In Cleveland Heights, where six candidates vied for three full-term (4-year) seats on council, voters re-elected Gail Larson (8,479 votes/23.07 percent), and elected incumbent mayoral appointee Janine R. Boyd (5,749/20 percent) and challenger Jim Petras (8,327/22.66 percent). Incumbent Melody Joy Hart (2,172/14.80 percent), vice mayor; John P. Rach (1,772/4.80 percent); Theseus Marshall (2,063/14.06 percent), who was appointed to council in May; and Winifred J. Weizer (1,927/13.13 percent), appointed to council in June. The unsuccessful candidates were Alicia Sloan (1,544/10.53 percent), Micah Maliskas (1,407/9.59 percent), Jonathan A. Bartell (1,372/9.35 percent), Hallie Shaley Turn-Weber (1,2517/8.52 percent), and Vincent E. Stokes II (667/4.52 percent).

Running unopposed were two candidates for the CH-UH Board of Education, Gabe Crenshaw and Phil Trimble, each of whom will serve a four-year term.

Also unopposed in his race was Judge James J. Costello, who was re-elected to serve a six-year term as Cleveland Heights Municipal Court.

How the Heights voted in the Nov. 7 general election continued on page 9
Support local this holiday season—and all year long

Sarah Wolf

While striving to shop local, eat local is a mindset worth maintaining year-round, supporting small businesses throughout the month of December is a must.

Small businesses not only provide residents with needed goods and services, they provide community space and help define a neighborhood's character.

While the convenience of online retailers might beckon, Heights residents can help build camaraderie and strengthen their neighborhoods by investing their dollars into the livelihood of the Heights—and any community: mom-and-pop shops, other local retailers, and restaurants.

While the surest way to support local is through spending money in Heights business districts, there are other ways to get the entire neighborhood involved. For example, neighborhood groups and block clubs could pledge to shop local and share with one another the great “finds” that they’ve discovered in local stores.

Groups could also select a local restaurant to cater or host their holiday gatherings.

Neighbors could generate their own local retail or restaurant Bingo cards to encourage shopping/eating local.

Even something as simple as committing to creating a social media post to “shop out” or promote the unique goods and services available in the community can provide a boost to the Heights economy.

Not all manners of support need to cost residents money. Simply following or “liking” favorite local spots on social media channels, then interacting with their posts, can help more people discover them. Writing positive reviews on Yelp, Google, Facebook, and other platforms can drive more traffic to small businesses as well. Talking to neighbors about both newly established shops and restaurants is an even more low-tech way to remind others in the community to support small businesses in Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

This December and beyond, choose to shop and eat local whenever possible. Doing so builds civic pride by ensuring that dollars spent are going directly to a member of the Heights community.

Sarah Wolf is a Cleveland Heights resident and the community-building programs manager at FutureHeights.

Hart thanks CH residents

Melody Joy Hart

Thank you to our residents for your belief in me over the past four years, I am proud that I ran a good, positive campaign, and thankful for the substantial support from our residents. Now it is time for a new chapter in my life.

I am pleased to have had the opportunity to help my beloved city. I have worked hard and am proud of my accomplishments on council, which include putting in place a successful diversion program for homeowners with housing violations to get help to repair their homes and stay out of court. I want to see that program continue.

I proposed and passed legislation to help hold banks and landlords accountable, providing training for new council members with staff and with the Ohio Municipal League, allocated ARPA funds to help our businesses and residents, and put in place a robust budget process for council.

Collaboration is necessary for council and the administration. But collaboration cannot be legislated or dictated. Each council member must make the decision to be collaborative. It is in their control. I have often encouraged council to be focused on YOU and collaborate with other council members and the administration to be Team Cleveland Heights. The past two months, it seems like the council coalesced more than ever to be a team.

Issue #2 passed resoundingly. Our campaign contacted 10,000 households just through our mailings, which included the issues to support. Issue #2 for legalizing recreational marijuana, regulating and taxing marijuana as well as the Tri-C levy to continue to support its valuable programs for the community also passed.

Congratulations to Judge JJ Costello on being re-elected, to Phil Trimbale and Gabe Crenshaw on their election to the CH-UH school board. And congratulations to Janine Boyd, Gail Larson, and Jim Petras for their election to CH City Council.

For those of you who know me well, you know that I am not a writer. I love this city and will continue to try to work for our community and all our residents. Together, we will continue to make the Heights better.

Melody Joy Hart is the current Cleveland Heights City Council president. Her term will expire on Dec. 31. She has 37 years of experience in finance as an executive.

Cumberland pool should be open all summer

Robin Koolen

Susie Kaeser described Cumberland pool in her December 2022 Heights Observer column.

“It is where we get to hang out together and enjoy the natural world,” she wrote. “It’s a great place to cool off, exercise, or just relax. The pool is surrounded by trees and feels like a bit of our community.”

Cumberland embodies much of what we love about our community, investigating the feasibility of creating both new outdoor and indoor swimming pools in Cleveland Heights.

We appreciate the attention the mayor is giving to Cumberland. We will leave the issue of a new indoor pool for another day and focus on two concerns we have concerning Cumberland’s current pool.

We know that Cumberland has been neglected for years. Routine maintenance has not been addressed for a very long time. We also know that the pool presently

returned on page 9

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 city. And try to keep it under 500 words.

• 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 216-330-1433 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

Articles to be considered for the January 2024 publication must be submitted by Dec. 17.

We publish some articles online only.
CH needs more pedestrian-friendly initiatives

David Felson

As a father of two young children, I was excited to attend the Heights Halloween Festival on Oct. 21. The day before, event organizers advertised in an official e-mail newsletter that “a portion of Lee Road will be closed.” Upon arriving, however, I was disappointed to find only a few hundred square feet of Meadowbrook Boulevard converted for pedestrian use. Lee Road remained open, leaving hundreds of kids and caretakers to jostle along sidewalks while cars zoomed by a few feet away. This is not only disappointing but also dangerous.

Cleveland Heights should prioritize the safety of its residents and visitors, particularly during community events like the Halloween festival and the recent Music Hop (which was plagued by similar safety concerns). If ever there was a time to experiment and try new things that would have brought to festivalgoers.

Event organizers could have rerouted traffic around the public parking lot at Meadowbrook and Sibby, creating a genuine pedestrian-friendly zone on Lee Road. This would have added less than 200 meters to the driver’s route, a negligible cost to drivers compared to the massive benefit it would have brought to festivalgoers.

Earlier this year, on two separate occasions, pedestrians were struck and killed on Lee Road, which makes the need for pedestrian safety even more urgent. In 2021, Cleveland Heights officially adopted Vision Zero, a global strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries.

Cleveland Heights government has done the bare minimum to keep pedestrians and cyclists safe in one of its most iconic business districts. In recent years, it has increased visibility at several crosswalks, added yellow flex posts, and decreased the speed limit to 25 mph. Yet more is needed to keep people safe, with more durable design upgrades and consistent enforcement.

At the Halloween festival, the sidewalk was so packed with kids in costumes that it was not easy to move around. However, the street was surprisingly empty, and cars were driving freely without interruption. Many parents were nervously keeping an eye on their kids, trying to prevent them from getting too close to the road. Rather than create an inviting atmosphere through placemaking best practices, Cleveland Heights decided to prioritize convenience for drivers over the safety and comfortability of the broader community.

Beyond increased safety, pedestrian-friendly districts are beneficial to local businesses, too, and community events have the potential to be an economic boon to restaurants and small shops. Cleveland Heights should consider what benefit there is in being able to walk to the Cedar Lee District if we risk getting hit by a car crossing the crosswalk.

Cleveland Heights needs to prioritize the safety of its residents and visitors. It cannot continue to claim to be a progressive, environmentally conscious, and welcoming city if it does not value transportation methods other than cars. Let’s make Cleveland Heights a model for other cities in Northeast Ohio by prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists for safety and community well-being.

David Felson is a resident of Cleveland Heights. He usually biking or walking with his two kids.

ACCELERATE THE RACE TOWARD HOPE

For 30 years, Cleveland’s party of the year has funded lifesaving pediatric care at Cleveland Clinic Children’s, making the impossible possible for children in our region and around the world.

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Join us in the winner’s circle and help children cross the finish line.

Relive all the best moments of the 2023 Derby Day Soirée here:
Pauline has always been passionate about educating and giving people the tools needed to succeed. As a professor, analyst, Certified Financial Planner and recent Crain’s Eight Over 80 honoree, she has impacted many and continues to inspire and inform as a volunteer and philanthropist.

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Susie Kowser

Lift your arm and reach for an imaginary apple. Bring it to your mouth and make a slurping sound as you take a bite. Then quietly utter the short “a” sound, followed by the word “apple.”

This is one of 26 hand motion-sound prompts that literacy volunteers like me have been sharing with kindergartners at Boulevard Elementary School for the last 15 years. This practice builds what is known as phonemic awareness, and it is an essential first step on the path to becoming a reader. Understanding symbolic language is no simple task, but its mastery is key to the treasures of the written word. And mastery takes work and time.

Repetition is key to building the neuropathways that pay off in reading. And volunteers provide kids the chance to practice, practice, practice.

Despite the wide acceptance of the validity of the ideas that fall under a “science of reading,” provides clear guidance for educators.

The Columbus-based Reading Recovery Council of North America, which promotes a different approach to reading education, filed suit against the state, claiming overreach. The council’s “three-cueing” strategy is not consistent with existing practice in America, which supports a different way. Gov. Mike DeWine, a proponent of the science of reading, included $66 million in his budget proposal to help school districts implement practices consistent with the research. His proposal took effect in July. Funds can be used for professional development, educational materials, and hiring teaching coaches for school districts with lower test results in reading.

In Jenkins’ view, the state mandate is consistent with existing practice in our school district. It won’t push the district in a direction it doesn’t want to go. I am hopeful that, at least for now, we don’t need to spend our finite education-advocacy energy fighting this fight.

I look forward to my Tuesday mornings helping my kids learn the unusual sounds that are tied to the letters of the alphabet. I look forward to the satisfying experience of knowing and guiding a delightful assemblage of kindergartners as the light of discovery goes on and they become ready to read.
Planning beats politicking

DEBORAH VAN KLEEF and CARLA RAUTENBERG

The last thing Cleveland Heights needed in our most recent city council election was “Democrats” trying to “out-Democrat” each other. But we got it anyway.

Six candidates were vying for three seats on CH City Council. Last summer, when the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party endorsed two, and the Cleveland Heights Democratic Club gave the nod to two others, a season of drama and political nastiness ensued.

Both bodies, by the way, require a 60 percent vote threshold of those present at the endorsement meeting for an individual to win. That was ironic: at the time, most of these dedicated Democrats were fighting hard to defeat the Issue 1 that was the subject of the August special election cooked up by statehouse Republicans. Passage of that Issue 1 would have meant changing the Ohio Constitution to require a 60 percent yes vote on future ballot initiatives.

What was the Democrats’ rallying cry? “We can’t let 40 percent plus one of the voters determine the outcome of an election. What about one person, one vote?” That August’s Issue 1 failed and November’s Issue 1 prevailed are both cause for great celebration. But we do find it strange that 40 percent plus one determining the outcome of an endorsement vote was just fine with both the county Democratic party and our city’s Democratic club.

Blatant hypocrisy aside, these intense endorsement battles stole way too much energy and attention from issues that really matter. Of principal concern: after two years of floundering, both the city and county Democratic parties have become a functioning body and fulfill its chartered role? Are the bodies, by the way, required to do so by the Constitution? Or are they volunteers? Council become a functioning body — that is some concern: after two years of floundering, will it become a functioning body — that is some concern: after two years of floundering, will it become a functioning body — that is some concern: after two years of floundering, will it become a functioning body? We’ll see.

The last thing Cleveland Heights needed in our most recent city council election was “Democrats” trying to “out-Democrat” each other. But we got it anyway.

We hand out a lot of brickbats in this column, but are delighted that the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy has chosen Cleveland Heights to be a “Legacy City,” as reported in the City News Update on Nov. 18. Kudos to Mayor Khalid Seren and Director of Planning and Development Eric Zanfﬁ for pursuing and securing this exciting opportunity.

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, headquartered in Cambridge, Mass., seeks to improve quality of life through the effective use, taxation, and stewardship of land (www.lincolninst.edu).

As a “Legacy City,” Cleveland Heights will take part in a “scenario planning” workshop in early 2024, where the public will be able to grapple with questions of the city’s future. The Lincoln Institute has awarded $125,000 to cover technical guidance and workshop logistics. Participants will consider ways to generate economic and population growth. These might include diversifying our tax base by, for example, creating maker spaces (Coventry storefronts?) and/or light industrial facilities (Sewing Circle?)

Following the workshop, the city will be required to produce a detailed report (due April 29, 2024), highlighting implementation strategies. At that point, our municipality could be eligible for further assistance from the Lincoln Institute to support that implementation.

Cleveland Heights has a poor track record when it comes to following through on visions and plans. This process must result in plans that are both visionary and practical, so that the government and citizenry will see them through to completion.

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

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University Heights City Council
Meeting highlights

OCT. 16, 2023

Council members present were Michele Weiss (vice mayor), Christopher Cooney, Brian J. King, Theresa Marshall, John P. Rash, Sheri Sax, and Win Weizer. Also present were Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan, Clerk of Council Kelly Thomas, Law Director Luke McCarron, and Finance Director Dennis Kennedy.

Public comments
A resident reiterated concerns regarding traffic congestion in the Mentor/University Parkway area on days when school buses, trash collection, and traffic are going through at the same time.

Mayor’s report
Mayor Brennan said he had approved flying the Israeli flag at City Hall in response to the Israel-Hamas conflict. He said Israel has a right to exist and Hamas is a terrorist organization that does not speak or act for all Palestinians.

Council actions
Council approved a tentative agreement with the firefighters' union that is in parity with the agreements for police and service department employees. Council approved demolishing the home at 2644 Whiton Road and building a new one, contingent upon the developer reaching an agreement with the city and addressing resident concerns regarding construction parking.

Council approved an agreement with the Cleveland Clinic for Mobile Wellness Programming for the fire department. ARPA funds will provide $204,600 for the program.

Council accepted the 2023–24 Ohio EMS Priority 1 grant of $3,000. Council approved purchase of a new fire-prevention staff vehicle.

Council Chambers changes
Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive assistant to the mayor on special projects, and Council Member Sax, who had placed the state of City Hall Council Chambers on the agenda, gave separate slide presentations. Bremer Fisher presented the history of the building and council chambers, and the changes made. Sax showed the demolition and said the mayor had executed the changes without notifying council. She claimed that asbestos put everyone in the building at risk, but was relieved to learn that the county testing and found no contamination.

Staff reports
Susan Drucker, economic development director, advised that a Lefty’s Cheesesteak franchise has purchased the old KFC building at Cedar and Taylor roads and will open a restaurant there at the end of the year.

LWV Observer: Marilyn Singer.

Program for the fire department.
Council authorized an agreement with the University Heights municipal tax code to make the city compliant with Ohio House Bill 33 passed in June. The changes are:

• Individuals under the age of 18 are exempt from municipal income tax.
• Businesses with remote workers can, for tax purposes, elect to report the location where the employee works or any other location in the state where the employer has a presence. This does not apply to withholding.
• Businesses that had already filed for a six-month federal filing extension may have an additional one-month extension.
• The city may implement a $25 fine for late filing subject to refunding to a first offender.
• Businesses may opt out of the municipal tax code for the state code if they have multiple locations within the state.

Council approved the Fabrizi Trucking & Transportation’s proposal for natural gas rates at a lower price than the current contract, which expires Nov. 30. Council approved five amendments to the University Heights municipal tax code to make the city compliant with Ohio House Bill 33 passed in June. The changes are:

• The city may implement a $25 fine for late filing subject to refunding to a first offender.
• Businesses may opt out of the municipal tax code for the state code if they have multiple locations within the state.

Council approved change orders for the 2023 Road Project to cover August storm damage, and missing curbing and other pavement issues exposed with removal of a school district mobile unit.

Council approved purchases of a new cardiac monitor, a responder utility vehicle, and a new ambulance for the fire department.

LWV Observer: Marilyn Singer.
Cleveland Heights City Council
Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 16, 2023

Council members present were Melody Joy Hart (president), Craig Cobb (vice president), Janine Boyd, Tony Cuda, Gail Larson, Anthony Mattox Jr., and Donna Russell. Also present were Mayor Khalil Seren and Clerk of Council Addie Balester.

Public comments
Five students and 13 other residents urged the city to repair Cumberland Pool without disrupting the swimming seasons. Mayor Seren said there was no intention of closing the pool and that every effort would be made to minimize disruptions.

Two residents thanked the city for condemning the Hamas attack on Israel and [for] its support of the local Jewish community: two other residents opposed the resolution as racist and dehumanizing to the Palestinian people.

A resident urged the city to pay for lifeguards and swim programs so that residents could use the indoor pool at Heights High.

Racial Justice Task Force
Rhonda Davis Lowrey summarized the final report of the Racial Justice Task Force. The presentation slides will be available on the city’s website.

Council actions
Council amended the 2023 budget expenditures, adding $672,901 for costs that were either offset by revenue or grants or shifted from the 2022 budget (Coventry Road repairs), adding an additional $160,000 for flooring around the ice rink.

Council accepted a $63,215.50 grant from the Ohio Department of Public Safety to support police overtime for targeted traffic-violation enforcement.

Council increased the clerk of council’s compensation by 3 percent to $59,480.74, effective Sept. 1, 2023.

Council appointed John Barber to the Transportation and Environmental Sustainability Committee for a term ending Dec. 31, 2024.

Council expressed support for LGBTQIA+ community and performance artists.

Council expressed support for Israel’s self-defense in the war launched by Hamas. The resolution also offered support for Cleveland Heights’ Jewish residents and an increased police presence in Jewish neighborhoods, schools, and synagogues.

Council renewed a three-year agreement, at a cost not to exceed $691,008, with the Cuyahoga County General Health district for public health services beginning Jan. 1, 2024.

Committee of the Whole
Linda Shewolfy, Charter Review Commission chair, requested hiring a facilitator to improve the commission’s effectiveness and extending the commission’s deadline to the end of May 2024.

DHW Observer: Jill Taten.

NOV. 6, 2023

All council members were present except Craig Cobb, who watched remotely. Also present were the mayor, clerk of council, law director, and City Administrator Danny Williams.

Public comments
Paul Wolpe, consultant to TWG, urged passage of the TWG Noble Station legislation. He said he was assisting with a community-engagement focus group, redesign of the site plan and building architecture, and concept development regarding nearby commercial properties.

Mayor’s report
Mayor Seren announced that the U.S. Department of Justice has awarded $399,846 to expand the Shaker Heights crisis-intervention team model to a five-city partnership among Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights, University Heights, South Euclid, and Richmond Heights. He announced that Cleveland Heights has received an additional grant of $175,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice for violence-prevention programs.

City administrator’s report
The city has been seeking solutions to the repeated traffic accidents damaging a residence at South Taylor Road and Fairmount Boulevard.

The city will apply for a $50,000 grant from the county’s supplemental grant fund, for use by the Coventry Village Special Improvement District to address safety, accessibility, and aesthetic issues in the business district. The city will also repair the elevator in the city-owned garage.

Council actions
Council authorized an agreement with Otto Elevator Company for repairs to the Cedar Lee parking garage elevator, at a cost not to exceed $32,000.

Council amended both the zoning and city code to make permanent the Shared Spaces Program, which enables businesses to use private and city-owned property for outdoor dining.

Presented an final reading, with no vote, was an amended purchase agreement with TWG Development, LLC, for property at 2228 Noble Road, to extend the time for executing a development agreement (for Noble Station) until June 1.

Committee of the Whole
City staff and TWG representatives explained the reasons for extending the deadline for the purchase agreement for the property at 2228 Noble Road. TWG expressed its intention to approach the Noble Station project differently.

DHW Observer: Jill Taten.
Julie Sabroff, former chair of the Board of Directors for FutureHeights (FH), a nonprofit community development corporation (CDC) for Cleveland Heights and University Heights, and publisher of the Heights Observer, stepped down from the board on Aug. 7, to help her family during a difficult period.

In the interim, Rhonda Davis Lovejoy and Chris Jacobs, both vice-chairs of the FH Board of Directors, will function as acting co-chairs of the board until it votes on a new chair. During her tenure as board chair, Sabroff ushered the organization through the adoption of a strategic plan, an update to the organization’s bylaws, and the hiring of current Executive Director Kristine Pagsuyoin.

Prior to becoming board chair, Sabroff served as the nonprofit’s treasurer, and was an essential contributor to FH’s evolution to becoming a fully functioning CDC.

In her resignation message to the board, Sabroff said, “Every person on this board has come to the organization with the purest of intentions to make our community a better place. This level of commitment and your generosity from the heart made my decision all the more difficult. This is a great board, and FutureHeights is a great organization. I already miss being involved and look forward to re-engaging in the future.”

As a resident of Cleveland Heights, Sabroff plans to stay engaged in the community and remains a firm supporter of FH’s efforts to improve the Heights community.

Amanda Isaacson is a FutureHeights board member and a Cleveland Heights real estate investor.

Sarah Wolf

Crowdsourced Conversations wrapped up its four-part 2023 series and is set to return in 2024.

This public forum series, hosted by FutureHeights and community partners, puts the spotlight on community voices by emphasizing action-oriented small-group discussions on selected topics.

Throughout the month of December, Heights residents can cast their votes to select four topics for 2024. Previous Crowdsourced Conversations participants made the topic nominations; the top four vote-getters will comprise the 2024 Crowdsourced Conversations.

The deadline to vote is Jan. 2. To cast a ballot, visit www.futureheights.org/cc24.

Each forum takes a multi-faceted approach, beginning with a communitywide survey on a topic of importance to Heights residents. The survey results are compiled in a comprehensive data report and are key to determining the small-group discussion questions at the forum.

After the event has concluded, participants are given the opportunity to stay connected with their group members and are encouraged to return to the next forum in the series.

The survey responses were collected in a comprehensive data report and are key to determining the small-group discussion questions at the forum. After the event has concluded, participants are given the opportunity to stay connected with their group members and are encouraged to return to the next forum in the series.

A resource page highlighting event takeaways and additional information is generated to help even those who might not have been able to attend the event remain up-to-date.

Ultimately, the Crowdsourced Conversations program is intended to inspire and empower residents to find ways to become more directly involved in the community in ways that feel meaningful to them and, along the way, meet other residents who hope to do the same.

Crowdsourced Conversations launched in 2022 with the topics of Sustainability, Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, Community Safety, and Civic Engagement. Over the course of those four events, a total of 768 survey responses were collected with approximately 150 participants attending forums.

In 2023, the topics were Our Public Schools, Traveling Around Town, Building Community with Renters and Landlords, and Planning and Development in the Heights. This year’s series saw increased participation, with 1,310 survey responses and an overall attendance of 29.

FutureHeights is grateful to have partnered with Heights Libraries, Home Repair Resource Center, Reaching Heights, Cleveland Heights Green Team, and a team of dedicated volunteers to bring Crowdsourced Conversations to life over these past two years.

For more information about Crowdsourced Conversations, send an e-mail to swolf@futureheights.org.

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

Sarah Wolf is the community-building programs manager at FutureHeights.
The procession will set off from the flagpole near the Coventry PEACE Building parking lot at 5 p.m. Carry your lantern—one you made at a workshop or one that you bring from home—as the procession makes its way through PEACE Park and the Coventry Village business district.

The procession will wind its way back to the Coventry PEACE Building, where the evening will wrap up with a sing-along of holiday classics, featuring the Singers’ Club of Cleveland, and hot cocoa, cider and cookies, at approximately 5:30 p.m.

Coventry Village invites everyone to join in the fun while supporting Cleveland Heights neighbors this holiday season.

Rachel Hunt, currently the marketing director of Grog Shop, has spent years working on Coventry—first at Tommy’s, then in retail at Vintage Apparel and Made Cleveland. She is continually amazed by the vibrancy and culture found within Cleveland Heights.

We also believe that citizen engagement is a priority for all communities. At some point in the future, the pool should be completed in Cumberland. We believe that all work should be solicited, encouraged, and paid for by the citizens. We feel strongly about this because without the pool for so many years, we cannot imagine a summer without the pool for so many years.

We believe that the community asset is unimaginable. Without the pool, the community gathers. Losing this asset would be unimaginable.

Robin Kozlen wrote this opinion with the input of Susan Ford, Cheryl Kuenzel and Kim Ulatowski-Billich.

For those reasons, we believe it imperative that community input be solicited, encouraged, and considered before any work begins. Shaker Heights and Lakewood engaged their citizens before finalizing their newly designed pools. We must do the same. The new design should reflect what citizens see as priorities.

We also believe that Cumberland should open this next summer, and that all work on the pool should be completed during the offseason. Cumberland’s leaks have been ongoing for years. We can endure those leaks for one year. Both Shaker Heights and Lakewood constructed their redesigned pools without sacrificing a swimming season. We deserve nothing less.

We cannot imagine a summer without the pool for so many years. It is very hard to imagine selling Cleveland Heights as a community for families to move into without an outdoor pool.

Many of us use the pool for exercise. Generations of kids have learned to swim, dive and socialize there. Cumberland is also a place where the whole community gathers. Losing this community asset, even temporarily, is unimaginable.

Sarah Wolf

FutureHeights’ Neighborhood Leadership Workshop Series (NLWS) provides Cleveland Heights and University Heights residents with the opportunity to gain skills and connect with other community change-agents.

Program participants examine leadership from the neighborhood perspective while using a strengths-based lens. Guest speakers are Heights-based leaders who share their own hyper-local perspectives and experiences, about past and current projects.

NLWS is held once a year. The 2023 workshop series will take place on Sundays, 3-6 p.m., Jan. 28, Feb. 11, Feb. 25, March 10, and March 24, at the Coventry PEACE Building. Applicants must commit to attending all five sessions in order to be considered for the program.

This interactive program offers participants an opportunity to engage with their fellow cohort members, and become connected to groups or projects in the community that align with their own interests.

No previous leadership experience is required, and the program is free for Cleveland Heights and University Heights residents.

The deadline to apply is Friday, Jan. 12. Space is limited, and applications are considered on a rolling basis; interested community members are encouraged to apply at their earliest convenience.

To learn more about the program, send an e-mail to swolf@futureheights.org, or visit www.futureheights.org/programs/community-building-programs/nlws/.

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

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Made Cleveland plans grocery expansion

Jessica Schantz

Made Cleveland, a Coventry Village store that features locally made goods by area artisans, has launched a fundraising campaign to expand its grocery offerings, to meet the needs of the community.

The plan for the space includes a cooler/freezer section for dairy/dairy alternatives, ice cream, fresh pasta, and proteins. There will also be a grab-and-go section for salads, sandwiches, breakfast options, pastries and breads, and an array of choices for all dietary considerations and needs.

The updated grocery section also will include bulk goods: locally milled flour, grains, legumes, coffee, tea, spices, olive oil, vinegars, and sweets.

“Over the past several months,” said Made Cleveland founder Ash O’Connor, “we’ve heard [from] the community and experienced for ourselves how necessary a grocery store that offers fresh, healthy, sustainable food choices is in this area.”

All produce and other food products will be locally sourced whenever possible; in the rare instance that an item isn’t available locally, it will be ordered through a nonprofit food hub that supports dozens of regional farms.

The fundraising campaign for Made Cleveland’s grocery expansion went live on Oct. 20, and will run through Dec. 25. The campaign’s giving page, where supporters can make donations and, in turn, receive various “rewards,” can be found at www.madecleveland.com.

Made Cleveland is located at 1807 Coventry Road in Cleveland Heights. The shop is open seven days a week: Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Monday, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. For additional information, visit the website, send an e-mail to ash@madecleveland.com, or call 216-964-3500.

Jessica Schantz is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and a small-business owner. She manages events for Made Cleveland, where she also sells upcycled furniture.

Sunday, December 24
4 p.m. • Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist with Live Animals (ASL Interpreted)
9 p.m. | Christmas Lessons & Carols
10:30 p.m. | Festival Holy Eucharist

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Seven Heights High students earn National Merit honors

Diana Drushel

Heights High seniors Niko Bell and Caleb Green have been named National Merit Scholar Semifinalists in the 2024 competition, and now have the opportunity to advance to the finalist level and qualify for National Merit Scholarships.

Natalie Bier, Laurel Buescher, Sean Egbert, Marcus Holland and Mason Spieth were named 2024 Commended Students, placing among the top 5 percent of the students who entered.

More than 1.3 million students entered the National Merit Scholarship qualifying competition by taking the PSAT test in the fall of their junior year. Nationally, 16,000 semifinalists were recognized, representing less than 1 percent of U.S. high school seniors, and there were 34,000 commended students.

Bell is enrolled in Ohio's College Credit Plus (CCP) program and spends their school day at Cleveland State University (CSU) taking courses on number theory, Eastern philosophy, pre-colonial African history, and Buddhism and Hinduism in America. Bell is active in Heights High's extracurricular activities as president of the Gender & Sexualities Alliance and as a member of the varsity girls soccer team, the National Honors Society (NHS), and the Academic Challenge Team. Bell plans to double major in mathematics and philosophy in college.

Green is taking AP BC calculus, chemistry, psychology, Spanish, and CCP college composition. Green commends his AP calculus teacher, Mr. O'Deens, for "the way he breaks down difficult concepts into enjoyable lessons." He is the NHS vice president, plays on the varsity tennis and hockey teams, and is a co-founder of the Heights High ping-pong club. After graduation, Green plans to study engineering.

Bier is taking AP BC calculus, psychology, statistics, and literature and composition. As captain of the Academic Challenge Team, Bier helped Heights High win the Norsson Academic Challenge Contest last May. She is also a member of the drama club, stage crew, NHS, senior class council, and girls tennis team. After graduation, she plans to study speech-language pathology.

Buescher is taking AP biology, BC calculus, government, statistics, CCP college composition, and plays violin in the Heights High Symphony. She participates in the varsity girls soccer team, drama club, NHS, and Heights High's environmental committee. She said CCP Introduction to American Studies was a standout for her: "We had some really great discussions in that class and I learned a lot."

Egbert is taking AP biology and statistics, and CCP neuroscience and college composition, and is part of Heights Career Tech's audio-engineering program. Of AP literature and composition he said, "It was the first time I felt engaged and interested in an English class, and it did wonders for my writing and grammatical abilities." A member of the golf team, he worked sound crew for the fall musical, and is the social-media representative for the senior class council. Egbert plans to study data science/analytics and get a master's in education.

Holland is taking AP BC calculus, environmental science, psychology, statistics and CCP college composition. Outside of academics, he is a member of NHS and the varsity baseball, bowling, and soccer teams. And Spieth is taking CCP college composition and introduction to American studies, and participates in Heights Career Tech's audio-engineering program. He is a member of NHS and also plays alto saxophone in Symphonic Winds and the Tiger Marching Band. After graduation, Spieth plans to study computer science.

Diana Drushel, a 2011 Heights High graduate, is the parent & community liaison for Cleveland Heights High School.

Celebrate Christmas at the Covenant

Love, Joy, Peace, Wonder

Sunday, December 3
10 am Worship
11 am - 2 pm Cache Christmas Boutique
Open for Holiday Shopping!
3 pm McGaffin Carillon Concert
4 pm Circle Fest Carol Sing
Cleveland School of the Arts Choir, the Cleveland Guitar Orchestra and Covenant Choirs,
Cookie Reception to follow

Sunday, December 10
10 am Worship
11:30 am Giving Tree Celebration with Carol Singing

Wednesday, December 13
5 pm Longest Night Service
A holiday service for those who have experienced loss.

Photo: ©Nancy Hribar Matz, Zena Photography

Sunday, December 17
10 am Christmas Pageant

Weekdays, December 18-29
12:45 pm Holiday Carillon Concerts

Sunday, December 24
10 am Worship and Communion
7 pm Carillon Prelude
7:30 pm Sanctuary Prelude
8 pm Christmas Eve Worship and Communion
Candlelight Service Covenant Choirs
with organ.

The Church of the Covenant
Presbyterian Church (USA)
11205 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44106
216.421.0482 • CovenantWeb.org
Tisch performs IMD concert violin solo

"From the first time working with him, it was clear he had a very keen ear and advanced skills. He was also always eager to play even more challenging music than what we were preparing. "

"As a high school student, he has spent all four years in the Heights High Symphony; and he has served as a leader in the violin section throughout that time."

"And this year, he has just joined the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra while maintaining his leadership role here at Heights High. It has been a pleasure to see Nathaniel grow as a musician and a member of the Heights orchestras over so many years."

Tisch is also principal second violinist of Kablooom Collective Studio Orchestra. Last summer, he toured three countries in Europe with Blue Lake International Youth Orchestra.

Outside of music, Tisch plays tennis for Heights High and is a four-year varsity swim team member—and swim captain his senior year.

Active in scouting since he was 8, Tisch earned the rank of Eagle Scout. As part of his scouting leadership activities, Tisch planted trees at University Heights Public Library.

Tisch plans to attend college after graduation, and expects to study world history and music.

Sharilee Walker

Nathaniel Tisch was a resident of Cleveland Heights for the last 22 years. She has three children in the CH-UH school district, and is a member of the Heights High Band and Parent Organization.

Cleveland Heights – University Heights Board of Education

Meeting highlights

OCT. 17, 2023 — special meeting

Board members present were Beverly Wright (president), Joak Souviri (vice president), Don Haiste and Maria Lewis. James Poisch was not present.

Board actions

The board approved a consent agenda comprising personnel matters, two high school field trips (to Wisconsin and to France and Spain), the financial reports, and the purchase of a truck. The truck is a Ford F50 dump truck, at a cost of $57,721.50, to be used for snow removal and other uses, to replace one that is no longer working.

IWV Observer: Paula Goodwin.

NOV. 7, 2023 — regular meeting

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

Public comments

The全体 members were excited to be elected to serve the CH-UH school district as a board member. He thanked James Poisch and Beverly Wright for their service. Gabe Creer, the other newly elected board member, was also in the audience.

Recognitions and awards

The board recognized two National Merit semi-finalists, five National Merit commendation students, and Tiger team members of the month for October.

Heights High senior Mango Burke and sophomore Alex Burke, members of the Superintendents’ Cadre, reported Heights High sports updates and reflected on the high school experience.

Board actions

The board approved Rosboro Middle School’s field trip to Washington, D.C.; and a field trip to Bali for Heights High’s 11th- and 12th-grade Advanced Placement students.

The board accepted donations of $500 to Canterbury Elementary School by Stratus Wealth Partners (president), $83 to Great Professional Development School by Box Tops for Education; $160 to Rosboro Elementary School by Rosboro Elementary Parents’ Guardian, $5,685 to Heights High’s Robotics Club by Peter and Maria Dubois Foundation Inc.

The board approved a contract with Overtime Sports Inc. in connection with one or more audiovisual projects entitled “Friday Night Sights Season 3,” effective retroactive to Oct. 24.

Canterbury IB program

Principal Erica Wiggins and Melissa Garcia presented Canterbury Elementary School’s IB (International Baccalaureate) program, including the timeline from its authorization in 2016 to goals for this year.

Thursday - Saturday

December 1 - 23

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HEIGHTS SCHOOLS
Library tutors offer after-school help and continuity

Nine-year-old Goshen Heard is a student at Fairfax Elementary School and an enthusiastic library user. His mom, Loretta Heard, said she and her son are at the library most weekdays—reading, attending programs, and checking out lots of books. That’s how they learned about the library’s afterschool tutoring program at the Lee Road branch.

“When Ms. Ericka told us about the tutoring program, it was a no-brainer for us,” said Loretta Heard. “We jumped right on it.”

Ms. Ericka is Ericka Hogan, known to the kids as just “E.” Hogan oversees the tutoring program at the library’s Lee Road Youth Services Department. Tutoring in math, science, history, and language arts is offered in partnership with Cleveland State University’s (CSU) Office of Civic Engagement and Case Western Reserve University’s (CWRU) Center for Civic Engagement and Learning. Hogan reached out to the schools after learning about their successful partnerships with other libraries.

“We’ve been very impressed with the college volunteers that have visited for tutoring—since they commit for the whole semester, young patrons are often able to work with the same tutors on a regular basis,” said Hogan. “We’ve been impressed by their commitment to service and the rapport they build with young patrons.”

Heard agreed: “He had the same tutors with every session—Luke from CWRU and Candice from CSU. This was greatly appreciated because it allowed Goshen and his tutors to truly build a relationship where he was comfortable with them, and allowed the tutors to know his strengths and challenges.”

“The tutoring services were extremely instrumental in two ways,” Heard continued. “Goshen received help with math and ELA [English Language Arts] for class, which [then] really helped him reach his goal of obtaining really great scores on the MAP [Measure of Academic Progress] and state testing.”

Goshen loves to read, according to his mom, and was a member of the library’s book club at Fairfax last year. He even recorded a video book review of the Dav Pilkey book Dog Man.

Tutoring is available this winter at Heights Libraries’ Lee Road branch on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m., starting Jan. 16; and at the temporary Noble Neighborhood branch location at Disciples Christian Church, 3663 Mayfield Road, every Tuesday at 3:30 p.m., starting Dec. 5.

More information can be found at https://heightslibrary.org.

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

Meeting highlights

OCT. 16, 2023

Board members present were Max Gerboc (president), Vikas Tordhia (vice president), Annette Ivanito (secretary), Danz Reutter, Tyler McGregor, and Melissa Soto-Schwartz. Pati Carlyle was not present.

Career services presentation

Kaela Sweeney, strategic projects manager, reported on customer use of and satisfaction with the skilled trades courses offered through the learning platform Interplay Learning at the Heights Knowledge and Innovation Center (HKIC). Since January 2023, 43 customers have accessed Interplay Learning courses. The completion rate for courses is 74 percent. About half of the customers were using this virtual-reality job-training program for a career change or new job in the skilled trades.

Heather Howiler, adult services manager, reported that, due to high demand, the services of the free Ohio Means Jobs/Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Career Services community development specialist has been expanded to two days at the Lee Road Library. In addition, job workshops are now offered on resume writing and job interviewing.

Financial report

Interest rates continue to climb. Tax revenues continue to be below expected levels. Overall tax receipts for the month of September were $2.5 million (0.2 percent) above expectations.

The Public Library Fund recently posted the distribution of funds, which is 2.55 percent above the original estimate.

Board actions

The board:
• Approved change orders for the Noble Road Branch construction and renovation project.
• Approved a guaranteed maximum price package with Regency Construction for the PEACE Park playground renovation.
• Approved a fund-to-transfer for the PEACE Park playground renovation.
• Approved a technology fund expenditure for a staff laptop for youth services.

Personnel report

Positions for staff ranging and development and a building assistant have been filled. This year’s staff development day on Sept. 22 was well- received. There are five open security officer positions. A nationwide shortage of security personnel was noted.

Director’s report

PEACE Park will be demolished the first two weeks of November. The sledding hill will remain open throughout the winter. The new playground and park construction will begin in January.

There was a sewage pipe backup at the University Heights Branch. It is hoped that this problem can be fixed when the backflow valve is installed in the coming weeks.

Banned Book Week was the first week in October. This year’s theme was “Let Freedom Ring.” Last year there were 93 attempts to restrict access to 79 titles in Ohio compared to 10 attempts to restrict access to 15 books in 2021. The majority of these challenges occurred in school libraries. Public libraries are also impacted.

Public service report

This month, the adult services department added a community puzzle table to the second floor near the magazines and newspapers. Puzzles benefit short-term memory, enhance concentration, relieve stress, improve problem-solving skills, strengthen fine motor skills, and encourage social engagement. The branchchild of Adult Services Librarian Jen Mihal, the community puzzle has been a big hit with customers of all ages.

“Unpacking Our History” recordings continue to be very popular. This month’s average was over 13 views per day.

Families joined Coventry Village Branch youth services staff for a Bluey family fun night.

The book club at Noble Elementary School was a success. In addition to the targeted fifth- and sixth-graders, second-grade students also expressed interest. As the reading levels are quite different, two groups will meet and then come together for a closing activity.

Youth services staff plans to extend the book club to Oxford Elementary School. Hannah Van Juren, youth services librarian, began her People in Your Neighborhood story-time series, featuring members of the community as guest readers to help familiarize children with people from all walks of life and professions. September’s guests were from the University Heights Sanitation Department and the Stone Oven.

Lee Road Library youth services celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month in September by hosting a dance workshop and a music performance. Associate Felicia Mohamed was awarded a MyCom grant that paid for a large portion of these programs.

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Winter Show on view at St. Paul’s gallery

Robin Outcalt

The Winter Show at the Nicholson B. White Gallery of St. Paul’s Church will be on view until early March. The exhibition features copper enameled jewelry, woodcut prints, wildlife photography, and oil and acrylic paintings by four artists from—or with ties to—Cleveland. Each artist exhibits mastery and control in their chosen medium.

Robin McIntosh paints with careful attention to detail in her landscapes and animal portraits. Her work is inspired by time spent in Ohio and Canada.

Michaelle Marschall strives to imagine and create atmospheric, underwater views in her unique wood-block prints. In creating her abstract impressions, Marschall draws on her experiences in a form of scuba diving.

Susanna Westberg fuses glass enamel to copper in her earrings and pendants. She mixes color and shape in every one-of-a-kind piece of wearable art that she creates.

Vic Weizer spends great lengths of time in the field, capturing images of owls and birds who reside in North America. His stunning photographic work is printed on metal or glass.

Each artist exhibits at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, at 2747 Fairmount Blvd., welcomes the community to its events and services throughout the year. For more information, visit www.stpauls-church.org.

Robin Outcalt is co-chair of The Nicholson B. White Gallery at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

Heights Arts announces 2024 music season

Cameron Gorman

Heights Arts has announced its 2023–24 music season. A blend of three unique series—Close Encounters chamber music, Gallery Concerts, and ARTbar events—the season reflects the uniquely creative community Heights Arts calls home.

With the help of its Music Community Team, Heights Arts has selected a talented lineup of musicians for both its Gallery Concert and ARTbar series.

For Close Encounters, artistic director Dane Johansen has gathered talent from the globally recognized Cleveland Orchestra and other acclaimed artists in the community. Performances of Close Encounters, the Sunday-afternoon chamber music series, take place in unique venues and local residences, where audiences hear the music as it was meant to be heard—up close and personal.

This year, in partnership with The Music Settlement, Heights Arts presents a new, rare opportunity for students and adults to glimpse the process of preparing for a Close Encounters performance. This one-

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University Dental Associates
Dobama presents new take on ‘Little Women’

Mariah Burks

Dobama Theatre will produce a new adaptation of Louisa May Alcott’s timeless novel Little Women this holiday season. Performances begin Dec. 1 and will run through a New Year’s Eve matinee.

In this fresh approach to the story, four actors in an attic retell Alcott’s classic, creating scenes of love and loss amid the ever-glowing warmth of the March family hearth.

Playwright Heather Chisler is a Chicago-based actor, playwright, and educator. The play was developed at First Folio Theatre in 2019 before premiering in 2021 at Theatre Cedar Rapids. It then received another full production at First Folio in 2022. Of that production, the Chicago Reader wrote, “. . . this lovely version of Louisa May Alcott’s classic coming-of-age novel hits with even greater acuity about the ephemeral nature of childhood and life itself after the events of the last two years.”

“Little Women” was featured on the 2020 Kilroy’s List—a list of new plays that is the result of an annual industry survey of excellent new plays by women, trans, and non-binary playwrights.

“We are thrilled to share this joyful, moving, and exceedingly theatrical adaptation of the beloved novel Little Women with Northeast Ohio audiences,” said Dobama’s Artistic Director Nathan Motta. "This all-female and non-binary cast, crew, and creative team will bring immense skill, heart, and imagination to Heather Chisler’s exquisite script. It will truly be a delightful offering for all audiences this holiday season.”

Dobama’s production will feature Theo Allyn*, Natalie Green*, Amaya Kiyomi, Rachel Gold, and Adrionna Powell (* denotes Actors’ Equity Association members). The creative team includes scenic design by Laura Carlson Tarantowski, lighting design by Josee Coyle, sound design by Angie Hayes, costume design by Colleen Bloom, props design by Vanessa Cook, intimacy direction by Casey Venema, and technical direction by Connor Stout. The show is stage managed by Faith Roush*, and at the helm is director Melissa Crum.

Dobama is a union, professional theatre dedicated to producing important new plays that have yet to premiere in the region.

For a complete performance schedule, ticket prices, and reservations, call the Dobama Theatre Box Office at 216-932-3396, or visit www.dobama.org/little-women.

Mariah Burks* is director of engagement at Dobama Theatre, and is among the performers in Dobama’s production of “Little Women.”
The future history of music here

David Budin

I take my grandson, Baxter, to his piano lessons. He wants me to watch his lessons. I wouldn’t if he didn’t. But when he started, nine months ago, when he was 5, he wanted me in there, and that hasn’t changed yet.

He’s always been very musical, and I thought he might start music lessons when he was 6, which is when I started. But he began asking if he could take piano lessons when he was 5, and though I thought he might be too young, I also believe that the time to start kids on music lessons is when they want to. So, I asked his parents if I could start taking him to piano lessons and that was fine with them. Also, kids are older now than they were when I was a kid; so at 5, he was probably where I was at 6.

Baxter’s taking lessons at Musicologie—on Fairmount Boulevard, just east of Taylor Road—which used to be the Fairmount School of Music, started, 35 years ago, by my former bandmate Kevin Richards.

Like most kids, Baxter doesn’t love practicing. But what scares me, a little, is that he usually plays MUCH better in his lessons than he ever does when practicing. It scares me because that’s what I always did—and still do, as a professional musician—and I wonder if it implies that he has that performing gene, or whatever it is that makes some of us want to be performers. Maybe he doesn’t; it’s too early to tell.

I was worried about Baxter and his sister, Westin’s, music education in public school when they started at Fairfax. Westin likes music, too, but hasn’t yet shown any interest in playing it. When I went to Coventry Elementary School, almost every classroom had a piano and almost every teacher I had knew how to play and could lead us in singing. We had at least a little music every day. I know it’s not that way any more. You can hear that it’s not that way, anywhere, because, well . . . .

When I was in elementary school, singing with the class, my teachers stopped and told certain kids to sing in tune. And then those kids did. Most of them. It works. I have done that with kids. Most can do it. You just have to help them with it. Like teaching math or reading.

I also had exceptional music teachers in junior high and high school—people who went out of their way to help me when I expressed an interest in becoming a professional musician. At Roosevelt Junior High, the band director, Wilbur Turner, let me come in after school and try every single band and orchestra instrument, when I told him I wanted to become an arranger. Then he let kids who played those instruments give me a few lessons each.

At Heights High, my choir director, Clair McElfresh, encouraged me in many ways, including letting me arrange music for vocal ensembles to perform in our concerts, and letting continued on page 19
Colopy is new Roots of American Music director

Tom Sivertson  
Michele Colopy  

Roots of American Music (ROAM), the Cleveland Heights-based nonprofit organization that uses traditional American music as a tool for education, social change, and community building, welcomes Michele Colopy as its new executive director.

Colopy brings 27 years of nonprofit leadership experience, and a master’s degree in arts administration from the University of Akron, to her new role.

“I am honored to join ROAM and continue the legacy of its founder, Kevin Richards,” said Colopy. “I look forward to working with the staff and teaching artists to provide music education and creative opportunities for the community in Northeast Ohio.”

Colopy succeeds Jason Patrick Meyers, who had served as ROAM’s executive director since July 2020. Vince Slusarz, ROAM’s board president, commented, “We are also thrilled to have Michele on board as our new executive director. She has a wealth of experience and skills that will benefit ROAM and its mission.”

ROAM offers music programs for schools, libraries, senior centers, veteran’s groups, and other community settings. ROAM also hosts concerts, workshops, festivals, and other events that celebrate the diversity and richness of American music.

For more information about ROAM, visit www.rootsofamericanmusic.org or call 216-321-9350.

Tam Sivertson is the project manager at ROAM. He teaches preschool music, and plays drums professionally.

“Kindling Creativity: LEI’s Winter Warmth”

Jonas Bryson  

“Snow All Over”  
Written in response to Hockey on De Bulion Painting by Carole Spandau

Outside the frame, it is people
Kids playing hockey on the sidewalk
Cars everywhere
Stairs to the apartments
Trees with no leaves as far as the eye can see
Windows all around
Snow on the street
Colors all around

As the winter frost blankets the city, Lake Erie Ink’s winter programming takes center stage. With everything from playwriting, science fiction and D&D story building sessions, LEI programs offer space for kids to warm up their imaginations. Designed to connect literacy, creativity and fun, Lake Erie Ink is not just trying to keep the cold at bay

December might be a short month, but LEI will make it a creative one! They are offering a perfect workshop for holiday preparations: “Paper Arts’ Explore y3 D collaging with Lake Erie Ink takes place at CMA’s Community Arts Center at the Pivot Center on December 16th from 10-12. For those long days during winter break, younger kids in grades K-5 can join Creative Play Days from 9:30-12:30

Under the guidance of passionate teaching artists, the winter workshops are designed to kindle the creative flame within, providing a respite from the cold while fostering a sense of community among participants. Students can look forward to Evening Ink workshops such as “Dungeons and Dragons: Story Games,” “Inside Out: Queer Writers Connect,” and “Create New Worlds: Sci-Fi & Fantasy.” Weekend Ink includes Playwriting workshops in collaboration with Dobama Theatre, our beloved, Kids’ Comic Con, happening in early March.

Founded on the belief that every child’s voice deserves to be heard, Lake Erie Ink offers a diverse range of programming tailored to nurture and inspire, kindling a passion that will burn bright long after the snow has melted away. The seeds of creativity sown here take root, blooming into stories, poems, and artwork that resonate with the theme of making “Words Bloom.”

As the days grow shorter and the nights grow longer, Lake Erie Ink stands as a beacon of warmth and expression. Registration for winter programming is now open! Learn more at http://www.lakeerieink.org/spring.

Jonas Bryson is the marketing coordinator at Lake Erie Ink.
Changes the number of signatures required on petitions for an initiative or referendum from a percentage of registered voters to a percentage of total ballots cast in the city’s last regular municipal election, and increases such percentages.

Council’s presiding officer: Relieves the mayor of this responsibility and provides that the vice mayor (a member of council) is to preside. The mayor and department directors are entitled to non-voting seats at council meetings so that the executive branch may communicate its interests to council.

Anti-discrimination: Prohibits discrimination by the city based on a person’s membership in certain protected classes or groups unless reasonably necessary to normal operations and having a substantial relationship to job function and responsibilities.

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

HEIGHTS ARTS’ Lee Road gallery. The ARTbar offers a mix of curated concerts and musical genres to perform in intimate, at-home settings. Featuring the Yu Shung Duo and Eric Everette Jazz Elation!, this season will offer a sample of what-you-can model to ensure accessibility. Featuring the Yu Shung Duo and Eric Everette Jazz Elation!, this season will offer a sample of what-you-can model to ensure accessibility. Featuring the Yu Shung Duo and Eric Everette Jazz Elation!, this season will offer a sample of what-you-can model to ensure accessibility. Featuring the Yu Shung Duo and Eric Everette Jazz Elation!, this season will offer a sample of what-you-can model to ensure accessibility.

For more information or to reserve tickets, visit www.heightsarts.org.

Cameron Garman (cgarman@heightsarts.org) is the assistant director for Heights Arts.

the ARTbar series will feature local favorites, including the Dan Bruce Trio and Hot Club of Cleveland, along with nationally acclaimed percussionist Jamey Haddad with his trio in May 2024.

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