Escrow waivers get review

In January, a story by Channel 3’s investigative reporter Tom Meyer indicated that Cleveland Heights Housing Commission Rick Wagner, at the urging of the FBI, may have exacerbated the impact of an alleged mortgage scam on Cleveland Heights. Specifically, Meyer’s report said Wagner waived escrow requirements to repair housing violations, allowing homes to change hands before repairs were made.

In the context of the alleged mortgage fraud—the subject of a 266-page indictment announced last August—escrow waivers allowed the homes to sell faster, ultimately ending up in the hands of unqualified buyers, and later to fall into foreclosure or abandonment.

After the story broke, City Manager Robert Downey asked Cleveland Heights Law Director John Gibbon to review the matter and report on the city’s role in the FBI investigation and its impact on the city.

Meanwhile, an independent review of escrow waivers granted in Cleveland Heights paints a less alarming picture than the one portrayed in the Channel 3 report. It revealed that many of the homes involved in the alleged fraud needed extensive repair before coming into the hands of those named in the indictment, and that they received repairs significantly faster than other homes in similar circumstances.

The review also revealed a potential lack of oversight in the city’s strategy to maintain its housing stock. While the procedure by which escrow waivers are granted is routine and publicly known, it is also undocumented and perhaps undersupervised. It is also unclear whether the policy actually helps to effect repairs.

Under terms of a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, the city provided documents for approximately 250 instances in which escrow was waived between 2006 and 2008. While a review of these documents addressed some of the questions raised by Meyer’s report (see below), it left many others still unanswered.

Did escrow waivers on properties involved in the alleged scam harm the city’s housing stock in any way?

Probably not. There were approximately 1,500 mortgage foreclosures in Cleveland Heights from 2006–2008, according to a variety of real estate sources. The Channel 3 report indicated there were 24 instances during the same period in which escrow waivers were given to sellers who were subsequently indicted in the alleged conspiracy, representing, at most, 1.5 percent of foreclosed properties.

A dozen of these properties were purchased directly by Uri Gofman, the accused ringleader of the alleged fraud, or by one of his companies. Among these, the required escrow amount

Remembering Andrea Robinson

Andrea “Rea” Robinson lived a short life, but she made a difference in that time.

The computers distributed to approximately 1,500 students in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District have the same anti-theft capabilities used by the Lower Merion School District (Ardmore, Penn.) to spy on students.

According to Coordinator of Communications Angee Shaker, however, the district has never used this feature and has strict procedures in place if it is ever needed.

Shaker’s statement is in response to questions that arose after parents of a 18-year-old sued the Lower Merion

HERE’S HELP FOR HOME REMODELING

Rebecca Stager

Perhaps you’re wondering, where to get advice on remodeling a kitchen or making an older home more energy efficient. Try the Home Remodeling Fair on March 20 sponsored by the Home Repair Resource Center. The event will be held at the Lee Road Library. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.; presentations begin at 10 and end at 2:30.

Contractors, product suppliers, architects and other experts will share their knowledge. Participants can go to workshops, ask questions at advice tables and even meet with an architect for a free 25-minute consultation. Register for “Ask an Architect” by calling 216-381-6100 beginning March 1. Time slots fill quickly.

Presentations include kitchen and bathroom remodeling, roof replacement, basement waterproofing, new windows, garage replacement and new heating systems. On these and other big-ticket projects it is important to make good decisions on whom to hire for the work and selecting the right products.

Presenters also will focus on conserving resources, such as retrofitting for local, shop local

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FREE TAKE ONE

Volume 3
Number 3
March 2, 2010

15 Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park clean up.

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10 Noble Elementary, talking plus thinking equals learning.

12 Wiley Challenge Choir.

15 Monticello basketball champs.

INSIDE

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City records indicate the house at 1610 S. Taylor Road, owned by one of Uri Gofman’s management companies, received an escrow waiver on $497,250 of Class A housing violations, of which 65 percent remain unrepaired while Gofman’s assets are frozen.

of the Heights High swim team started a Facebook group. In less than 48 hours, it had over 1,000 members.

“Rea just had a great personality and was a lot of fun to be around. She brought a lot of energy and passion to her team,” said Terry Saylor, Rea’s former lacrosse coach. “She was bright and had great goals. She had a great future ahead of her, and that’s what makes something like this so sad. Rea provided a lot of leadership to the team.”

The night after the team got the news, they spent their practice talking about Rea and the impact she had on the team. Her uniform number, 9, will be retired from the Cleveland Heights lacrosse team—the first time they have retired a number.

“She was the best roommate anyone continued on page 8
Community banks and credit unions are best for local businesses

Jim Simpson

The Heights is Greater Cleveland’s best asset—next to the lake, of course. The Heights has fantastic restaurants and it’s just up the hill from nationally recognized health care facilities. It has viable local merchant districts, with nice homes, and is adjacent to the cultural icons of University Circle, and it’s inhabited by the most diverse demographic of Northeast Ohio. We should do more than celebrate this community; we should fiercely protect and grow the Heights as innovatively, efficiently and aggressively as possible.

I propose that the community consider a community-wide effort to secure what’s here, and to establish programs that move as much commerce as possible through our local merchants, restaurants, retailers, service providers and employers, utilizing banks and credit unions to provide simple rewards and “give backs” that also provide economic relief to residents and nonprofits.

National increases in consumer and credit card transaction costs, fees and interest rates prefer few solutions to consumers focused on saving money and reducing spending. The ongoing “siphoning off” of local dollars by national banks, credit card issuers, mortgage companies, and the loss of the circulation of those local dollars by our local banks succumb to the same fate as many local retail stores.

First, we can join the “Move Your Money” campaign by moving our deposits and merchant transactions to our local (for nonprofit) community banks and credit unions that historically are the best source of funding for local businesses.

Second, we can use debit cards instead of credit whenever possible. Debit cards reduce debt, many now offer the same—or greater—“rewards” as credit cards, and they’re almost always issued by a local financial institution. After all, if someone is going to benefit from the merchant’s overhead costs (i.e. card sale fees), why not the banks and credit unions that are supporting our community? Besides, your local merchant pays much less for debit than credit card transactions.

Third, our community retail, restaurant and service sector could simply request to more fully utilize their existing point-of-sale terminals, to provide a small percentage of a completed sale back to the consumer as an incentive to think—and shop—local, first. Such programs are being heavily pushed by hundreds of national, online retailers as rewards, so why not capture these opportunities for our brick and mortar merchants?

Finally, ask your local bank, credit union, favorite auto repair shop or restaurant to consider participating in this effort. If you’re looking for a local financial institution, local credit unions include Cardinal Community, Century Federal, the Cleveland Heights Teachers Credit Union, Sts. Margaret & Gregory Credit Union and Steel Valley Credit Union. Community banks in the area are Parkview Federal and Third Federal Savings bank.

Jim Simpson is a Heights area resident and marketing manager for debitdeal.com.

Forest Hill Park needs our help

Elisa Johnson

Calling all friends of Forest Hill Park: your favorite place to (check one) walk, cycle, run or hang out with (check one) your boyfriend, girlfriend, children or dog, needs your help.

Forest Hill Park means much to many people. With its huge old-growth oaks, large open meadows, and steep wooded ravines, it is a natural treasure, an old-world deer park transplanted into the middle of an American city: it is a place where dogs and children can romp, golfers can practice golfing in the rough, and old folks can stroll, nodding amiably as they pass. It is a place for all peoples and ethnicities, the rich and the not so rich, the immigrant and the native, the frail and the fit.

It is a place where one may see a fox or coyote, converse with crows, watch children squealing over baby raccoons grabbing in the ball field, be surprised by the flight of a flying squirrel, or see a 10-point buck in the fall with the evening sun shining red on his antlers, his velvet hanging in tatters.

But our favorite park has many problems. They are mostly problems of age and benign neglect. Some of these problems, like the collapsing retaining walls around Lake Brewster, are sizable projects for which outside funding must be found. But other problems are within the scope of willing helpers. Maybe you.

When the park was established, the woods and the oaks were young, growing and healthy. Today those oaks have become massive old trees. Many suffer from disease and fungus. Many have lost whole limbs, and some of the park’s big trees have died and fallen. There is a big dead oak by the footbridge, for example, which will require serious tree removal equipment to safely bring down. In the meantime, it is a threat to pedestrians walking on the path beneath it.

The park has lost 15 trees in the last year on the East Cleveland side alone. The Cleveland Heights section also has dead and dying trees. Right now the emphasis is on saving the big oaks in the Great Meadow. Foresters believe feeding the oaks would make them more resistant to disease.

Can you help feed a tree? For more information on how you can get involved, visit The East Cleveland Parks Association at www.excparks.org.

Elisa Johnson is a Cleveland Heights resident, a landscape architect and a member of the East Cleveland Parks Association.
Environmental change starts at the curb

Tobias Ritner

Tuesday is my least favorite day in Cleveland Heights because it is supposed to trash, but I detest the remnants left over each week from our failed waste and recycling programs. I walk my dog several times a week, and Tuesdays are frustrating. Instead of enjoying the walk through my beautiful neighborhood, I maneuver a gauntlet of chicken bones, pizza boxes, candy wrappers and unknown recyclables and food remnants, hoping my dog doesn’t digest any of this dangerous smorgasbord.

Take, for instance, my walk just a few weeks back. In a three-house stretch I encountered two chicken bones, a spilled glue container, an open takeout box and its contents, dozens of pieces of paper and plastic. Fortunately, thanks to some quick redirection, my dog didn’t snack on these unwanted treats.

Anecdotes aside, Cleveland Heights needs to reexamine its waste and recycling programs. Our community represents much that is creative and innovative in government, yet we fall short in this area. Our trash collection is unsanitary, unsafe and downright barbaric. Cleveland Heights should project an image of safety and sanitation. Instead, on trash nights we project an image of filth. Each person’s individual impact. Residents are given choices on trash removal is a source of pride, and the community is able to take on a better system for waste recycling. We need to give businesses, community should embrace a citywide public/private model of waste removal.

Cleveland Heights could do all of this—it must begin at City Hall. Our community should embrace a citywide strategy to reduce waste and increase recycling. We need to give businesses, particularly our restaurants, incentives to use recyclable materials. We also need to mandate trash removal and limit the amount of garbage that can be placed on the curb each week.

These measures are easy to implement but require political will and personal fortitude. While not everyone will embrace these changes, our creative citizenry in Cleveland Heights should strongly support this type of bold move.

Toby Ritner is a member of the FutureHeights board of directors and ran for Cleveland Heights City Council in 2009.

In support of local businesses

Bob Rosaehaus

One reason FutureHeights launched the Heights Observer was to encourage community dialogue and engagement among Heights residents—engagement with the local government, community and businesses. Another reason was to serve those businesses.

The local commercial base is a big part of what gives the Heights its unique character. By helping those businesses thrive, the thinking goes, FutureHeights helps maintain the community’s charm.

There’s also an economic justification. A series of well-known urban planning studies have demonstrated that money spent at local merchants is worth more to a community than money spent at national chains.

In one such study, the strategic planning firm Civic Economics calculated that for every $100 spent at a local business in Chicago’s Andersonville neighborhood, $68 recirculated in the local economy—as compared with just $43 for money spent at a chain store in the same neighborhood.

Our merchants generously support local causes, respect their customers, and provide goods and services national chains do not. They add variety to streetscapes, pay local taxes and provide jobs. They are our friends and neighbors. Every time we buy from a local merchant, we enrich our community and ourselves.

The Heights Observer gives these businesses an easy and cost-effective way in which to market themselves; and the newspaper thrives on the money businesses spend to do so. Ten local businesses advertised in the first issue of the Observer, 13 months ago. We currently average 45 advertisers per issue—and that number is still growing. The Observer is pleased to have the support of these businesses, and is equally pleased for the opportunity to support them.

We also want to thank the businesses that support us by serving as distribution points for the newspaper. Many are advertisers, but with more than 200 places where you can pick up the Observer, most of them aren’t . . . yet.

For a full list of Observer distribution points, go to www.HeightsObserver.org and click on the “About Us” link.

Please join me in thanking our local merchants for doing what they do so well. I hope, too, that you’ll join me in giving them the recognition whenever you make a purchase.

Bob Rosaehaus, chairman of the newspaper’s Advisory Committee and a member of the FutureHeights board, writes this monthly column to provide transparency about the Heights Observer. Send your comments and questions to bob@obernbaum.net.

You can write for the Heights Observer by registering at the Member Center at http://heightsobserver.org/members.

REASON CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

could ask for,” said Rea’s OU roommate, Nikki Lamendola. “We got along great, we never got into a fight. We had so many great times together and my only sadness is that it was cut too way short.”

At Rea’s wake on Feb. 22, Heights High graduates came from out of town to pay their respects. OU bound students to Cleveland. Faculty and current students from Heights High also attended. The service was held on the Monday at St. Ann Church, where current members and alumni of the Heights choir sang several songs in tribute. Her sisters, Bailee and Stephanie, read the poem “I carry your heart with me” by e.e. cummings and that “Rea played many roles in life: a daughter, a sister, a friend, a girlfriend and Auntie RaRa. But now, she takes on a new role: a guardian angel.”

Robertson’s time on earth was short, but it was fully lived. She had a very contagious smile and laugh. She looked for the best in everyone, and she knew how to make anyone feel good.

For those who knew Andrea Robertson, there were many wonderful memories, and those won’t be forgotten anytime soon.

Simon Quarrell is an 2009 graduate of Cleveland Heights High School and it studying journalism at Kent State University.

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Cleveland Heights City Council
Meeting highlights

JANUARY 19, 2010
Vice Mayor Phyllis Evans excused.

Step It Up concerns
About 12 members of Step It Up Cleveland Heights were present and Susan Kaiser, of Compton Road, and Mark Chop, of Edgewater Road, spoke on behalf of this “informed group of residents who got together last summer to think about ways we could have a positive impact on our city and its future.” Kaiser urged council to address five core concerns: 1) environmental and financial sustainability, 2) close and supportive relationships with the public schools, 3) a plan for the community’s future, 4) collabora- tive and creative approaches to the housing foreclose crisis, and 5) engaging and valuing a diverse community. Chupp promised that the group would continue to brainstorm ideas and partner with council and local nonprofit organizations.

Housing amendments to city code
Council amended the city code to permit the city manager to establish regulations pertaining to an expedited process for selecting companies for the demolition of homes under the Neighbor- hood Stabilization Program without formal bid- ding procedures. (The current process pertains to the selection of contractors for renovation work; this legislation enables similar rules for the selection of contractors for renovation work; this legislation enables similar rules for the selection of contractors for renovation work.)

Oakwood property
Fran Meach, of Lynn Park Road, representing the Oakwood Country Club property would become a public green space. The organization has a Web site: www. oakwood.org and a Facebook page, “Help Save 144 acres of Green Space in South Euclid- Cleveland Heights.”

Houses purchased by city
The city has purchased three properties, 1035 Helmdale Rd., 3191 Sycamore Rd., and 950 Dresden Rd., which are located in Neighborhood Stabilization Program priority target areas, for the purpose of demolition or rehabilitation and eventual resale.

Funds for fair housing study
Council approved the reprogramming and real- location of $1,500 in Community Development Block Grant funds in order to undertake an analysis of impediments to Fair Housing Choice Study.

Doan Brook Watershed expenses
Council authorized an agreement with the non- profit Doan Brook Watershed Partnership for partial funding, in the amount of $18,000, all of the organization’s operating expenses. Council Member Bonnie Caplan is now the council rep- resentative to this organization.

Police car purchase
The city police department will purchase 9 new Ford Crown Victorias from Statewide Ford Lin- coln Mercury through the Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing Program. The agreement passed by council limits the total cost to no more than $215,000, which represents most of the police department’s capital budget for the year.

Recycling importance
Council members Bonnie Caplan and Ken- nth Montlock spoke about the importance of recycling. Montlock noted that recycling produced income for the city of about $25 per ton. Landfill costs are about $35 per ton. The revenues from recycling and the savings from not sending everything to the landfill are critical to the city’s budget.

LWV observer: Katherine Solander

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United States Census 2010
Sarah Woom
Answering 10 simple questions this month can make all the difference for economically stressed Cleveland Heights.

With one of the shortest ques- tionnaires in history, the 2010 Census, arriving on your doorstep soon, asks for name, gender, age, race, ethnicity, relationship and whether you own or rent your home. It takes only about 10 minutes for the average household to complete.

Pop it in the mail by National Cens- sus Day on April 1, and you’ve done an easy and important civic duty. Every- thing from infrastructure development to community food bank assistance to senior services is influenced by national census data. Locally, the census helps Cleveland Heights maintain critical Community Development Block Grant programming for low and moderate income neighborhoods, including assis-

tance to the Heights Parent Center and Home Repair Resource Center, among others.

Responses to the 2010 Census ques- tionnaire are required by law and all are strictly confidential.

Do not speak English? Forms are available in many languages. Don’t have a form? Pick one up in many locations around town. Don’t have a permanent address? You will be counted where you live and sleep most of the time. Ques- tion? Call the Telephone Questionnaire Assistance center at 1-866-872-6868 or visit www.2010census.gov.

Sarah Woom is a community volunteer.

1841 Waverly Ctr Rd. www.class1pavers.com

Full and accurate census count important to city’s bottom line

LWV observer: Katherine Solander

Space restrictions sometimes require the deletion of some proceedings. For more complete summaries view online postings at www.heightsobserver.org.

These meeting summaries are abstracted from LWV observers’ written reports. The summaries have been edited and prepared by hon. Marilyn McDermott, and Marilyn Barnes. To receive e-mail postings of full reports, send an e-mail to observer@216gmail.com or join through Google groups using “lhwv observer reports” as a search phrase.

These reports contain member ob- servation and selected highlights of public meetings and are not members of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribu-
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www.heightsobserver.org

Support your Local Businesses!
University Heights City Council
Meeting highlights

SPECIAL MEETING—JANUARY 11, 2010
All council members were present.

Safety director’s position

This meeting was held specifically for the purpose of discussing the position of the mayor serving also as safety director. The mayor receives a salary of $33,750 per year, and the safety director receives a salary of $36,750.

Councilman Frank Consoletti asked for the discussion to take place in executive session because it was a personnel matter, but Mayor Susan Infeld requested a public question in light of Councilwoman Stull’s request for greater transparency, and out of respect for the residents who were in attendance. Acting Law Director Dennis A. Hever stated that according to the city’s ordinances, if the employee in question requests a public discussion then the discussion must be public.

[The details of council’s discussion can be found in the online version of this report at www.heightsobserver.org.]

LWV observer: Wendy Deuring.

JANUARY 19, 2010

Haiti assistance

Sarah Wilder of Meadowbrook Road asked that city employees who were in attendance. Acting Law Director Dennis A. Hever stated that according to the city’s ordinances, if the employee in question requests a public discussion then the discussion must be public.

[The details of council’s discussion can be found in the online version of this report at www.heightsobserver.org.]

LWV observer: Wendy Deuring.

Bob Rosenbaum is a Cleveland Heights resident and member of the FutureHeights board of trustees.

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Future of UH in hands of few

Anita Kazarian

When is city council taking our town, UH residents wondered after sitting in a packed council chamber to watch a 47-slide presentation by the Northeast Ohio Sourc- ing Office on Jan. 19. The slide show reportedly recommended that the city privatize, outsource or collaborate with other cities for most of the services it provides, including fire department, garbage pick-up, snow/leaf removal, housing inspection and many others.

Council awarded a $25,000 contract to NEOSO to identify the services. According to their Web site, NEOSO is “an extension of your procurement team. We develop best-in-class contracts for a wide range of products and services in compliance with state-mandated procurement guidelines.”

Councilman Kevin Patrick Murphy had contacted David Akers, NEOSO founder, in July 2008 to discuss a study Elise Holt, principal of Strategic Gear, completed with Akers in September 2008 to propose and conduct the study that was awarded to them in January 2009, with then Vice-Mayor Adele Zelander casting the tie-breaking vote. This was NEOSO’s first such study.

At the Jan. 19 meeting, Holt told the audience that University Heights “is not a city in crisis,” but he believed the city might save $75,000 to $2 million with the NEOSO plan. Both Akers and Holt acknowledged the city’s extensive current collaborations, over 90, with local and regional organizations which contributes to its fiscal stability.

In 2008, council received two competing bids. The losing bid was proposed by the Center for Public Management at Cleveland State University’s Levin College of Urban Af- fairs. It was to study the efficiency of the overall operations of departments and the potential for reducing costs. It included an analysis of financial trends including revenue, expenditures, capi- tal assets and debt position.

Residents had questions after the slide show: How did they get the $75,000 to $2 million figures? How many city employees will be left in city hall—half, less than half? Where’s the written report—a narrative with facts and conclusions? There was none. Why was a buying office get this contract, don’t they do this for free to get jobs?

Although council members and residents had requested a copy of the report in advance, NEOSO failed to provide it. Thus, Akers is returning on Feb. 23 to answer questions.

We know council works hard to improve our city, but residents are confused as to how council is trying to accomplish this—by providing better services or by preparing the city for merger or regionalization.

University Heights is fortunate to have citizens who are actively en- gaged in city government. Council and residents need information, facts and documentation, and agreement before major changes are made. If council wants the support of residents, it needs to articulate where it wants to take the city and why. Perhaps col- laboration should begin at home.

Send your comments and suggestions for future topics to Anita Kazarian at Anita-Kazarian@gmail.com.
January 25, 2010

Choose to Read Ohio grant

The board accepted the Choose to Read Ohio grant in partnership with the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District in the amount of $5,211, with a local match of $1,736. One of the two books featured, You Remind Me of Me, by Cleveland Heights author Dan Chao. Activities will take place in the spring and will include author visits.

Balanced Scorecard strategic plan

Deputy Director Catherine Hablak-Ausperk presented progress on the Balanced Scorecard strategic plan. Included are programming plans with both the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and the Malta Museum. The new computer gallery opened on Jan. 19.

Board President Billington’s first report

Billington began by thanking trustees and staff for the time and effort they give to the library system. He especially thanked the staff for its commitment to provide more service with a smaller budget. He stated that the board should be neither a rubber stamp nor a micromanager. He presented a list of 15 goals that he would like to see accomplished this year, with no particular priority. The list included:

• Understanding how the selection process for the collection works and assuring that it reflected the needs of the community.
• Coordinating the Coventry School building site development with the Music Settlement address parking and program opportunities.
• Evaluating Sunday hours.
• Monitoring finances with a view to being prepared for whatever may happen in 2011.
• Strengthening children’s services staff and programs with increased outreach to any underserved population.

Friends of the Library

About a dozen volunteers meet twice weekly to sort donated materials. The upcoming book sale at the University Heights Library will be Feb. 18–20.

The library has requested $26,000 from the group for various purposes during the 2010 budget year. Director Levin talked about the possibility of having another literary fest at Nighttown similar to last October’s, especially because many area authors didn’t get to read.

All-staff meeting awards

A 25-year pin was presented to Becky Katzenmeyer of Adult Services. Gold Star winners were Becky Katzenmeyer, Ben Gulyas, Chuck Collins, Darla Arnold, Hazel Drake, John Fichette, Serena Olson and Susan Black. Judy Russo was the Defil Fabian Award Winner, and Alice Lina was the Gertrude Kleiner Award Winner.

LWV observer, Anne S. McFarland

Space restrictions sometimes require the deletion of some proceedings. For more complete summaries, view online postings at www.heightsobserver.org.

See disclaimer on page 4.
CH-UH Board of Education
Meeting highlights

WORK SESSION: JANUARY 12, 2010
All board members present.

Extension of the elementary school day
Superintendent Huwer explained the need for more instructional time in the elementary schools, and how the district compared with other school districts. According to the superintendent, his plan to extend the student day until 3:30 p.m. (except for Tuesday) could be done within the contract with the teachers’ union.

Both Tom Schmida, intern assistant superintendent, and Sally Levine, director of elementary education, spoke about new state standards and the need for more instructional time. The present elementary schedule has 1,130 minutes a week in core subjects (language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies). The extension would add 60 minutes.

Tom Schmida, president of the teachers’ union, said that the elementary teachers see the need for more instructional time, but also the need for the planning time that the change would drop. The union’s position is that the extension is part of the terms and conditions of employment and should be discussed with the union. Schmida said he is willing to collaborate with the superintendent. The survey of the teachers had some good ideas for adding instructional time that were different from the superintendent’s plan. The school board directed Superintendent Huwer and Schmida to collaborate and come back with a plan before April. The change would take place for the 2010-2011 school year.

Angee Shaker, coordinator of communication and community engagement, presented the results of a parent survey, which showed that the majority wanted the change to start at the beginning of second semester, Jan. 25, 2010.

Stephen Shergalis, director of business services, discussed the changes in the bus routes. Helpful McDaniell, director of human relations, said the change would increase cost because it would add a half hour to the aides’ schedule. However, the after school program’s cost to parents would decrease.

Eight-period day at the high school
The administration and the teachers’ union have to work on a plan for an 8-period day at the high school that would give students more flexibility in taking classes.

LWV observer: Adele Cohn.

JANUARY 19, 2010
Eight-period high school day
Marc Engloglia, principal of Legacy School, spoke about the process of developing schedules so that students, counselors, teachers and principal were in alignment. Jane Simeri, a teacher in the Renaissance School, spoke about how intervention within the school day should be developed for the 72 percent of students who received a D or F in their first semester 2008 report card. The union was consulted for a solution and three proposals were given, but not acted on.

Karen Kastor, a teacher in the Legacy School, spoke about extending the school day for Educational Options for Success (EOS). It is a flexible school with teacher core planning time, where every 9th- and 10th-grade teacher has the same schedule. Students would have an intervention period where teachers would provide help.

Marc Aden, principal of REAL School, spoke about the comprehensive team of schedulers who will work to meet the students’ needs.

Board members asked when the electives and AP classes were to be scheduled. The goal for this extended day would be to increase 9th- and 10th-graders’ GPAs. The proposal for the 8-period day was tabled because the union had filed a grievance.

LWV observer: Jillian House.

FEBRUARY 2, 2010
Eight-period school day
Tom Schmida, president of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, spoke about the change to an 8-period day at the high school. He stated the union was at step two of the grievance process, but was willing to waive the timeline. He said, although the union was willing to accept some changes, there were too many unknowns and he would work with the superintendent.

The board approved the new high school courses and the 8-period day at the high school.

Virtual summit for African-American males to close achievement gap
David Peake, a counselor at Ransom Middle School, presented plans for a virtual summit of African-American males. He felt this would change attitudes and help close the achievement gap.

Letter in the Sun Press
Nancy Popper, school board president, commented on a letter to the editor in the Sun Press, and asked that writers come and visit the schools before commenting on them. She thanked the people who wrote in response to the negative letter.

State of the Schools address
The State of the Schools address will be Thursday, Feb. 4 in the Social Room at the high school. It can also be viewed on the district’s TV station, channel 22.

LWV observer: Adele Cohn.

Space restrictions sometimes require the deletion of some proceedings. For more complete summaries view online postings at www.heightsobserver.org.

See disclaimer on page 4.

Heights High expands school day

Angee Shaker

Cleveland Heights High School is expanding its school day to increase instructional time for students. This change takes effect in August, at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year. The new school day will last from 8:25 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Currently, the Heights High school day is seven periods long, with an optional 5th-period slot that was available for elective courses. Students would have an intervention period where teachers would provide help.

This was clear when four of Riley’s students were at the Smartboard, an interactive white board. Students took turns reading paragraphs and then, as a group, chose one of three answers that identified the topic sentence of the paragraph. This required understanding and analysis of the text.

It’s tempting to rush and guess at answers, touching the screen and watching the cool graphics—especially when each correct answer earns another piece of the word puzzle. But a quick reminder from Riley puts the four back in thinking mode.

“This really needs to slow down and talk about the answers first,” says one student.

And they do.

They exchange ideas about why one option might be right, listen to each other and rebut a suggestion with a reading from the text. They agree on an answer and are rewarded with another clue to solve the word puzzle. This thinking and talking makes learning fun and lasting.

“Building a classroom environment of idea exchange and cooperative learning takes work. Everyone has to know and trust each other. I tell students that they don’t have to love each other but they do have to work together,” says Riley.

“Learning is their job right now and just like any job, they need to be professional and work, talk and think with anyone and everyone in the class.”

This attitude reflects the whole school’s focus on two civility rules: Speak kindly and respect personal space.

Joy Henderson is the assistant director at Reaching Heights, the Cleveland Heights University Heights High School support organization.

Noble Elementary School, talking plus thinking equals learning

Joy Henderson

There’s a pattern to learning in Sharon Riley’s 5th-grade class, and her student Mallea Simmons can describe it: “First, we see Mrs. Riley do the work, then we do the work and talk about it with each other.” Talking and thinking about the work is important.

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Joy Henderson is the assistant director at Reaching Heights, the Cleveland Heights University Heights High School support organization.
In August 2009, Ohio Attorney General Richard Cordray and Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Bill Mason indicted 41 Real World Companies for their alleged role in the purchase of 453 homes across Northeast Ohio with fraudulent loans totaling $44 million.

Here’s what a government press release said about it at the time. “Uri Gofman of Beachwood, OH, is alleged to have orchestrated one of the nation’s largest mortgage fraud cases by flattering family, friends and others to invest in his real estate company, Real Asset Fund, with promises of profit. The scheme involved using straw buyers to purchase homes, falsely claiming home improvements were performed on houses in order to refinance them, and then selling homes to unfurnished buyers with the assistance of real estate agents, mortgage brokers and title companies.

Lenders were tricked into believing that the buyers were making at least a 10 percent down payment when they were not, that the buyers had assets when they did not, and that the properties were worth more than they actually were. The defendants sprinkled off more than $31 million in profits from their criminal enterprise. Eventually, 358 of the homes fell into foreclosure.

Of the 453 homes involved in the indictment, 74 were located in Cleveland Heights, according to the attorney general’s office. Of those, 99 subsequently fell into foreclosure.

Fifteen homes were in University Heights, of which eight fell into foreclosure.

**Indictment and alleged fraud**

**How escrow waivers work**

Before a home can be bought or sold in Cleveland Heights, it must receive a Point-of-Sale inspection by a city housing inspector:

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* Noun. 1. geothermal energy. Making the planet greener, one house at a time.

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11:00 am • Service in Sanctuary

Maundy Thursday • April 1st at 7:30 pm
Good Friday • April 2nd at 12:00 pm

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www.heightsobserver.org
TavCo’s new owner launches upscale menu

Kelli Fontenot

The Tavern Company has a new owner and a new menu.

Chris Armington, who worked for 12 years at Brennan’s Colony as a bartender, server and manager, now owns The Tavern Company, also known as TavCo. “It’s always been a dream of mine to own my own business,” he says.

After signing the papers last November, his dream came true, and in January, Armington introduced a new menu for 2009. “If you’re a bar on Lee Road, you have to have wings and burgers, so we do that. But we also wanted to offer things that are a little more high end, and not be like every other bar on Lee Road.”

Additions to the menu—such as the seared tuna sandwich with orange pickled fennel and tarragon aioli on a crispy portobella mushroom bun, which replaces the old menu’s tuna melt—provide a more sophisticated take on the restaurant’s previous offerings. Other new items include sautéed spinach, soft-shell crab shell po’ boys and the pork chop, served with manchego-bacon polenta and maple thyme jam, a favorite of both Armington and his new chef, Jamie Wynbrandt.

Formerly a chef at Brennan’s, Wynbrandt points out that the bistro-style bar gets its bread baked daily by The Stone Oven across the street, and the bistro’s moose head over the bar and the mounds of cash on the counter are favorite of both Armington and his new chef, Jamie Wynbrandt.

For all of the electronics in modern cars, an errant jumper cable can cause hundreds, or even thousands, of dollars in damage. There is the story going around of the improperly jumped Mercedes-Benz that ended up with a $4,000 repair bill. There is also the story of one of the local towing companies telling the car owner that the battery was installed backwards (ignoring the fact that the car had been performing perfectly for a number of years). The battery was turned around and most of the electrical system was destroyed.

A persistent area of confusion that mechanics and customers face when communicating with one another is which side of the car is which? Mechanics use the perspective of someone sitting in the driver’s seat. The mere act of exiting the car and looking at it from the front does not alter the sides. The left and right sides are still in the same place, it is the driver who has reoriented. It is extremely difficult to make the requested repairs if the mechanic is being told the wrong side of the car. So remember: it’s as seen from the driver’s seat.

Rick Hollis is the owner of Hollis Automotive in Cleveland Heights.

**What to do if the car won’t start**

Rick Hollis

What should you do if your car won’t start?

Many times a customer will report that the engine cranks but does not turn over. If all of the usual noises occur when the key is turned, the engine is turning over. In this case, get the car to a mechanic because there are many factors that can prevent the car from starting.

However, if the car is totally silent and still, a jump start may be necessary. Be extremely careful when jump-starting a car. Batteries can explode, and cheap jumper cables really are not necessary. Be extremely careful when jump-starting.

Factors that can prevent the car from starting:

* Many times a customer will report that the engine cranks but does not turn over.
* If all of the usual noises occur when the key is turned, the engine is turning over.
* In this case, get the car to a mechanic because there are many factors that can prevent the car from starting.
* However, if the car is totally silent and still, a jump start may be necessary.
* Get the car to a mechanic because there are many factors that can prevent the car from starting.
Verne & Ellsworth Hann draws on four generations of experience

Kim Sergio Inglis

A fixture on Lee Road for 43 years, Verne & Ellsworth Hann Inc. has roots in the Heights community going back to 1907. Now Bill Hann and his brother, Chris, carry on the four-generation family tradition of heating and cooling service, begun over 100 years ago by their great grandfather, William Hann.

An inventor and pioneer in the heating industry, Hann codeveloped the first low-pressure steam heat system, working with architects, such as Harlan Shimmin and Meade & Hamilton, to install it in many of the large houses in Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights.

“Prior to the development of the new system, heat was either on or off. My great grandfather’s invention kept noise to a minimum, and, for the first time, allowed radiator heat levels to be adjusted,” Chris Hann explains.

Today, 80 percent of Verne & Ellsworth Hann’s business remains in Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights, and 95 percent of it is residential.

“One of the advantages to staying in Cleveland Heights is to be near our customers. We are friends with all the business owners along this stretch. It’s unique to have all these family-owned businesses, and we feel we know our customers a lot better than our competitors,” Hann says.

The company is named for Ellsworth Hann, Chris and Bill’s grandfather, and his brother, Verne. Like the three generations that preceded them, Chris and his brother are hands-on business owners. Bill, the company president, still works in the field during their busy fall/winter season, and both brothers began working summers for their father, William, after they finished 6th grade.

“I remember holding my lunch, waiting in the driveway for a crew to pick me up. I got my first pair of work shoes. My dad said I had to keep them polished, and I did,” Chris, the company vice president, recalls. “Working with the guys in the field gives you credibility. The best part of the job is the relationships we form with our employees. You really build a camaraderie working side by side with them.”

Chris Hann believes that their longevity and location give them an advantage in servicing their customers, many of whom live within five miles of their Lee Road office. Many of their employees—the longest serving of whom has been with them 43 years—learned from Chris and Bill’s father and grandfather.

“Our niche is quality and detail. We like things done a certain way—the right way,” Hann says.

The company has many of the original blueprints showing the early heating systems installed in Heights homes, and Hann points out that many family secrets on how the old systems work have been passed down through the four generations.

The company provides plumbing service as well as heating and cooling systems, but Hann says that boilers are their “bread and butter.” He recommends that anyone with a boiler get a yearly tune up, explaining, “Unlike a bad part in a warm (forced) air furnace—where part can completely burn up a boiler.”

“Part of the job is the relationship we form with our employees. You really build a camaraderie working side by side with them.”

Chris and Bill Hann have been working in the business since the 6th grade.

Local businesses invited to March 25 workshop

Sarah Wean

Jeff Milchen, cofounder of the American Independent Business Alliance and an international leader in helping communities build vital local economies, is coming to town.

He will be conducting “Strength In Numbers,” a 2–3 hour workshop for locally-owned businesses, on Thursday, March 25 at 8:30 a.m., at the Lee Road Library.

Milchen’s workshop will address public information campaigns about the benefits of doing business locally; organizing collaborative purchasing, marketing and media campaigns among business members; and creating a visible public presence for independent business owners.

“This is a great opportunity for our local business community to hear from a national expert on the benefits of working together,” said Deanna Bremer Fisher, director of FutureHeights, the workshop’s host.

Since 2001, AMIBA has helped more than 100 communities form local Independent Business Alliances, “Buy Local” campaigns, and other programs to support local entrepreneurs.

The workshop is free for Cleveland Heights and University Heights business owners. $25 for others. Register online at www.amibaworkshop.eventbrite.com or call 216-272-5508.

Sarah Wean is a community volunteer.

More stories online at www.heightsobserver.org

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Western Reserve Chorale presents ‘Requiem in C minor’

Susan Marshall

Beethoven called Luigi Cherubini “the greatest living composer” and claimed that if he himself should write a requiem, his only model would be Cherubini’s “Requiem in C minor.” The piece was performed at Beethoven’s memorial service.

The Western Reserve Chorale will present the Cherubini’s work as part of its second concert of the 2009-10 season, on March 21, at 7 p.m., at Grace Lutheran Church, 13001 Cedar Road.

The “Requiem in C minor,” by turns ethereal, highly dramatic and ultimately transcendent, was triumphantly premiered on Jan. 21, 1817, in a memorial service for over 100 years. Call today for your initial inspection.

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34th Annual Cleveland International Film Festival
March 18–28, 2010
Tower City Cinemas
www.clevelandfilm.org

Katharyn Starinsky is the local marketing and media manager for the 34th Cleveland International Film Festival.

Katharyn Starinsky

First stop UH City Hall; next stop U.S. Capitol for Wiley Challenge Choir

Andrew Davis and Anita Kazarian

University Heights celebrated Black History Month in council chambers on Feb. 16 with a musical presentation by the Wiley Middle School Challenge Choir, and an address by Rev. Marvin A. Mcickle, pastor of Antioch Baptist Church. Before making its trek to perform at the U. S. Capitol this spring, the choir performed for Mayor Susan Infeld, members of University Heights City Council and residents.

More than 30 voices sang “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” followed by “Total Praise,” a composition by African-American composer before the abbey church of St. Denis to commemorate the anniversary of the executions of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. The bodies of the long-deposed monarchs had been searched for and found a few years earlier and were finally being laid to rest in the crypt of St. Denis. The success of Cherubini’s “Requiem” was immediate. It was so overwhelming that Berlioz claimed that it gained a virtual monopoly over memorial concerts in France.

Schumann stated that the work was “without equal in the world.” Brahms called it “marvelous.” The “Requiem” is scored for a conventional orchestra. It is the first requiem to include a gong in the percussion section, and in order to avoid comparison with his earlier operatic style of composition, Cherubini wrote his “Requiem in C minor” without any solo parts.

This free concert will be followed by a reception. The church is wheelchair accessible and parking is free. For more information, call 216-791-0061 or visit www.westernreservechorale.org.

Susan Marshall, a Cleveland Heights resident, is a singing member and treasurer for the Western Reserve Chorale.

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March community events

Benefit arts programs in CH-UH schools

“C’erl to see” is the theme of this year’s benefit and auction to support Rosales, a nonprofit that works to promote excellence in public education in the Heights. A jazz ensemble of current Heights High students will accompany a full meal from Clyde’s. Tickets are $50, or two for $90. Purse auction includes appetizer, wine, nonalcoholic beverages, choice of four entrées, two side dishes, dessert, gravy and potato pudding. Drinks and appetizers will be served starting at 5:30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Seating is limited. For reservations or more information, contact Patrick Mullen at patrick@reachingheights.org or 216-932-7169.

Jazz event benefits Heights schools

Hot Jazz on a Cold Night: Reaching Heights Night at Clyde’s, is a March 8 event to benefit Reaching Heights, a nonprofit that works to promote excellence in public education in the Heights. A jazz ensemble of current Heights High students will accompany a full meal from Clyde’s. Tickets are $50, or two for $90. Purse auction includes appetizer, wine, nonalcoholic beverages, choice of four entrees, two side dishes, dessert, gravy and potato pudding. Drinks and appetizers will be served starting at 5:30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Seating is limited. For reservations or more information, contact Patrick Mullen at patrick@reachingheights.org or 216-932-7169.

Partnerships span the globe but begin at home

Jessica Shick

Like many young Clevelanders, I twid- dled my thumbs after graduation and looked for jobs in exotic (and expensive) cities. But unlike most of my peers, I discovered that the universe had other plans. I received a phone call announc- ing that an internship had opened up for International Partners in Mission. Jessica Shick attended Ohio University and worked for International Partners in Mission. John Power 216-291-5116. For more information, visit www.tetelestai-cpam.org

Kindergarten Information Night, March 11

Parents can meet teachers and have questions answered about the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District’s kindergarten program from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on March 11, at Boulevard Elementary School, 1749 Lee Road. Topics to be discussed include kindergarten readiness, kindergarten curriculum and enrollment services. Parents will learn more about the before-and-after-school programs, student services, food service, transportation and more. For more information, contact the Early Childhood Center at 216-371-7356.

Fairmount Church Cooperative Nursery School’s Second Annual Winter Carnival

Escape the winter children by spending the evening of March 13 at Fairmount Church Cooperative Nursery School’s Second Annual Winter Carnival. Come enjoy a fun night of food, carnival games with prizes. The festival runs from 4 to 7 p.m. and is the main fundraiser for the parent cooperative preschool. Dinner tickets are $8 for ages 6 and up, $5 for ages 3-5 and free for ages 2 and under. For more information, contact the school at (216) 321-5800.

Tetelestai returns to the Heights

Tetelestai—a contemporary musical portrayal of the trial, execution and Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah—is returning to the Heights area after a 15-year absence. Gesu Parish will host Tetelestai on March 19 at 8 p.m., March 20 at 8 p.m., and March 21 at 3 p.m. in Gesu Church, 2470 Miramar Blvd. A volunteer cast and crew gives 27 “performances” throughout the Lenten season. Admission is free, and seating is open. Donations are welcome. To volunteer to help with publicity, hospitality, or selling tickets, contact Carrie Keddy at 216-838-7290 or John Power, 216-291-5116. For more information, visit www.tetelestai-cpam.org.

Open house celebrates HRCR rehab

The Home Repair Resource Center’s Home in the Heights subsidiary is about to complete the renovation and reclamation of another previously vacant and foreclosed property in Cleveland Heights. The public is invited to the open house at 3519 Edson Road on March 20 between 1 and 3 p.m., and celebrate one more house adding value to Cleveland Heights.

Are you or someone you know

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WHAT DO YOU WANT IN A HATHA YOGA CLASS?

I think it’s a non-competitive atmosphere—whether it’s the pose or your clothes… the opportunity to be in your neighborhood with like-minded people at a comfortable location… and in a class where the level of difficulty is adapted to the capacity of the participants.

Led by George F. Kroto, B.A., L.M.T.

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Class series begin: Monday evening, March 7th 7:30-9:10pm Friday evening, May 7th 5:50-7:30pm Saturday morning, May 8th 7:50-9:30am

(women eight weeks one class per week in May and June for $60)

and are held at: Hillcrest Academy, 4431 Mayfield Road, South Euclid Phone (216) 291-2610 to reserve your space or for more information.

Learn to reduce the negative effects of stress and make your body a more comfortable place in which to live!
Sarah Wean
writer and speaker, is best known as an
Center.

She has lived in the Coventry neighborhood for 22 years, since she arrived from what was then the Soviet Union. She is a friend of Tommy Fello, of Tommy’s, whom she calls the “unofficial mayor of Coventry,” and has had her art exhibited at his restaurant. When she goes into Hunan Coventry, waiters greet her warmly and the chef makes a special dish for her, something that is not on the menu. Coventry is her stomping ground.

Eugenia Vainberg, 82, was in the story, and to my eye, Soviet-style, building from the 1970s towering over the inner city. I wanted to know, and I came to know, and I came to know, and I came to know about what they thought of as a fearsome circle, anyone with extra food divvies it out.

When she goes into Hunan Coventry, she has her art exhibited at his restaurant. “I would never have done this if I had not come here,” she told me.

Eugenia was trained as an engineer and scientist, was a prominent engineer and scientist, was arrested and tortured. When the Germans arrived, she was arrested and tortured. She is on the top floor, the penthouse. She lives in Musicians’ Towers, a 13-story, and to my eye, Soviet-style, building from the 1970s towering over the

Sarah Wean is a community volunteer.

Jeff Milchen, cofounder of the Ameri
can Independent Business Alliance, will speak Wednesday, March 24, 7 p.m., at the Cleveland Heights Community Center.

Milchen, a nonprofit entrepreneur, writer and speaker, is best known as an advocate for independent businesses, community economic vitality and representative democracy. He frequently facilitates trainings for communities or
ganizing independent business alliances, “buy local” campaigns, prolocal policy and other programs designed to enhance local economic development centered on local entrepreneurs.

Independent Business Alliances are based on a model Milchen pioneered in Boulder, Colo. in 1997. Milchen is the founder and first executive director of ReclaimDemocracy.org, a group focused on revoking corporate control over law and politics, and he is a cosponsor of the Citizens’ Debate Commission.

Event sponsors are the Cedar Lee and Coventry Village special improvement dis
ctricts and BOOM Modern, with assistance from the City of Cleveland Heights and the CH-UH Public Library.

The event is free and open to the pub
ic businesses are encouraged to attend. For information, call 216-272-5398.

Note: Milchen will conduct an addi
tional free workshop for local businesses on March 25, at the Lee Road Library. Go to ambakov@kbos.com for details and online registration or call 216-932-1936.

Sarah Wean is a community volunteer.
Explore Heights past through maps on March 7

Stephen Tichenal

Take a trip back in time to explore the Heights and all of Ohio using historic maps that have been georeferenced in Google Earth, a free program that manages multiple map layers so you can see how locations have changed over time.

A hands-on workshop exploring these maps and the Google Earth application will be offered at the Lee Road Library on Sunday, March 7. Register in advance at www.heightslibrary.org.

Find the circle that gave University Circle its name. Locate the Euclid Railroad that served the quarries at the northeastern edge of Cleveland Heights and South Euclid. See where J. D. Rockefeller’s home was in Forest Hill. View Fairmount Boulevard when it was a street car right-of-way.

Georeferenced maps date from 1824 to the present. Cleveland Heights was formed from parts of Warrensville and Euclid Township in 1903. The 1842 map of the Western Reserve, and the 1857 and 1858 wall maps of Cuyahoga County show the land ownership and early roads before the city was developed. Detailed Cleveland atlases were published in the late 1800s and early 1900s that documented the area using large detailed pages. The 1912 Hopkins Atlas has been georeferenced, allowing these pages to be combined into one large map of the area. The United States Geological Survey maps show the land elevation contours and locate important cultural details.

Links that load these maps into Google Earth are available from usrailsandtrails.com/GoogleEarth/. The maps are provided courtesy of the Cleveland Public Library, Bedford Historical Society and other area collections.

Stephen Tichenal is a retired teacher and librarian who lives in Cleveland Heights.

Myth: trusts are only for the rich

Rebecca Price

If someone had given you $100,000 on your 18th birthday, no strings attached, what would you do with it?

Would you have spent part on your college education, and saved the rest for a down payment on a house?

More likely you would have thought, “I’m rich!” Then spent the money on a new fully loaded car or a vacation.

One common misconception is that trusts are only for the wealthy. But, not only can a properly executed and funded trust make the administration of an estate easier, it can ensure that children are provided for until they are adults.

In Ohio, a financial custodian or guardian must manage money left to a minor child in trust until he or she turns 18. At that time, a financial custodian or guardian has no power over the inheritance if the child demands control of the money. However, if you set up a trust to hold assets that pass to your children when you die, you can arrange to have the trustee control 100 percent of the inheritance until the time that you wish.

The trust can call for distributions of portions of the trust on certain birthdays or milestones, such as graduations or weddings. When a trust is in place, your child does not have a right to the money unless the request complies with what you have designated.

May you don’t think you have enough money to make setting up a trust worthwhile. Let’s say that you and your spouse each make $450,000 a year, and you have two small children. You and your spouse made wills when your kids were born designating a guardian to make sure they inherited whatever assets you had.

You never considered setting up a trust for their benefit. Let’s say that each of you has a modest life insurance policy that has a death benefit of five times your salary ($225,000). Each of you passed away at the same time, your children would each inherit $250,000 on their 18th birthdays—less what the guardian spent on their care while they were minors. This could be a substantial amount of money that, if used wisely, could provide for them for a long time.

Rebecca Price is a mother of a 10-month old daughter, a Cleveland Heights resident and a member of the law firm of Gallup & Burns. She may be reached at price@galluplaw.com or 216-621-4636.

The Lake View Cemetery

Robert Smith

Saturda, March 20

Lee Road Library

9:30 a.m.

Registration

10:00–2:15 Drop by advice tables

Ask an Expert

Talk with a lender about Financing Your Project

Historic Preservation/Exterior Paint Color Choices

Ideas for Northeast Ohio Yards

Ask about Land-Safe Remodeling

Ask about Deeds, Living Wills, Property Taxes

10:00–2:00 “Ask an Architect,” a free individual 30-minute consultation with an architect to help you prepare for a home remodeling project. Bring a picture or scale drawing.

Note: To schedule a consultation, call 381-6000 anytime after March 7. You may also sign up for a consultation at the fair, beginning at 9:30 a.m., on a space-available basis.

10:00–11:15 Session 1: Workshops

Bathroom Remodeling

Roof Replacement

 Retrofitting Old Houses to Lower Energy Use: Conventional Means in Unconventional Ways

Kitchen Remodeling

Choosing a New Heating System

Basement Water Control: Interior vs. Exterior

11:30–12:45 Session 2: Workshops

Installing a Rain Barrel

Choosing Replacement Windows

Garage Replacement

All day–HRRC’s Resource Library, with videos and contractor evaluations.

More stories online at www.heightsobserver.org

Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park cleanup

Joanne Campbell and Diane Mogren

In 2008 and 2009 Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park was voted “Best place to take your kids” in the Future Heights “Best of the Heights” poll. Twice a year, the community gathers to clean and maintain it. But do you know how the playground came about?

In 1991 the existing playground was worn out and the Coventry PTA decided to do something about it. It formed the Coventry School Playground Committee, which, by early 1992, had student drawings of what they wanted on their “dream” playground.

When initial estimates came in at nearly $150,000, organizations realized the project was beyond the scope of a PTA subcommittee, and nonprofit Coventry P.E.A.C.E. (People Enhancing A Child’s Environment)—play off the school’s “peace” theme—was incorporated.

The excitement of a new playground generated many volunteers from the parents, neighborhood community, students and teachers, and much of the work was dedicated to fundraising. The partial list of fundraising activities undertaken included candy and bake sales, concerts by local musicians, an Asian dinner put on by a local grocery store, lemonade stands at community events (these are ongoing), T-shirts, and a performance at the Doohama.

As money was being raised, the design team subcommittee selected Learning Structures Inc. to design the playground based on input from students, parents and the community. Its charge was to design, provide a list of materials needed and be on site during the “New England barnraising” style construction.

Construction week was scheduled, rain or shine, from Wednesday through Sunday the first week of October 1993. And did it rain! The downpour was legendary, turning the construction site into ankle-deep mud.

Each work day began at 8 a.m. and ended at 5:30 p.m. Assignments: building the playground, child care, and food. The anticipated need was for at least 400 volunteers.

The results are there for everyone to see, use and enjoy.

Please join us for the spring P.E.A.C.E. playground and garden cleanup on Saturday, April 7 from 9 to 3. Volunteer as much time as you can spare that day.

Yes, it is work, but it is also fun to be part of what makes Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park so notable.

Lunch is served, garden tools and gloves are provided.

Joanne Campbell is a member of the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Board, and Diane Mogren is its former president and secretary.

The Lake View Cemetery

John Tracy

Join Lake View Cemetery and the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes As we discuss the habitats of Owls, while searching for their Signs and sounds.

$6.00 per person Pre-paid registration required

For more information call 216-421-2665 or visit www.lakeviewcemetery.com
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