) for 16 years. He served as board president for four terms.

Register’s passion for quality public education, and his commitment to social, economic, and racial justice, are some of the criteria the committee uses to evaluate scholarship applicants.

The scholarship committee—Doris Allen, Reg. T. Evans, Susie Kaeser, Louisa Oliver, Quentin Smith, and Diana Woodbridge—noted that the two recipients exemplify some of Register’s endearing qualities: namely, selflessly giving back to the community while pursuing personal excellence.

The committee is confident these two young men will make an indelible and positive mark on society.

The scholarship was initiated in 2019, a year after Register stepped down from the BOE.

That year, and in every subsequent year, two remarkable students have been awarded a Ron Register Scholarship.

PORTRAITS continued from page 11

said the colors chosen, and how they’re laid out across the children’s faces, reveal who they are and what they care about. “I can tell that this one is quiet and likes to read, while that one may go through three different moods every day,” Apple-Presser noted.

RoxArts is endeavoring to display the more than 2,000 portraits throughout the community, for the public to view.

The first installation was at Appletree Books in the Cedar Fairmount neighborhood, while the Lee Road Library is currently showing hundreds of portraits in the exhibition space near Dobama Theatre.

Next, empty storefronts on Coventry Road will soon be lined with portraits.

Turner reminds students and

their families not to be disappointed if their portrait has yet to be displayed. The pictures are being chosen randomly, not based on artistic ability, and the project coordinators are working to secure enough public spaces to display them all.

RoxArts is also in the process of changing its name to more accurately reflect its work funding arts education and enrichment across the district.

“We want schools and teachers to know they’re eligible for equal amounts of funding,” said Turner, who expects a new name to be announced in the late summer or early fall.

*Krissy Dietrich Gallagher is a freelance journalist under contract with the CH-UH City School District. She is proud to raise her two sons in this community.*

In conceiving the scholarship, the Black Caucus of Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian, immediately reached out to the broader church and surrounding community.

The scholarship committee was, and remains, multi-racial, comprising members of both the community and the church, which administers the program.

Those interested in learning more about, or wishing to contribute to, the Ron Register Scholarship can contact Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian ([www.fhcbpresb.org](http://www.fhcbpresb.org)).

*A transplanted former New York resident, Quentin Smith is a member of Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian, and the Ron Register Scholarship Committee.*

## Cleveland Heights – University Heights Board of Education

### Meeting highlights



MAY 17, 2022 – work session

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

**Staff petition and hiring of new staff**  
The board acknowledged the petition they received from 148 high school staff in support of hiring Dr. McKinney as permanent principal of the high school. McKinney, however, has requested that she be hired as the interim principal.

Superintendent Kirby welcomed the hiring of Dr. Abdussatar as the new director of social and emotional learning.

**CTE focus group results**  
Former Career Technical Planning (CTE) District Superintendent Celena Roebuck and Heights Consortium Coordinator Katrina Myers presented focus group findings and recommendations for the CTE program. Cleveland Heights-University Heights participates with Maple Heights, Shaker Heights, Warrensville Heights, and Mayfield Heights in a compact. Students in these schools can enroll in any of the 22 CTE programs offered at any of the schools.

Focus groups were held to determine student, parent, community, and teacher perceptions of the CTE programs. A major finding was that too little [information] about the programs was available to students. Coordinating the school spring break calendars was considered a major success.

**MSAN presentation**  
Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) students updated the board on the issues they have been examining. The students meet biweekly and have discussed critical race theory, the treatment of Africans in Ukraine, mental health in the black community, and the wage gap between male and female professional athletes.

LWV Observer: Robin Koslen.

JUNE 7, 2022 – regular meeting

All board members were present, as were the superintendent and treasurer.

**Tudor Taylor Corridor**  
Brian Anderson, business development manager for the city of Cleveland Heights, introduced a multi-year project for the Tudor Taylor Corridor. The initial phase of the project will focus on the apartments and stores in the property. This project is still at the visioning stage. The city is pursuing money for what is considered a historic preservation project. The Tudor Taylor buildings are listed on the National Register for Historic Places. CH City Council authorized a memorandum for working with WXE Development on the project.

Posch [said he] sees value in this project

to revitalize the community. Heintz [said he] appreciated the historic preservation aspects.

Brian Anderson and Matthew Weimer of WXE stated they would give periodic updates of the project as it progressed. Mayor Kahlil Seren was present to state his support for the project.

**Personnel agreements**  
The board approved a consent agenda that included agreements for new contracts with all bargaining units for the next three years, and noted that this meant a levy would probably be unneeded for several years.

**Policy Group C**  
At the final reading and approval of Policy Group C, board members noted a more complete definition of weapons and clarification of the student requirement to report information regarding weapons in schools.

**MetroHealth**  
Superintendent Kirby announced that MetroHealth at-school care continues this summer for all CH-UH students. Students can receive physicals, routine lab tests, care for chronic conditions, and more at the Heights High clinic.

**Sex-based harassment**  
Kirby reported that invitations have gone out for the sex-based harassment (SBH) advisory group. The Dress Code Committee has been identified. Discussions are being held regarding the search for a Title IX compliance officer to oversee the district’s processes relating to SBH. Timelines for completion of work on identified areas of SBH focus are on track. Focus points will be included in summer training for the start of school.

**Treasurer’s report**  
Treasurer Gainer stated that passage of Ohio House Bill 126 will make it more difficult to file complaints regarding county assessment of property values.

To clarify school funding and finance, he presented explanations of Tax Increment Financing (TIF), General Fund, and Fiscal Year.

**Ohio House Bill 99**  
Responding to the passage of HB 99, which allows the arming of school personnel, the board approved a resolution opposing the new law and asserting a commitment to a weapon-free school environment. Board members each gave opinions regarding the safety of children and the Ohio Legislature’s dereliction of duty in passing HB 99. Board President Lewis plans to share the resolution with other school boards and with cities.

LWV Observer: Rosemarie Fairman.

Documents for all board meetings can be accessed at [www.chuh.org/BoardofEducation.aspx](http://www.chuh.org/BoardofEducation.aspx). Board meetings are livestreamed at [www.youtube.com/CHUHSchools](http://www.youtube.com/CHUHSchools), and recorded for later viewing.



# Cleveland Heights – University Heights Public Library Board

## Meeting highlights

MAY 16, 2022

Board members present were President Gabe Crenshaw, Patti Carlyle, Dana Fluellen, Annette Iwamoto, Tyler McTigue, and Vikas Turakhia. Vice President Max Gerboc was not present.

### Public comments

Coventry PEACE Campus (CPC) Board President Krista Hawthorne presented a written statement to the board opposing the library's entering into a contract with Cresco Real Estate/Playhouse Square Management as property manager of 2843 Washington Blvd. According to Hawthorne's written statement, "the signing of a contract with Cresco Playhouse Square will have a negative effect on the Coventry PEACE Campus, and we are asking that, instead, you grant the long-term lease we all agreed to in October of 2020, or sell us the building. We urge you to come back to the negotiating table with Coventry PEACE so that both our organizations can get back to what we each do best." Hawthorne noted the library's repeated refusals to meet with CPC in a meaningful way, and stated that CPC has met the criteria stated in the governing document to allow conversion to a long-term lease. Nine additional community residents and CPC tenant-artists also spoke (in two-minute time allocations) in opposition to the board's property management agreement. Among the concerns shared was the fear that the property might be converted into condos; the ways in which the community and children, in particular, would be negatively affected by a lack of art services and events; the economic contributions of CPC [to] area businesses; and a lack of opportunity for meaningful discussion on this issue. Speakers also stated appreciation for library services to the community.

### Board resolutions

The board unanimously approved a contract with Cresco Real Estate/Playhouse Square Management to be the exclusive managing and listing agent for the building at 2843 Washington Blvd. The board authorized the fiscal officer to pay CRESCO the initial startup fee of \$2,750, as well as the property management fee of \$2,750 per month for the one-year term, for a total amount for property management services not to exceed \$36,000. Each board member present gave a statement about his/her rationale for voting to approve the contract. All stated that tearing down the CPC building and converting to condos is not under consideration. The board members spoke about their fiduciary trustee responsibility to the library, the issues in selling property between a public agency and a private group, the repairs that are still needed to the building that have not been paid by CPC, the fact that CPC had not shown financial viability [nor] the ability to achieve independent economic sustainability for the long term, as well as other concerns. Board members stated they had independently read and reviewed every document and e-mail, and came to this decision on their own. Board members also stated that they wanted CPC to succeed.

The board approved a resolution that stated, "Cleveland Heights - University Heights Board of Library Trustees stands in solidarity with the Cleveland Heights - University

Heights Board of Education and strongly opposes Ohio House Bill 616." The resolution further stated, "The Library is concerned that HB 616 seeks to limit candid conversations about race and gender identity in our schools, spaces in which all children should feel safe and welcome."

The board approved the purchase of Maker Flex Tables for HKIC and divider walls for meeting rooms at Lee Road library, construction of additional study rooms at the Lee Road library, landscaping at the University Heights library, and a contract with Bostwick Design Partnership to provide professional design services as the architect of record for the Noble library renovation and addition.

The board approved a contract with the Hodge Group to prepare plans for a redesign of the Coventry PEACE Park and playground construction.

The board changed masking requirements, making masks voluntary for staff. Consumption of food and beverages will be allowed as of May 19, until such time as masking may be reinstated for customers.

### Personnel report

As of the end of April, 248 new applications had been received for 10 jobs advertised. Nearly all applicants were from Ohio. Tyler McTigue asked that further geographic breakdown data be provided for Ohio.

### Public service report

Kim DeNero-Ackroyd shared the 2021 strategic plan annual report, which lists library activities and progress toward each of the following goals: 1) foster diversity, equity and inclusion, 2) promote safety and security for the community, 3) facilitate communication and be a bridge builder for community concerns, and 4) be a bedrock for community workforce development.

LWV Observer: Elizabeth M. Tracy.

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

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# Made Cleveland opens on Coventry



Owner Ash O'Connor in front of Made Cleveland at 1807 Coventry Road.

Jessica Schantz

Made Cleveland, the new “market-place of independent creators” in Coventry Village, opened its doors on June 3. It hosts the work of approximately 120 vendors, mostly from Northeast Ohio, whose wares include perishable and non-perishable food items, apparel, beauty products, refillable cleaning products, home goods, furniture, art and jewelry.

Owner Ash O'Connor describes her path to opening Made Cleveland as part determination and part good luck and timing.

After moving to Northeast Ohio from Philadelphia in 2017, to take a job as a hotel food and beverage director, O'Connor decided to stay in Cleveland when it turned out the job was not a good fit. Two years later, with a partner and a newborn, she hadn't yet made her

next professional move.

That holiday season she had hoped to shop online for locally made goods, but couldn't find a central directory. That sparked the idea for Made Cleveland's original iteration: a hyper-local, online vendor space and makers community.

O'Connor planned to launch *MadeCleveland.com* in September 2020; when the pandemic hit in March 2020, she expedited the process, and launched in May of that year.

In December 2020, and again in December 2021, O'Connor tested out brick-and-mortar spaces on Coventry Road, hosting two pop-up holiday markets.

Given the markets' success, and availability of a large retail space (previously occupied by City Buddha), O'Connor approached the city about a long-term lease, with the help of Mal-lory Kent, the Coventry Village Special Improvement District director.

The store is designed to comple-ment the website, and O'Connor's goal is to offer one-stop-shopping convenience while providing “expe-riences,” such as DIY classes taught by vendors, coupled with tastings from the pantry. She hopes to offer curbside pickup soon, and possibly home delivery in the future.

Larchmere Fireworks—a glass-blowing and blacksmithing retailer and studio that collaborated with O'Connor on one of the pop-up mar-kets—has a permanent space at Made Cleveland, where patrons can watch

*continued on page 19*

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# Heights grad Dunn hits the big time

David Budin

Antoine Dunn is a star. His singles and albums have charted high on Billboard. His songs, including “Can’t Forget” and “Miss My Love,” can be heard on SiriusXM, BET and MTV. The singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, producer and record-label owner also happens to have grown up here. He went all through the CH-UH school system—Gearity, Wiley and Heights High—graduating in 2006.

Dunn, who now lives in Los Angeles, has toured nationally with other top R&B artists. He’ll be performing in Cleveland, at the House of Blues, on Sunday, Sept. 4, 7 p.m.

Dunn grew up on Revere Road. “We would walk to Cain Park,” he remembered, “and ride our bikes there, go sledding there.” His father still lives in Cleveland Heights, but his mother died in 2011, “just before my music career took off,” Dunn said. “She was a big supporter.”

Dunn credits a few people from his school experience with contributing to his success. One is Glenn Brackens, his music teacher at Wiley. “There were so many people from his program who went on to do great things,” Dunn said. “He really conditioned us for [Heights High’s] A Cappella Choir. We were doing college-level pieces in middle school. I still keep in contact with him.”

At Heights High, Dunn was a member of the Choir, the Heights Singers and the Gospel Choir; the first two were directed by Craig McGaughey. “[McGaughey] really developed some good talent,” Dunn said. “He didn’t treat us like kids. That was the through-line from Glenn Brackens. We were already used to that level of criticism, if you will.”

Dunn also wrestled, coached by Larry Hoon. “Coach Hoon really believed in me,” Dunn said. “The discipline I learned in wrestling is something I took to every area of my life, and I attribute my success to that. Wrestling builds a certain amount of mental toughness and rigidity that team sports don’t really help you with because you’re depending on all these other people. Wrestling changed my life.”

He also is grateful for his guidance counselor. “My grades started slipping because I would cut classes and play the piano in the auditorium. Luckily, my counselor noticed and recommended



Antoine Dunn

that I take a career-prep class. So, I took Auto Collision Technology and brought my grades up enough that I could graduate. Thank God for guidance counselors.”

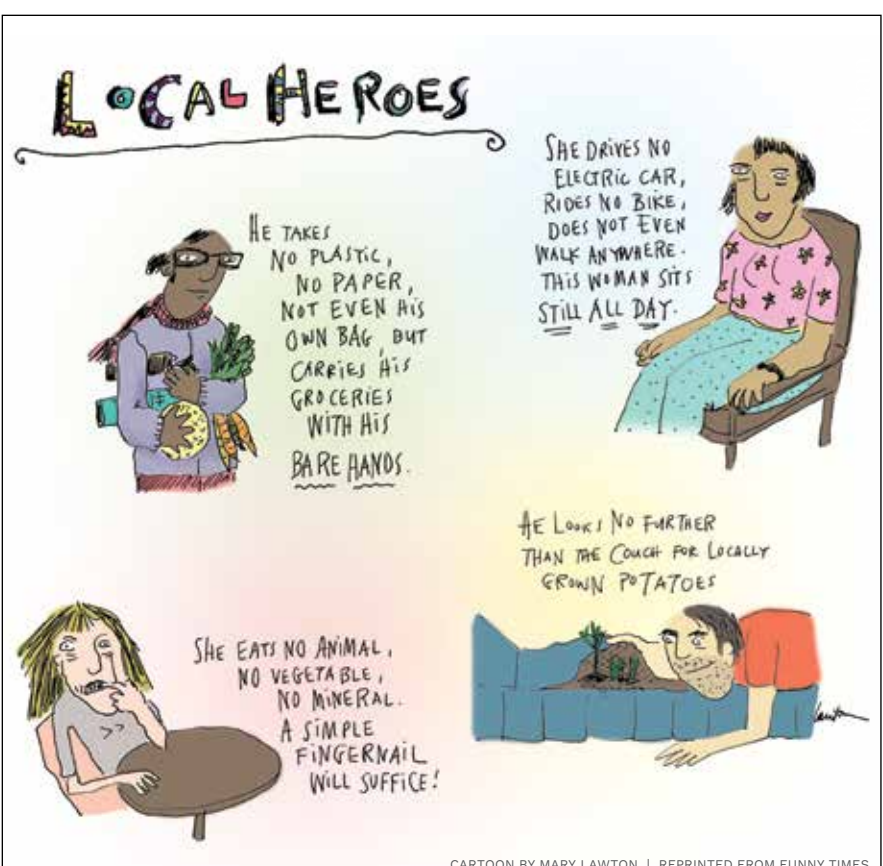
When Dunn was still living here, in 2010, a couple of projects fell apart. He was “in kind of a funk.” One Sunday night, a friend asked him to go to Nighttown. He didn’t feel like going, but decided at the last minute to go.

“There were just a few of us there,” Dunn recalled. “[Pianist] Jackie Warren was playing and she came over and said, ‘I know you’re a songwriter. This could be a great opportunity for you. Would you like to come up and play a song while Stevie’s here?’ So, I played a song I wrote and Stevie loved it. He and his band called me over to their table. Stevie told me, ‘Man, you really got it. Whatever you’re doing, as far as your writing process, don’t stop, cause it’s working for you.’”

“I was so excited. I ran full speed up Delaware Drive, where my car was parked, and got a CD and ran back and gave it to Stevie. He said, ‘I’m gonna call you on Tuesday.’ Monday morning my phone got cut off. It didn’t get turned back on until Thursday. So, I don’t know if Stevie Wonder called or not.” They’ve met several times since then—though he has yet to tell Wonder the Nighttown story.

Dunn used to play his songs in his CH basement, and pretend he was a disc jockey announcing the record. “It never really occurred to me,” he said, “that one day I’d actually hear my song played after a Beyoncé song; or that I’d get to meet one of my idols, D’Angelo, and he would know me by my first name. And that I’d be blessed to tour with him, twice. It’s incredible to me. It’s just crazy.”

*David Budin is a freelance writer for national and local publications, an author, and a professional musician and comedian.*



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## Hidden gems



SONGS AND  
STORIES

David Budin

I was talking with Susanna Niermann O'Neil before her May 2 retirement from the city of Cleveland Heights, where she had served for 45 years, most recently as city manager. We talked about some of the hidden gems in Cleveland Heights.

I mentioned that when I was involved with the Friends of Cain Park, we used to sell raffle tickets before most Cain Park concerts. When I did that, I talked to as many people as I could about the park. I was always surprised by how many of them—people who had come to hear Lyle Lovett or Sheryl Crowe or Arlo Guthrie, for instance—had never heard of Cain Park before, even though it's been here since the 1930s and has presented concerts and musicals almost the entire time. Even some people who had lived in Cleveland Heights for their whole lives said they'd never heard of it.

I belong to a Facebook group that focuses on Cleveland-area architectural history. Recently, someone posted an old picture of Cumberland Pool (which looked almost exactly like current Cumberland Pool). Many responded that they'd never heard of it. That's a little more understandable, since it's only open to Cleveland Heights residents. Several people said that when they were younger, they only knew of Coventry Village, and they thought *that* was Cleveland Heights.

The Cedar Fairmount shopping district, which I live near now, was built a few years before Cleveland Heights even was a city. Coventry came along a few years after that. The Coventry library is another hidden gem, even though it's not exactly hidden. I mean, everyone sees it, but I'm guessing not many from outside the city ever go inside.

I practically grew up in that library. It was built in 1926. I started going there, probably as a baby, with my mother, who later worked there when I was attending Coventry School across the street. I'm always amazed



COURTESY DAVID BUDIN

Another Cleveland Heights hidden gem: the beautiful Mayfield Cemetery, the much smaller cemetery immediately to the east of Lake View Cemetery.

when I step inside the library that it not only looks pretty much like it did when I was a kid, but, also, that it still smells the same. You could blindfold me and take me there and I would know where I was.

If not many outsiders know about Cumberland Pool, even fewer seem to be aware of Cumberland Park. I was recently in London and while there, at every historical site, my mind went back to Cumberland Park, where I would skip school in the autumn and spring of eighth and ninth grades, hiding out in a clump of trees and bushes (which is still there) and read about British history.

Cumberland Park is the home of the Cleveland Heights Veterans Memorial. At its opening in 1943, the program stated it was "dedicated to the sacred valor of those who gave their lives to perpetuate freedom and justice and to all whose bravery and sacrifice have glorified the armed might of America and her Allies." Several years ago, the Memorial was expanded to honor CH veterans who served in the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars.

When I was a kid, the memorial had my name on it. Spoiler alert: I didn't die in WWII; my father's brother, David A. Budin, was a U.S. Army veteran. I don't know why my name disappeared. Neither did Susanna when I talked to her. Maybe someone figured out that Uncle Dave died *after* the war.

I've written before about the benches all over Cleveland Heights. I only discovered them three summers ago, when I started walking for the first time in decades. On one of my walks, I ran into former City Manager Bob Downey and mentioned the benches. He told me that it was

*Continued on page 19*

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A past Random Acts of Art Live concert featured Larchmere Collective's marimba and cello duo.

# Heights Arts brings the music

Tom Masaveg

Heights Arts is emerging from two years of disrupted music programming with a new mix of offerings at community sites and in its gallery at 2175 Lee Road. Heights Arts musical events transform front yards into concert venues, and blend music with poetry in the new offering, ARTbar.

When the pandemic made live music unavailable, listening trends changed. Before the pandemic, the classical genre wasn't among the most popular music played by young people. But during the isolation of COVID-19, playlists for working, studying and relaxing that included classical music spiked more than any other genre, including among young audiences.

In 2022, Heights Arts is putting extra effort into staging live performances for classical audiences and performances of new genres that speak to more types of listeners. With ARTbar, Heights Arts brings intimate musical and cross-disciplinary events to its gallery space in a comfortable cafe setting where attendees can sit down and enjoy a drink while listening.

Meanwhile, Random Acts of Art Live transports music to shared outdoor spaces, serving new audiences and spreading music throughout neighborhoods. These concerts offer a safe way for neighbors and friends to gather and celebrate with song and dance.

Free gallery concerts at Heights Arts increasingly go beyond the classical genre. On July 23, at 7 p.m., The Katy, an indie trio fronted by songwriter, vocalist and bassist Cathalyn, and featuring Cleveland natives Ashanti Allison (drums) and Eli Hanley (keyboards), will take the stage at the Lee Road gallery. The Katy's music is ever-evolving, an earnest,

genuine blend of influences strained and sifted through the trials of life and rooted in trust and love. Its energetic melodies, pulsing, driven tempos, and purposeful lyrics address inequality, relationships, adoration and struggle.

For more information on Heights Arts' community programs and events, including house concerts and gallery performances, visit [www.heightsarts.org](http://www.heightsarts.org).

*Tom Masaveg is a public artist specializing in augmented reality installation and graphite works on paper, and is the programs manager at Heights Arts. Contact him at [programs@heightsarts.org](mailto:programs@heightsarts.org).*

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## COS theater returns with 'Little Mermaid'



COS students perform in Disney's "The Little Mermaid, JR."

Eileen Ryan Ewen

Following two seasons of darkened lights and shuttered curtains, Communion of Saints School's (COS) drama program returned to the stage in May, when 49 children in grades K-8 sang and danced in Disney's "The Little Mermaid, JR."

Sea animals, seagulls, merpeople and royals all took to the spotlight. Bright costumes flashed before painted sets. The student stage crew behind the scenes helped ensure that everything ran smoothly. After months of rehearsing, the show went off without a hitch.

The production was directed by Kelly Monaghan, with support from drama coordinators Carlita Skok, Beth Sluzewski, and Jeanne Gordon, and numerous volunteers.

"Communion of Saints drama

program is a family affair," said Sluzewski, a parent and volunteer.

Parents, grandparents, alumni, and parishioners came together to design and build sets and sew costumes. The result transported theater-goers from the school gym to King Triton's court.

The drama program builds on the arts foundation established by Fr. John Mary Powers, founder of St. Ann's School and Parish (now COS). Powers, an avid theater and music fan, formed the parish theater troupe, The Power Players, more than 50 years ago. For decades, students have learned and honed their skills on the Power Players stage.

*Eileen Ryan Ewen is a children's book illustrator and volunteer librarian at Communion of Saints School. Her children attend COS School.*

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HEIGHTS ARTS

Cain Park raffles off Heights prizes and OSU football tickets

Lisa Manzari

Friends of Cain Park, supporting Cain Park for more than three decades, is back this summer selling memberships and raffle tickets to support this regional treasure. Raffle tickets can be purchased online at [friendsofcainpark.org/raffle](http://friendsofcainpark.org/raffle), and at the Cain Park Arts Festival, July 8-10. [Admission to the Arts Festival is free on all three days.] Each raffle ticket costs \$5; \$20 purchases five. Six baskets, each valued \$100 to \$250, features items from Cleveland Heights businesses, as well as Guardians tickets. Participating businesses include The Wine Spot, Zhug, Dewey's Pizza, MOJO world eats & drink, Boss Dog Brewing Company, Phoenix Coffee, Rising Star Coffee, and Larchmere

Fireworks. In addition, Ohio State football fans have the chance to win two tickets on the 30-yard line for the Rutgers game on Oct. 1, in Columbus. The lucky winner will also win a \$250 Visa gift card, for a prize package worth \$750. All raffle winners will be drawn on Sunday, July 10, at the close of Arts Fest. (If you are a local Heights business interested in donating to, or otherwise supporting Friends of Cain Park, send an e-mail to [womanzari@ameritech.net](mailto:womanzari@ameritech.net).)

*Lisa Manzari is a 16-year resident of Cleveland Heights, and a member of Friends of Cain Park.*

MADE CLEVELAND continued from page 14


the artists at work. O'Connor equates the robust response of both sellers and buyers with a particular lesson of the pandemic: "There were very vivid images of what it means to lose small businesses. That's been a wake-up call. [Made Cleveland] focuses on convenience; these small shops actually are convenient, and it's quite inconvenient when they disappear." O'Connor is committed to creating a positive work environment, where trusting people is key. "That begins with a fair wage," said O'Connor. Made Cleveland's starting pay rate is \$15 an hour. O'Connor plans to expand her food selection and establish an in-store farmer's market for local growers and vendors, and has applied to accept EBT cards. She envisions the space evolving further. "I see certain lines continuing to grow, including apparel. We have an art gallery, and every Final Friday [a Coventry Village monthly summer event], there will be a new

piece installed. We would love to have free, local, live music, local film screenings, literary readings, and eventually we want to install a micro kitchen to serve local wine and beer, and have the kitchen be available to burgeoning food entrepreneurs to test concepts." Of her commitment to the business district, O'Connor said, "When I first moved to Cleveland I lived by the Westside Market, and there were lots of cute restaurants and shops, and lots of foot traffic; but in terms of the type of community that we wanted, Coventry was the one. There are so many different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, and we wanted to serve and represent a diverse community." Made Cleveland is open seven days a week, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. To contact Made Cleveland, e-mail [coventry@madecleveland.com](mailto:coventry@madecleveland.com), or call 216-800-8420. *Jessica Schantz is the e-news manager at the Heights Observer and a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights. She is also the co-owner of Upcycle Design, a furniture vendor with Made Cleveland.*

HIDDEN GEMS continued from page 16

no accident; that the city had placed them all around. Susanna said that, too. The benches are all different and I've tried them all. As I often say, my motto has become: "I will leave no bench un-sat-in." Then there's the tiny forest just east of the Community Center, that, essentially, connects the Community Center to the section of Forest Hill Park with the baseball fields and picnic area. At the edge of the parking lot, small, barely noticeable signs

lead you to hiking trails and several points of interest—both natural and human-made—that you'd never know were there. That little spot really is well hidden. The others are various degrees of hidden. But they're all gems. *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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