Heights Hall of Fame inducts 10

Cathen Cavanaugh

On Sept. 17, the Heights Schools Foundation and the CH-UH City School District inducted 10 Heights High graduates into the Cleveland Heights High School Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame (HOF), as part of homecoming weekend.


Addressing their families, friends, and current Heights High students, each member of the new 2022 Hall of Fame cohort shared how their experiences at Heights shaped their successful futures.

Inductee Habbebah Rasheed Grimes recalled feeling, as a young child, uncertain of her own potential—until she came to CH-UH schools and met caring teachers who believed in her.

“I felt that love start to chip away at that crushing weight. My desire for all Heights scholars, for young people all across this nation, is that adults will show you that you have every right to rise, to shine, to be im- maculate and brilliant,” said Rasheed Grimes.

Each inductee was paired with a current Heights High student, who had an opportunity to get to know them.

Heights Eco Fair is Oct. 8

Catalina Wagens

The second annual Heights Eco Fair will take place on Oct. 8, noon to 4 p.m., at Coventry Peace Park.

The Cleveland Heights Green Team (CHGT) again has partnered with Heights Libraries, Future-a-Team (CHUT), and the Coventry Village Special Improvement District (CV-SID) to host the fair.

“The Heights Eco Fair was conceived as a space where we could connect Heights residents with all of the amazing resources that we have in the area to support a more environmentally friendly lifestyle,” explained Natalie Elwell, CHGT co-founder. “The fair is designed to raise awareness about issues and solutions, opportunities to volunteer and contribute to ongoing efforts, and to spark ideas for new collabora- tions.”

The lineup of exhibitors and partners is extensive and organized in four categories. Sustainable Living continued on page 12

The 2022 Hall of Fame inductees include Habbebah Rasheed Grimes, James Wyban, Peter Bendix, Al Carr, Stan Silverman, Juliana Woda, Tenesa Gonzalez-Jennings, Nancy Eppler-Wolf, and Jerome White. [Not in attendance was Diana Cohen, who delivered her remarks via video.]

CH seeks resident input on ARPA funds via survey

Kim Sergio Inglis

The city of Cleveland Heights is asking residents how they would like it to spend its remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

A public input form (survey) posted on the city’s website, cleve- landheights.gov/arpa, asks residents to prioritize areas of investment, and suggest specific ways in which the funds might be spent.

Cleveland Heights received $8.8 million ARPA state and local fiscal recovery funds. Of that total, $80.46 million has not yet been allocated.

According to the city’s website, the other $80.46 million has been al- located as follows:

• $30 million to make up for lost rev- enue during the pandemic, so [the city] can continue to provide vital services and make needed capital investments.

• $38 million for sewer repairs. The city’s sewers need major repairs, and using ARPA funds to pay for some of them will help lower future residential and business quarterly sewer bills.

• $460,000 for premium pay to first responders during the height of the pandemic.

The city has not yet set an end date for the survey.

Residents who lack Internet ser- vice can contact CH Council Member Davida Russell (drussell@cleveland- heights.gov) to learn how to obtain assistance in completing the survey.

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

Heights Observer October 1, 2022 1  www.heightsobserver.org
CH residents issues plea for access to information

Robin Kuslen

In 2019, I voted for an elected-mayor form of city government, and the following year I voted for Kahlik Seren. I want him to succeed because, if he does a good job, we all win. I support his candidacy because of positions he took regarding accountability to voters, community involvement, and an effective working relationship with city council.

I don’t know where that candidate went when he became mayor, but I want that first guy back. Although he’s been on the job for a short time, it is important to many of us that his current approaches to leadership be re-evaluated and improved.

Candidate Seren was an avid supporter of resident involvement, but Mayor Seren seems less so. In the LWV Voters Guide, the candidate spoke about his dedication to not overstepping the executive role, and to the vital exchange of information between branches of city government needed for an effective relationship with council and for informed decision-making.

Examples of Seren’s departure from his campaign rhetoric include his disparaging public remarks about the city’s refuse and recycling task force and a proposed environmental sustainability committee, his subcontracting the city’s learn-to-swim program to an outside group without input from the residents who use that program, the removal of staff from citizen advisory groups, and the directive to staff to avoid answering questions from members of city council or from residents.

Residents of Cleveland Heights want and expect to be involved in city government. To do that, we need access to information about how our city is being run. We want our advisory groups to have actual policy power. We want answers to decisions are made on our behalf without public discussion.

Most of what I know about the role of the executive and legislative branches, I learned in ninth grade civics class. Our council should be setting policy and enacting legislation. Council members need unfettered access to information to do their jobs effectively. Preventing council members from communicating with city staff is overstepping the executive role, full stop! My assumption is that council members and the mayor have as their mutual goal a well-functioning government; access to information is critical to achieving that goal.

The lack of access to information affects other aspects of community life, as well. When I recently requested information about sharing facilities with University Heights from the city director of parks and recreation, I was told that I needed to get that information from the mayor. Requests for that information from the public instead of from the mayor

I understand that the mayor cannot possibly respond to each and every citizen inquiry. But if staff are not permitted to respond, how can residents as council members get the information they need? That is not what I voted for.

This letter is a plea to the mayor for improvement. Some have suggested the mayor settle into his job and to acquire the skills needed to be an effective executive. I am of the group that believes it is vital that the mayor immediately review and expeditiously implement the positions he took as a candidate.

Robin Kuslen, a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, is a former, grand reflecting, teacher, part-time activist, full-time rebel.

CH council members have the right to inquire

Alan Rapport

A major problem with the operation of government in Cleveland Heights needs immediate correction.

The CH City Charter grants council members a right of inquiry. They have the order city employees to take actions, but they can approach any city employee privately to ask questions.

This right of inquiry is necessary and beneficial. It allows council members to make informed decisions. It allows them to monitor the performance of city departments. It helps them decide how to allocate city resources. It prevents them from being totally dependent on what the mayor chooses to tell them.

Unfortunately, the mayor has been frustrating their exercise of this right.

For example, the city’s new Employee Handbook states: “The laws of communication between the Staff and Council runs through the Mayor, pursuant to the City Charter.”

It does not refer to the right of inquiry also found in the Charter. Employees must communicate with council members only through the mayor; otherwise, they risk disciplinary action.

The mayor effectively has prohibited conversations between council members and city employees.

A council committee can request that city employees attend its meetings. The mayor, reportedly, has refused some such requests, claiming they had “no legislative purpose.”

But in restricting access to information, the mayor has violated the Charter. He has proclaimed himself sole arbiter of how each council member has a right to inquire. Imagine the reaction if the President told congressional committees they could not invite federal employees to oversight hearings.

The Charter provides that the mayor “shall attend meetings of any committee of the Council when so required by such committee.” But council members must be able to learn directly from those who implement city programs. They must learn what government does. They must learn where government is not doing an adequate job. They must learn what government cannot do given present resources.

Attendance of the mayor at committee meetings is helpful, but it is not sufficient to keep city council informed.

The mayor may believe direct communication between council members and city employees incriminates his authority. But an absence of such direct communication threatens the entire system of government.

The right of inquiry makes council members effective. Without it, they cannot perform oversight and cannot legislate. Without it, council becomes a mere rubber stamp.

The right of inquiry is meaningful if council members as-

meeting spaces in the basement.

The additional main floor restrooms, basement meeting rooms, and new elevator will improve accessibility for mobility-challenged customers in particular,” noted Levin. “No more trips downstairs to go to the bathroom. And our handicapped-accessible entrance, which opens into the basement level by the elevator, is now on the same floor as the new meeting and program rooms.”

For the first time in the building’s history, the public will have AV technology that local groups can use. The new program room includes a maker space that will allow staff to expand into culinary literacy and healthy lifestyles.

The new ground-level program rooms also make it easier for access to the outdoor property, including the library’s PEACE Park, which will enhance and expand activities for children and teens.

Seryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.
Correcting the record on the Doan Brook

Christopher Wetherill

I am writing in response to Bert Stratton’s opinion, “Hey, where’s my lake?” (Heights Observer, September 2022.) He made a number of points which were either misleading or simply factually inaccurate, and which bear correcting.

The author takes issue with restoring Horseshoe Lake to, as he puts it, a “primordial” natural environment. Obviously, nobody is advocating goatskin lean-tos as a return to the natural environment, as Stratton suggested. When we talk about restoring a natural environment, it is specifically about mitigating those problems that artificially created reservoirs can cause, and being careful and intentional when we make significant alterations to existing ecosystems. It is expressly not a slippery slope on the way to eschewing modern life and returning to our agrarian pre-historic roots.

Stratton’s comments regarding Cumberland Pool and the Cleveland Museum of Art belie further ignorance of the actual issues facing the Doan Brook Watershed. Man-made structures are not inherently at issue here; the central problem is that human activity can have serious, negative, and long-term effects on local environments and the humans who inhabit them. When this is the case, we should reasonably revisit those old choices and ask ourselves, “Hey, do we think maybe there’s a less destructive alternative we could consider?” Nobody is seriously suggesting demolishing the Cleveland Museum of Art, incidentally; it is also not an ecological hazard. It is not a fish-migration barrier; it is not continually filling with sediment; invasive, non-native plants do not proliferate around it and require active management. These issues are, however, abundant in Horseshoe Lake.

To the author’s remark that “nobody ever . . . lost her life in a flood in the history of Shaker Lakes,” a man did actually lose his life to flooding of the Doan Brook in 1975, after being caught in the flood and swept under a culvert near East 105th Street and East Boulevard. A second drowning occurred during flooding in July 1990. Granted, these deaths predated the ubiquity of the Internet, and the author may be excused for not discovering this in a cursory Google search; however, records of this have been preserved through the
OPINION

“Expanding my curiosity about life is what it’s all about.”

Joe Coyle

Completely engaged. That’s how Joe Coyle feels about his life at Judson Manor.

An award-winning journalist who has lived in Paris, Santa Fe, and New York City, he arrived in July 2020 via the suggestion of a fellow resident. He’s been delighted ever since.

“As a writer, I enjoy spending time alone, and these surroundings are perfect: my apartment is quiet, and the views overlooking the Cleveland Museum of Art are lovely. But by far the best part of Judson is the people. Everyone is so knowledgeable about art and culture. I wanted to have stimulating company to spend my time with, and I’ve found that here. These are wonderful, interesting people,” says Joe.

Read the full story at judsonsmartliving.org/blog

Nostalgia doesn’t save lives

Moshe Koval

I’m writing in response to Bert Stratton’s opinion [published in the September 2022 Heights Observer], and the “Save Horseshoe Lake” movement, who argue [for] keeping [Horseshoe Lake] a lake, providing no practical reasons other than pure nostalgia.

There’s a reason the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NE-ORSD) is concerned about flooding. If Stratton has been following the goings-on around our country and the world, he’d notice that severe flooding due to climate change and the effect of increasing impervious surfaces is happening more and more.

His dismissal of the direct flooding risk to “that old University Circle brick apartment building,” because of the fact that it’s the only building at direct risk of being flooded, seems cavalier toward the lives of the people who live there, and his solution to “vacate the ground floor and pour concrete in it” would displace real people in an already tough housing market.

While we can all agree that Horseshoe Lake looked beautiful while completely filled, I personally find much beauty in its current state as well. Mitigatory shorebirds have been flocking to the wetland habitat that partially draining the lake has created, and the diverse habitats of having a lake in Lower Shaker Lake, and a marsh-like native wetland at the Nature Center have been quite successful at attracting songbirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl.

I encourage everyone to take the survey “Doan Brook Restoration Near Horseshoe Lake Park” that the NE-ORSD has created to seek input from citizens, and suggest options for a sustainable, beautiful tomorrow. Change can be good, and is often necessary.

Moshe Koval is a student who lives in Cleveland Heights.

Vote for more Heights representation

Gary Benjamin

As city leader for the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party, one of my tasks is to look at voting patterns in Cleveland Heights. For example, in November 2018, more than 21,000 people voted in the Senate race won by Sherrod Brown. That vote was overwhelmingly Democratic—21,438 for Brown and 266 for his opponent. There were 35,474 registered voters, so our turnout was 61 percent. This makes Cleveland Heights a political powerhouse whose votes are necessary to elect state Democratic leadership.

In Cleveland Heights we already have two sitting Supreme Court Justices elected in a statewide election, and now we have our own Cheryl Stephens on the Democratic ticket for Lieutenant Governor.

Most of us who vote know who Cheryl is—former Cleveland Heights City Council member, former vice mayor and mayor of our city; and, presently our Cuyahoga County Council member.

She’s been a rock-solid person on policy and practice, and is especially strong in economic development. Her day job is CEO of the East Akron...
Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

Cleveland Heights’ best feature may be its great variety of century-old homes; yet these charming beauties harbor a threat to the lifelong health of our children. Lead-based paint was not banned in the United States until 1978. Houses built earlier unquestionably contain lead.

Eradicating all traces of lead-based paint from an old house is exorbitantly expensive, requiring replacement of windows, doors, walls and soil, and installation of new exterior siding. Increasingly, U.S. cities are requiring more practical measures, called “interim controls.” If applied correctly, these methods can significantly reduce lead in and around a home. They consist of keeping the original pre-1978 paint contained, or “encapsulated” by new paint, and covering bare soil with grass, ground covers or mulch. The resulting environment is not lead-free, but, if properly maintained, is much safer. (“Lead-safe” is the technical term.)

Even when lead paint is successfully encapsulated, friction from opening and closing pre-1978 windows and doors inevitably produces fine lead dust, which young children ingest when putting their hands in their mouths. Once poisoned, a child suffers lifelong cognitive, behavioral and physical health consequences. Making a home safer for children younger than 6 is a two-part process. Even with interim controls in place, parents or other caregivers must minimize dust by frequently cleaning floors, windowsills and other surfaces, and by washing children’s hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys.

Throughout much of the U.S., lead hazards are identified only after a child is diagnosed as poisoned. In other words, the vulnerable bodies of young children comprise our lead-detection system. However, in recent decades, one-by-one, cities have begun to institute preventive programs, and some have reduced lead poisoning dramatically.

To launch and operate a successful lead-safe program, a city’s building, housing and communications departments must be fully staffed and competently led. Inspectors must be thoroughly trained, professionally licensed, conscientious, and scrupulously honest. Frankly, this is a heavy lift for many cities.

In 2019, Cleveland City Council, responding to pressure from Cleveland Lead Advocates for Safe Housing (CLASD) and other groups, enacted an ordinance to tackle the problem of lead in older rental homes. Last year, then-Cleveland Heights council member (now mayor) Kahlil Seren drafted legislation closely modeled on Cleveland’s.
Cumberland Pool is good for CH

Susie Kesser

Labor Day always marks the end of the swimming season at Cumberland Pool. It’s a disappointing moment for me and the rest of the swimming crowd. I’ve spent as much time as possible at this community treasure during the last 40 summers. It is where we get to hang out together and encounter friends and strangers who share our interests. This is a public space, and the public uses it!

I love the sounds of splashing water, youthful horsing around, and quiet conversations. It’s the best place to cool off, exercise, watch the clouds and feel like I’m part of our community.

You can enjoy the pool at every stage of life. Little kids cool off, play and learn to swim—a life skill. Teenagers have an inviting place to enjoy with their friends. Young families have a destination where they can discover other young families. And lap swimmers have plenty of space to work out.

The pool is also a workplace for lifeguards and other staff. It’s a wonderful place for our high schoolers to build their résumés, while they keep us safe and serve as role models for younger kids. Each year these energetic young people work with the kids to pull off a water show for the community—another project with multiple benefits.

There is nothing that epitomizes the Cumberland experience more than the deep-water aerobics class that meets on Saturdays. Joyce Braverman, who grew up in the neighborhood and for whom summer vacation meant going to the pool, has been teaching the class for nearly 25 years. It’s a multi-generational gathering of mostly women who strap on flotation belts and go through a series of exercises that help develop core strength. Many have participated for years.

Braverman, the Shaker Heights planning director, said she has stuck with the Saturday class she loves because, “It is good exercise and allows people to get moving at their own pace. And it builds community.”

When I watched the class on the final Saturday of the swim season, there were about 20 women spread across the diving area in neat lines. Braverman would raise her voice to give directions, and the swimmers would, in a seemingly effortless fashion, change position or move to a different location, all while maintaining their conversations. At the end of the class, they gathered for a farewell picnic.

The exercise class is a communion...
Flooding at UH Library causes damage and service changes

Sheryl Banks

Beginning Aug. 27, the lower level of the University Heights branch of the Heights Libraries experienced flooding that lasted, off and on, for roughly two weeks. The lower level is home to the branch’s children and teen areas, including the collections for both age groups.

While flooring, walls, and built-in furniture were severely damaged, none of the collection was damaged, thanks to the work of the University Heights staff.

“Our staff was truly heroic,” said Sara Phillips, University Heights branch manager. “They worked non-stop over the course of eight hours to move about 14,000 items up to the first floor. I don’t know how we did it—I guess it’s because we had to.”

Phillips also sang the praises of SafeSteam, a Solon-based water-remediation company that removed roughly 10,000 gallons of water from the building. The company has also removed damaged flooring, walls, and built-in desks and cabinetry; sanitized the spaces; and performed mold testing to ensure that staff and customers are safe in the building.

Phillips said she is optimistic that the building can reopen its main floor to the public on Oct. 3. Staff have converted the building’s first-floor meeting rooms into a temporary children’s section, and the northeast corner of the main floor into a temporary home for the teen collection. Adult services will continue, with public computers and seating still available. However, the small study rooms will be unavailable until further notice due to their current use as storage for items rescued from the lower level and as staff work spaces. The lower level will remain closed until further notice.

The cause of the flooding is still under investigation, and the library administration has been communicating with the city of University Heights as well as the Cleveland Water Department to determine what could have been the cause.

Customers are encouraged to call the branch at 216-321-4700, or check the Heights Libraries website (heightslibrary.org) and social media, before heading to the building, as the situation could change quickly.

Sheryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.
If the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District gets their way with the former Horseshoe Lake, WE could be stuck with a multi-million dollar tax bill.

According to the Sewer District, Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights COULD HAVE TO PAY for any improvements, maintenance, and management. This could cost Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights residents millions of dollars each year.

What do we know about the Sewer District’s Plans for Doan Brook?

The Sewer District has NOT committed to paying the full cost of Doan Brook park. Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights Residents could be left to foot the bill. If the cities couldn’t pay to maintain Horseshoe Lake, where will the funds come from to maintain this proposed park?

Don’t let the Sewer District Destroy Horseshoe Lake and Stick Us with a Multi-million Dollar Bill.

Make Your Voice Heard

Fill out our survey on the future of Horseshoe Lake here
Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights
AUGUST 15, 2022 — regular meeting

Present were Mayor Khalil Seren, Council President Melody Hart-Jennings, Council Vice President Craig Cobb, and council members Tony Cuda, Stan Silverman, Anthony Mataro Jr., Joanne Moore, and Davidus Russell. Law Director William Hanna also attended the meeting.

Public comments
Three residents spoke in favor of, and one in opposition to, the proposed charter amendment regarding council’s right of inquiry. Several witnesses, both pro and con, criticized council members for their role and unprofessional treatment of one another.

Charter amendment
Council rejected a proposed charter amendment to “go on the ballot” in November 2022. Voting yes were council members Cuda, Larson, Moore, and Russell. Voting no were council members Cobb, Hart, and Mataro. [Five votes are required to approve a charter amendment proposal. The proposal “ought to amend the charter to formalize procedures for council to request information from departments, and the police and fire departments.”]

Other council actions
Council appointed an Assessment Equalization Board to hear objections to assessments for public purposes for the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District.

Council authorized purchase of real property 12323-12328 Cedar Road for $765,000.

Council authorized an agreement with Link Glenwood Corporation for purchase, installation, and maintenance of the MunisLink software system for utility billing.

Council member comments on the proposed charter amendment
Tony Cuda [pro]: The charter is vague on how council exercises its right of inquiry, and the amendment would clarify the matter.

Joanne Moore [pro]: Council needs information to legislate, advocate for residents, and respond to residents’ questions.

Gail Larson [pro]: Council needs access to information to respond to citizens’ requests, avoid duplicating administrative efforts, and legislate responsibly.

Anthony Mataro Jr. [con]: Previous charter amendments have not been thoroughly reviewed and have created problems. The current proposal leaves critical elements undefined. Instead, a Charter Review Commission should be established.

Davidus Russell [con]: City staff will need to be protected, but council cannot do its job if prohibited from communicating with staff.

Craig Cobb [con]: The proposal underlines the new strong-mayor form of government. It is the responsibility of council and the mayor to develop and review future relationships, which is better done outside the charter. A comprehensive charter review is necessary.

Melody Hart-Jennings [con]: The charter needs to be reviewed as a whole. Council and the mayor working together to develop a process for sharing information is a more flexible method.

Other council member comments
Hart-Jennings stated that criticisms of council members’ interactions have been heard, and that that is necessary that council members maintain decorum and treat one another with respect.

JLV Observer: Jill Tetem

AUGUST 22, 2022 — special meeting

Mayor Khalil Seren was not present. All council members were present.

Clara of clerk’s council
On entrance, council appointed Addie Bales as clerk of council, effective Aug. 22. Anthony Mataro Jr. voted no.

JLV Observer: Jill Tetem

SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 — regular meeting

Council Vice President Craig Cobb was not present. All other council members were present, as were the clerk, council of clerk, and law director.

Clara of clerk
Addie Bales was sworn in as clerk of council.

Mayor’s report
Mayor Seren described the work of Heights Community Congress (HCC) in making Cleveland Heights an inclusive community, and congratulated HCC on its 50th anniversary. He presented proclamations recognizing the 1972 St. Ann Audit of Real Estate Practices, by Suzanne Nigro, Liana Powell, Linda Johnston, Nancy Cappelletti, and Jeannine Martin-Diamond, which demonstrated racial bias and discriminatory practices land real estate companies in Cleveland Heights.

Racial Justice Task Force
Rhonda Davis Lowery, Gary Benjemins, Lisa Hart, and Robert Lampey of the city’s Racial Justice Task Force presented interim reports from the Housing and Economic Mobility, Health and Education, and Public Safety subcommittees.

Council actions
Council approved several pieces of legislation on first reading, including three resolutions approving the reports of assessment equalization boards hearing objections to assessments for expenses for 1) street lighting, 2) improvement of streets and parkways, and 3) the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District public services plan, and three ordinances implementing assessments for expenses of the above.

Union agreement
Council approved compensation rates and benefits negotiated with the laborers’ Local 860 Laborers’ International Union of North America.

Lead-safe ordinance
Presented on second reading, but with no vote, for an ordinance requiring rental units constructed before 1978 be certified lead safe as a condition for obtaining a rental occupancy permit.

Council member comments
Tony Cuda expressed concerns about some elements of the process used to revise the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District, and urged improvements before the next time a SID is expanded. He also advocated starting a discussion about a charter review initiative.

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

Cleveland Heights City Council Meetings are open to the public and are broadcast live online at www.heightsobserver.org.

Back to Us!

Two worship services every Sunday.

Contemporary Worship 9:00 AM
Traditional Worship 11:00 AM

First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland
3630 Fairmount Blvd.
Shaker Heights, OH 44118
(216) 952-7480
www.firstbaptistshaker.org

We hope to see you there!
LEI cookbook stirs up community connections

Maya Watkins

Food and cooking bring people together, linking families and communities. They are an integral part of the stories we tell, and how we connect to others. In the spirit of such connections, Lake Erie Ink (LEI) has launched a Creative Community cookbook project that aims to bring people together through shared recipes and stories.

The cookbook is the latest iteration of an ongoing project that LEI launched in 2020—the Creative Community Challenge.

Originally conceived as a way to bridge social isolation during the quarantine, each challenge is open to all ages and all types of writing and art. It asks contributors to submit creative work on a given theme, culminating in an anthology and a storefront display.

The project brings together people of all ages from the community to share their stories in a myriad of different forms.

This fall, a collaborative cookbook, Stirring Stories, will be LEI’s seventh Challenge.

The book will feature recipes, writing and art from LEI students and the Greater Cleveland community, as well as recipes from local chefs, including Shawnda Moye, Doug Katz, and Tommy Fello.

Imagine someone cooking your favorite meal, filling the air with the most amazing scents. Are they sweet or savory? Is it a special occasion? Who is in the kitchen? Entire scenes can be conjured by tastes and smells.

Every recipe has a story that goes with it. Eating a certain dish can evoke memories of specific places and times, and the person who invented the recipe or passed it down. Stories about food are the stories of who we are and where we’ve been.

Lake Erie Ink invites community members to share favorite recipes and stories this fall, and participate in this creative culinary experience. The resulting publication will be printed and available at local bookstores and other shops. Each contributor will receive a free copy.

To learn more about the project, or to submit a recipe, writing, and art, visit Lake Erie Ink’s website, www.lakeerieink.org/creative-community-challenge/.

The deadline for submissions is Nov. 6.

Maya Watkins is the program operations coordinator at Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth. She is a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident, and a graduate of Hiram College.

A Coca Cola Cake

Tastes chocolatey and good
Coca cola cake tastes like a Disco ball

Smells good smells like
Bubbly, good, and fresh

Coca cola cake feels like victory

by Jayda D., a former LEI student, 2018

COMING UP

4 REASONS TO SHOP LOCAL FOR THE HOLIDAYS
1. Local indies exist to serve you
2. If you don’t support them now, they may not be around later
3. More of your money gets recirculated close to home
4. They support the same local causes and institutions you care about

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The book will feature recipes, writing and art from LEI students and the Greater Cleveland community, as well as recipes from local chefs, including Shawnda Moye, Doug Katz, and Tommy Fello.

Imagine someone cooking your favorite meal, filling the air with the most amazing scents. Are they sweet or savory? Is it a special occasion? Who is in the kitchen? Entire scenes can be conjured by tastes and smells.

Every recipe has a story that goes with it. Eating a certain dish can evoke memories of specific places and times, and the person who invented the recipe or passed it down. Stories about food are the stories of who we are and where we’ve been.

Lake Erie Ink invites community members to share favorite recipes and stories this fall, and participate in this creative culinary experience. The resulting publication will be printed and available at local bookstores and other shops. Each contributor will receive a free copy.

To learn more about the project, or to submit a recipe, writing, and art, visit Lake Erie Ink’s website, www.lakeerieink.org/creative-community-challenge/.

The deadline for submissions is Nov. 6.

Maya Watkins is the program operations coordinator at Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth. She is a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident, and a graduate of Hiram College.

A Coca Cola Cake

Tastes chocolatey and good
Coca cola cake tastes like a Disco ball

Smells good smells like
Bubbly, good, and fresh

Coca cola cake feels like victory

by Jayda D., a former LEI student, 2018
Disciples Christian Church offers monthly community meals

This past summer, with a tent erected in the church’s courtyard, guests had the option of eating under the tent or taking the meals to go. Starting on Thursday, Oct. 27, the meals will be served indoors from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. (depending on the COVID risk level), and “to go” dinners will also be available.

Disciples Christian Church is located at 3663 Mayfield Road, in Cleveland Heights. For additional information, call 216-382-5344, or visit the church’s website, www.discipleschristian.org.

Ronald Werman is an elder and a member of the communications team at Disciples Christian Church.

Ronald Werman

Since August 2008, Disciples Christian Church has been hosting a community meal on the fourth Thursday of each month (with the exception of November, when it moves to the third Thursday).

The event brings together church members and neighbors from the community to share a meal and fellowship. All are welcome.

When the pandemic hit in March 2020, coordinator Sandy Taylor-Welch changed the normal routine, providing “to go” home-cooked dinners that guests could come to the church parking lot to pick up.

The dinners are always available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Meet Ruffing’s exceptional faculty, talk with our Head of School, explore our beautiful and spacious classrooms, and discover for yourself why so many of your friends, neighbors and colleagues have fallen in love with Ruffing and made it the school of choice for their children.

Admissions Open House
Saturday, November 12
12:00 to 2:00 PM
18 months to 8th grade

Register today: Visit ruffingmontessori.net
Green Team sponsors e-media recycling drive Oct. 1-8

Natalie Elwell

From Oct. 1 through Oct. 8, the Clevel-
dand Heights Green Team (CHGT), in partnership with Heights Libraries, will be collecting CD cases (CDs), video games, DVDs, Blu-ray discs, 3.5" and 2.5" floppy disks, Zip and Jazz disks, and media cases. Large blue recycling bins for the items will be located inside the lobbies of all four Heights Libraries branches—Covington Village Library, Lee Road, Noble Neighborhood, and University Heights. The Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District (CCSWD) recently partnered with GreenDisk, a company that provides secure disposal of intellectual property stored on electronic media and other trash. 

Because GreenDisk partners with a nationwide network of for-profit and non-profit companies, the four businesses almost-impossible-to-recycle materials can be dropped off for eco-friendly processing. “The materials are ground up and used in the creation of automotive parts, home heating components, and other composite products,” explained Matt Walters, recycling coordinator at CCSWD. “The media collected in the bins will be transported to the CCSWD office in Garfield Heights. “Residents can be assured that sensitive data will be securely destroyed,” said Walters. “This is why we chose to partner with GreenDisk. We have 100% confidence in their ability to safely dispose data and techno trash in an environmentally responsible manner.”

According to Walters, a common question he receives has to do with ways to safely dispose of items in an eco-friendly manner. “We ask people not to place discs and media in their curbside recycling,” said Walters. “There are several options for people to free up space and avoid the landfill. We advise people to resell, donate, repurpose, and, when all else fails, re-cycle.”

If the product is in good working condition, residents’ residences may want to consider reselling their CDs, DVDs, and video games. The CCSWD recommends the Exchange on Coventry Road. 

Residents with working-condition media can also bring them to the Eco Fair at Coventry PEACE Park on Oct. 8, from 4 to 7 p.m., for the fair’s media swap. “If donating is preferred for some, the Waste District’s website offers a comprehensive list of nonprofit (https://cuyahogarecycle.org/CDs_DVDs_video_games).”

And for the inventive mind, repurposing these materials into something new is extremely satisfying, DIY sites and blogs offer inspiration and ideas.

If you miss the local drive, CCSWD accepts these items at its offices (2500 E. 131st St., Garfield Heights) Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and on the second Saturday of each month, from 9 a.m. to noon.

For more information, visit www.chgreenteam.org or www.cuyahogarecycle.org.

Natalie Elwell is director of gender equity practice at Work Resources Institute in Washington, D.C. She is co-founder of the Cleveland Heights Green Team. She would greatly appreciate you dedicating her free time to advocate for environmental protection and activism.

Eco Fair continues from page 1

Neighborhood Development Corporation, a major developer of affordable housing in the Akron/Canton area. Cheryl’s work on reinvestment has cut down on ‘trash’ is.”

"This event provides a fun, connective, and inspiring place for our community to join us in learning about how to live more equitably," commented Mallory Kent, executive director of CVSID. "With businesses all over our district that cut down on plastic, participate in neighborhood cleanups, support sustainable and local shopping, and keep a vibrant resale/vintage cycle going, we’re happy to partner with the Eco Fair in our neighborhood."

The Eco Fair is a fantastic community-building event where Heights’ residents can participate in hands-on activities that can increase their awareness of sustainability practices, while introducing them to a wide variety of vendors with expertise in earth-friendly techniques and tips.

For more information, visit www.chgreenteam.org or call (216) 382-4236.
Outdoor learning at Gearity

For the past few years, Amit Shuck, who runs Imitating Eden Garden Design, and Paul Gustafson, a CH-UH teacher, have tended the garden at Gearity, working especially hard during the summer to keep the garden thriving.

The garden comprises a variety of plants, including a huge, fruitful fig tree in the high tunnel. “It’s amazing how many figs are on a tree that is not even supposed to grow in Cleveland’s climate,” said Warner.

Shuck also leads an ongoing fundraiser for the garden by sharing the produce from it through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). Members of the CSA pick up fresh food twice a week.

The Gearity garden is full of learning opportunities, and learning outdoors has been shown to improve the health of students and teachers. For example, COVID and other respiratory diseases are less transmissible outside in fresh air. Learning outdoors also has been shown to raise test scores, and kids with ADHD can expand their energy into the greater space of the outdoors.

Although it is challenging to bring students outside, due to logistics and the busy schedules of the school day, Warner hopes the cob oven and other outdoor facilities at Gearity will be used more in years to come.

“Maybe, one day, the outdoor spaces at all the CH-UH schools will be used for learning,” Warner said.

Laura Marks’s family moved to Cleveland Heights in 1855. She is a member of Heights Tree People.

Laura Marks
Heights High teacher Steve Warner has an enduring passion to get students learning, working, and playing outdoors. Warner has guided students through many outdoor projects, including building pollinator gardens. One of the highlights of this past summer occurred when he and students made s’mores in the cob oven at Gearity elementary school in University Heights.

“Cob” is a building technique that uses a mixture of mud and straw to make a weather- and fire-resistant structure. In 2015, Warner was part of the team that expanded Gearity’s outdoor learning spaces to include the cob pizza oven, a large high-tunnel greenhouse, and several outdoor classrooms.

“I like seeing the kids enjoying themselves outside. Hopefully, one day the kids can enjoy the outdoors during the school day as well,” Warner said.
Cleveland Heights – University Heights Board of Education
Meeting highlights

AUGUST 16, 2022 – work session
Board members present were President Maha Lewis, James Pasch, Jodi Sourini, and Beverly Wright. Dan Franz was not present. Also present were Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby and Treasurer Scott Gainer.

Strategic plan update
Representatives from groups working on the district’s strategic plan presented progress on several specific goals:

1. Goal Three (Family and Community) was presented by Cathan Cavernagh, Nancy Pappler, and Leo Hunt. In September, schools will develop the means to measure the impact of community partnerships and how they align with school goals. The Noble program is part of the Ohio 21st Century Grants program designed to provide after-school enrichment in math and English, youth development, and family engagement. Extending the program to Oxford Elementary School is being discussed. Development of the districtwide communication plan is ongoing.

The Educational Equity Policy is accessible on the district’s website, under Academics.

2. Goal Four (K-12 Academic) was presented by Paul Lombardo, who announced a $50,000 Educators Rising Ohio Grant (has been) awarded to the district by the Ohio Department of Education and the Farmers and the teacher staff and is also referred to as the Grow Your Own Program.

The school will conduct threat-assessment training using the MTSS partnership (Multi-Tiered System of Supports Professional Development and Implementation Services). Vulnerability assessment will focus on arrival and dismissal scenarios. The Safe School Advisory Committee includes cleaners and staff.

3. Goal Five (Operations) was presented by George Petkas and Christina Blosser. Petkas presented an overview of maintenance and building projects. The master facilities plans are updated, and a new system has been implemented to track projects and reports. Current capital improvements include school window projects, the kitchen at Roxboro, and the bus depot.

4. Goal Six (Community) discussed cybersecurity concerns and a need for security awareness training for users.

Treasurer’s report
Scott Gainer encouraged people to follow the Ohio legislative as it discusses the Ohio Biennial Budget, which includes the school funding plan.

LWV Observer: Roseanne Farman.

SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 – regular meeting
All board members were present, as were the superintendent and treasurer.

Board actions
The board approved the development of the Community Learning Centers. This research-based strategy will support implementation of Full-Service Community Schools. The approved statement of support, available on BoardDocs, provides details about the program.

Superintendent’s comments
Focus on Title IX update: G-W Comprehensive Health Skills series was purchased after collaborating with teachers to review options. Textbooks and online access for secondary students align with the National Health Education Standards and the National Sexuality Education Standards. The new health curriculum has a consent component.

Treasurer’s report
Scott Gainer shared “Three Things” for the month of September. His report aligns with Goal Five (Operational Resources) of the CH-UH strategic plan. Financial reports and forecasts can be found on the district’s website, under Finance & Development.

1. The Permanent Improvement (F1) fund is only for building projects and has specific restrictions. Board members commented that the F1 fund reflects planning that provides the community with stability, and said they appreciate the transparency of the reports being accessible on the website.

2. Public record requests increased, but many requests did not meet the definition of a public record. The public record request process and clarification of the Ohio Sunshine Law are reviewed on the district’s website. A public record is an existing document or record, not vague or summarized information. People are encouraged to reach out to board members to clarify such information. Maha Lewis said that it’s easy to contact board members by e-mail or phone. Public record requests are audited, and the district takes requests seriously.

3. Disadvantaged Pupil Impact Aid (DPIA) is part of the Fair School Funding Plan, and the dollars spent must be reported. Reporting DPIA funds distribution is a districtwide effort as described in the district’s website, under Finance & Development.

The Ohio Department of Education requests more than disaggregated pupil data for individual components of reported data, such as school district comparisons relevant to the Fair School Funding Plan. (See District Profile Reports (Cupp Report) online at https://edcution.ohio.gov.) Josh Sovick noted that the data clarifies differences between school districts as presented in the Cupp Report. Funding varies depending on student population.

(Note: The LWV Observer viewed this meeting via YouTube. The sound did not come on until 25 minutes into the meeting, as Superintendent Kirby was concluding her report. Part of this report was assembled from the PowerPoint presentation. Board members commented that the report was audited, and the district takes requests seriously.)

LWV Observer: Roseanne Farman.

Documents for all board meetings can be accessed online at www.shh.org/Boards/Educato- rion.aspx. Board meetings are livestreamed at www.youtube.com/CHUHSchools, and record for later viewing.
Libraries will host Oct. 16 ‘homecoming’ celebrations

Sheryl Banks

Fall is the season for homecoming celebrations. High schools, colleges and universities invite alumni to reunite with old classmates, visit campuses, and see how their schools—and classmates—have changed. Former students stroll through their old dorms and student centers, then visit the new stadium or the new computer science building. It’s a comforting combination of old and new.

Heights Libraries will have its own homecoming celebration on Sunday, Oct. 16, 1–4 p.m., at every branch. Community members are invited to visit their neighborhood library to meet new staff, reconnect with existing staff, and learn about what’s new since they last visited.

Since the COVID pandemic struck in 2020, Heights Libraries’ circulation and visitor numbers have dipped as a result of periodic library building closures and restrictions, such as social distancing and mask-wearing, which made programming difficult. However, library staff took advantage of those quieter times to create new resources and services: A new Local History Room at the Lee Road branch, a new STEAM Lab at the HKIC, new meeting rooms at the Coventry Village branch that feature space for culinary programs, a revitalized children’s garden at the Noble Neighborhood branch, and weekly take-and-make projects for all ages at the University Heights branch, to name just a few innovations.

The Oct. 16 homecoming events will feature refreshments and activities for all ages, and customers who check out more than 10 items will get a free tote bag, while supplies last.

More information is available at heightslibrary.org.

Sheryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.
MetroHealth expands services at its CH campus

Angela Townsend
The MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Behavioral Health Hospital, opening Oct. 8, is the latest expansion of comprehensive care provided at MetroHealth’s Severance Circle facility.

The new behavioral health hospital will provide inpatient care for people struggling with depression, substance abuse, and more. Outpatient behavioral health services have been offered since July.

Other new additions to the Cleveland Heights campus:
• The Red Carpet Care Program provides services for chronically ill and/or frail Medicare and Medicaid patients. It works with primary care providers.
• A patient care navigator works with the geriatric patient population. Before patients go home after seeing their primary care provider, the navigator helps schedule specialty appointments.
• Medicare Wellness visits with a nurse practitioner are available by appointment on Thursdays and Fridays. Call 216-724-7777 for an appointment.
• The pharmacy is now open seven days a week (Sunday hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.). MetroHealth’s enrollment in the 340B program—which requires pharmaceutical companies to give major discounts to hospitals that serve low-income patients—results in lower prices for everyone who fills their medications through MetroHealth pharmacies, even people with commercial insurance.

Two of MetroHealth’s newest internal medicine/pediatrics attending physicians are Marcus Germany, M.D., and Mary Ryan, M.D. Both joined the staff in 2021, and are accepting new patients of all ages.

“I wanted a career that would allow me to have an adult practice while still treating children,” said Germany, who served as chief resident of pediatrics during his final year of residency at MetroHealth. “I wanted a robust and rigorous pediatrics training.”

Caring for patients whose backgrounds are as diverse as Cleveland Heights itself has been a bonus, said Germany, who sees patients at MetroHealth Cleveland Heights three days a week, and works with the School Health Program at Cleveland Heights High School.

Ryan, a graduate of Beaumont School, is following in the footsteps of her father, Martin Ryan, M.D., an internal medicine physician at MetroHealth.

Like Germany, Ryan wanted a medical practice that allows her to provide care for people across the age spectrum, enabling her to form long-term relationships with patients and their families.

“Cleveland Heights is a great facility, there’s lots to offer,” she said. “It’s really helpful to have the support of so many specialties here, as well as the Emergency Department for people who may need a higher level of care.”

MetroHealth’s Cleveland Heights’

continued on page 19

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Apollo’s Fire announces its new 2022–23 season

Nichole Fehrman

Cleveland Heights-based baroque orchestra Apollo’s Fire is gearing up for its 31st season under founding Artistic Director Jeannette Sorrell. The season comprises 26 subscription concerts, including seven in Cleveland Heights, and additional performances across Northeast Ohio. Apollo’s Fire is also planning robust education and outreach performances in the Heights.

Highlights of the 2022–23 season include the return of Sorrell’s acclaimed version of Handel’s “Messiah,” a new program, “Exile,” focused on the music of displaced cultures; and a return of Monteverdi’s sumptuous “Vespers of 1610.”

Both “Messiah” and “Vespers” have recently won national praise, with Apollo’s Fire’s CD version of “Vespers” recently being named one of “30 Must-Have Recordings of Our Lifetime” by BBC magazine. Sorrell brings her version of “Messiah” back to Northeast Ohio after conducting it with the New York Philharmonic in 2021.

Performances in Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights include: Monteverdi’s “Vespers” on Oct. 8 and 15 (at First Baptist), Storms & Tempests on Nov. 12 and 13 (at St. Paul’s Episcopal), Handel’s “Messiah” on Dec. 10 and 11 (First Baptist), Muse of Fire on Feb. 3 and 4 (St. Paul’s Episcopal), Exile: Music of the Jewish & African Diasporas on March 10 (St. Paul’s Episcopal), and A Return to Bach’s Coffeehouse on May 12 and 13 (St. Paul’s Episcopal).

On Oct. 22, an Apollo’s Fire ensemble will perform an educational family concert at the Lee Road branch of Heights Libraries—“Sing for Joy!” The free concert, designed for children and families, features soprano Sonya Headlam in a program of joyful folk and baroque songs.

Apollo’s Fire’s popular Baroque Bistros—casual restaurant concerts—will also return in January, with Drive the Cold Winter Away planned for Bottlehouse Brewery.

Cleveland Heights-based Apollo’s Fire embarks on its 31st season.
Almost all of my grandchildren’s teachers, in their as-yet brief scholastic careers at Fairfax Elementary School, are people who were born 20- or 30-some years ago. Think back on the past 30-some years. Life really hasn’t changed very much in that time. These teachers are young. The kids love them, and they love school. I believe there’s a connection between those things. That foundation is important.

Almost all of my teachers at Coventry Elementary School were born in the 1890s. Some of my Roosevelt Junior High teachers were, too. So, that was my foundation: teachers who were born in the 1800s.

In the 1890s, cowboys were still riding around the West, trying to kill Indians, just like in the old Western movies. Radio was introduced. The first (primitive) movies were shown. People heard the first phonograph records. The first patent for an automobile was granted. Carnegie Hall opened (with Tchaikovsky as guest conductor). Idaho and Wyoming became states. Peanut butter and tea bags were new kitchen items. The first official basketball games and the first professional football games were played. The first modern Olympic Games took place.

Here, in what would become Cleveland Heights, there were still some Native American tribes, like the Erie and Seneca. The Shakers operated a grist mill at what is now Coventry Road and Fairmount Boulevard, stone quarries at the present-day North Park Boulevard and Grandview Road, and a broom factory on what is currently Lee Road. Much of this area consisted of farms. In the 1890s, visionaries (with an eye on big financial gains) started to see this area as a potential escape for the denizens of Millionaire’s Row, who wanted to get out of the big city and build “country” homes, leading to the city in which we now reside.

I don’t know when my elementary school teachers moved here, but this area didn’t become the city of Cleveland Heights till 1921, the year my father was born. He moved here a couple of years later, from the city of Cleveland, then started elementary school at Coventry. I had two of the same teachers there that he had.

My first guitar teacher was also born in the 1890s. I was 7 and went to Motter’s Music, which was then on Coventry, looking for a teacher. There weren’t many back then, as the guitar was still an outsider instrument. But there was this old cello instructor there who knew how to play guitar. It was an awful experience, but I really wanted to learn, so...

Among the many services and specialties at MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Medical Center are x-ray, CAT scan; lab services; colon cancer screening; allergy shots; dermatology; eye care; sleep medicine; sports medicine; and physical, occupational and speech therapy.

The J.D Mobile Mammography van is on campus on Tuesdays, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The same cancer-screening technology is used at all MetroHealth Breast Imaging sites. Exams take 15 minutes or less. Patients can request a referral by using MyChart or by phone (216-320-002, ext. 1. For more information on Apollo’s Fire programs and performances, visit apollosfire.org.

Nichole Fehrman is the director of market- ing for Apollo’s Fire, Cleveland Heights’ resident international baroque orchestra.

I stuck with it.

I used my guitar in a Coventry School Halloween talent show as a senior in third grade, and I lip-synced an Elvis Presley performance in our third-grade assembly when I was in third grade, so I always think about my third-grade teacher telling us what kind of decorations we were allowed (!) to put onto the clay candy dishes we were making. I created one that combined my interest in Native American history with my subtly formed initials. She went crazy over that, and not in a good way.

I just learned to ignore my teachers. And to hate school. Neither was, because I performed before the whole school several times and teachers—some of whom I didn’t even know—would always compliment me afterward, when they didn’t have to. Those earlier teachers of mine never seemed to understand what I was doing or what I wanted to do. I always think about my third-grade teacher telling us what kind of designs we were allowed to put onto the clay candy dishes we were making, I created one that combined my interest in Native American history with my subtly formed initials. She went crazy over that, and not in a good way.

I just learned to ignore my teachers. And to hate school. Neither was a good thing. The situation got slightly better as I got older (as the teachers got younger). But by then it was too late. That foundation is important.

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 musican and comedian. His writing focuses on the arts and, especially, pop-music history.
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