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

Dave's Markets acquires Zagara's Marketplace

Bruce Hennes

Dave's Markets has acquired Zagara's Marketplace on Lee Road in Cleveland Heights.

Zagara's closed on Oct. 21. On Oct. 29, it reopened as Dave's Market and Eatery.

Dave's Market in the Cedar Fairmount Business District closed on Oct. 25.

Dave's is a fifth-generation family-owned and operated business, with three generations of the Saltzman family currently active in Dave's Markets.

David Saltzman, a fifth-generation member of the family, said, "We continue to believe in Cleveland Heights and we're ready to deepen our investment in the city. We're going to rebrand the new location as Dave's Market and Eatery."

"Moving our operation from Cedar Fairmount to the Zagara's location on Lee Road will allow us to continue providing customers with the best possible service, selection and prices in a large location with amazing potential," said Saltzman. "The Lee Road store was



KIM SERGIO/INGLIS

Zagara's Marketplace on Lee Road has reopened as Dave's Market and Eatery.

built to be a family-owned operation, and I'm happy to say it will stay that way."

Zagara's, one of the last independent grocers in Cuyahoga County, opened in the city of Cleveland, moving to Cleveland Heights in 1988.

John Zagara, owner and operator

of Zagara's Marketplace, offered thanks to his customers and employees for their support over the past three decades.

"There are very few large, single-location independent grocery stores left in the U.S. With limited buying power and the inability to scale-up operations

continued on page 2

Walter Stinson was University Heights

Mike Cook

Walter J. Stinson, 94, who served the city of University Heights for more than four decades as its community coordinator and senior services manager, died on Oct. 7. He is survived by Sara, his wife of 47 years, son Paul, and two grandchildren.

"Walter Stinson was a good man, and a great man. He loved this community, and he served this community like no other," said Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan. "He is an inspiration, and an example for us all."

Stinson, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., moved to University Heights in 1973. Three years later, Mayor Irving Konigsberg hired him to become the city's first community coordinator, where he promoted fair housing opportunities, welcomed new homeowners, encouraged neighborhood activities and planned senior citizen



CALEB SCHUSTER

A public servant, a gentleman, a family man, and a legend, Walter Stinson was laid to rest on Oct. 14.

programs. Stinson handled the city's communications and became known as "the voice of the city" as host of its cable television program, "University Heights Today."

Stinson served in this capacity for more than 34 years, serving under Mayor Beryl Rothschild and Mayor Susan Infeld. He retired in 2010 at

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FH rehabs 22 homes over three-plus years

Robert Brown

"I was looking for a move-in-ready house on a quiet tree-lined street located close to my medical school job in University Circle," said first-time homeowner Thomas Radford, who previously lived in Solon and Bainbridge. "This house checked all the boxes for me."

Radford's house, on Elbon Road in Cleveland Heights' Noble neighborhood, is one of 22 vacant and foreclosed homes rehabilitated so far through work led by FutureHeights, the city's community development corporation (CDC). Each had fallen into disrepair, and some were facing possible demolition.

Until this year, FutureHeights sold each vacant house, prior to renovation, to a developer who then carried out the work and re-sold the renovated house to an owner-occupant. (One such renovation project was completed in May, just two doors down from Radford's home, in keeping with FutureHeights' targeted approach to neighborhood investment and redevelopment.)

For Radford's home, FutureHeights itself acted as the developer, hiring and supervising the work of construction contractors.

"It's another way for FutureHeights, and CDCs in general, to rehab houses and improve the community," explained Micah Kirman, FutureHeights' interim director. "We, as a CDC, are able to keep the sales

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Heights art students upcycle trash into treasure

Natalie Elwell

Visitors to the Heights Eco Fair on Oct. 8 had the opportunity to view more than 100 works of art created by 10th- and 12th-grade Heights High students, and vote for their favorite pieces.

With the exhibit, *From Trash to Treasure*, art teachers Sarah Cooper and Nancy Rich-Drehs saw an opportunity to channel their students' creativity through an awareness of the environment.

"We had already done some upcycled artwork in previous years," Cooper

explained, "but a meeting with members of the Cleveland Heights Green Team helped give context to the work and inspired a movement that impacted the [school] building as a whole."

"Instead of just utilizing found materials, we tasked students with developing systems for acquiring items we could use. Our artists made phone calls, sent e-mails, and created collection bins that we plan to continue using for future upcycled projects. With this approach we were able to

continued on page 9



SARAH COOPER

The best-in-show winning piece was inspired by A Snowy Day.

Letters Policy

The *Heights Observer* welcomes letters to the editor. They must be submitted electronically, along with the writer's name, phone number and e-mail address, to: www.heightsobserver.org/members.

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

The *Heights Observer* is a citizen-based news source published monthly by FutureHeights, a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to civic engagement and quality of life.

2843 Washington Blvd. #105,
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
216-320-1423

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The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the *Heights Observer*, its publisher and staff, or of FutureHeights, its staff and board of directors.

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 and click on "Member Center" at the left.
- For information about writing style, article length, etc., click on "Become an Observer" at the left. For questions that aren't answered there, call the FutureHeights office at 216-320-1423 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

Articles to be considered for the December issue must be submitted by Nov. 7. We publish some articles online only. We also publish an e-newsletter each Tuesday.

12 reasons to shop local for the holidays



OPENING
THE OBSERVER

Bob Rosenbaum

At this time of year, we typically run a local holiday shopping guide. I'd like to say it's a reader favorite, but the truth is we get underwhelming feedback on it from readers and businesses alike.

We hope to replace it next month with a guide to holiday events and programs that will take place in the community throughout December.

But our message about supporting neighborhood businesses is as relevant as ever: **Please shop local for the holidays.**

Here are 12 reasons why:

1. It's personal. The people who run local independent businesses tend to be deeply embedded in the community. They're friends and neighbors. So who manages the nearby big box stores? Have you ever met them? Where do they live, shop, send their kids to school?
2. Small-business owners have invested everything specifically to serve the

people who live nearby. Simply put, they care more about us.

3. In the trade-off between the services used and the tax revenue delivered, specialty retailers bring in more than they cost for communities like ours, according to the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. Big boxes cost more than they bring in.
4. Local businesses carry unique, curated merchandise—often from other local businesses and artisans—for gifts you won't find anywhere else.
5. A larger portion of the money spent at local shops gets recirculated within the community, creating a multiplier effect. Most of the money spent at a big box gets sent back to headquarters.
6. Your kids aren't likely to get a donation from a big box or a restaurant chain to support the band, soccer team or other causes that are important to you and your family.
7. Small-business owners worry most about their customers. Corporate CEOs are chiefly concerned with investor returns, and will likely never set foot in the stores they operate here.
8. The *Heights Observer* is supported almost entirely through advertis-

ing from local businesses and organizations. Without them, this and other community assets couldn't exist.

9. Small businesses don't get tax abatement, open overseas holding companies to avoid taxes, or outsource labor to low-cost countries. They also pay proportionally more in taxes than large corporate stores.
10. Small businesses don't vacate giant blocks of real estate, turning entire shopping plazas into acres of blight.
11. Small businesses don't hire corporate lobbyists or make dark-money donations to influence elections.
12. We are what we do. If you like living in a community with lively business districts, the most impactful thing you can do to keep them is to spend money in them—during the holidays and also year-round.

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

CH mayor's micromanaging impedes progress

Steve Rowsey

While I do not present myself as an expert in city management, I do find it my civic duty to keep well informed on local issues.

Viewing the Committee of the Whole meetings of Cleveland Heights City Council on YouTube is an excellent method to educate oneself as regards the interactions between our current elected officials.

The meeting of Oct. 3 displayed the discord that obviously exists within council, as well as between council and the administration. At the heart of this conflict is council's direct access to information from administration department heads.

Article III, Section 6, of the Cleveland Heights City Charter states in part, "*Except for the purposes of inquiry*, the Council and its members shall

deal with the administrative service solely through the Mayor or the City Administrator . . ." [Emphasis added by the writer of this opinion.]

While council members have the charter-granted right to make inquiries, any answers seem to be blocked by the mayor's apparent instruction to his department heads to not reply to those inquiries.

At the Oct. 3 meeting, responding to a frustrated council member, Mayor Seren said that, as mayor, he's "got eyes on things that maybe an individual director may not know." In regard to inquiries, he said he wants to be certain that "information we are providing is both consistent and complete."

While the mayor's position is both understandable and commendable, his attempt to micromanage the flow of information to council

members (and city residents) is crippling any forward movement on issues critical to the citizens of Cleveland Heights.

I would remind Mayor Seren that individual department heads may have eyes on things about which the mayor may not be aware. The current Memorandum of Understanding (see the YouTube stream for information on that!) appears to be just another tool of micromanagement.

I would urge the mayor to loosen the reins a bit and let the city's department heads do their jobs—part of which is answering inquiries from citizens and council members. This deadlock cannot continue.

Steve Rowsey, a former Cleveland Type-writer employee, is learning to enjoy retirement in Cleveland Heights, where he has been a very happy resident for 30 years.

ZAGARA'S continued from page 1

in the same way a larger chain can, it's always been a challenge to be competitive and profitable," said Zagara. "With the help of my talented managers and employees, and the tremendous support of our loyal customers, we've been successful. But anyone operating a business today knows that the current environment provides unprecedented challenges. By transitioning our store to the Dave's family, we are assuring local ownership continues for the business we worked so hard to build."

Local 880 of the UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers International Union) will continue to represent both Dave's and Zagara's employees. All of Dave's employees at the Cedar-Fairmount store will be offered employment at the Lee Road store or other Dave's locations. Employees of Zagara's will be offered jobs with Dave's.

Dave's remains committed to



John Zagara

operating its store at Severance Town Center.

Preliminary plans for a significant 2023 renovation of the Lee Road store include updates to décor, lighting and flooring, as well as enhancements to individual departments designed to improve the shopping experience.

"Zagara's customers will continue to find the items they've always shopped for and more," said Saltzman. "In order to minimize customer dis-

ruption from the beginning, the store layout will be similar, and customers can look forward to finding items they were accustomed to, plus an expanded variety. Additional day-one enhancements will include extended hours across the store, Grandpa Dave's famous fried chicken, made-to-order hot sandwiches, freshly squeezed orange juice, a new meat counter and more deli offerings."

"I couldn't be more pleased to leave the Zagara legacy and the Lee Road store that I built in the hands of the Saltzman family. It will be an exciting place to shop, and I wish them every success as they make their vision for it a reality," said Zagara.

Bruce Hennes is a 47-year resident of Cleveland Heights. He was asked by the Zagara and Saltzman families to submit this article. Zagara's has been a client of Hennes' company, Hennes Communications, since it was conceived of and built at its Lee Road location.

Jury duty is both a right and a privilege

J.J. Costello

I suspect that most people's first response when getting a jury summons in the mail is, how am I going to get out of this? If that is you, read on . . .

You were selected randomly from the voter rolls or a list of licensed drivers. Your employer cannot penalize you for being called to jury duty, and cannot require or request that you use vacation or sick leave for time spent while being called to jury duty.

You do not need to worry about not knowing anything about the law. It is the judge's job to provide you with the law. Your role is to decide the disputed facts.

Nearly every resident at least 18 years of age can serve on a jury. Certain persons may be excused, such as members of cloistered religious orders, someone whose jury service would cause them or someone in their care extreme physical or financial hardship, or those older than 75 years of age. However, the court must approve your excuse even if you fall within one of these categories.

Most are undoubtedly qualified to serve as a juror, but there may be something that could disqualify them in a particular case. Everyone has predetermined ideas about some matters, but the American jury system is based on the principle that those jurors who decide a particular case will decide it with an open mind. Everyone, including me, has feelings, assumptions, perceptions, fears, and stereotypes—that is, "implicit biases"—of which we may be unaware.

When instructing jurors, I ask that they resist relying on conclusions based on personal likes or dislikes, generalizations, gut feelings, prejudices, sympathies, stereotypes, or biases, and instead carefully evaluate the evidence presented.

When a group of prospective jurors is summoned for a trial here at Cleveland Heights Municipal Court, I recognize they have mixed emotions about being there. I can appreciate that. However, our Constitution contains several protections for defendants in criminal cases, and key among them is the right to a fair

trial by a jury.

By serving on a jury, you help preserve this right for your fellow citizens and ensure that our justice system works with integrity, fairness, and transparency. While it is no doubt a sacrifice to be there, it is a sacrifice that our democracy requires.

At our last scheduled jury trial, that is just what I told the jurors. Unfortunately, of the 65 jurors summoned, only 15 appeared. I was certainly disappointed in the turnout. If someone receives a jury summons and ignores it, I can issue a warrant for their arrest and punish them with contempt of court. I have high regard for the citizens of Cleveland Heights, and I hope and believe that the low turnout was an anomaly.

As we approach an election, we should all be reminded of the importance of both voting and jury service—two acts that are our duty and privilege as citizens.

For far too long, individuals were denied those acts, and people fought and continue to fight to ensure everyone has those rights. As you head to the polls, or if you receive a jury summons, remember how important it is. When you get that jury summons, instead of wondering how to get out of it, be honored and excited that you get to play an active role in our justice system.

J.J. Costello, a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident, is judge of the Cleveland Heights Municipal Court.

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A pro-Horseshoe Lake summary of the issues

Peter Zicari

Between formal public statements and social media, the debate over Horseshoe Lake has become a tangle of ideas and responses. The following is an attempt to organize them.

There is no apology here for being partisan [pro-lake]; those who want to remove the lake speak pretty well for themselves.

The neglected spillway of Horseshoe Lake was found in 2018 to have seriously deteriorated. The state ordered Shaker Heights to drain the lake in 2019. Shaker Heights turned to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District. The sewer district [replied with] a hard “no,” but offered to remove Horseshoe Lake forever. Everything after that is subject to dispute. The debate rages in the following areas:

The practical:

Anti-lake: The dam is unsafe. If it broke, the water would endanger people in University Circle. It would be more cost-effective to enlarge only the lower lake dam. The upper lake has outlived its usefulness.

Pro-lake rebuttal: Horseshoe Lake is not the cause of University Circle flooding—that neighborhood flooded in 2020, after the lake was drained. The lake is valuable as an asset in an urban park, like the art museum lagoon—and it supported the value of millions of dollars in real estate.

Pro-lake: The lake can be modified to improve its flood-control ability and lift some of the load from Lower Shaker Lake. Removing the lake because the dam is damaged is like removing a road because of potholes.

The environment:

Anti-lake: Doan Brook should be restored to its “natural” state.

Pro-lake rebuttal: People have been messing with the brook for more than 170 years, and the watershed has radically changed. The stream will never be the same. The diversity being promised comprises tiny minnows and bugs under stones; Lake Erie fish aren’t going to migrate past University Circle and the Lower Lake dam. Critics don’t seem to have a problem with the other dams on Doan Brook.

Pro-lake: The lake harbored quite a bit of life. Water birds returned every year. The Audubon Society said the lake was part of a significant bird area. The lake filters out silt and has a cooling effect in summer.

Legal and equity issues:

Anti-lake: The state says the dam is out of compliance with strict safety regulations. The sewer district says it will not spend money to keep the lake.

Pro-lake rebuttal: The Friends of the Horseshoe Lake’s engineer says the dam can be made to comply with the regulations for less than

what the sewer district plans to spend. The district is inconsistent; it’s helping restore a lake in Garfield Heights, and didn’t have a problem rebuilding the Green Lake dam. It must not be forgotten that the sewer district will not pay to develop park features. They will do what they want and blame it on cost control.

Pro-lake: Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights agreed to maintain the lakes when they signed a lease with Cleveland. They are still responsible.

Emotional, historic and aesthetic issues:

Anti-lake: Supporters tend to dismiss the lake’s beauty and historic value, and say the lakes are for the wealthy.

Pro-lake rebuttal: Hundred of people were happy to stroll over the dam, rest their eyes on the water, and feel themselves a part of the lake’s long history. A sculpted, low-erosion channel will be a shallow depression with a gutter of rip-rap (rock rubble) down the middle.

It’s our generation’s turn to save the lake for the future. The Friends of Horseshoe Lake are continuing the struggle. To help out, go to savehorseshoelake.com.

Peter Zicari is a former newspaper writer and editor, a longtime resident of the Heights, and passionate supporter of Horseshoe Lake. While he supports the Friends of Horseshoe Lake, he does not speak for them here.



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Democracy does not begin or end with Election Day



HEIGHTS OF DEMOCRACY

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

In our June 2020 column, we wrote that citizen participation in a democracy requires effort beyond merely voting. Now, we approach this theme from a different angle: local government's responsibility to facilitate resident access and involvement. We consider a few practices—some recent, others longstanding—at our own Cleveland Heights City Hall.

For years, council members and the public complained about city manager Tanisha Briley's habitual insistence that council pass legislation "declaring an emergency," even when it did not address an urgent matter. Under Mayor Seren, this practice has continued, although the full text of the proposed legislation now includes the reason for emergency status.

In addition to projecting urgency where none may exist, laws passed as emergencies cannot be overturned by citizen initiative. Passing certain ordinances as emergencies specifically to protect them from future revocation may be justifiable—those concerned with contracts, for instance. If an agreement executed in good faith can later be broken by popular vote, few individuals or corporations would choose to sign contracts with municipalities.

When used frequently or indiscriminately, the "emergency" designation can be profoundly undemocratic. In 1912, our state constitution gave Ohioans the rights of initiative and referendum as a corrective to the machine politics of the Gilded Age. One hundred ten years later, we do not want our local government to contravene the intent of our state constitution. We urge the mayor and city council to reverse this trend.

As we pointed out in June 2020, boards and commissions provide important opportunities for citizens to participate in local government and contribute to their communities. Sometime during Briley's tenure, board members' and commissioners' names and contact information disappeared from the city web-

site. To date they have not been restored. Membership on a city board or commission is a public role. Although not elected, these appointees are charged with representing residents and our interests. Not only should we know their identities and be able to contact them, they need our input.

Early in his term, Mayor Seren abruptly eliminated staff assignments to boards and commissions. This may have been necessary to prevent unreasonable workloads for city employees, especially given perennial understaffing. But if that is the case, it behooves the administration to come up with an alternative. Citizen oversight and advice are essential to local democracy; appointees are volunteers and need professional support to function properly and effectively.

A recent incident exemplifies further constraints on both appointed bodies and city staff. When the city's Commission on Aging planned a "listening forum" for seniors, they were stymied by staff's refusal to schedule it without the mayor's approval. This is not the first hint we have heard of a repressive atmosphere at City Hall. We hope the administration realizes that secrecy and fear are antithetical to the transparent, accountable city government CH residents voted for and deserve.

A final note: Will wonders never cease? For the first time ever, we agreed with and endorse the content of Alan Rapoport's opinion, "CH council members have the right to inquire," published in last month's *Heights Observer*. He wrote, "The CH City Charter grants council members a right of inquiry. They cannot order city employees to take action, but they can approach any city employee privately to ask questions." Rapoport did an excellent job of explaining council's rights and the administration's responsibilities under the current charter. If you missed his take on this issue, we hope you will give it a read.

Postscript: If you have not yet voted, please remember these three words: Ohio Supreme Court.

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

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State school report card inadequate as quality measure



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

In September, the Ohio Department of Education issued its annual report cards for each school in the state's 610 districts. The reports are based on state-mandated tests taken last spring by students in grades 3-12. Calling these annual data dumps a report card is a stretch; that would suggest depth, thought about the complex components of quality education, and qualitative, as well as quantitative, information.

A summary of results for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District is posted on the district's website (www.chuh.org) under the headline "District makes strides in closing education gaps." According to last year's test data, several of our schools have done a great job reducing test performance differences among children by race, income and other categories. That's something to be proud of when your goal is equity.

The summary includes this comment from Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby: "While the report card provides information about performance on state assessments, our strategic plan is our blueprint towards realizing our mission for our students. We monitor our progress towards our strategic plan goals through a robust performance management structure that guides the work of our teacher teams, building leadership teams and district departments."

Test scores are not robust measures.

I'm impressed by Kirby's response. She articulated that the report card summarizes state test performance—that's all. She then went on to define what the school district aspires to, and the variety of metrics needed to evaluate whether it has achieved its vision.

This is a refreshing departure from the past when, out of fear of looking unconcerned, our leaders had to promise to do better. They inadvertently validated a system they knew was not fair or adequate.

I followed an online link to the strategic plan (www.chuh.org/StrategicPlanning.aspx) and was thrilled by the vision we have for our students.

Our district's mission isn't to create great test-takers; it's about developing citizens.

The district's core values, excellence, equity, integrity, trust and respect, "remind us of what we must see in ourselves and one another." You don't measure these ingredients by test scores alone.

The strategic plan defines the metrics needed to measure quality: "Measures that matter go beyond test scores and KPIs [key performance indicators]; activities such as community service, participation in the arts, music, and sports, and an ongoing quest for learning come to mind when we imagine a Heights graduate who is ready to become a responsible, caring and successful citizen."

Standardized testing has driven our public schools for 20 years. State lawmakers have attached a variety of consequences to test performance, including labeling some schools as failing. These high-stakes consequences are inappropriate, but they prevail. They create fear among educators, trapping them in an endless quest for high scores.

Ohio spends millions each year on testing, only to confirm what researchers have proven over and over: Test results reflect the family income of the students who attend our schools, rather than the quality of education they receive.

People are hungry for good information about their kids and their schools, but this [report card] data doesn't provide insight into authentic learning, effective teaching, character development, or the conditions that support engagement and success.

We want more for our kids than what the state has decided is important.

I'm grateful that Kirby did not fall for the false claims and limited vision offered by its report card. We shouldn't either.

Standardized tests can provide useful data, but for them to be legitimate, we need to stop attaching high-stakes consequences to them.

Susie Kaeser moved to Cleveland Heights in 1979. She is the former director of Reaching Heights and is active with the Heights Coalition for Public Education and the League of Women Voters. A community booster, she is the author of Resisting Segregation, a book about local activism.



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UH breaks ground on long-planned South Taylor townhomes



The ground was officially broken at South Taylor Place on Oct. 14.

Mike Cook

In an Oct. 14 ceremony, the city of University Heights and Knez Homes broke ground on the South Taylor Place townhomes.

When the project is completed,

30 new “luxury” townhomes will have been built, in clusters of three or four homes. Each will have a two-car garage, and some will feature rooftop decks with views of the Cleveland skyline.

“This progress has been a

long time coming,” said University Heights Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan.

“It began in 2018, my first year in office as mayor. This administration began the process of creating this project, creating this situation,

creating the structures through which this project was not only possible, but would one day happen. That day is here.”

South Taylor Place will be the first new housing development built in University Heights since the 1970s.

Brennan said the project would not have happened without the strong and persistent work of many.

The mayor gave credit to the city’s Economic Development Director Susan Drucker, former Housing and Community Development Director Patrick Grogan-Myers, City Engineer Joe Ciuni, City Law Director Luke McConville, past and present city building officials, housing officials, and past and present members of UH City Council.

The mayor also gave credit to the CH-UH school board—Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis, Jim Posch, Jodi Sourini, and Beverly Wright—together with school Superintendent Elizabeth Kirby and Treasurer Scott Gainer.

“This land was assembled and this project is happening because school officials and city officials came together and shared a common vision for what will be,” Brennan said.

Brennan also thanked developer Bo Knez and his team for “sharing in our vision of what will be.”

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

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FUTUREHOMES continued from page 1



Micah Kirman, FutureHeights' interim executive director, and Thomas Radford in front of Radford's new home on Elbon Road.

price low enough to be affordable. Private developers and rehabbers do not necessarily share the same motivation of affordability.”

During its first three years, FutureHeights' housing rehabilitation program, FutureHomes, produced almost \$2.7 million in increased property valuation, generating \$107,000 in additional taxes for the city. The houses are all located in areas targeted by the city for re-investment activities.

For each house it acquires, FutureHeights develops a comprehensive scope of work and design standards. The CDC then oversees the work, ensuring it meets those standards. The renovated houses are then sold to owner-occupants.

“We may act as developer for one house per year; no more than that,” Kirman noted. “It's another tool in our toolbox, expanding the ways in which we can rehab houses to improve the community and accomplish our goals. We'll continue to sell homes to developers/rehabbers, so long as they agree to our standards and work scope.”

The average pre-rehab value of the 22 homes was approximately \$8,000 each. Following the rehabilitation work, the average sale price was \$177,000.

The first 22 houses rehabilitated

through the FutureHomes program are located in Cleveland Heights' “mid-city” target area, near the high school; in the Noble-Monticello-Caledonia target area; and in the Desota-Altamont target area.

“FutureHeights remains committed and eager to continue real estate work within our target areas, and we are especially motivated to help correct the problems caused by residential vacancies, out-of-town bulk buyers, mortgage and tax foreclosures, and nuisance properties,” said Kirman.

FutureHeights acquires most of the homes it rehabs from the city of Cleveland Heights' land bank, with some purchased from the county's land bank.

“We pay a nominal fee,” said Kirman, “[with the] understanding that we are motivated to complete quality renovations and secure a new owner-occupant for the community's sake, rather than just earn a profit, like many house flippers tend to do. This is a partnership with our local government.”

Robert Brown is a city planner with 47 years of experience, including nine as Cleveland's City Planning Director. A Cleveland Heights resident for more than 40 years, he serves on the board of FutureHeights.

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Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights

S SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

Present were Mayor Kahlil Seren, Council President Melody Joy Hart, Council Vice President Craig Cobb, and council members Tony Cuda, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., Josie Moore, and Davida Russell. Also present were Addie Balester, clerk of council, and William Hanna, law director.

Public comments

A resident expressed support for the proposed lead-safety legislation receiving a third reading this evening.

A parent/youth hockey coach pleaded for the community center to resume making ice on both rinks [during] this five-month season. He supported his request with documentation for cost savings.

Three young people asked that the city intervene in the practice of some in the Orthodox Jewish community of killing live chickens as part of their preparation for the Day of Atonement.

Council actions

On first reading, council:

- Made a routine 2022 budget adjustment to appropriations and expenditures.
- Approved funds for operating expenses, specifically to obtain software for the clerk of council.
- Amended the dates of the lease agreement with WXZ CPV LLC for the Taylor-Tudor buildings.
- Authorized the Ohio Department of Transportation to provide bridge and culvert inspection services within the city.
- Authorized application for funds from the Urban Forestry Assistance Program of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for the purchase, installation, and care of trees and other urban vegetation.

On second reading, council:

- Accepted property tax rates from the county budget commission.
- Approved a request to the county fiscal officer to advance taxes for 2022 to the city, and to enable receipt of the funds more often than the usual two payments to make budgeting easier for the city.
- Authorized a switch in recycling service provider to Waste Management of Ohio. Josie Moore noted that the new contractor will accept a broader list of items to recycle.

Lead-safe legislation

Council heard a third reading of, but did not vote on, legislation to add a lead hazards provision to the certificate of occupancy for rental properties. During the committee of the whole meeting, council discussed the time needed before implementation, as the housing department is inadequately staffed. ARPA funds may be used, but these are limited. Real estate agents have questions about their accountability.

Committee of the whole

The Administrative Services Committee will draft charter review legislation, beginning at its meeting on Sept. 28.

LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.

OCTOBER 3, 2022

The mayor and all council members were present, as were the clerk of council and law director.

Public comments

A resident, concerned that infill [building of] homes in the Caledonia neighborhood [has] not yet started, expressed her feeling that

other areas are favored, and that redlining and broken promises may reflect prejudice against Rev. Jimmie Hicks and the Start Right Community Development Corporation he leads.

A resident thanked Gail Larson for her help with a problem property, and went on to decry the lack of inspectional services and animal control in Cleveland Heights.

Peter DeGolia of the Commission on Aging asked council to approve a listening forum for seniors on Oct. 24. When told council does not need to approve this, he stated that CH Senior Center staff had indicated otherwise.

A resident implored council to focus on the needs of citizens rather than council and mayor interactions and communications. She felt it was reasonable for council leadership and the mayor to formulate the memorandum of understanding.

A father [who is a] youth hockey coach requested that the city restore ice on the South Rink at the CH Community Center, stating there is a high demand for ice time.

First reading adoptions

Council approved several pieces of legislation on first reading, including:

- Changes in expenditures and appropriations, moving money from one line in the budget to another.
- Authorization to apply, jointly with South Euclid and University Heights, for a NO-ACA grant to fund the Heights Regional Neighborhood Greenway Project/Initiative. This would fund signage, buffered bicycle lanes, and connector pathways.
- Authorization to apply to the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission for grant funding for creating a template for neighborhood planning.

Crossing guards

On second reading, council authorized an agreement with All City Management Services Inc. for crossing guards. The term of this agreement is July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, at \$135,819 per year, to be shared equally with the school district.

Lead hazards ordinance

The lead hazards ordinance has had four readings but is not yet ready for a vote; it was sent back to the Public Safety and Health Committee for additional changes. It will be voted on at the next regular council meeting.

Council member comments

Anthony Mattox Jr. urged residents to complete the ARPA funds survey on the city website.

Committee of the whole

There was a lengthy discussion of the voluntary and non-binding memorandum of understanding worked out by Council President Hart and Council Vice President Cobb with Mayor Seren. The process for making requests, timing of replies, and method for mediating disagreements were defined. There was considerable disagreement over the process used to write the memorandum, but the mayor endorsed it as collaborative, cooperative, and a good compromise.

LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.

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

UPCYCLE continued from page 1



Among the Heights High artists who showed work at the Eco Fair were (clockwise, from back row, left) Johanna Carlyle (best in show winner), Joseph Putnam, Rilyn Manne, Antonia Casucci, Isabella Villanueva (best 3-D art), Natalie Bier, Emma Naypauer.

acquire the raw materials we needed while reducing the amount of waste leaving our school building for a landfill. It was an amazing opportunity for Heights’s artists to experience art as activism.”

Rich-Drehs explained, “Once materials were collected, upper-level art students got to work planning projects that would turn this everyday trash into artistic treasure. We discussed ways in which these materials could be transformed.”

“Providing a space for our youth to connect with the environment through expressions of art is a perfect example of what the Eco Fair is all about,” said Catalina Wagers, co-founder of the CH Green Team. “The Art Exhibit is the outcome of a young mind’s journey of awareness and discovery resulting in activism as a form of self-expression, connecting the artist and the audience with the realization that we all are both creators and stewards of our future.”

Eco Fair visitors voted for their favorite pieces in three categories. The winners were:

- Jordyn West (sophomore) - Best two-dimensional art
- Isabella Villanueva (sophomore) - Best three-dimensional art
- Johanna Carlyle (junior) - Best in show

Carlyle described her winning piece as “inspired by the snowsuit in the book *A Snowy Day*, and some wonderful sculptures a student from the Cleveland Institute of Art did.”

“I love working with the female form,” said Carlyle, “and try to incorporate it into most of my art. Using recycled materials was an interesting experience because my main media is oven-bake clay. I enjoyed the challenge of working with something so unpredictable. I used a book that had been sitting in my mom’s attic for over a decade, so I’m really pleased that I was able to turn it into something special to me.”

West commented, “Using recycled stuff was really new for me. It was definitely out of my comfort zone; however, I’m glad that I still went through with it. If I were given a chance to do what I did again, I would. It’s something I’m willing to get better at.”

“It was impressive to see students think creatively and use available materials to make something meaningful,” said Cooper. “Even more importantly, they were able to quantify a small portion of the waste we produce as a school community and find ways to use it to beautify shared spaces. It is empowering to feel your impact, as a single person’s efforts can sometimes feel futile. Working together on this project connected us to each other, our neighbors, and our environment. I am thankful for that.”

Natalie Elwell is director of Gender Equity Practice at World Resources Institute in Washington, D.C., and is co-founder of the Cleveland Heights Green Team. She works remotely, and dedicates her free time to advocate for environmental protection and activism.

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The Warner-Racca House



The Warner-Racca House in 2015.



The distinctive staircase of the Chateau de Blois, located in Blois, France, may have inspired the Warner-Racca House.



CLEVELAND HEIGHTS LANDMARKS

Ken Goldberg

The Warner-Racca house, one of Cleveland Heights' most picturesque, is known for the projecting circular staircase that forms a major component of its façade.

Designed by architects Meade and Garfield, the East Overlook home was completed in 1898. It was designated a Cleveland Heights Landmark in 1996.

The architect may have modeled the distinctive stairway appendage after the 16th-century spiral staircase tower at the Chateau de Blois, in France; in any case, he was certainly inspired by the romantic chateaux along the Loire River.

Half-timbering and ornate chimneys add to the eclectic décor of the home. Its interior boasts artfully carved woodwork and leaded glass, including around the graceful staircase.

The home's original owner, William Henry Warner, was president of seven coal mining companies, including the W.H. Warner Company, and was director of six manufacturing and real estate businesses—all in Cleveland.

Concrete contractor Peter Racca and his wife, Dolores, owned the home from 1955 to 1996, and raised five children there.

Ken Goldberg is a member of the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, which preserves and protects buildings, works of art and other objects of historical or architectural value to the community. The commission's seven members are appointed to three-year terms by CH City Council.

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FutureHeights awards mini-grants to three Heights projects

Sarah Wolf

The FutureHeights Neighborhood Mini-Grant program has awarded grant funding to three Heights groups in the fall 2022 round of funding—Oxford Community Garden, Roxboro Elementary School, and the Cleveland Heights Green Team.

Oxford Community Garden, established in 1934 as a Victory Garden, was awarded \$1,000 for its Raised to Grow project, which will install raised garden beds to help conserve water and to make it easier for older gardeners to participate. The garden’s organizers also plan to plant shrubs, to try to prevent deer from infiltrating the garden space. Their hope is to continue to engage the whole community—everyone from the children in the neighborhood to the elderly—through these gardening enhancements.

Roxboro Elementary School was also awarded \$1,000 toward funding its project—Pivot: Hydroponic Sowing and Growing in an Urban School Library—which will bring the capacity for year-round gardening to the students. The hydroponic gardening system, made by Fork Farms, will enable Roxboro students to try their hand at farming, and even take home the vegetables they grow. Roxboro Elementary School is still in the process of raising all of the funds necessary to purchase this system from Fork Farms.

The Cleveland Heights Green Team (CHGT) received \$750 for its Sustainability Awareness and Activism project. These grant



An example of a hydroponic garden.

dollars will be used to support CHGT’s 2023 programming and educational materials. CHGT offers sustainability-awareness programming for all ages, citywide.

FutureHeights’ Mini-Grant program offers up to \$1,000 in funding for Cleveland Heights- and University Heights-based projects undertaken by Heights community members.

In 2022, the FutureHeights Mini-Grant program awarded a total of \$9,700 to 13 Cleveland Heights projects.

The twice-yearly application deadlines are March 15 and Sept. 15. To learn more, send an e-mail to swolf@futureheights.org, or visit www.futureheights.org/programs/community-building-programs/mini-grants.

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

UH band performs free concert Nov. 6

Edward Siess

The University Heights Symphonic Band (UHSB) will perform its annual fall concert on Sunday, Nov. 6, 3:30 p.m., at John Carroll University’s Dolan Science Atrium.

As always, admission to the concert, and parking, will be free.

UHSB will perform concert-band classics from Holst, Reed and Sousa, as well as new music from Reineke and Mackey.

This concert will also mark the premier performance of a new piece, “Doylestown March,” by Jay West-

field, a member of UHSB.

UHSB is in its 53rd season, and now under the direction of its fourth music director, Devlin Pope.

The atrium is in the university building that is closest to Fairmount Circle—the building directly behind where the band performs its outdoor summer concerts. Seating will be available in the lower and upper concourses.

Edward Siess is the University Heights Symphonic Band’s president and business manager.

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STINSON continued from page 1

the age of 82, and then was rehired on a part-time basis as the city’s senior services manager, serving in that capacity for another 10 years.

By joint proclamation and resolution of Mayor Brennan and UH City Council, the community park at Fenwick and Saybrook roads was rededicated as Walter Stinson Community Park (aka “The Walt”) in 2019.

Stinson was 92 when he retired from the city of University Heights for the second time, in 2020, at the onset of the pandemic when in-person gatherings—especially those for seniors—were not possible.

In his honor, Mayor Brennan issued a proclamation on Oct. 10 ordering that the flag of the United States be flown at half-staff at Uni-

versity Heights City Hall and all public buildings and grounds within the city until sunset on the day of his interment. The community gathered to pay its respects at a Mass of Christian Burial at Church of the Gesu, and Stinson was interred at Lake View Cemetery on Oct. 14.

“To many, he was the face of the City, like no other. For decades on behalf of the City, he visited every new homeowner, myself included,” said Brennan. “Everyone knew him. We all celebrate his service and love of community in the park we re-named in his honor in 2019. We will all miss him.”

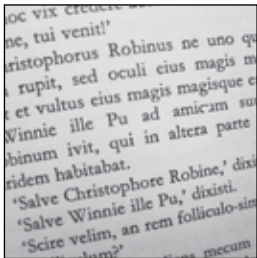
Mike Cook is the communications and civic engagement director for University Heights.



Walter Stinson Community Park on Fenwick Road in University Heights.

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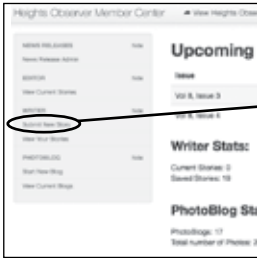
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Cleveland Heights – University Heights Board of Education

Meeting highlights 

SEPTEMBER 20, 2022 - work session

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

Progress on strategic plan goals

The strategic plan goals were developed as broad, long-term aims that reflect the district’s mission and vision. Staff members Felicia Gould, Lashonda Abdussatar, Allison Byrd, Christina Bauer, Karen Liddell-Anderson, and Robert Swaggard explained in detail the action steps the district is taking to achieve goal one: “Every student graduates ready to succeed in college and career;” and goal two: “Excellent education is provided to each student in every District school and classroom through multiple pathways.” The board and district administration [say they are] very cognizant of and focused on data that will track achievement of these goals.

GEAR-UP update

The board approved a proclamation in support of National GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) week. The district has received two federal GEAR UP grants, and a district student was named federal GEAR UP student of the year. GEAR UP grants provide low-income, minority, and underserved students with the support and resources they need to go to college, despite the challenges they may face.

LWV Observer: Robin Koslen.

OCTOBER 11, 2022 - regular meeting

Jody Sourini was not present. All other board members were present, as were the superintendent and treasurer.

Public comments

Cleveland Heights resident and former school board member Eric Silverman asked for clarification regarding the percentage of taxes the [district] would receive from the Cedar-Lee-Meadowbrook development project, and other projects initiated by the city of Cleveland Heights.

Recognitions and awards

Superintendent Kirby announced that 1,329 students [had] perfect attendance during the first month of the 2022-23 school year. She will continue to recognize students with perfect attendance at board meetings.

The IT department has a new coordinator. The department is continuing the smart board upgrades, assisting the Curriculum and Instruction [departments] in piloting new ELA (English Language Arts) applications, and working to coordinate with the new Metro-Health clinic at the school.

A teacher or staff member from each of the schools was recognized for outstanding commitment and awarded a Tiger Team celebratory plaque.

Heights High senior Maxwell Frey is a National Merit Semifinalist, and senior Ashaun Sims has been offered 15 full scholarships

Two Heights High ninth-graders on the superintendent’s Student Cadre, Chelsea Gipson and Meghan Marshall, presented athletic successes of the various sports teams and other achievements. Dan Heintz recognized and congratulated Marshall for a CH-UH “first;” she was the first female on the Heights freshman football team to sack [the opposing] team’s quarterback.

The high school’s theme for this year is “believe.”

Superintendent’s comments and announcements

The Heights Homecoming Parade on Sept. 16 drew more than 1,000 spectators. On Sept. 17, 10 alumni were inducted into the Heights High Hall of Fame.

Treasurer’s report

Scott Gainer [said he] appreciated Ohio State Rep. Bishara Addison contacting him about Ohio House Bill 290, the “Backpack Bill,” so that he could explain the impacts of the bill on Heights schools and on public education. [Addison, appointed last spring to complete Janine Boyd’s term, represents Cleveland Heights, University Heights, Shaker Heights, and parts of Cleveland.]

As part of his [ongoing] “three things” presentation, Gainer explained the impact of millage rollbacks from House Bill 920, the difference between effective and voted millage, and how these affect the levy cycle.

For a future “three things,” James Posch requested a presentation on how tax collection differs between residential and commercial properties. Also, [he said] he would like to hear more about state laws on TIFs (Tax Incremental Financing) and what the city can do without school district approval. He [said he] felt that many citizens are unaware of this information.

State board resolution

Malia Lewis read a prepared response opposing the state board of education’s (BOE) resolution, “A Resolution to Support Parents, Schools and Districts in Rejecting Harmful, Coercive and Burdensome Gender Identity Policies,” written by state BOE member Brendan Shae. The resolution, scheduled for a vote on Oct. 12, has been returned to committee. Shae’s resolution has been opposed by several other state BOE members and by several Ohio school boards. The board responded favorably to Lewis’s response, but James Posch proposed a few amendments, which the board approved. Lewis agreed to rewrite and update her statement. [Shae was elected in November 2020 to represent state BOE District 5.]

LWV Observer: Rosemarie Fairman.

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

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Beaumont wins back the golden racquet from Cleveland Heights



A pre-match picture of the Beaumont and Heights High tennis teams.

Nicole Levine

Each year, the Beaumont School and Cleveland Heights High School varsity girls' tennis teams compete to bring home the "golden racquet."

The tenth annual matchup took place at Cain Park on Oct. 4, with the Beaumont Blue Streaks beating out the Cleveland Heights Tigers 4-1.

The trophy, a tennis racquet painted gold, will reside in the Beaumont trophy case until the teams meet next year.

Beaumont head coach Mike Pellechia was feeling uneasy the entire match, even after Beaumont took a 2-0 early lead, thanks to Maggie Brady taking first singles, and Lilly Dixon winning a hard-fought match at second singles.

"We had the early lead last year, and Heights came back and took the match," said Pellechia.

Beaumont secured the victory when the second doubles team of Sarah Wolf and Payge Dague defeated Jose Naypaver and Leslie Villeda, followed by a third singles win from Haley Scott.

The Heights first doubles team of Libby Warren and Leela Manne edged out Beaumont in two sets, 7-6, 7-6, to score the lone point for Heights High.

"It's always exciting to bring the golden racquet home for the year," said Pellechia. "I am proud of how the girls played, and can't

wait for next year's match."

Nicole Levine is Mike Pellechia's daughter, and an avid tennis lover. She earned a bachelor's degree from Ohio University's E.W. Scripps School of Journalism, and currently resides in Columbus.

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Library chooses CMAR for Noble branch renovation

Sheryl Banks

After a competitive RFP (request for proposal) process, Heights Libraries has hired the Independence Construction-DeGeronimo Companies as the construction manager at risk (CMAR) for the Noble Neighborhood branch renovation project. The decision was announced at the library's Oct. 17 board of trustees meeting.

The Independence-based company has extensive experience with both for-profit and nonprofit projects. They

include Pinecrest in Orange Village, the Greater Cleveland Food Bank's new distribution center in Cleveland, and several libraries—most recently the new Bay Village Library.

"All the applicants had great portfolios and experience, so it wasn't an easy decision," said Heights Libraries Director Nancy Levin. "But DeGeronimo had a combination of supply-chain solutions, budget-reducing strategies, and a focus on community needs, which made them the right choice."

continued on page 19



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Cleveland Heights – University Heights Public Library Board

Meeting highlights  LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF GREATER CLEVELAND

SEPTEMBER 19, 2022

Board member 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

Bostwick Design Architects gave a presentation to the board about updated plans for the Noble Neighborhood Library renovation and addition. Floor plans, interior planning, exterior design, and landscaping were discussed.

The Hodge Group gave a presentation via Zoom, updating the board on progress made to date in setting up a donor base, preparing documents for donor meetings, and training volunteers for donor meetings.

There was a comment relating to the tenants of the Coventry Peace Campus (CPC).

Board resolutions

The board approved a construction manager at risk for the renovations and additions to the Noble Neighborhood Library.

The board approved a second phase of work with the Hodge Group to facilitate donor visits, help prepare grant applications, and coordinate fundraising teams and campaign management.

The board authorized the construction of a new door for the food pantry and deliveries. This will replace the book lockers on the south side of the Lee Road branch, which were little used.

The board approved repairs needed due to flooding in the University Heights branch. Expenditures will be reported to the insurance company and the board.

Director's report

Library Director Nancy Levin updated the board on the current relationship with CPC. Lease agreements have been sent to all ten-

ants. So far, no tenants have indicated they intend to move out of the Washington Boulevard building. There still remain a number of unresolved issues between the library and CPC, mainly around outstanding bills and repairs. Broken glass in a window needs repair, and lights in the gym are needed. Levin stated that these repairs are the tenants' responsibilities, and that CPC has not responded to requests for repairs. CPC is still reviewing documents provided by the library. Negotiations have not begun. Levin [said she] hoped to be able to resolve these issues, and for the tenants to remain in the building.

Levin reiterated the policy regarding services that do not discriminate against people in poverty, who have chosen to be unhoused, or who have challenges in their lives forcing them to be unhoused. There is no rule against sleeping in the library as long as the person remains upright in a chair and doesn't cause a disturbance. In the past month, the library received a number of complaints from customers challenging the rules. Libraries are bound by U.S. law to provide services to people experiencing homelessness. A further refinement of policies will be discussed at an October committee meeting.

Public service report highlights

Summer reading programs participants numbered 1,869 adults. Youth services summer reading programs had a total of 1,470 registrants.

Circulation continued to increase over the summer, nearing pre-pandemic levels.

LWV Observer: Elizabeth M. Tracy.

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

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Lee Road Library security guard de-escalates toy gun incident



The Lee Road entrance to the Lee Road Library.

Sheryl Banks

On the afternoon of Oct. 6, at Heights Libraries' Lee Road branch, a young teen "under eviction" from the library tried to enter the building with what appeared to be a handgun protruding from the waistband of his pants. It was later determined to be a toy "splatter gun."

The security guard in the lobby was alerted to the teen's presence by several children as they entered the building. He took swift action to secure the safety of customers in the building by immediately calling 911, then calmly confronting the teen and preventing him from entering the building.

Cleveland Heights police arrived quickly and took the teen into custody. According to police, the weapon was not a handgun, but a realistic-looking toy gun—an Or-beez, or water pellet gun.

Heights Libraries is grateful for the swift action of the guard and the Cleveland Heights police, who prevented the situation from escalating.

"Incidents like this are thankfully extremely rare," said Heights Libraries Director Nancy Levin. "But with the rise of gun violence,

we understand that we need to be ready for anything, and must take threats seriously. That's why we have our own security staff who are skilled at handling and de-escalating a wide variety of potential crisis situations, including those involving young customers."

Levin continued, "It's also why we engage in staff safety trainings on a regular basis, such as active-shooter trainings and first aid and CPR. We care deeply about the safety of our community and our staff."

The security guard [whose name has been removed from this article at the library's request] is known in the library system for his warmth and approachability, and already had a relationship with the children who alerted him to the potential danger.

"I'm just glad that everyone is safe, including the young teen with the toy gun," commented the guard.

The teen had previously caused property damage at the Lee Road branch.

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

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MetroHealth’s new hospital opens at Severance

Angela Townsend

A dedication ceremony to mark the opening of the MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Behavioral Health Hospital was held on Oct. 4.

The new three-story, 100,000-square-foot hospital at 10 Severance Circle is believed to be the largest investment in behavioral health in Northeast Ohio in at least 30 years. The 112-bed hospital facility is designed for short-term stays for adolescents, adults and seniors with mood disorders, addiction, and other behavioral health needs.

“We’re setting a new standard in relation to care in Northeast Ohio,” said Julia Bruner, M.D., MetroHealth’s senior vice president for Behavioral Health and Correctional Medicine.

“We want to do the best for our patients and our families and the community.” The new hospital, she said, is “designed to be a place of calm, of welcoming and of light.”



From left, Akram Boutros, M.D., MetroHealth president and CEO; Bev Lozar, executive director of Behavioral Hospital Operations; Julia Bruner, M.D., senior vice president for Behavioral Health and Correctional Medicine; and Jane Platten, executive vice president and chief administrative officer.

The hospital, on the campus of the MetroHealth Cleveland Heights Medical Center, will add 225 jobs and generate an estimated \$350,000 in additional tax revenue for Cleveland Heights.

The behavioral health expansion will help reduce Cuyahoga County’s critical shortage of care and treatment capacity.

In 2019, nearly half of the residents who required behavioral

health inpatient care received it outside of Cuyahoga County.

In addition to behavioral health, MetroHealth will continue to offer inpatient services, specialty care, emergency services, pharmacy services and other care in Cleveland Heights.

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



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Heights Arts Holiday Store opens Nov. 4



Paper Bowl, by Sue Schieman.



Jellicle Cats, jewelry by Dylan Kamalay.



Foraging 1, drawing by Christopher Owen Smith.



Muffled, painting by Nicole Carroll.

Tom Masaveg

This year's Heights Arts Holiday Store will be open Nov. 4 through Dec. 30.

"The Heights Arts annual Holiday Store offers a unique shopping experience for people seeking special gifts made by local artists," said store manager Heather Patterson. "We strive to display carefully curated works, and enjoy helping you find the perfect personalized gift."

The holiday store has celebrated local artists for more than 20 years, and has expanded during that time.

The 2022 shop features approximately 120 artist contributors—chances are, some of your neighbors might be among them.

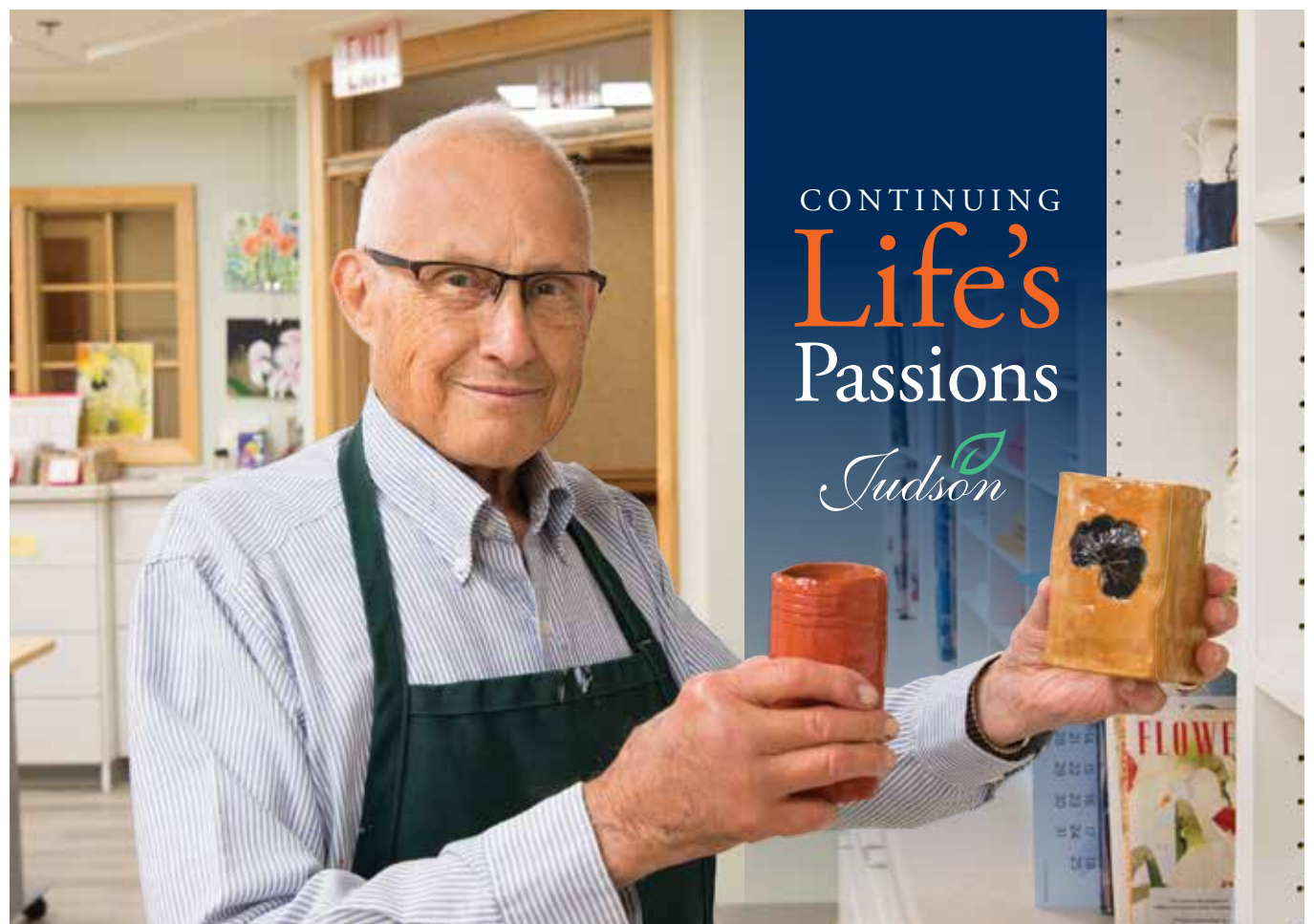
This year's participating artists are: Bobby and Danielle Allen, Patti Austin, Jeffrey Balazs, Kristin Barnes, Annie Becker, Jess Bennett, Sue Berry, Paula Blackman, April Bleakney, Melissa Bloom, Patricia Bolgar, Davon Brantley, William Brouillard, Linda Brown, Malik Burpo, Catherine Butler, Andrew Cari, Nicole Carroll, Jamey Christoph, Barbara Claas, Kristen Cliffl, Martha Cliffl, Benita Cullinan, Sandra Curry, Susan Danko, Catherine Davies Paetz, Karin Marleen Dijkstra, Bonnie Dolin, Megan Dull, Dylan Eddy, Gene Epstein, Shari Escott, Marjorie Falk, Betsy Fallon, Katie Ford, Al Fuchs, Susan Gallagher, Patricia Garmhausen, Bernadette Glorioso, Jane Godfrey and Sondra Radcliffe, Zac Gorell, Gretchen Goss, Leslie Greenhalgh, Sharon Grossman, J. Allon Hall, Thomas Hanger, Abbey Hansen, Melissa Hintz, Marianne Hite, Jeneen Hobby, Alyson Hollobaugh, Jimena Horta, Pat Isenstadt, Lari Jacobson, Michelle Janosky, Jalonda Jones-Singleton, Amelia C. Joynes, Dylan Kamalay, Tricia Kaman, Larry Kasperek, Lori Kella, Ursula Korneitchouk, Scott Kraynak, Coretta Kutash, Elaine Lamb, Michael Lau, Cherie Lesnick, Janet Luken, Nancy Luken, William Mahon, Claire Marks, Stephanie Miller-Davis, Erica Montejo, Joyce Morrow-Jones, Robert Muller, Joan Neubecker,

Wayne Niemi, Lynn O'Brien, Jennifer Omaitz, Karen Koykka O'Neal, Michelle Pajak-Reynolds, Lori Pastor, Pamela Pastoric, Cass Penegor, Shayna Pentecost, Jane Peterson,

Maryann Posch and John Gulyas, Halle Preneta, Elizabeth Prindle, Qandle Qadir, Tom Ream, Marty Resnik, Natalie Rich, Jamie Richey, Rick Rollenhagen, Robert Romeo,

Carmen Romine, Danielle Rueger-Miroewski, Sue Schieman, Sharon Schlesinger, Lisa Schonberg, Genevieve Schwartz, Charles Schweigert,

continued on page 19



Peter has always been passionate about living, working, and volunteering in University Circle.

From his lifelong work as an astronomer to his recent work in pottery and everything in between, Peter is always searching for new things to explore.

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SONGS AND
 STORIES

David Budin

Raymond DeForest was inducted into the Cleveland Blues Society Hall of Fame on Oct. 30. The long-time Cleveland Heights resident has been playing music professionally for 50 years.

The Cleveland Blues Society is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving blues music in this region. It sponsors jam sessions, and holds an annual Blues Cruise on the Goodtime III as a benefit to raise funds, with which it provides scholarships to high school students who are interested in blues performance or related fields.

I had a '60s-style folk music group, Long Road, for about 10 years, from 2007 till 2017. Ray was our bass player. He was the rock-solid foundation of the group. We didn't have a percussionist, and if any of us ever lost the beat—which happens sometimes to every musician—we'd just listen to Ray playing and pick it right back up.

He always played the right notes. It was never fancy; it was just right for what we were playing.

We all sang in that group, though Ray probably a little less than the rest of us. And often, when he would sing something for the first time during a show, a few people would laugh a little; not because Ray is a bad singer—he's a good singer—but because he's a bass singer. And you don't hear many bass singers in anything other than classical music. Plus, some people found it funny that the guy who played bass could also sing bass.

Ray was the only Black person among the six members of Long Road. I sometimes made references to that in my between-song humor. I could hear Ray laughing from across the stage. I always listened for his laugh during my bits in our shows—to know if I was on the right track.



Raymond DeForest

COURTESY DAVID BUDIN

The thing I found most remarkable was this: Over the course of that decade, every few months I would meet some other local musician, we'd talk about our experiences and, at some point, he or she would say, "The guy who plays bass in my band, Ray DeForest . . ." What? How many bands is this guy in?

I asked him, not long ago. He said that because of the pandemic, which put almost every musician's career on hold, he's down to only three at the moment: Blue Lunch (swing), the Spider Stompers (roots and Americana), and Bent String (eclectic). Among his many bands and accompanist gigs, he has also played with nationally known jazz artists, including Clark Terry. Ray also teaches bass.

So, he plays all kinds of music. He has played, professionally, in bands performing blues, jazz, R&B, rock, folk, roots, bluegrass, swing, and probably other genres I can't think of.

When I asked him how someone gets interested in playing every kind of music, he turned it around, saying, "I never understood how people could restrict themselves to playing just one kind of music. If I like it and have the opportunity to play it, why not do it? I enjoy it all."

Not everyone is as open-minded about it. "When I was growing up," he added, "I kind of had to keep my interest in anything other than R&B and soul music to myself, rather than have

continued on page 19



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LIBRARY continued from page 14

The next phase of the Noble branch renovation will be the creation of an accurate budget and preparing to go out to bid for the actual construction.

The planned addition to the library building will be approximately 9,000 square feet, almost doubling its current size. Heights Libraries plans to break ground on the project in spring 2023.

Because the branch will have to close during the construction phase, the library will rent a small satellite space on the first floor of the BNH Building, located near the corner of Mayfield and Noble roads. It will be open limited hours, and will contain

public computers, holds shelves, circulation and reference services, and a small collection of books to check out.

The project's architectural design firm, Bostwick Design, held its third community meeting at the Noble branch on Oct. 4, to share up-to-date design plans with the community, including interior and exteriors of the new addition. Thirty-six community members and neighbors attended the event and offered feedback on the most recent renovation designs.

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



Raspberry Ceramic, by Paula Blackman.

HEIGHTS ARTS continued from page 17

Renee Sentilles, David Shafron, Eric Silverman, Susan Skove, Christopher Owen Smith, Abby Star, Ellen Strong, Mark Sudduth, Maureen Sylak, Carol Thombs, Bedel Tiscareño, Jeremy Tugeau, Guangshen Wang, Jean Wendland Porter, Will Wilson, Mark Yasenack, and Taryn Zwolinski.

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Beech Bird, by Annie Becker.

as new work is continually added.

For more information, visit www.heightsarts.org, call 216-371-3457, or stop in to the Holiday Store, 2175 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights.

Tom Masaveg is public artist specializing in augmented reality installation and graphite works on paper. He's also the programs manager at Heights Arts. Contact him at programs@heightsarts.org.



Buddy Robot, wooden action figure by Bedel Tiscareño

SONGS & STORIES continued from page 18

people give me a hard time about it."

When Ray was a kid, he lived in Cleveland. He's lived in Cleveland Heights for the past 45 years. He started playing clarinet in fourth grade. He began bass at 16, in 1968.

"After I had my last clarinet stolen at school, I started playing bass," he said. "My younger brother had one, and I just picked it up and started messing around with it and taught myself how to play it."

He played along with records at first. "A friend of mine brought [local blues performer] Tim Matson down to my basement to hear me, and he asked me to play in his band. That was in '72."

He also took lessons. He studied as an upright-bass major at Cuyahoga Community College with Harry Barnoff, then-principal bassist in the Cleveland Orchestra.

But he has played most often with blues bands. Like who? "Well, let's

see," he said. "There was Mr. Stress, Natural Facts, Aces and Eights, Crazy Marvin, the Mambo Combo, King Solomon and Princess Ladia, and I performed with [Robert Junior] Lockwood."

Ray, as befitting his personality, was surprised to learn that he was going to receive the honor of induction into the Cleveland Blues Society's Hall of Fame. "They called me and told me about it," he said. "It was the last thing I was expecting."

I didn't know about it, either, but I'm certainly not surprised. And, you know, in this kind of piece, I can be as biased as I want.

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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