Severance is more than big boxes

Vince Reddy

The many commercial districts in Cleveland Heights and University Heights define our communities. They are notable for their numbers—upwards of twenty, depending on how you count them—as well as their variety. Some are large and extensive in their offerings; others are small and specialized.

Many of the districts can claim interesting, historically significant locations. Like Crown Heights, the intersection of Rockwell and Weeden (including the old Western Reserve Meat Market) is a good example. To the north, where the traffic circle intersects with the center of town, is a roundabout with public art in the center. To the west, near the intersection of the streetcar line and the University Circle, is a small shopping district that features several unique small shops.

Severance Town Center is one of our two large and imperfect big-box commercial districts (the other is Cedar Center). They don’t always get the consideration they deserve. Unlike our iconic streetcar-era commercial districts, they are rarely thought of as interesting, historically significant locations.

Severance is a town center in more than name. Besides Cleveland Heights’ city hall, which relocated from the Mayfield Superior commercial district in the mid-1980s, Severance is home to medical facilities, restaurants, and parking. A few of these are not bad at all. For example, the parking garage at the University Circle shopping center is a good example of a parking garage that is not just functional but also aesthetically pleasing.

Severance is remarkable among Greater Cleveland commercial districts in that it holds not a single example of an extended “residential and commercial” complex. Perhaps this is because of the local planning department’s efforts to discourage development in the area. However, this does not mean that Severance is not a good place to live. In fact, it is one of the best places to live in Cleveland Heights.

The Courtyards of Severance is a Cord Company development of new homes. (continued on page 5)

Budget cut spurs citizen action

Hugh Fisher

Among the many cuts made by Cleveland Heights City Council to balance the budget were the landscaping, plantings and flower baskets that add to the quality of life in Cleveland Heights. This year we won’t see the baskets of flowers gracing the gateway to Cleveland Heights on Cedar Glen or plantings on the medians on our boulevards, among other touches of beauty around the city that we have grown accustomed to.

For several neighbors on Fairmount Boulevard, these cuts meant they needed to take action themselves. Ruth Anna and David Carlson live across the street from Dianne Hunt in condos in the Cedar Fairmount area. They share a view of the end of the boulevard median, and that view needed sprucing up. “We decided to do something about it,” said Ruth Anna Carlson. “If the city couldn’t do it, we thought we could do it.”

The Carlsons and Hunt contacted Alex Mannarino, director of public works for the city, and told him they wanted to landscape the median at the base of the Historic Fairmount District sign, and that they wished to do so at their own expense. “We were happy that the city agreed to let us plant on city-owned land,” said Carlson. “They were very cooperative.”

According to Carlson, Mannarino sent several city workers to the site to turn over the grass and dump a load of fresh topsoil. “Alex and his workers were great,” Carlson said. “They even said they would put down mulch when we were done.”

The Carlsons and Hunt plan to arrange a watering detail among their neighbors. “A tremendous amount of the city’s landscaping budget went to daily watering, so we’ll have to do that ourselves also,” Carlson said. “This is really a small first step,” said Hunt. “Since there is so much more to do, we plan to appeal to local garden clubs that are a part of the Federated Garden Clubs. This parent organization has as a part of its mission a commitment to civic beautification. Hopefully we can secure funding to continue this kind of work.” Groups or individuals wishing to make similar beautification improvements should contact the city for approval.

Hugh Fisher is a Cedar-Fairmount resident.

CH Mayor has best part-time job

Mark Majewski

Mayors and councilpersons perform some pleasant chores like cutting ribbons at grand openings and riding in parades. Much more time, however, is spent in meetings, working to balance budgets, addressing complex legal questions and responding to resident concerns. In difficult times, balancing budgets may require cancelling the fun stuff like parades.

In most communities, council positions are part-time jobs with only modest “salaries.” Given the hard work and challenges, why do people campaign for election and serve in these positions?

A conversation with Mayor Edward J. Kelly of Cleveland Heights provides some insights into the motivations of at least one mayor/councilperson.

“It’s the best part-time job anybody could have,” said Kelly. “The job is very challenging, but also very rewarding. I have lived here my entire life and I have wanted to do this since I was about 20 years old. I feel that I am a problem-solver.”

This is Kelly’s fifteenth year on council and his eleventh as mayor and president of council. He shares credit with his fellow council persons for listening to residents, ensuring that people get a response when they contact city hall, maintaining and enriching diversity, and promoting economic development.

Kelly did not hold public office before running for city council in 1993 when ten people competed for four seats. There is much less competition for the seats today. Asked why, Kelly said he hopes that people are “happy with municipal services and the incumbents. They may also recognize the substantial time commitment required to serve.”

According to Kelly, a person running for council needs first to have a real love for the city. It helps to have some understanding of the workings of city hall. Cleveland Heights City Council encourages residents to apply to serve on one of the various boards and commissions in order to get to know their local government before running for office.

Council meets every Monday night. Council persons also participate in committee meetings, special public meetings and special events. Kelly estimates that his role as a part-time Mayor requires 20-30 hours per week.

Cleveland Heights is a “council-
Boarded up homes damage image

Hello, Heights Observer!

I just picked up a copy of your inaugural edition. I hope your citizen newspaperprospers!

I have been a Cleveland Heights resident since 1977. I live 1000 yards away
from Cain Park. I love Cleveland Heights and think it’s a marvelous place to live.

Here’s the thing: My neighborhood has been decimated by home foreclo-

sures about 40% of the houses on my street have For Sale signs, and because
of that, boarded up windows. The street is starting to look like something from
the depths of inner city Detroit or St. Louis.

Visitors going to Cain Park over the summer to see musical and theatrical
productions or attend the Cain Park Art Festival will walk down my street past
For Sale signs and boarded up homes. This will damage our image as a progres-

sive, nice-place-to-live-in inner suburb.

A recent call to the Cleveland Heights Housing Department informed me
that the city cannot or will not do anything about the boarded up windows
and doors. This is a sign of the demise of my once proud Cleveland Heights.
We are losing the charm we once had. Soon, because of budget cutbacks, we will
no longer be able to maintain our parks. Already our main streets are a shambles
of un-repaired potholes.

It is hard when something you love dies before your very eyes.

Steve Warner
Note: Letters to the editor should be 200 words or less. Send letters to futureheights.org.

Fountain beautifies all seasons

Michael Reins

As a westsider to eastsider convert, I have never regretted making that taboo
change and enjoy raising my family in this wonderful community.

Regarding the development of Top of the Hill, I have to commend the city
on its efforts to gather opinions and ideas from the community, as Heights
residents see this space as the “wel-

come” to our unique oasis. Surrounded
by green space, this area should be a
parking place, after a meal at Night-
town or a place for a grandfather to re-

fect and share a story with a grandchild,
at all times of the year.

This is a perfect opportunity to add a tasteful, reflective, iconic cen-
terpiece for welcoming home residents
and welcoming visitors. I suggest an
all weather illuminated water feature,
reflective of our traditional architecture,
which would compliment this project,
provide a smile as we leave, and welcome
us home as we ascend the hill. For an
example, I offer the Butler Ice Fountain,
an integral part of the campus of Buffalo
State. The fountain is the masterwork of
Carl Nesjar, a world-renowned artist and
collaborator with Pablo Picasso.

As you can see, this all weather
fountain was designed to be a year round
focus point, as beautiful in the winter
as it is in the summer. This should not
be an afterthought or a budget left-

over item but an essential component
of the project. With a lot of history to
draw upon for its form (City of Trees or the Severance Fountain), it will be
beautiful and appropriately scaled to
make a statement but avoid even the
slightest suggestion that we are trying to
create a Bellagio-like light show.

I hope this provides additional inspiration to make the development of
Top of the Hill another successful and forward looking Cleveland Heights
benchmark.

Michael Reins and family enjoy living in Cleveland Heights and direct you to
www.buffalostate.edu/library/archives/:

Chemical-free gardening?

Not if the city opposes it

Chaya Tabak

Ah, the warm breezes, fragrant lilacs, blooming crabapples. At this season, we
eye our garden plots and vegetable beds
and plan for a crop. While I give admir-
ingly at some of my neighbors’ gardens,
I heave a sigh of despair over my front yard.
We have trimmed and tamed the bushes,
and the area is rather weed-

ridden. A lawn is it not, and though I
enjoy its shade and furry visitors,
I cringe with embarrassment at the bare
spots and weeds.

Long ago, I concluded that digging out
the weeds would be a thankless, end-

less task. However, I really did not
want to use chemical herbicides to get rid of all
the growth, and sought a better method. Re-
search suggested the following: smother the
growth with material that blocks sun and air,
such as black garbage bags, then place lay-
ers of wet newspaper, peat moss, compost,
mulch, and tarp on the ground. I bor-
rowed several tarpaulins from a supportive
friend and, after covering the herbage, set
out to smother what was left.

Just as hormone-free cattle take
longer to grow, but are probably healthier
for it, getting rid of weeds without using
herbicides takes time and patience. Over
the course of the summer, the weeds slowly
turned white under the tarp and began to shrivel.
The next summer, I be-
gan the task of laying out newspaper and
soil amendments, section by section. In
the meantime, little pecked at the edges
of the items. After a couple of years, I now have to choose
among three options: Place the tarps back
and seek the help of the municipality, simply
cut the growth every few weeks and never
expect to beautify it, or use herbicides.

We ought not try to recreate English
country gardens of the eighteenth cen-
tury; we ought to be promoting the use
of native plants and of sustainable
methods. Given the opportunity to
improve my small lot, I could have provided
such an example to my puzzled neighbors.

In a time when society is becoming more
conscious of the need to reduce the poi-

soning of our environment, it behooves
the city—and the community—to recog-
nize the value of alternative methods of
controlling unwanted plant growth.

Chaya Tabak is a local high school biology
teacher who volunteers during the summer at
the Cleveland Botanical Garden and is dream-
ing of having her own garden.
Cable choice creates eyesore

Hugh Fisher

Look around and you’ll see them sprouting up on area tree lawns. Unlike the odd mushroom though, these are pretty obvious. They are about the size of a refrigerator and actually sound like one, purring quietly. But don’t expect the city to pick them up on garbage day.

Until last year, cities negotiated cable franchise agreements directly with providers. In exchange for service, cable companies provided community access channels, offered senior rates and addressed customer complaints. Time Warner Cable exclusively serviced Cleveland Heights and University Heights. Last year, Governor Strickland signed Senate Bill 177, which deregulated the cable TV industry in Ohio and enabled cable providers to obtain a single, statewide franchise. Both Time Warner and AT&T are now able to provide service throughout Ohio, including the Heights.

Which brings us back to the refrigerators on our tree lawns: They are “node cabinets” for AT&T’s U-verse product, which combines telephone, television, and internet services. AT&T’s fiber-optics and the copper phone line from your house meet up in the node cabinet. Each cabinet can service 200 to 500 homes.

On its face, more choice seems a good thing for consumers. But parking large cabinets in front of homes seems like a spoiler. It turns out that tree lawns are actually a right-of-way, and utilities have the right to use them.

Carl Czaga, manager of capital projects for the city of Cleveland Heights, says the city has been able to influence the locations of some boxes, but has limited authority. “We can’t flat out deny them the locations of some boxes, but they provide us!”

Carl Czaga, manager of capital projects for the city of Cleveland Heights, says the city has been able to influence the locations of some boxes, but has limited authority. “We can’t flat out deny them the locations of some boxes, but they provide us!”

Czaga reports that AT&T has in some instances secured easements from property owners, enabling them to place their cabinets on private property and off the right of way. Although Czaga says Cleveland Heights’ right of way regulates cabinet placement, a perusal of the ordinance did not reveal any provisions regulating their visual impact.

“They are ugly monsters upon the landscape,” says University Heights Mayor Beryl Rothchild. “I insisted on looking at where they wanted to put them and making suggestions. These are big utilties with a lot of clout. They don’t care unless you challenge them.”

Traffic control boxes are located on rights of way at intersections. They are much smaller, painted gray or black, and blend into the background. AT&T’s tan cabinets, with neon-orange street designations, do not blend in. AT&T spokesman Bob Beasley, says that the cabinets are “designed to blend in to local aesthetics and meet local ordinances.” Clearly, aesthetics is in the eye of the beholder.

Hugh Fisher is a Cedar-Fairmount resident.

Cluniversityland Heights

Tobias Rittner

Cooperation, collaboration, regionalism and partnerships are at the top of every community’s “to do” list these days. For too often, however, communities fail in these efforts. In Cleveland Heights (CH) and University Heights (UH), some of these activities may actually happen as city leaders and citizens begin to discuss the very real potential for a CH/UH merger. So what does it take to merge and why would our two cities entertain such a notion?

Merging governmental jurisdictions is not uncommon. Over the past two decades numerous communities have successfully merged services and political jurisdictions. The City and County of Denver, CO, Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, KY, the City and Borough of Juneau, AK, the Louisville-Jefferson County Metro Government, the City of Indianapolis and Marion County, IN, and the City and County of San Francisco, CA are just a few examples of proactive consolidation efforts.

So maybe CH and UH are not at the level of these larger consolidations, but these success stories beg the question as to why our two communities have not yet explored this option.

A merger in Ohio can be an arduous process with feasibility studies, community negotiations, voter referendums and state approval roadblocks to name just a few of the challenges that would need to be addressed. The most significant step, aside from having the people who actually live in these two communities approve the move, would be conducting a feasibility study to determine if a merger would benefit the two communities.

Clearly there is strength in numbers and a merger would significantly raise the population and profile of the new CH/UH community in Northeast Ohio. Two smaller towns combining to become one mid-sized community would alter the balance of power on the eastside of Cleveland. CH and its 50,000 residents combined with UH and its 14,000 citizens would establish a diverse first ring suburb with a variety of housing and neighborhood choices. A community 64,000 strong would also lead to a greater share of federal resources, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant program funding.

CH and UH are both unique economies that have strengths in different areas. CH has vibrant, walkable community centers that provide dining, nightlife and services. CH lacks strong office and retail centers and significant development opportunities. UH, with its larger retail corridors, access to the Eastern suburbs and prime real estate development opportunities brings a different economy that could benefit from CH's strengths.

It is also important to point out that with a merger, both cities could save money by combining fire, police and city service departments. The elimination of duplicative city agencies and executive branches would also afford both communities savings. CH and UH already partner together on schools and some purchasing elements. A merger would potentially strengthen these existing relationships.

The two cities have a number of commonalities, including high real estate taxes and an aging infrastructure. Both communities rely on the other for shopping, dining, services and amenities. You could say that CH and UH are a perfect match.

So what is stopping the merger?

There are a lot of obstacles, aside from the obvious legal and approval issues, which have kept merger talks at bay. Both CH and UH leaders are hesitant to make the first move, fearing pushback and controversy.

There are other issues impeding a merger, including community sentiment. What would this new community be called? This is a common question when merger discussions take place and many fear that UH, the smaller of the two cities, many lose its identity. This is not an easy question to answer. Options include adopting the current Cleveland Heights, combining the names or creating a new name all together. CH is a community of neighborhoods and the UH community would fit nicely into this structure. UH’s unique location and relationship with John Carroll University would make it a unique, new “neighborhood” of Cleveland Heights.

CH and UH are probably years away from a true merger. But, given the current economic conditions of first ring suburbs and the desperate need for both communities to curb spending and increase tax revenue, a merger of services over time is a very likely outcome in the near term. Down the road, a full merger would seem to make sense.

Toby Rittner lives on Coleridge Road and is an active community volunteer.
Cedar-Fairmount study committee

City seeks public input

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The city of Cleveland Heights has formed a steering committee of residents, business owners and other stakeholders in the Cedar-Fairmount neighborhood to guide a planning process for transportation in the Cedar-Fairmount commercial district. The city has retained City Architecture, an architectural firm known for its streetscape plans in urban environments, and Michael Baker, Jr., Inc., an engineering and consulting firm, to assess existing conditions and evaluate opportunities to enhance the district.

"By improving the presence and access to public transportation and making it safer to cycle, Cedar-Fairmount can become a true multi-modal neighborhood that has many strong connections to its surrounding context," says Alex Pesta of City Architecture. "Celebrating the walkability of the district will only be further enhanced by improving the district's connectivity within the city and beyond."

Funding for the study is provided by the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) through its Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative, which helps existing communities in Northeast Ohio obtain federal funding and technical assistance for planning transportation projects that strengthen community livability.

The Cedar-Fairmount project exemplifies many of the criteria of the program: to enhance the economic viability of established retailers, improve quality of life for visitors and residents, assist in the redevelopment of urban core communities and improve the safety and efficiency of existing infrastructure.

The steering committee's goals are to facilitate community input, set priorities for the district and provide recommendations for the development of a transportation and streetscape plan that would support these priorities. The plan will address calming of vehicular traffic, parking, pedestrian and bicycle access and safety, public transit, economic vitality, creating a sense of place, and creating a vibrant and sustainable mixed-use environment for residents, visitors, and businesses. The study will take into consideration potential development of the "Top of the Hill," a 3.5 acre parcel located where Cedar Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard merge to form Cedar Hill. The land currently is used for surface parking and open space.

The committee held its first meeting on Thursday, May 22, in council chambers at city hall and will meet periodically over the next eight months.

Business owners, residents, and representatives from the Cedar-Fairmount Special Improvement District and Future Heights make up the committee. Representatives from NOACA, Case Western Reserve University, the Ohio Department of Transportation and University Circle Inc. also attended.

The first of three public meetings is scheduled for Thursday, June 5, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Cleveland Heights Community Center, corner of Mayfield Road and Monticello Boulevard. All residents are encouraged to attend. The city plans to film each of the public meetings for airing on Channel 23.

All community stakeholders are encouraged to give input by completing a survey, which is available online at www.clevelandheights.com/whatsnew.asp?id=530. For more information, contact Deanna Bremer Fisher at 216.321.5419 or mjw1234@gmail.com.

City Cedar-Fairmount study committee

 Heights Parent Center receives national grant from Dollar General Literacy Foundation

Louisa Oliver

Heights Parent Center has received a $20,000 grant to promote family literacy in Cuyahoga County. The grant, the maximum available from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation, was one of three given within the state of Ohio, and one of 93 awarded to organizations in 32 states. The grant supports "Families Learning Together," a pilot family literacy program offered by the center during 2007-08. The program's first year was funded by the Literacy Cooperative of Greater Cleveland, through a grant from Cuyahoga County, and a grant from the Deaconess Community Foundation.

Families Learning Together engages whole families in building key skills necessary for success in school and in life. The program creates a network of problems who together offer the four key components of family literacy: adult basic education, early childhood education, parenting and interactive literacy time for parents and their children. Heights Parent Center also provides personalized support for each enrolled family.

Any TANF-eligible family in Cuyahoga County (TANF is Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Ohio's welfare program) where an adult is working on, or wants to work on, a GED and has a child younger than school age is encouraged to apply for the program. Call 331-0079.

Dollar General has supported literacy since its founding. One of the company's co-founders, J.L. Turner, was functionally illiterate when he started the company that is recognized today as Dollar General. Dollar General believes "that learning to read, receiving your GED...is an investment that opens new doorways for personal, professional and economic growth for individuals and families...It is the one gift that no one can take away...the one gift that lasts a lifetime."

Heights Parent Center is an educational, resource and support center for families with children. Information about HPC programs and services can be found at www.heightsparcenter.org.

Louisa Oliver is executive director of Heights Parent Center and a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights.

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MAYOR, from page 1

Mark Majewski is a 20-year resident of Cleveland Heights and a community planning consultant.
Peter Shaw joins Liberty Bank’s commercial lending team

Mary Patton

Liberty Bank, N.A. has appointed Cleveland Heights resident Peter G. Shaw as vice president of commercial lending.

“Peter is a proven professional lender who has a strong commitment to the Northeast Ohio market,” said William A. Valerian, chairman and CEO of Liberty Bank. “His experience and knowledge give the bank a decided edge in our mission to help customers grow and prosper.”

Shaw has more than 15 years’ experience as a seasoned banking and finance professional. Prior to joining Beachwood-based Liberty Bank, he served as business banking client manager in global commercial banking with Bank of America.

Shaw has also held numerous relationship manager positions with National City Bank in Cleveland, TCF National Bank in Chicago and First of America Bank in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from Virginia Tech and a Master in Business Administration from The College of William and Mary.

With branch offices in Beachwood, Solon and Twinsburg, Liberty Bank serves local consumers and privately held businesses with sales of up to $25 million. The community bank specializes in providing innovative financing and cash management services together with competitive rates and personalized customer service.

For more information, visit the company’s web site libertybankna.com.

Mary Patton is a public relations consultant and a longtime resident of the Heights. She currently lives in University Heights with her husband and daughter.

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Coventry committee to board of education: Rent or raze

Sarah Wean

The Coventry School Study Committee ended its deliberations on May 20 with a recommendation to CUH Board of Education to retain the property and either lease it or tear it down.

Early in the meeting the committee expressed frustration in making a recommendation in the absence of a larger master plan and sought greater clarification on the long-range facilities needs.

Committee member Kal Zucker, a member of the board of education, pointed out that although the board doesn’t have a master plan document, the district has been strategic in planning its program goals and considers facilities usage on an ongoing basis to align with those goals. District facilities manager Steve Shergalis reassured the committee that the district has no plans for future use of the empty building.

Citing the need to focus on the task at hand because the bigger picture was “beyond the purview of this committee,” facilitator William Wendling reminded the group their recommendation must align with the district’s priorities of fiscal responsibility and educational goals.

And, if the committee were to become a landlord, he said, any tenant would need to prove its ability to pay its own way and be sustainable over time.

In the end, the committee adopted two options for the Coventry property: recommending the district become a landlord and solicit formal proposals over a set period of time from prospective tenants in the form of a letter of interest; or, razing the building and expanding open space.

Either recommendation allows the district to maintain ownership of the land and building for future use.

A letter of interest is an open process seeking detailed and solidly supported business plans for rental use of the property.

Heights Arts, a Cleveland Heights-based arts organization, is interested in reusing the building as a multi-tenant arts and education center and will be responding to the letter of interest. To date they have been courting potential partners and conducted an informal energy appraisal of the building.

The second recommendation, razing the building, the least palatable but potentially most financially prudent of the options, would eliminate $106,000 in annual operating expenses for the empty school. “Money that could be spent on new teachers,” Mr. Zucker said.

Mr. Wendling said it is incumbent upon the community, and not the district, to respond and get behind any specific proposal that would put the building to new use. And, in the potential absence of receiving any viable proposals through the letter of intent process, the razing of the building must be option as well, he said.

The committee considered the emotional and economic consequences to a neighborhood of tearing down public structures versus the responsibility the district has to use its resources wisely. They agreed that in the absence of receiving any viable proposals for renting the building, the razing of the building must be presented as an option.

The cost of demolition is estimated at $500,000.

The committee’s recommendation will ask the board of education to follow a reasonable timeline and set a “date certain” to make a decision, subject to financial review by the Lay Finance Committee, by the end of 2008.

A letter was sent to the Ohio Department of Development requesting that this recommendation was made using district-supplied information that indicated the board has no plans to use the building for educational or administrative purposes, now or in the foreseeable future.

Ten members of the 19-member committee attended the May 20 meeting. The committee’s final report will be presented to the board of education in June, on a date to be determined.

Sarah Wean is a community volunteer.
Bodega Infuses Coventry with Ambiance, Mediterranean Flair

Local owner opens tapas/martini/wine restaurant in former Utrecht space

Christina Kleacetic

Sandwiched between Bd’s Mongolian Barbeque and Phoenix Coffee on Coventry, Bodega made its official debut May 21. Owner and Heights resident Said Ouaddaadaa (pronounced Sy-eed Wadada) is an experienced restaurateur who has been at the helm of Uptowne near University Circle for the past 15 years.

Ouaddaadaa said ambiance and hospitality are two aspirations for Bodega, which serves up tapas, martinis and wine. His complimentary grand opening, which drew an estimated attendance of 400, achieved both as guests were welcomed by an ever-present band, sangria and Mediterranean smorgasbord consisting of chef specials and menu items, such as grape leaves, hummus, curried chicken and aromatic rice.

In advance of the opening, I caught glimpses of the space through sheer drapes at street-level and couldn’t wait to see more. Bodega is very easy on the eyes with its sophisticated color palette, cascading waterfall and dramatic chandelier that greet guests as they enter. The bar features an impressive wine display with a flat-screen television in the corner to accommodate Tribe fans...

from the dining area.

While the menu is on the slim side, consisting of a few salads, soups and two-dozen cold and hot small plate options, the martini list is a bit overwhelming (in a good way) with 200 choices broken down into categories like classic, cosmos, island frozen margaritas and dessertinis (think liquid Snickers). My favorite of those I sampled over the course of my two visits is the Mello Jell-O (a Jellitoni if you will), which features small chunks of soft, wobbley orange Jell-O. Average martini price is about $9.

Bodega’s wine list also is bountiful. Per our server on grand-opening night, 110 are on the menu and the list will grow to 300 varietals from around the globe. Not much of a surprise since according to Ouaddaadaa, a Moroccan native, Bodega means “wine cellar.”

Tapas are priced reasonably and serve one to two people. Based on my visits, I’d recommend ordering four tapas per two people at a minimum.

A fill-dough addict, I couldn’t pass up the warm brie and honey French Cigar ($6) or chicken-stuffed Pastilla ($9) that was beautifully presented with a fragrant sprinkling of cinnamon. The flavorful French Onion Soup ($4) and fresh Caprese ($5) also received compliments from my dining companions.

However, the Blue Scallops ($8) were unexpectedly spicy with a Cajun seasoning, which was a bit too competitive with the rich blue cheese for our party. Also, some tapas weren’t served as warm as they could have been.

Ingredients for the “Modern Mediterranean” menu are sourced locally. Ouaddaadaa said, so Bodega can count itself as one of the growing list of Cleveland’s farm-to-fork establishments. Expect to spend about an hour and a half for a leisurely dinner for two.

Service staff were friendly and attentive, although some were more knowledgeable about the menu than others. I noticed a mix of clientele on both visits...twenty-somethings and Baby Boomers integrated easily.

Bodega is a great spot to grab a drink with friends and enjoy a light dinner, without having to hustle it downtown to West Sixth. For now, it’s open for dinner only from 4 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. daily, during which guests are treated to live music, consisting of mostly jazz sprinkled in with some Frank Sinatra favorites on Wednesday nights. Bodega will open for lunch in a few weeks.

According to her grandmother, Christina Kletnic is a “good eater” who never met a carb she didn’t like. She enjoys sampling eclectic restaurants, galleries and neighborhoods, which is why she loves Cleveland Heights.

Editor’s Note: For another review of Bodega visit www.heightsobserver.org

“Where everybody knows your name” Brennan’s Colony – A Cleveland Heights tradition

Patrick Paoletta

Most of us remember the popular Bo’s sitcom “Cheers,” which revolved around a neighborhood Boston pub with friendly bartenders and an entertainingly diverse mix of regular customers that included a psychiatrist, accountant, and a mailman. You will find the same welcoming atmosphere and diverse crowd when visiting Brennan’s Colony on Lee Road.

The pub has a long history in Cleveland Heights, dating back over 80 years. Early photographs provide clues that the storefront was originally a market, which later evolved into a working class bar that began to feature food in the 1950s. During that time, people would line the sidewalk waiting for tables for popular fish fries, vying for the limited tables that existed in the single storefront space. Known then only as the Colony, the pub operated continuously from the 1950s through the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. Brennan began his ownership of the pub three times. Jim Brennan worked at the Colony in the 1980s, and in 1991 became the new proprietor, renaming the establishment Brennan’s Colony.

Since that time, he has expanded the pub from two storefronts to four, and last fall opened a new outdoor patio behind the pub. The outdoor space was an immediate success, as the patio is well protected from the noise of the surrounding business district, completely surrounded by the pub and the brick walls that were once eight garage bays. With a long granite bar, comfortable tables, summer greenery, and a big screen TV, what’s not to like?

To me, the two things that make Brennan’s Colony so enjoyable and successful are the people and the food.

The friendly bartenders, wait staff, and neighborhood crowd often refer to you by name, even when you are a once a month regular! And most importantly, the pub fare is high quality and a great value. Brennan has three chefs whom he feels have made his pub the success it is today, Jamie Wynnbrandt, Rich Wise, and Kelly Kral have been with the pub for 9, 15, and 25 years respectively.

Brennan’s Colony has a broad menu ranging from excellent salads to pasta to burgers, with weekly chef’s specials featuring the Colony’s more elaborate entrees. One of my favorites is the blackened tuna steak salad. With its meaty texture and Cajun flavorings, it is one of those dishes I get regular craving for and goes well with a glass of white or red wine. A banker colleague of mine has told me the pork chops are his personal favorite. In addition to the large selection of beer you might expect at a pub, Brennan’s Colony also offers a great list of wines, and most are moderately priced.

If you have never been to Brennan’s Colony before, be prepared for crowds on Friday and Saturday nights, when it becomes a popular gathering spot for families. Weekday nights are more relaxed. In either event, you will get to know the friendly staff, and you may even run into an old neighborhood friend you haven’t talked to in quite a while. Who says there’s not a real place where everybody knows your name?

Patrick Paoletta serves on Future Heights’ board of trustees and is a 10 year resident of Cleveland Heights.

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Heights grad follows auto dreams

Lita Gonzalez

Chip Ramsey, Heights High class of 1988, has at least known what he wanted to do: have his own auto repair station. “When I turned 40, I knew I had to do it.” One and a half years ago, Chip took the big step and put his dream in motion by purchasing Washington & Lee Service, Inc. on Lee Road.

Born and raised in Cleveland Heights, Chip says that his parents used to bring their cars to the repair station. Seeing and talking to the mechanics triggered some of his fascination with cars. “When I was 15 I bought a ’69 Pontiac GTO and drove it up and down the drive way,” Chip reminisced. When the car needed repairs it was taken to the Washington & Lee Station. “The previous owner gave me the tune up parts so I could learn how to work on it.”

Chip says that he has always been intrigued by what makes things work. When he was younger he liked to tinker with discarded lawn mowers, and at the service station he would talk to the mechanics to learn what they were doing to fix the cars. “Certain people know instinctively how to do things,” Chip explained. “Knowing how to fix cars is in my blood.”

Chip Ramsey looks around his repair station as mechanics work on cars perched on lifts. In the corner of the waiting room is an old gas pump. Old license plates and colorful gas station advertisements decorate the walls. Chip points out the unusual stained-glass art piece that covers part of the front window. Thick pieces of glass form the shapes of a spark plug, gas pump, gears, wrench and a wheel. “When the sun shines through this it is amazing, and at night we leave the light on so it shines through the glass,” he says with pride. This is his dream.

Lita Gonzalez, a long time community volunteer and an aspiring writer, artist and gardener, lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband Mark. Both her daughters are Heights High graduates.

Lox and lox of bagels!

Bialy’s owner Mark Osolin

Fifteen thousand pounds — that’s how much wheat flour Bialy’s Bagels owners Mark and Ellen Osolin require each week to keep up with customer demand. Anyone who has sampled a freshly-baked bagel from Bialy’s understands why these glazed, donut-shaped Jewish yeast rolls are so popular. They come in 18 different shapes of a spark plug, gas pump, gears, wrench and a wheel. “When the sun shines through this it is amazing, and at night we leave the light on so it shines through the glass,” he says with pride. This is his dream.

Bialy’s owner Mark Osolin learned the business from his father-in-law Terry Skolnick. Mark and Ellen took over five years ago, when the Skolnick’s moved to Florida. Osolin credits Bialy’s success to a terrific group of employees. “Bialy’s is a hands-on operation, a 24/7 business,” he says. “Most of our workers have been with us for 10 years and more. We have a very good, friendly atmosphere. Everyone here works very, very hard. It can get awfully hot in here.”

Bialy’s is an art piece that covers part of the front window. Thick pieces of glass form the shapes of a spark plug, gas pump, gears, wrench and a wheel. “When the sun shines through this it is amazing, and at night we leave the light on so it shines through the glass,” he says with pride. This is his dream.

What’s “green” about a car?

Andrew Chiarelli

What’s “green” about a car? Many people ask how a car can be good for the environment when it uses gasoline. Well, I have the answer for you: The Honda Civic GX Natural Gas Car. It’s the “greenest” internal combustion engine in the world, having earned the top spot on the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy “Greenest Vehicles” list for the fifth straight year. For the past nine years I have sold this car to cities, individuals, utility companies, and government agencies. The great attribute of the Civic GX is its approximately $5 dollar per gallon equivalent. With a range of about 250 miles per tank, for $2.50 you can drive around 500 miles. Honda has built about 2,000 of these vehicles in East Liberty, Ohio, with most going to New York and California. But Ohio has hundreds of years of natural gas reserves in the ground and millions of gallons of methane available from controlled land fills. We could build an infrastructure to supply state vehicles run on natural gas, and the public would benefit from fill stations to support those vehicles. Ann Arbor, Michigan has two public fill stations. So if we truly want to be in the forefront of a new “green” society, we need to think a little greener and pass our feelings on to those who can get things done in our progressive city.

Wouldn’t it be nice if Ohio cities installed refueling and bought cars and work trucks that ran on natural gas? We would save millions of tax dollars in fuel costs and eliminate millions of tons of carbon going into our air. That is how we should be thinking about cars in our “green” future.

Andrew Chiarelli is the alternative fuel vehicle manager at Motorcars in Cleveland Heights.
Bug Bash expands to include Chrysalis in 2008
Nature Center at Shaker Lakes family benefit adds Chrysalis to biennial fundraiser

Andrea Turner

Families with children of all ages can now enjoy the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes’ (NCSL) highly anticipated family-centered fundraising event this summer.

“Bug Bash,” the event’s theme, focuses on the dependence that humans and trees have on each other. As in the Nature Center’s mission, it’s our responsibility to conserve a natural area, connect people with nature and inspire environmental stewardship.

Bug Bash activities include the popular “Bug Bouncer,” magic shows at 3:45 p.m. and 4:30 p.m., a DJ dance party from 5-6 p.m., a family scavenger hunt among the trees, crafts, games, and much more. The ‘sweens won’t want to miss out on the fun of Chrysalis, with their own DJ dance party from 8-9 p.m., team building games in the woods, Wheel of Nature trivia game with prizes, creating earth-friendly newspaper potted plants and building their own ice cream sundaes.

Families can enjoy dinner and bid on raffle packages. Parents can sample the “pest bar,” with wine and beer selections provided courtesy of Trader Joe’s.

“In an effort to make the event as environmentally sustainable as possible, participants may choose to pay an added incentive for this green option, participants will be awarded a raffle ticket for a chance to win a golf package, also known as the ‘green fee.’”

“Our intent is to reduce our carbon footprint as much as possible while at the same time providing a memorable and educational day for children and their parents,” added Jennifer Mosher, co-chair.

Because the event sells out quickly, advance tickets are required. Tickets are $40 for adults; $20 for youth ages 9 to 14; $10 for children ages 3 to 8; and free for children 2 and under. Bug Bash + Chrysalis 2008 benefits the Nature Outreach Program, which provides an opportunity for underserved youth to participate in the NCSL’s programs and camps. As Richard Louv states in his book, “Last Child in the Woods,” it’s our responsibility to save our children from what he terms “Nature Deficit Disorder.”

NCSL member Kim Wheeler, WKYC-TV Channel 3 News Today Weekend Anchor and Education Reporter, serves as honorary chair.

Bug Bash + Chrysalis 2008 has received major corporate sponsorship from KeyBank; Edward Jones Investments; Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP; Fairmont Minerals; Zeisler Morgan Properties, Ltd.; and Todd & Associates.

The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes was founded in 1966 as a result of a grassroots community effort to preserve the Shaker parklands from becoming the route for a new freeway connecting Cleveland’s eastside to downtown.

Ten thousand children participate annually in more than 30,000 hours of curriculum-related school programs, including a strong early childhood program for several eastside school districts and the Cleveland Public Schools. Additionally, 10,000 walkers, runners, and bird-watchers use the trails and grounds for exercise and enjoyment of nature.

For more information, visit the NCSL’s web site at www.shakerlakes.org or call 331-1535.

Andrea Turner is the PR Chair for the NCSL Bug Bash and Chrysalis 2008 Family Benefit. She lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband and two children.

Families play, share and learn at Heights Parent Center

Louise Oliver

Tucked away in Taylor School is a great resource for families with young children ages 0 - 5! Heights Parent Center is an education, resource and support center for parents, caregivers and young children. In our comfortable and welcoming playroom children and parents can play and talk together, share experiences and resources, and find new friends.

“Parenting is a tough job; it’s a lot easier when you have support from others! By supporting the wellness of the family unit, family support programs strengthen the community. HPC offers play and learn sessions and parenting classes at Taylor. In addition, there is a great family literacy playroom and Toy Lending Library at the CH-UH Main Library.”

Join us! More than 500 families take advantage of the many low-cost and free programs each year. Our programs:

- Develop assets All families have strengths and they build on those strengths when they participate in HPC programs.
- Are open to all Everyone is challenged by raising children and can use support to help them grow to their fullest potential. No parent has to have a deficit or be in crisis to participate in family support programming.
- Provide resources Families share with and learn from other families, observe how staff and other parents interact with their children, borrow books from our parenting resource library, and find information about community resources.
- Reduce stress Parents attending family support programs develop an enhanced community support system that reduces their isolation, provides new ideas and strategies and gives them a safe and engaging place to interact with their children. No parent has to feel alone with the pressures of childrearing.

Enhance skills and confidence Interacting with other parents, talking with staff, attending parenting discussion groups, participating in support groups, and using the parenting resource library all provide ways to learn new skills about raising children. Parents also gain confidence in their own abilities to decide what is best for their family.

Invest in the future HPC programs prevent problems by offering resources, connections and support before a crisis arises.

HPC’s mission is to support and promote the healthy development of families and children in the belief that strong families build strong communities. Find out about our programs and family fun activities at heightsparentcenter.org.

Louise Oliver is executive director of Heights Parent Center and a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights.

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GET INVOLVED! IF YOU HAVE A STORY IDEA OR KNOW OF ONE, WE WANT IT! INFO@FUTUREHEIGHTS.ORG 320-1423
Catch the reading bug at Heights libraries

Tonya Gibson

Summer is here and that means picnics, vacations and more daylight for reading. Kids can start the summer off right by taking part in Catch the Reading Bug, thirty $5 bills, 20 point prizes. Kids receive a prize just for signing up. Registered summer readers can make tracks to the library weekly for fun, exploration, stickers and chances to win prizes.

Register your children for any of the library’s series of programs for babies, toddlers or preschoolers. Or drop in for one of the weekly family storytimes. Maybe we’ll see you at the park for Stories in Purvis Park on Wednesdays at 2 p.m. beginning July 2 and running through August 27. Or maybe we’ll see you at ExploraStory. Either way, you’re sure to have fun and learn a lot!

What is your savings score?

Gail Jackson

To determine your savings score please answer the following questions. I warn you these questions may be painful!

1. Do you have a savings plan for emergencies, for retirement and vacation? 2. Do you deposit funds into your savings account monthly? 3. Do you have a personal budget?

If you answered no to any of these questions you may be in danger of living above your means. Actually, there is no such thing as a savings score, but these should be! We all owe it to ourselves to have a secure financial base. Most of us don’t want to think about money issues until we are in a real crisis. Now is the time to organize your financial affairs and map out a plan to save for a new car, buy a home and increase your retirement and vacation savings. Empower yourself with the knowledge and tools to create a financially secure future.

Let’s stop worrying about credit scores and start to focus on our savings score as an indicator that we are handling our money with accountability to our future.

I suggest that a savings score consist of the following indicators:

• Having and maintaining a personal budget, credit yourself with 100 points.

• Depositing monthly savings into a savings account, 5 points for each deposit (deduct 10 points for each withdrawal!). Add 10 points if you deposit 10% or more of your net income.

• Maintaining a balance of:

  • $0.00-$1,000.00, 10 points.
  • $1,000.00-$5,000.00, 15 points.
  • $5,000.00-$10,000.00, 20 points.

Add 5 points for every $5,000.

• Spending less than 20% of your net income on revolving debt. For example if you have a credit card debt of $5,000, less than 15% of 20%, that is 3% of your net income.

We have great teen events, too. Join us every Friday at any of our libraries for a Totally Buggie Film Festival that will show creepy crawly creature features. The first five teens who register for the Breaking Dawn Book Discussion in August will receive a free copy of the book. Teens can also make their own designer T-Shirts, learn about snakes, spiders, and lizards in our Creepy Crawl Petting Zoo, and learn how to write, direct and produce their own video in Youth Production, Inc.

This year, adults can join in on the action as well. We’re having an adult summer reading program so we can compete with the kids—and show them how much fun it is to read! Read a book by the pool, in the hammock, by the beach (if you’re lucky!), to your child, or any way you like. Then fill out a short entry form at your favorite branch and drop it in the box to be entered into our drawing for one of our exciting prizes:

1. Weekly prizes (at each branch): select from a treasure chest of excellent, recently published books

2. Second prize: a pair of tickets to the Cedar Lee Theater

3. Grand prize (early August): receive the Book of the Month: your choice of the latest titles, ordered especially for you and delivered to your door each month for a year

No matter your age, we will have programs that will make you wiggle and giggle and prizes that will have you marching to the library everyday! Forget watching television or playing a video game. You will be caught up in great books to put on your reading log! Registration for the summer reading program began June 1, 2008.

Tonya Gibson is an employee of the Heights Libraries who enjoys writing and photography in her free time.

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Featured Heights Libraries Programs

Coventry Village Library
1925 Coventry Road 216.321.3400
You Gotta See This Animation Celebration
Thursdays, June 23 - July 17, 2:00 p.m.
Step out of Time
Monday Matinees
Wednesdays, June 25 - July 30, 10:30 a.m.

Lee Road Library
2345 Lee Road 216.932.3600
Independent Film Festival
June 4, 10, 13, 18, 20, 24, 25 & 27, 6:00 p.m.
Summer Vacation Celebration
Thursdays, June 5, 3:15 p.m.
Independent Film Festival
June 7, 14 & 21, 2:00 p.m.
From Drab to Fab T-shirt Decorating
Mondays, June 9 & 16, 1:00 p.m.
Rock the Block
Tuesday, June 17, 6:00 p.m.
Monday Matinees
Mondays, June 23 - July 28, 3:30 p.m.
Mother Goose Falls a Story
Mondays, June 23 - July 28, 10:30 a.m.

The Home Repair Resource Center
3185 Coventry Road 216.321.4700
Step out of Time
Thursdays, June 12 & 26, 7:00 p.m.

University Heights Library
13866 Cedar Road 216.321.4700
Weekly Movie Series
Mondays, June 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30, 1:00 p.m.
Stay & Play
Fridays, June 6 - August 29, 9:30 a.m.
Get Buggy with Us Animal Show
Mondays, June 9 at 7:00 p.m.
Mystery Book Discussion Group
Thursdays, June 12, 7:00 p.m.
I’m Totally Buggie’ Teen Film Festival
Mondays, June 13-August 15, 12:00 p.m.
School’s Out and Reading’s In with Teacher Night
Thursdays, June 12 & 26, 7:00 p.m.

Noble Neighborhood Library
2800 Noble Road 216.291.5665
Summer Story Step
Fridays, June 6 - August 29, 11:15 a.m.
Stay & Play
Fridays, June 6 - August 29, 9:30 a.m.
Get Buggy with Us Animal Show
Mondays, June 9 at 7:00 p.m.
Mystery Book Discussion Group
Thursdays, June 12, 7:00 p.m.
I’m Totally Buggie’ Teen Film Festival
Mondays, June 13-August 15, 12:00 p.m.
School’s Out and Reading’s In with Teacher Night
Thursdays, June 12 & 26, 7:00 p.m.

University Heights Memorial Day Parade.
Interview with “Karaoke Master” DJ Eli Cohen

Sophie Wener

I originally became acquainted with Eli Cohen, the compassionate disc jockey of “EL’s Expert DJ Service” at the karaoke nights he hosted at Champs in Lyndhurst, where he continues to work. Cohen is also the energetic host of karaoke at the B-Side Liquor Lounge in Coventry Village. Cohen took the time to sit down with the Heights Observer and offer some insight into how he has harnessed the popularity of the karaoke phenomenon.

Q: Please talk a little bit about your upbringing and cultural heritage. How do you think your Yemenite Jewish heritage has influenced your professional style?

A: I would say that my (warm) mannerisms are one important trait that I bring from my Yemenite culture into my work.

Q: What do you think are some of the most important qualities necessary to becoming a successful DJ?

A: Persistence. I went through a period when I wasn’t working, after completing my internship at the Ohio Center for Broadcasting, and I felt really down; a necessary component to becoming a successful DJ?

Q: What advice would you give to those who have always enjoyed singing and would like to perform for an audience but are too shy?

A: You should just enjoy it. Come in groups of three or four. I’ve seen it happen, where somebody just suddenly goes up there after and breaks the ice.

Q: Do you host private birthday parties, bar/bat mitzvahs, and weddings?

A: Yes. I’ve done lots of weddings and bar mitzvahs, once I DJed charitably at an Italian wedding where the groom was a veteran of the war in Afghanistan. The event got a lot of press.

Q: How much time per week do you spend preparing your karaoke repertoire before the big night?

A: I spend a lot of time preparing in my search for new songs and I have a real sense by now for what songs will be popular.

If you love karaoke, DJ Eli Cohen also encourages you to visit Johnny Malloy’s in South Euclid, 4350 Mayfield Rd., where a night of great karaoke on Tuesday nights awaits patrons. Close friend to John Carroll University students are especially encouraged to visit.

Q: What do you most love about your profession of being a disc jockey?

A: My favorite thing about working as a DJ is that it makes people happy: one of my regulars at the B-Side came up to me recently when she found a job out of state, and she cried to me telling me how much she would miss me and the karaoke. I enjoy the singing, and people ask me for advice on voice control.

Cleveland Heights and University Heights
Summer Fun Guide 2008

Date | Event | Info | Location
--- | --- | --- | ---
June 13 | UH Symphonic Band | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
June 24 | Nick Penn Quartet | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
June 10 | Cain Park Walking Tour | 291-8478 | Cain Park
June 17 | Rock-The-Block | 361-3330 | Cedar Lee District
June 19 | Ponce Street Ensemble | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
June 20 | Coventry Street Arts Fair | 536-0927 | Coventry Village
June 17 | Music, Movies, and Just Plain Fun | Neighbiorhoods.org | Coventry-P.E.A.C.E. Playground and Arch
June 17 | 2nd Annual Summer Festival | Neighbiorhoods.org | Noble-Nela Neighborhood
June 22 | Log Jams Garden Tour | Neighbiorhoods.org | Heights Youth Club
June 26 | Big Bush and Chrysalis | 321-9395 | Nature Center at Shaker Lakes
July 3 | UH Symphonic Band | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
July 9 | Music, Movies, and Just Plain Fun | Neighbiorhoods.org | Coventry-P.E.A.C.E. Playground
July 10 | Swing Time Big Band | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
July 11-13 | Cain Park-Cleveland Heights | 371-3000 | Cain Park Arts Festival
July 19 | Clear Fork Bluegrass Quartet | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
July 17 | Coventry Street Arts Fair | 536-0927 | Coventry Village
July 17 | Music, Movies, and Just Plain Fun | Neighbiorhoods.org | Coventry-P.E.A.C.E. Playground and Arch
July 24 | Straight-Six Dixie Band | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
July 31 | UH Symphonic Band | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
July 31 | Music, Movies, and Just Plain Fun | Neighbiorhoods.org | Coventry-P.E.A.C.E. Playground and Arch
August 7 | Blue Lunatic | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
August 7 | Music, Movies, and Just Plain Fun | Neighbiorhoods.org | Coventry-P.E.A.C.E. Playground and Arch
August 10 | Discover Cedar-Fairmont Festival | Neighbiorhoods.org | Cedar-Fairmont District
August 12 | Rock-The-Block Festival | 361-3330 | Cedar Lee District
August 14 | Yodelers Cup Kletzkie Band | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
August 21 | Frank Moracek Polka Band | 932-7800 | UH Summer Band Concert-Wiley Middle School
August 21 | Music, Movies, and Just Plain Fun | Neighbiorhoods.org | Coventry-P.E.A.C.E. Playground and Arch

Call for more information or visit our community calendar at www.heightobserver.org

Folky Cleveland Heights thing

Long Road, (5) Bob Sandborn, Celie Hollander, Lewis, Ray DeForest, David Budin and Kevin Richards, all with Heights roots, perform in all-60s folk show at Cain Park on Sunday, June 29, at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

David Budin

For years I sat in the audience at Cain Park concerts, not missing being on stage. Then, all of a sudden, I started playing concerts at Cain Park.

I played in rock and folk groups when I was a kid at Coventry School, and played professionally, starting as a teenager (at Roosevelt Junior High and Heights High), until the age of 31, in Cleveland and New York. Then I quit for what I thought would be forever. But after many years, I decided to have a reunion concert with my singing partner from the 31 years earlier, Denise Johnson. We performed our “David & Denise” show at Cain Park.

I had enlisted the aid of three terrific musicians to back (and cover) us up. People really liked the “60s” quality of the show: five musicians playing acoustic instruments and singing well-written, meaningful songs in harmony. I’m not sure it would have worked quite as well in other suburbs; it might have been a Cleveland Heights thing. So I decided to do a real ‘60s show the next season at Cain Park.

I put together another group of great musicians — that is, four great musicians, plus me — and we performed a show last summer called “Can’t Help But Wonder Where I’m Bound: A 1967 Coffeehouse Concert,” consisting of songs you would have heard in any folk club in 1967.

The group, Long Road is fairly Heights-centric: Kevin Richards, Ray DeForest and I live here; Bob Sandborn and our newest member, Celie Hollander Lewis, who both also used to live here, now live in Chesterland and Athens, Ohio, respectively.

This year’s show will be the last one at Cain Park’s Alma Theater, so we did the show again at the Kent Stage. Then we played at Nighttown twice and the Kent Stage again. Now we’re coming back to Cain Park to perform the sequel — “Can’t Help But Wonder Where I’m Bound” Part 2: A 1968 Coffeehouse Concert” — on Sunday, June 29, at 2 and 7:30 p.m.

This time we’re doing songs you would have heard in 1968, but not any of the ones we did last year. And, like last year’s show, these shows are fund-raisers for the Cleveland Heights-based education organization Roots of American Music (ROAM).

David Budin is a freelance writer living in Cleveland Heights.
Summer fun at Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park

Joanne Campbell

A Thursday evening series of music, movies, and just plain fun begins this evening sponsored by Erick Kaufman, President of Coventry P.E.A.C.E. and Steve Presser of Big Fun. They promise more fun than last year so put these dates on your calendar and be prepared to sit back, relax and enjoy fun under the stars.

THURSDAY JUNE 19: The first Coventry Street Fair of the season runs from 6-9 p.m. Stroll over and ride your bike to the PEACE Park for the “Pee Wee’s Big Adventure” starting at dusk and sponsored by Walk and Roll Cleveland, a wonderful non-profit. Before the movie you will be able to bike rodeo with prizes for all decorated bikes.

THURSDAY JUNE 23: At 7 p.m. under the P.E.A.C.E arch, a wonderful band will present an eclectic program of soul, gospel, and cultural vocal music. The movie “Drum Line” starts at dusk with two local drum lines competing against and with each other just before the movie. The music is sponsored by Heights Arts.

THURSDAY JULY 3: The second Coventry Street Fair of the summer runs from 6-9 p.m. Move over to the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park to see the classic silent film “Metropolis,” produced in 1927 by Fritz Lang. We are blessed to have Rare Blend who will painstakingly work on their score live to accompany the film. The movie was created by Jacob Bergson, a recent Heights High graduate who would like to see music on the streets of Coventry. Bring your instrument and be part of this musical jam. Please note these Tuesday evenings have been planned but not yet confirmed. Watch for more announcements.

Joanne Campbell lives in the Fairfax El School area, but says that all of CHUCH has been her neighborhood for the past 42 years.

Senior citizens receive special Mother’s Day thank you

Lita Gonzalez

On Friday, May 9 twenty-two senior citizens received an early Mother’s Day gift. Cleveland Heights High School’s cosmetology program and the Diversified Health Occupations program sponsored a Movie Night for you, here is more!

Cleveland Heights High School’s cosmetology program is located at the school district’s Taylor Academy building. Starting junior year, a student can enroll in the two-year program that features a full service salon/learning center open during the school year under the guidance of two licensed instructors, Lensa Cruz-Price and Donna Pollard. On this day, students gave back to the community and said thank you to the senior citizens.

Many of the special customers commented that they did not know the salon existed. Carol Stauer was happy that she signed up. “I’m so glad to learn about this resource. I had a pedicure and it was delightful,” she said. “For seniors on a fixed income this is a wonderful place. The prices are very reasonable,” explained another senior as she sat having her nails done. “I plan on coming back again and telling all my friends about this. I wish they were open all year round.”

Donna Pollard, instructor for the senior cosmetology students, demonstrated one of her techniques for giving a facial massage. As she stood behind a student, Ms. Pollard slowly moved her fingers along the student’s forehead while the student mimicked her movement on the client. “I used to try teaching this through lectures,” she explains, “but when they can feel the correct pressure I’m exerting, they quickly understand.” Ms. Cruz-Price agreed that this was crucial especially when working with senior citizens whose skin can be thinner and more fragile.

Throughout the day, the students happily charted with their clients as they painted finger and toenails and styled hair. Chatal Cook felt that the entire day was a fun experience and a good way of letting the senior citizens know about the Cosmetology salon. In addition to cosmetology, Chatal has a full class-load including AP German and AP English Composition. “I like cosmetology. I was always told to get a trade that would help pay for college, and this is it.” She will attend Cleveland State University this fall and hopes to go to law school at Cornell University.

Two former students stopped in to say hello to their teachers, Alaina Powell (’07) is now attending Baldwin Wallance College and majoring in business with a minor in entrepreneurship. She hopes to eventually enter the athletic training field. “I got interested in athletic training when I learned about the anatomy and physiology of the face in cosmetology classes,” said Powell. “The essay that I wrote on just that subject for my college admissions even got me a college scholarship!” Katera Thomas (’07) agreed. “Cosmetology prepared me with the anatomy and physiology that I needed for the nursing assistant course I took.”

Residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights who would like to visit the cosmetology salon can make an appointment by calling 310-3757. The salon is open during the school year, Tuesday through Friday, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. and from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Lita Gonzalez, a long time community volunteer and an aspiring writer, artist and gardener, lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband Mark. Both her daughters are Heights High graduates.
Thee Oak Roader

Phaana, Phaaasa she shouted out to her neighbor who lived across the road. Erma had lived on Oak Road in Clevel-

land Heights for many years. She was true, and she was timeless. She asked her neighbor if he could make a small
casket for her. She knew that he could do it for her, as it was for her pussy cat that had passed on.

Her neighbor was a tall, quiet man, originally from Mississippi. Erma called him Pa, but his name was Bish, short
for Bishop, and, of course, that he was not. She looked up into his face and asked him again. “Sure,” he said, and off
he went to make the coffin.

It did not take him very long to finish it. Erma was very pleased and asked “Pa” to put the cat in the box, saying
she would be with them momentarily. When he placed the poor creature inside the box, the cat’s eyes were wide open
and staring. The fur on its little body was standing up; it was stiff and prickly, just like a hedgehog.

Erma came down from upstairs all dressed up like a dog’s dinner. Her grey hair had been combed, and she wore a
beautifully bold T-shirt with shiny beaded lettering on it: The Cat That Got Away. Her slack were the same as always
with their shiny spots that she had worn in over many months. Her sneaker shoes matched her love that Red lipstick.

So, a few words were said over the buried cat. Erma turned to examine the outfit on “Pa’s” wife. It was black like Erma’s,
an unspoken kindness any good Oak Roader would do. They sat on her porch and sipped a glass of sherry. Erma made a toast. She was happy now that her dear lovely pussy cat had gone up to
the Cat heaven. She sat in the Cat heaven and then, the coke on her helps waited for the next episode of the Oak Roaders.

Anita King lived on Oak Road in Cleveland Heights with her husband Bishop for over 30 years. Although she now lives in an apart-
ment, she revels in her many memories of the Oak Road community, affectionately known as the Oak Roaders.

Editor’s Note: Readers are welcome and encouraged to submit neighborhood memo-
ries, or current events, of growing up and living in the Heights.

Revered Ruffing teacher retires after 38 years

Maureen Moir with her students at Ruffing Montessori.

Carol Provan

One of the most durable fixtures of Ruffing Montessori School on Fair-
mount Boulevard have been Children’s House directoress Maureen Moir, who
began her career at Ruffing in 1970 as a classroom assistant with just a year
old students – when the school was in a converted cottage, a relic from the
property’s earliest identity as the Painter Estate.

She completed the specialized Mont-
essori training in Chicago in 1970 to
become a directress. She took over in
the class in the cottage and remained there
until it was demolished in 2003 to make
way for the school’s new green facility.

“I have loved working with and be-
ing with children all my life. I can relate
to them and I understand them,” says
Maureen. The young children in her
charge have benefited from her sunny
disposition and kindness, and from her
respect for and commitment to Montes-
so as a guide to life. “Maria Montessori
had a vision of guiding a child to his or
her individual success. We help the
child go as far as he or she can go, to
experience success and be confident to
take on challenges.” Hundreds of Mau-
rene’s former students look back with
gratitude at the foundation for lifelong
learning, established in those early years of school.

Victory garden becomes urban garden in 21st century-
Plots still available

Sarah Wean

The Canterbury neighborhood commu-
nity garden began a life as a World War II Victory Garden in the early 1940’s and continues to support urban gardening efforts today.

One of three Cleveland Heights community gardens, located near the cinder path off Princeton Road near
Canterbury Elementary School, the garden has 35-40 plots and is run as a partnership between the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging, The Cayahoga County Extension Service and local vol-
unteers Carol Battle and Luella Eslick.

Carol Battle has been gardening there since the early 1980’s. “We can always use help,” she said during a recent volunteer cleanup on a soggy Saturday in late May. Senior citizens receive priority on renting a garden plot for the season, she said, and the garden is open to all residents of Cleveland Heights.

Plots are generally 10 x 50 feet and cost the grower a mere $20 per season. That cost goes toward water, hoses, and other upkeep.

Battle said the garden is a place for growing friendships and supporting com-
nunity needs. Veteran gardeners share their knowledge with newer gardeners and a number of the gardeners grow produce to donate to local food centers.

Also attending the cleanup were Shaker Road residents Charlie and Maryann Wilson. They’ve been tilling their plot since 1959. Pulling weeds and turning the earth in preparation for this season’s planting, Charlie fondly recalled being in the garden in 1943 as a student at Canterbury School and par-
ticipating in the war effort to grow local food. He’s been at it ever since. “It’s fun and it’s good exercise,” said Wilson.

Plots are available this growing season. Teams of two people may share a plot. Those interested in gardening at the Canterbury Community Garden should call Carol Battle at 321-3108.

Sarah Wies is a community volunteer.

Chicken in or chicken out?

Ralph Solonitz

[Many of you have read the online discussion about raising chickens at the Observa-
ty. Here’s Ralph Solonitz’ contribution to the discussion. Editor.]

Click cluck, bawk bawk, or mowz mowz?

I’m a dog lover. My last two lived 15 years each. Marbles and Doxy. I like the feeling of sticking my feet under my
dog’s butt on cold winter nights. Wives are
goofy for that too! My wife Linda and I miss having a pat.

Our apartment lease prohibits having a dog.

A cat?

My sister-in-law Ellen swears by them. No walking.

Then I remember, Picky eaters and hairballs. Never mind.

My grandpa Yasha had chickens, lots of them. I
spent every summer on Yasha’s chicken farm. South Jersey near the shore, fresh air and
free eggs.

Chicken why not?

I googled pet chickens and started to read.

START

Baby chickens.

Pet chickens are a joy, a bundle of love, affectionate,
and soon become your best friend, hey, with
my sarcasm.

I called all the friends I can get.

This is what I’ll need:

A cage with a heat lamp.

A dish for feeding.

A cup for water (chicks love water)

My wife loves a glass of Shiraz.

Buy chick feed, later feed and grit.

Clean its cage, and later let it run outside.

Trust it nicely June, why wouldn’t I? Young
chickens learn to trust early. Just like me!

WARNING

Uh oh. What’s this part?

Be prepared to clean up after it.

Chickens can pack hard, my wife too!

Chickens are not suitable with other pets. Ok, only child.

Charlies will crow, (these must be the males... hence the name... dust). Get the chick seamed before you buy. Sexed? Oh, find out if it’s a girl. For the eggs, yet, if your chicken is paying lots of attention to your eyes and is close to your face, move it on. Chickens will peck at eyes. I’ll keep my glances on, thank you!

When do I get to the part about the omelets? Oh, I see here. I’ll have to wait five to six months before the egg laying begins, and then

they are productive for three to four years... and they can live for 1.5 years. They may outlive me?

Maybe not. Chicken salad? Oooh, just checked my local zoning laws... Chickens are considered farm animals and forbidden... off to Giant Eagle for eggs.

Giant Eagle eggs?

Cleveland Heights resident Ralph Solonitz (artist/writer) was born in 1943 in Munich, Germany, the son of Holocaust survivors. He began doodling very early on... first in German, and a few years later in his new language English. His father gave him mo-
tivational advice... “stop your doodling, you aren’t going to amount to nutting” but his fast. Chickens like to peck at eyes… I’ll keep my glasses on, thank you!

Fast forward 35 years, thousands of dollars in therapy and he still can’t stop doodling.

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Cleveland Indians Shortstop

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What are they doing now?

Lita Gonzalez

Heights High grad has been taking “the road less traveled,” “marching to the beat of their own drum,” and “thinking outside the box” when it comes to continuing their post graduation studies. They are definitely a group that sees the world as an extended classroom. I would love to hear more from Cleveland Heights and University Heights families about what their Heights High graduates are up to now. Email me at lita@valancy.com. Here’s just a sample of what some of our recent graduates have been up to.

Class of 1999

Bayard Elfyin is a professional soccer player (goalkeeper). He developed his skills as a youth player with the Eastside Kickers, was goalie for Heights High, and was recruited to play at Ashland University. He played for the Cleveland Force, the Portland Timbers, and he’s the St. Louis Steamers, and he now plays for the New Jersey Ironmen. He also has played for the U.S.A. Team in Beach Soccer world cups in Rio de Janeiro, Costa Rica, and Mexico.

Class of 2002

Scott Muthersbaugh completed his degree at Elon University. He has been a volunteer fireman, is an EMT, and is interning as a photojournalist in Burlington, NC.

Marcie Phillips received a BFA in Ceramics and a BA in Psychology, graduating magna cum laude from Ursuline College. She is presently the manager at Phoenix Coffee on Coventry and traveled to Costa Rica last spring to study more about coffee growing.

Class of 2003

John Sharpe is graduating with an MFA in accounting from Baldwin-Wallace College. He went straight through in less than five years. He will be returning to Costa Rica in the fall to teach English at Morgan College.

Nathan Smith is at Loyola University Chicago studying law.

Ben Winger attended the country’s top orthornistry program at Cornell University and now travels the world continuing that work. He may be in Peru right now.

Sam Petrey is at Depaul University in Chicago as a violin performance major.

Chris Pekek graduated from University of Michigan Ross School of Business and has a job with Intel.

REIN LAMBRICHT and SABRINA KALOUNI both graduated from Case Western Reserve University and are now in medical school.

Zev Valancy graduated as a drama major from Northwestern University. He is living in Chicago and has been in several local theater productions there.

Katie Vail graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a degree in environmental architecture.

ERICA JONES was chosen for a special Masters Program Accounting at Miami University because of her outstanding undergraduate performance.

Peter Eckenrode graduated from Seton Hall University with a degree in sports management. He worked for the Lake Erie Monsters this winter and is the part time mascot for the Lake County Captains this spring.

Class of 2004

Elisabeth Pardee is graduating cum laude in June with a double major from Kalamazoo College. She plans on going back to Japan with the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program next year. JET is a competitive program run by a collaboration of Japanese ministries and takes about 4,000 people per year from 41 countries around the world. She spent her junior year at Doshisha University in Kyoto.

Class of 2005

Jon Hall is a junior at Miami University. He is a math major and a supplemental instructor for freshman calculus students.

Kelley Phillips is a junior at Marymount Manhattan College in New York City. A studio art major, she just completed a semester abroad in Florence, Italy.

Mark Muthersbaugh is studying abroad in Tanzania now. He will be a senior at Oberlin College next year and will continue swimming on the varsity team.

Class of 2007

Rhonda Register was elected Senator for the College of the Arts in the Undergraduate Student Government at Ohio State University.

Susan Wherely is at Harvard University and will be going to Africa this summer.

Noah Rosenberg-Szubinski is in California designing websites.

Lisa Gonzalez, a long time community volunteer and an aspiring writer, artist and gardener, lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband Mark. Both her daughters are Heights High graduates.

Ruth DeGolia

The global problem-solving skills of a Cleveland Heights native were featured on a nationally syndicated television show April 25. Ruth DeGolia was featured on the “Tyra Banks Show” for starting the company “Mercado Global,” a trail-blazing fair trade organization. Through her company she helps women artisans in Latin America by selling their hand-made fashion products. The sales from Mercado Global provide income to the artisans, many of whom are widows.

DeGolia is most proud of the university community that has been able to send back to Guatemala. “It is amazing what people can accomplish,” DeGolia said. Her organization has doubled its sales each year and provided internships to send 237 children to school.

DeGolia credits her experience growing up in Cleveland Heights and attending Heights High. “Growing up in a diverse community taught me how to respect and interact with a range of people. The skills I gained at Heights High help me successfully engage and partner with people ranging from fashion designers, highland artisans who can neither read nor write, corporate executives, and indigenous leaders. Our success at building such an innovative and powerful organization is based on our ability to develop this range of partnerships.”

In high school DeGolia was the editor-in-chief of the Black and Gold student newspaper. She says that her newspaper teacher, Tim Casany, was her biggest influence at Heights High. “He gave me a reason to be challenged,” DeGolia said.

“When she came to an obstacle, she found a solution for it,” Casany said, noting that DeGolia was very enthusiastic and cared a lot about people. “I was blessed to have her as a student.”

After graduating from Heights High in 2000, she spent 14 months in international studies at Yale University, where came up with the idea of Mercado Global. “We have found a way to harness the power of the markets to promote good around the world. We are all about women helping women, and looking good in the process!”

Phil Torres is a graduating senior at Cleveland Heights High School. He will study journalism at Bowling Green State University.

Garity recognized as National Model School

Michael Dougherty

Garity Professional Development School was named a Model School by the International Center for Leadership in Education based on its innovative approaches and student achievement. It is one of eight elementary schools nationwide to be selected. “This is a tremendous achievement for our students, our staff and families,” Principal Sherry Miller said. “We operate under the core belief that every student belongs to every adult in the building, and we strive to make education rigorous and relevant while inspiring the joy of learning.”

Principal Miller, math program specialist Stephanie Myers, and the 3rd grade Garity teaching team will present Garity’s success at the 2008 Model Schools Conference, the nation’s premier conference on K-12 education reform, in Orlando, Florida this June.

In partnership with John Carroll University, Garity’s focus on becoming a Professional Development School has lead to interdisciplinary instruction that centers on student-teacher cohorts, joint planning, faculty collaboration, and undergraduate and graduate learning. A JCU professor works on-site at Garity one day a week to support the student-teachers’ efforts. The student-teachers attend three on-site college classes charging one work hour mirrors allowing them to observe Garity teachers working directly with the children.

Garity uses ongoing data collection to inform instructional efforts and achieve important short-term student successes. According to Miller, students have grown in their understanding of their progress through the data. The Soaring Stars Positive Behavior Program provides character education for the children. Students share examples from our own character education being studied and provide situations, problem solving, and vocabulary work surrounding these concepts. Parents are involved regularly through newsletters and a designated bulletin board depicting the traits, student examples of these behaviors, and vocabulary meanings connected to the concepts.

Staff members participate in a mentoring program which provides adult “buddies” to each student. Staff and students meet weekly to talk, play a game, work on academics, or share a model school hobby. This provides strong relationships between members of the school community who may not otherwise have the opportunity to interact with the children.

The Garity campus also houses the CH-UH City School District’s Early Childhood Center, which recently earned accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the preeminent standard of excellence in preschools.

Michael Dougherty is the Coordinator of Communications for the Cleveland Heights – University Heights City School District.
Putting the pieces together
Lisa Gonzalez
Mix together world history, geometry, technology and art. Combine with creative, energetic freshmen. Add two exceptional teachers and gently stir in the experience of a ceramic artist. For students in the Mosaic Experience, one of the five small schools at Heights High, this was the perfect educational recipe. Under the guidance of social studies teacher John Stevens, math teacher Al De Gennaro, and ceramic artist George Woeidke, the 9th grade students in world history and geometry classes spent two weeks researching, designing and building the mosaic mural that hangs outside the Mosaic Experience office.

“Student-generated ideas shape our school,” said Principal Nick Petty. “Teachers become guides in helping students bring a wide range of experiences.” Mosaic staff emphasize relationship building. “The grant we received from the Jennings Foundation allowed us to marry the geometry and world history curriculums, infusing the learning experience with art and technology in a way that made it fun. The mural is a visual expression of what the students learned.”

Five of the project workers, LaTonya Bouldin, Jonathan Tarnay, Christopher Rutherford, David Schellenberg, and Ajia Mason, explained that the teachers gave them parameters: the final piece had to include a world map, for example. In math classes the students learned how to include tessellations in their design to fit the mosaic pieces together. Tessellations are formed when a shape is copied over and over again, covering a plane without any spaces, gaps or overlaps. They then met with artist Woeidke who showed them examples of his work.

The students initially planned to base the world map on the GDP of each country, but the design became too cluttered. They decided instead to use population as the sole factor for determining the size of the countries. Geometry teacher De Gennaro recalls: “Students had to take what they were learning in class and apply those concepts to the design. They had to fit corners, shapes and rotations, the mechanics of how to pieces fit together. De Gennaro would love to find more artists to work on collaborative projects. ‘Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could find a glass blower willing to work with students to build a Galileo Thermometer or an artist to build a unique working sundial? It’s all about marrying the core subjects with technology and art to make these concepts come alive.”

“We learn all these things in school,” said David Schellenberg. “Subconsciously we know how things work, but to actually work on this project and see it in front of us, it changed how we view the world.”

“And,” Jonathan Tarnay added, “it makes it so much easier to find the Mosaic office.”

Lisa Gonzalez, a longtime community volunteer and an aspiring writer, artist and gardener, lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband, Mark. Both her daughters are Heights High graduates.

Photo caption: Mosaic project workers. From left to right, David Schellenberg, LaTonya Bouldin, Ajia Mason, Christopher Rutherford and Jonathan Tarnay.

New Montessori High School holds open house
Jean Buchanan
Montessori High School at University Circle will host prospective students and parents at an admissions open house on Saturday, June 21. The first high school of its kind in Northeast Ohio, MHS will open this Fall with 45 students in grades nine through eleven.

The program begins at the Cleveland Botanical Garden, 10923 Magnolia Drive. Prospective students will meet faculty and staff, hear a presentation on the new school and the Montessori learning and teaching methods, and meet representatives from the program’s University Circle “partner institutions,” the Natural History Museum, the Cleveland Institute of Music, Western Reserve Historical Society, and the Cleveland Botanical Gardens. Each institution will play a key role in the students’ education and provide staging areas for student study and work. The MHS campus consists of two historical mansions, a new science laboratory and greenhouse, student residence, and campus green.

To reserve a place on the tour call 421-3033, or email the admissions office at jeanbuchanan@montessorihigh-school.org.

Jean Buchanan is director of institutional advancement at the Montessori High School at University Circle and lives in Cleveland Heights.

Middle school news from Reaching Heights
Patrick Mullon
At Reaching Heights, we celebrate the great work going on in our schools. Our neighborhood newsletters focus on each elementary school and include news from our three middle schools. Fuller versions of these stories can be found online at reachingheights.org/news/newsletters/. Patrick Mullon is executive director of Reaching Heights.

Happy to be Home: “I am an Monticello because I wanted to come home,” said Sheldon Smith, Monticello Middle School’s first-year principal. “I graduated from Heights High. I was looking to come back to the CH-UH district and make a difference in the lives of our young people.” He’s excited with the district’s emphasis on developing teachers and finds the staff at Monticello eager to move students forward. He’s looking forward to the One To One Learning initiative, as part of which Monticello students will receive laptop computers next fall. Before coming to Monticello, Mr. Smith was a teacher and principal in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. He is a graduate of Morehouse College and has an MBA from Clark Atlanta University and an education certificate from Cleveland State University. He has two children who attend CH-UH schools, Joy Henderson and Reaching Heights assistant director.

Conferences star students: As a mother of four, I’ve attended many parent-teacher conferences. This year, my oldest child is at Roxboro Montessori Middle School and I attended my first conference with the Extreme Team, one of two sixth-grade teaching teams. In the past, this was the perfect educational recipe. The original window openings are covered with 1970s black windows. We found the new wall where students studied times in 1974 and looked at the 1974 addition. We learned a lot just by looking at the building. We had a good time having history detectives! It was fun to learn about the history of Noel School. People inside the school and the neighborhood around it.

Authors: Charlie, Tala, K’vaughn and Lucilla are third graders in Mr. Sustar’s class at Noble Elementary School have become history detectives. We found out about the history of Noble School and our neighborhood. First, we split into research groups and then we looked through history books. We also looked at photographs, an old school yearbook and maps. Noble parent Mazie Adams helped us with this project. We interviewed a real-life detective, Mrs. Krause from the O’Donnell, who is the preservationist for the city of Cleveland Heights. Then we went on a walk around the school and down Noble Road to visit the places we learned about.

Our research group studied the history of the Noble school buildings. We learned about the 1876 one-room school building, the 1930 school designed by Harlen E. Shinmin, and the current school built in 1922. As more people moved to Cleveland Heights, they had to make the school building bigger and bigger.

We went outside to “read” the building and discovered many things: new walls and old walls (the bricks are darker on the old walls and there are also sandstone parts). The original window openings are covered with 1970s black windows. We found the new wall where students studied times in 1974 and looked at the 1974 addition. We learned a lot just by looking at the building. We had a good time having history detectives! It was fun to learn about the history of Noel School. People inside the school and the neighborhood around it.
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