Bicycle coalition formed for a more bicycle friendly Cleveland Heights

Mary Dunbar

Did you know:

- Cleveland Heights ranks in the top 10 percent nationally for the number of residents that commute to work by bicycle.
- Since 1961, our city has offered Safety Town and other programs to educate our children to navigate sidewalks and roads safely on foot or by bike, and
- Every one of our business districts and libraries and almost every school has one or more bicycle racks!

Neither did I, until I completed an application in February for Cleveland Heights to be recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. In May, I learned that the application garnered an Honorable Mention. That means that we have a solid base on which to build for an award in the next year or two. The awards remain in effect for four years and range from platinum and gold to silver and bronze.

Why does being bicycle friendly matter? It’s an integral part of building livable, healthy communities. Bicyclists are an indicator of a healthy, vibrant community; Bicycle-friendly towns, like those with good schools and enjoyable business districts, are communities that offer improved quality of life, which can lead to higher property values, business growth and increased visits to our city. Being recognized as bicycle friendly will give Cleveland Heights even more cachet than it already has.

That’s why a group of bicycle enthusiasts has formed the Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition (CHBC)—to make sure we get a first-rate cycling community. The core group of founders includes sisters Joy and Ann Henderson, Nicholas Matthew and me. Dozens of others have expressed interest and want to become involved.

We are passionate about improving our city’s bicycle infrastructure and safety, enhancing the city’s connectivity to University Circle, and supporting the growth of the regional cycling network.

The show must go on—despite June 17 street fracas on Coventry

Anna Schade

On Thursday, July 1, the Coventry Village Special Improvement District and Coventry P.E.A.C.E. (which built and maintains the open field, while many in the audience ate picnic dinners—some brought from home and others purchased from Coventry Village restaurants.

The ordinariness of the evening came as a relief—but not necessarily as a surprise—to event organizers, who viewed the disruption at the street fair as an isolated incident.

The June 17 fair had been one of the best yet, according to Steve Presser, owner of Big Fun and one of the fair’s organizers. “It was the only fair scheduled this year—an economy-related break from previous years, when two or three such events have been held.

But some attendees at this year’s fair noticed an unusually large number of unsupervised youth over the course of the evening. “You expect to see families and adults; I’d never seen so many kids at one of these,” said a 17-year-old.

Patricia Pavlovitch

Patricia Pavlovitch was presented with the 2010 Legacy Award by The Cleveland HOST, an alumni group that represents Heights High’s first black students.

The award ceremony took place on June 24 at The Alcazar, and was a complete surprise to Pavlovitch.

She received the award for her leadership in helping to integrate the Cleveland Heights community in the 1960s. The Cleveland HOST President, Randolph Tyrone Givens, who served as master of ceremonies for the event, sang a song to honor Pavlovitch’s efforts.

In attendance were Pavlovitch’s close friends, family members and other residents of The Alcazar.

Anna Schade

Anna Schade is a senior at John Carroll University and an intern with the Heights Observer.
Opening up the Observer: local businesses team up

Bob Rosenbaum

When in the course of human events, it becomes appropriate for communities to assert their independence, to denounce uniformity and celebrate their uniqueness, a respect for freedom and human creativity requires independent businesses and peoples to declare those elements which make them interesting.

That’s how the American Independent Business Alliance (www.amiba.net) explains its annual Independents Week—an event cleverly scheduled for the first week of July.

The alliance is a national umbrella group for local coalitions of independent businesses that are working together to strengthen themselves against the onslaught of competition from big box stores and other national chains.

The newest member of this nationwide movement—and the first in Northeast Ohio—is our own Heights Independent Business Alliance (HIBA), which has used the occasion of Independents Week to announce its founding.

HIBA was created with prodding and support from FutureHeights, and it will be closely connected with the Heights Observer to strengthen itself against big business.

But it’s a stand-alone organization of small companies in Cleveland Heights and University Heights that typify the kind of businesses that contribute so much to this community’s scale, livability and charm.

Cleveland: Great for singles, porch parties

Lisa Gaynier

Admittedly this is old news since the ratings came out last July; however, it bears repeating. I interviewed prospective students for the master’s program in organizational leadership at Cleveland State University, where I am a faculty member. I was impressed with all the candidates we interviewed. They were well prepared and had researched the program before coming to us. That’s always a good sign.

One in particular had spent the past year visiting cities and universities for “fit.” She told us that in her research she had run across the news that Cleveland was ranked 4th Best City for Singles by Forbes.com. It was one of the reasons she had chosen our program. She also liked Cleveland for its friendliness and livability compared with Cincinnati or even NYC, where she had grown up. She was moving from Puerto Rico—committing to our city, having faith that she would be accepted into the program, because of what she had found here in Northeast Ohio.

Cleveland Heights is part of that picture. Minutes from the heart of Cleveland’s cultural center, we are living on a gold mine, but I’m not sure who we let merchants who have put energy into its founding. After that, it will reach out to attract more members and begin fulfilling its objectives.

In the coming months, look for the HIBA logo and other messages to begin appearing around town. Know its purpose: to support and perpetuate the Heights area’s unique character as a place to live, play and do business.

Bob Rosenbaum, chairman of the newspaper’s editorial advisory committee and member of the FutureHeights board, writes in this column to provide transparency and understanding about the Observer. Send your comments and questions to bob@observer.com.

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

HIBA’s mission (until its website launches, its online presence is at www.facebook.com/calachos) is cooperative promotion for its members, and education for the public about the economic benefit of shopping locally. It will inevitably pursue both of those tasks in the pages of the Observer.

To date, the organization admirably hasn’t gotten very far. It’s still working to build its website and to formalize membership for the 30 or so merchants who have put energy into its founding. After that, it will reach out to attract more members and begin fulfilling its objectives.

In the coming months, look for the HIBA logo and other messages to begin appearing around town. Know its purpose: to support and perpetuate the Heights area’s unique character as a place to live, play and do business.

When vacationing in Seattle or New England this summer, I found much to make me appreciate the place I now live. Cleveland Heights. Returning to Cleveland on winter break, and then again for summer vacation, my view of this city has been completely renewed. I started paying more attention to the architecture, public transportation, the people, the urban planning, the greenery, the biking trails, which I often ignored and realized that Cleveland is already a good place to live, and has potential to be even better.

The sprawling cities surrounding Cleveland are not without distinguishable identity, compared to many other things that Cleveland has.

Coming into Cleveland on the Red Line from the airport, I was newly impressed with a spectacle I once ignored. I’ve been tempted to videotape the drive from Hopkins to my house on Kingston Road, off Fairmount. I’ve never seen such a dynamic, monumental series of places in a city from the skyline, including the lake, numerous bridges and skyscrapers, to the myriad, magisterial churches of the Euclid Corridor; up I-71 Cedar Hill through the classic (and still improving) Cleveland Lee district. Further up I-90, I was gracefully curving Fairmount Boulevard, laden with venerable trees and stately mansions, and down my own charming street.

A couple of their kids—young adults who grew up together through those years of shared porches, and have returned home to Cleveland after years in other places—joined us, initiating what might be a new generation of porch people.

Lisa Gaynier lives in the old Coventry School neighborhood with her husband Mike and their cat Andie. She teaches and directs a masters program in diversity management at Cleveland State University.

Letters Policy
Letters to the Editor
The Heights Observer welcomes letters to the editor. They must be submitted electronically, along with the writer’s name, phone number and e-mail address, to: letters@heightsobserver.org or by U.S. mail, to the Heights Observer, 2319 Lee Rd., #103, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118.

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HOMETOWN HATE SYNDROME
Anthony Syro

When one has lived in a city for too long, it has been my experience that distaste for the place can develop. Growing up in Cleveland, I often heard phrases along the lines of “Cleveland sucks” or “Cleveland is boring,” or other negative sentiments. I was no exception.

Upon relocating in Seattle or New York City, I vaguely eyed their populated downtown areas, energetic vibe, and other attributes I thought of as “cool.”

Why can’t Cleveland be like that?” was an emotion, though unexpressed, question in my mind.

Some time in the past year or so, my view began to change. This was primarily due to the fact that I went away to college, a place where one often gains new perspectives on life. I’ve figured out that anything becomes missed after an extended period without it.

I attended the University of Redlands in Southern California, located an hour and a half east of Los Angeles. While the campus is an enjoyable place to spend time, the city of Redlands and the surrounding urban sprawl is decidedly pleasant.

If one desires to go anywhere beyond the local Chipotle restaurant, a car is a necessity. A car is needed to get to the near-edge bus station. The freeway goes right through the city. A “metro” train ride to L.A. is a notoriously slow and painful affair. The same can be said about driving anywhere in Southern California, where the streets are wide, but inhospitable to bikers and even pedestrians—sidewalks are often lacking and motorists regularly ignore the crosswalks.

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Lisa Gaynier lives in the old Coventry School neighborhood with her husband Mike and their cat Andie. She teaches and directs a masters program in diversity management at Cleveland State University.

Anthony Syro, a graduate of CHHS, attended the University of Redlands this past year. He is interested in botany, art, music and the rejuvenation of Cleveland.
“I moved here from Louisiana in August of last year. I love writing and editing, and I was impressed by the Heights Observer quality and depth. FutureHeights is a refreshing organization that’s really committed to citizen involvement and positive change. Volunteering with FutureHeights has helped me to learn more about the community. I’ve been able to meet some fascinating people and help them share their stories.”

“As a board member of FutureHeights, I chaired the annual auction committee and serve on the development committee. Each year I volunteer to march in the University Heights parade and distribute copies of the Heights Observer to the crowd. Heights residents should support FutureHeights because FutureHeights is about improving the quality of life in our community and engaging citizens in the issues that affect us all. It is so important for people to care about the issues in their community and FutureHeights is the organization that stimulates the interest in CH-UH.”

“I deliver the Heights Observer to area businesses because I believe it should be free. I’ve donated prizes for several years to the FutureHeights auction. The Heights region has always had a spirit of pride and cooperation among the residents that supercedes many other places. Those who don’t yet support FutureHeights should consider that the strength of any region begins with the support of its citizens. FutureHeights is essentially an organization that amplifies this support. All of us benefit from its endeavors.”

“When my husband and I came to Ohio from New Jersey, I had an immediate affinity to the Heights. It wasn’t just that I was closer to my grandchildren. There was something special about this area. I first heard about FutureHeights when I picked up a copy of the Heights Observer. I inquired at the FutureHeights office if they needed the help of an experienced editor and received an article to edit later that day! FutureHeights means community involvement, volunteerism and citizen activism. People should consider supporting FutureHeights because FutureHeights supports the community— it’s a win-win for everyone.”

Join Hugh, TC, Hank, Jewel and Kelli. Get engaged with FutureHeights, the organization that is committed to engaging citizens in order to cultivate healthy and sustainable Heights neighborhoods, just like yours.

We have been given a terrific opportunity through an anonymous donor, to double your gift to FutureHeights this summer. Act now—this offer is good only through July 15!

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- Supports the local economy
- Creates a vibrant and sustainable future for the Heights
- Promotes civic engagement
- Builds community partnerships
- Publishes your community newspaper, the Heights Observer.

FutureHeights is an efficient, grassroots organization, housed above the Cedar Lee Theatre with only one staff person.

FutureHeights relies heavily on individual contributions from people like you to stay afloat. We appreciate your need to be discerning with charitable gifts during this challenging time. No donation is too small.

FutureHeights engages citizens. Engaged citizens build strong communities. Please take a minute to fill out this form, write your check and send it to FutureHeights today.

Get engaged in your community
More than 500 volunteers are engaged with FutureHeights. Isn’t it time for you to get engaged?

□ Yes, I want to get engaged with FutureHeights! Enclosed is my tax-deductible, membership gift in the amount of:

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* We want to support citizen-driven, community news. With a $50 or more gift, FutureHeights will send 12 issues of the Heights Observer directly to your home or business.

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Mail To: FutureHeights, 2163 Lee Road, #103, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Thank you for your support!
Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights

MAY 17, 2010

Council Member Bonnie Caplan was excused.

High school scholarships honored

Council recognized seven Cleveland Heights High School students for their academic excellence. They were: National Merit Scholar Matt Zuckar, National Merit Commended Scholar Lewis Pollis and Alexandra Miller, National Achievement Scholar Natalie Roberts, National Achievement Outstanding Participant Jary Samson and Erin Morris, and Phi Beta Kappa Honoree Daniella Bolster.

Denison Park, truck bids

Council approved City Manager Robert Downey’s request to advertise for bids for improvements to Denison Park and for the purchase of a front loading refuse truck.

Secondhand dealers legislation amended

Council passed an amendment to earlier legislation which had licensed secondhand dealers who handle specific merchandise that is commonly the subject of theft. The amendment excluded retail businesses selling primarily items at least 30 years old or electronic equipment at least 12 years old.

Ambulance billing modified

Council voted to bring the billing procedure for ambulance services to nursing homes into compliance with federal law requiring the city to bill nursing homes, rather than Medicare or Medicaid, when ambulance services are provided by Life Force Management, Inc.

CDBG funds allocated

Several pieces of legislation dealing with the use of Community Development Block Grant funds were approved. A $7,000, 12-month contract with the Cleveland Tenants Organization will give the city’s resident landlord-rental counsel- ing, and a $6,500 grant will provide operating support to the Heights Emergency Food Center. Also, up to $40,000 in CDBG funds will renew an agreement with Tim Barret, Franklin Piccirillo, Catherine Sabalik and Carolyn Smith for design and consulting services for the city’s Storefront Revitalization Program.

Home to be renovated and resold

Council approved the sale of a city-owned property at 3755 Berkeley Road to Home in the Heights, a subsidiary of the Home Repair Resource Center, for renovation and resale to an owner-occupant.

JUNE 7, 2010

All council members present.

Reallocation of block grant funds

Council approved the reprogramming and reallocation of $152,700 in Community Develop- ment Block Grant funds from the contingency fund to the public works fund. This vote also authorized moving $31,835 from the Home Repair Resource Center’s Deferred Loan Match Program to the Neighborhood Project Repair Program.

Funds to Home Repair Resource Center

Council also authorized an agreement with the Association for Community Organizations for Assistance with Neighborhoods (ACON) for assistance with the nonprofit organization’s various home repair and home improvement programs, including Neighborhood Project Repair grants, the Assist 0% program, Assist Incentive grants, the Assist Deferred Loan Match Program and House Counseling. The agreement extends from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011.

Funds to Open Doors

Open Doors Inc. will receive $5,000 in CDBG funds during the next 12 months to assist with the organization’s after-school programming for Cleveland Heights school-aged students.

Taylor Road rehabilitation

Mayor Ed Kelley noted that those residents who regularly drove on Taylor Road between Eclid Heights Boulevard and the north city line will be happy to know that the Taylor Road Rehabilitation Project will start in the summer of 2011. The city announced that it is in the process of applying to the Ohio Department of Transportation State Infrastructure Bank for a $72,560 loan to fund the project. The city will cover the city’s share of the costs and provide interim funding for the costs anticipated to be reimbursed with $5,804,800 in federal funds.

Norfolk project monies

Council authorized amending an agreement with Mackey Engineering & Surveying Company re- lated to the Norfolk Waterline and Sewer Replace- ment Project to provide $1,379.27 for additional services requested by the city.

Extension of electric power agreement

The city’s current agreement with First Energy Solutions Corporation to supply electric power to the city’s residents and businesses under the city’s “Green Power” Electric Aggregation Power Supply Program was extended three years to May 2018.

Design services for Denison Park

Council approved Behnke Associates, Inc. for design services for improvements to Denison Park, including the removal of the pool, the development of additional shelters and picnic areas, and a storm water management plan at a cost not to exceed $3,500.

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New city plans

Council President Dennis Wilson reported that the city is updating its Strategic Development Plan to include projects to increase the city’s tax base. The city has purchased the Planning Commission and posted on the city’s website after at least one public meeting. Also underway is a Green Zoning Initiative, which will result in revisions to the zoning code with an eye toward environmen- tally friendly and sustainable practices.

Lead remidiation monies

Council renewed an agreement extending through October 2010 with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health for a grant of $12,750 for lead remediation work in at least 11 Cleveland Heights units occupied by young children whose families are ineligible.

LWV observer: Katherine Schneller

Look for earlier, and often expanded, postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.

These meeting summaries are abstracts from LWV observers’ written reports. The observers have been edited and prepared by Anne McFarland, Marilyn McLaughlin and Maryann Jams. Thanks to Ralene Jams for compiling these summaries. These reports contain member observations and selected highlights of public meetings and are distributed to local Leadership Councils and the Chapter of the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribution of these reports.

Pat Pavlovich

My husband and I and our two small children moved to Cleveland from Chicago in January 1965. We wanted to be near excellent schools and in an integrated neighborhood. At that time, the only truly integrated neighborhood was the Ludlow area of Shaker, which was out of our price range.

We rented half of a duplex in Clevel- and Heights, on Hampshire Road. We were happy in the Coventry School area that when we looked for a house to buy a year and a half later, we looked at houses only in that neighborhood, and we found one where we were very happy. Two years later, my husband and I happened to see an extraordinary house. At that time there was a smatter- ing of black families living in the area. Each of our boys had one black friend from Coventry. To our stuccification, the families on either side of our new house, each with seven kids, not only shunned our boys, but targeted our house for vandalism.

But before all of that, shortly after we moved to Cleveland Heights, we had become involved in Heights Citizens for Human Rights, which had hundreds of Cleveland Heights, University Volunteers and Shaker Heights members. Our goal was to bring peaceful integration to the Heights, and also to encourage Clevel- and Heights City Council to issue a fair housing law.

Many of us went to almost every council meeting. One meeting became a regular occurrence, and that was the fight in the stairwell, where some of the overflow crowd was standing, the meeting was moved across the street to Park Syna- gogue. Among the things we did was extend our black friends for looking for housing to the places they wanted to be shown. At that time, they might have an appointment to see a property, but too often when the agent saw that the people were black, sud- denly “the door was broken and couldn’t be opened.” Or, the property had “just been sold.” So the white couple would go to the properties first and gain entry and ascertain that the place was, indeed, avail- able, and then our “friends” would show up to see the place.

We also sent our mailings advising our friends on what to look for in homes that were renting. This job was done at the home of a member who had the largest dining room table for us to work on. We had a “telephone tree,” where participating members had a list of names and addresses so that in an emergency we could notify the others.

On Mother’s Day (I’m not certain which year in the 1960s) there were four bombs thrown through the middle of the night from our home. At about 4 p.m., I received a phone call asking me to notify my members that...
University Heights City Council Meeting highlights

MAY 17, 2010
Councilwoman Susan Pardee was excused.

Green space on Ashurst Road: Residents expressed their will- ingness to work with the city to keep the green space that was created when the house at 2603 Ashurst was torn down. Mayor Infeld met with representatives from John Carroll University and the Ohio State University Extension about this proverb and use of Tealor Road and said that help will come from both Ashurst residents and John Carroll students.

Opposition to opening of McDonald's: Residents of Bushnell Road voiced their opposition to a McDonald's restaurant on Warrensville Center Road. Two residents spoke against allowing McDonald's to build a restaurant on Warrensville Center Road. On June 19 the Architectural Review Board will discuss the fate of McDonald's request to build on the site. If the proposal is accepted, it will then go to the Planning Commission, which will address traffic issues.

RTC office for John Carroll University: A special board of zoning appeals meeting on June 16 and a community meeting on June 14 will address John Carroll University's request to use a house, located at 40777 Carroll Blvd., near the Pizzazz restaurant, as an RTC office.

City Hall hours: Mayor Infeld reported that City Hall is now open until 7 p.m. on Wednesdays, and will remain so until the fall time change. Building Commissioner McCann clarified that there would be no permit inspections during Wednesday evening hours.

John Carroll University green initiatives: Carol Dietz, chair of the Sustainability Committee at John Carroll University, reported that the university's removal of a temporary parking lot will increase green space by one and one-half acres and reduce runoff. The university is undertaking a number of other green initiatives.

County land bank: Council authorized an agreement with the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation for the latter to act as an agent of the city.

Intercity police services: Council approved an agreement with the cities of South Euclid, Shaker Heights and Euclid for the interchange of police personnel, equipment, and services. Police Chief Stahlke said the three cities have been meeting regularly for a year to discuss how they could work together to save money, especially for a S.W.A.T. team.

New fire pump truck: Council authorized an agreement with Central States Fire Apparatus, L.L.C., a division of Rosenbauer America, for the purchase of a fire pump truck. Fire Chief Pitchler said the city wouldn't receive the truck until March 2011 because they first had to build it.

UH zoning study gathers dust

Anita Kazarian

It may be time for council to authorize a comprehensive zoning study in this, the most densely populated city in the area.

Since its inception, the University Heights zoning code is a patchwork in progress. Pathways are just that, a mix of odds and ends with no consistency, cohesiveness or strength because so many strings are needed to hold it together. That may be fine for a blanket, but not for our city.

Updating and revising to a more appropriate and user-friendly code containing better defined standards and building requirements will go a long way. The updated code, using current industry standards, will be understandable and may reduce the number of requests for variances and limit the appeals process.

An updated code will be a start that will reflect and guide our city for the future. While we do not have much land for development, we have land that is being reconfigured.

Land for residences, schools, commercial and public use requires specific codes. And as night follows day, zoning codes follow a city's plan for the future, called a master plan. A master plan outlines how we envision the use of the land. University Heights has several master plans on the shelf, from 1987, 1991 and 1995.

The zoning code, its interpretation and appeals, is a complicated process. At issue is our right as private property owners to define our property as we wish. In a landmark 1960 Ohio case, the United States Supreme Court ruled that zoning was a legal city function. Since 1965, state and federal courts have continued to rule that a city has the right to pass and enforce zoning laws. When property owners have challenged the restrictions imposed, the courts have continued to define a city's right and power to issue zoning regulations.

Last year, two different neighborhood citizen groups formed to contest requests for zoning variances. The Waterway car wash deal for Warrensville Center Road ended when Waterway relocated to Pepper Pike, John Carroll University's plan to convert a house on Carroll Boulevard to RTC offices ended in an appeal process, JCU subsequently withdrew.

This spring, both citizen groups returned to action. One to prevent a McDonald's on the Warrensville site, and the other to prevent JCU from converting the house into offices. In 2008, D. B. Hart Inc. submitted a proposal to evaluate the city's existing zoning code. Hartt, a recognized leader in community planning and zoning, states its mission is to "improve the quality of life and physical planning in a community . . . so that competing interests can make informed decisions, resulting in responsible use of land." In other words, the result of updating the zoning code must be acceptable to the different interest groups within the city.

As a city, we do not focus on the future. Master plans and the D. B. Hartt proposal to evaluate the existing zoning code are gathering dust.

An updated zoning code with specific development standards and building requirements, with the general support of the residents, will reduce variance requests and appeals that are now based on interpretations of vague language. More importantly, it will help reduce the conflict between residential and commercial interests. It is time for council to dust off the D. B. Hartt 2008 proposal.

With July and August cleared of council meeting obligations, council has the time to begin this important municipal task.

Comments? Suggestions? Contact Anita at AnitaKazarian@gmail.com.

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The City Beautiful Commission has established five categories for beautiful homes awards. They hope to finish selection before Labor Day, so the winners can be on display over the holiday.

John Carroll university green initiatives: Carol Dietz, chair of the Sustainability Committee at John Carroll University, reported that the university's removal of a temporary parking lot will increase green space by one and one-half acres and reduce runoff. The university is undertaking a number of other green initiatives.

County land bank: Council authorized an agreement with the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation for the latter to act as an agent of the city.

Intercity police services: Council authorized an agreement with the cities of South Euclid, Shaker Heights and Euclid for the interchange of police personnel, equipment, and services. Police Chief Stahlke said the three cities have been meeting regularly for a year to discuss how they could work together to save money, especially for a S.W.A.T. team.

New fire pump truck: Council authorized an agreement with Central States Fire Apparatus, L.L.C., a division of Rosenbauer America, for the purchase of a fire pump truck. Fire Chief Pitchler said the city wouldn't receive the truck until March 2011 because they first had to build it.

University Heights City Council Meeting highlights

Anita Kazarian

It may be time for council to authorize a comprehensive zoning study in this, the most densely populated city in the area.

Since its inception, the University Heights zoning code is a patchwork in progress. Pathways are just that, a mix of odds and ends with no consistency, cohesiveness or strength because so many strings are needed to hold it together. That may be fine for a blanket, but not for our city.

Updating and revising to a more appropriate and user-friendly code containing better defined standards and building requirements will go a long way. The updated code, using current industry standards, will be understandable and may reduce the number of requests for variances and limit the appeals process.

An updated code will be a start that will reflect and guide our city for the future. While we do not have much land for development, we have land that is being reconfigured.

Land for residences, schools, commercial and public use requires specific codes. And as night follows day, zoning codes follow a city’s plan for the future, called a master plan. A master plan outlines how we envision the use of the land. University Heights has several master plans on the shelf, from 1987, 1991 and 1995.

The zoning code, its interpretation and appeals, is a complicated process. At issue is our right as private property owners to define our property as we wish. In a landmark 1960 Ohio case, the United States Supreme Court ruled that zoning was a legal city function. Since 1965, state and federal courts have continued to rule that a city has the right to pass and enforce zoning laws. When property owners have challenged the restrictions imposed, the courts have continued to define a city’s right and power to issue zoning regulations.

Last year, two different neighborhood citizen groups formed to contest requests for zoning variances. The Waterway car wash deal for Warrensville Center Road ended when Waterway relocated to Pepper Pike, John Carroll University’s plan to convert a house on Carroll Boulevard to RTC offices ended in an appeal process, JCU subsequently withdrew.

This spring, both citizen groups returned to action. One to prevent a McDonald’s on the Warrensville site, and the other to prevent JCU from converting the house into offices. In 2008, D. B. Hart Inc. submitted a proposal to evaluate the city’s existing zoning code. Hartt, a recognized leader in community planning and zoning, states its mission is to “improve the quality of life and physical planning in a community . . . so that competing interests can make informed decisions, resulting in responsible use of land.” In other words, the result of updating the zoning code must be acceptable to the different interest groups within the city.

As a city, we do not focus on the future. Master plans and the D. B. Hartt proposal to evaluate the existing zoning code are gathering dust.

An updated zoning code with specific development standards and building requirements, with the general support of the residents, will reduce variance requests and appeals that are now based on interpretations of vague language. More importantly, it will help reduce the conflict between residential and commercial interests. It is time for council to dust off the D. B. Hartt 2008 proposal.

With July and August cleared of council meeting obligations, council has the time to begin this important municipal task.

Comments? Suggestions? Contact Anita at AnitaKazarian@gmail.com.
Democrat Phil Robinson runs for County Council in District 11
Campaign focuses on economic development and government efficiency

Leah Knapp

University Heights resident and Democrat, Phil Robinson, is running for the Cuyahoga County Council seat in District 11. The district includes Beachwood, Euclid, Lyndhurst, Richmond Heights, South Euclid and University Heights. The primary election is Sept. 7.

Robinson sees the newly formed county council as being responsible for delivering health and human services in an efficient, compassionate manner; fostering an environment for sustainable economic development; ensuring tax dollars are spent wisely; providing a meaningful check and balance to the county executive; and facilitating collaboration between local governments.

“The citizens of Cuyahoga County have spoken, and I am committed to bringing them the government they deserve. I will work to ensure that county services are effective and efficient, government is open and honest, and that the county workforce is the best it can be.

“This is a critical moment in our region’s history, and it requires a new set of leaders with innovative ideas. We have a real opportunity to reinvent our county and write its next chapter. Together, we can make our new government as good as its promise,” said Robinson.

Robinson’s three-prong platform includes creating a government that provides excellent health and human services, as well as judicial services, while controlling costs and ensuring transparency; energizing the local economy through new land-use policies and economic and workforce development; and attracting bright minds and young families by marketing the region and opening an immigrant welcome center.

Robinson is endorsed by State Senator Nina Turner; State Representative Mike Foley; Tim Downing, Beachwood resident and Cuyahoga County Democratic Party Executive Committee member, and Ronald Register, Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board member.

To learn more, visit www.votephilrobinson.com.

Leah Knapp lives in University Heights with her husband Brad.

Leading indicator in UH shows rebound

Anita Kazarian

Homeowners’ increasing investment in repairs and remodeling is considered a leading indicator, one that predicts the future, of an improving economy. By any measure, University Heights homeowners are investing in their homes.

On June 21, Building Commissioner David Menn reported a 20 percent increase in permit applications as compared to the same period in 2009. Menn also reported a 100 percent increase in contractor registrations for the same period.

Because of the filing fee, contractors do not file registrations unless they have a job in the city. “I think it is a very good sign,” Menn said. The building department also published a comparison of permit fees charged by neighboring cities. The average fee, (calculated by this writer) is $28.75 for University Heights, $45.50 for South Euclid, $45.03 for Cleveland Heights and $53.75 for Shaker Heights.

The UH building department is a resource for city homeowners. The experts in the department are happy to respond to homeowner requests for guidance on options they are evaluating for remodeling or repairs. One contractor may convince you that a new electrical supply is required for a job, another says what you have will be fine. Not sure what to do? Contact Dave Menn’s office at 216-932-7800. The building department team will explain code requirements and identify alternative options.

Anita Kazarian, a marketing professional and longtime resident of University Heights, is a frequent contributor to the Heights Observer.

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Anita Kazarian, a marketing professional and longtime resident of University Heights, is a frequent contributor to the Heights Observer.

Bremec Garden Center partners with UH City Beautiful Commission

Anita Kazarian

University Heights’ Civic Pride Foundation for the City Beautiful Commission (CPC) partnered with Bremec’s Garden Center in Cleveland Heights for a special fundraiser in June. Volunteer members of the University Heights City Beautiful Commission encouraged UH residents to make their gardening purchases at Bremec’s with a marketing campaign kicked off at the city’s Memorial Day parade.

For purchases made with special coupons between May 31 and June 12, Bremec’s donated 10 percent to the UH foundation.

In past years, the CPC raised funds with a spring flower sale. Mayor Infeld encouraged the commission members to explore new ways to engage homeowners and revitalize itself at the group’s first meeting this year.

Also new this year are different categories for the commission’s Beautiful Homes awards. New members are welcome to attend the next meeting of the CPC at UH City Hall. Contact Kelly Thomas at 216-932-7800 or kthomas@universityheights.com

Anita Kazarian, a marketing professional and longtime resident of University Heights, is a frequent contributor to the Heights Observer.

Nominations open for 2010 UH Beautiful Home awards

Anita Kazarian

Don’t wait! The City of Beautiful Homes is seeking nominations for its 2010 awards. Do you or a neighbor have a beautiful garden, back yard or home you are proud of? Don’t keep it a secret, share it with us. Nominate your own or a neighbor’s property for one or more of the 2010 Beautiful Home awards.

Telephone Kelly Thomas at City Hall 216-932-7800 or send an e-mail to kthomas@universityheights.com.

2010 Beautiful Home awards categories and criteria

“Curb Appeal,” a home with landscaping, flowers, and lawn maintenance that catches your eye from the sidewalk as you walk by or from the street as you drive by.

“Best Front Door,” a home with a great front door that draws your attention.

“Set-a-Spell,” a home with a front yard that invites passersby to come, set-a-spell, and enjoy just taking in the surroundings.

“Best Kept Secret,” a home with a backyard that creates a setting and atmosphere through beautiful gardens, flowers, landscaping, and/or other decorative items or outdoor furniture where visitors and the homeowner alike can go to be restored.

“Eco-Garden,” a home with a unique front, back or side yard garden that is organically fed and watered in a sustainable green manner, such as a rain barrel.
**CH-UH Public Library Board Meeting highlights**

MAY 17, 2010
Vice President Audrey Cole was absent.

**Technology policy**
The board adopted a Technology Policy and Planning Guide to ensure quality access to electronic resources. This policy will be included in the overall policy manual. Board Member Jim Poitch stressed the importance of guidelines that have yet to be written. He wishes to bring the best practices of the technology field to the library and is looking for constructive feedback. Board Member Kevin Orner commented on the hard work put in by the subcommittee to bring the technology plan into the mission and core values. Director Nancy Levin will discuss the guidelines with staff on May 27.

**Meeting room usage**
Programming Coordinator Tonya Davis’s report on meeting room status showed an increased usage of 15 percent in total attendance and a 33 percent increase in income. Room reservations can be made on the Web, and that portion of the site has been made more attractive and easy to use. Weekends and weekdays peak times, for which reservations are needed three months in advance. Book displays have been added to the meeting rooms as a number of attendees are new to the library.

**Personnel changes**
Dawn Scheir has been appointed the marketing and community relations coordinator. Adult Services has had two resignations, including one part-time aide. That position will be upgraded to full-time and will include responsibility for technology training.

**Primary election day**
Director Levin pointed out that 86 percent of the library levies on the primary ballot in the state were successful. She extended her thanks to all of the branch managers for their service in opening the libraries early on Election Day.

**Library summer reading programs**
Tonya Davis

Stop in for one, or all, of the library’s special summer reading programs:

**Morrison Dance’s Fit Fun Frolic**
Tuesday, July 13, 7 p.m.
Noble Neighborhood Library
Join in for an evening of dance fun. This program demonstrates how to encour- age gross motor development, brain growth, and the love of physical activity in young children and infants.

**Turtle Tales**
Thursday, July 15, 7 p.m.
University Heights Library
Bring the whole family to hear Susan Weber recount tales of turtles and other splashy fun from around the world. You will travel the globe through Weber’s folktales and songs.

**Make a Splash Summer Reading Party**
Wednesday, July 28, 7 p.m.
Lee Road Library
The entire family is invited to join the grand finale of the summer reading program. Enjoy games, balloons, water-related crafts, and a cool summertime treat.

**Splish Splash Shadow Puppet Show**
Thursday, July 29, 7 p.m.
Coventry Village Library
Enjoy a shadow puppet theatre show and make a splash yourself.

**July**
- Learn about what water does for your body.
- Make rainsticks and learn about the water cycle.
- Make an underwater garden and a frog to take home.
- Decorate a paper hat with a water theme.
- Learn about turtles and play Turtle Hurdles!

**Lee Road Library**
2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

**University Heights Library**
13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

**Lee’s Tavern**
2195 Lee Road, 216-321-1116
Parking behind Cedar Lee Theatre

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**Turtle Hurdles!**
JUNE 1, 2010

All school board members were present.

Recipients of recognition

- Chris Morgan, from United Way, presented the district with an award for money collected for United Way.
- Greg Copeland, a groundskeeper, was recognized for helping a resident who had fallen and was lying on the lawn in front of the resident’s house.
- The student council received recognition for Outstanding Student Artwork.
- Alastair Pearson for the SAT and Calia Van Den Boert for the ACT were recognized for receiving the top district scores in the North western University Talent Search.
- Twenty-nine staff members were honored upon their retirements.

Credit flexibility

Superintendent Heuer introduced two new members to the Credit flexibility mission database for analyzing operating costs.

Teacher recalls

The board approved the recall of 28 of the 34 teachers laid off in April due to projected needs.

The superintendent explained that the 34 layoffs were due to the difficult economic climate and the need to maintain a 2.0 GPA; disqualification due to a felony conviction; disqualification due to a four- to five-year lease for Millikin School.

Eligibility rules

The definition of “medical review panel”: the board agreed to a medical review panel. The definition of a grading period: currently it is one week. The board and staff pointed out the need to define the grading period to provide both flexibility and fairness to all sports.

The impact of credit flexibility: attendance requirements in this initiative would present new difficulties.

The definition of a “medical review panel”: the board felt that this wording should be better defined and with district liability considered.

Athletics versus extra-curriculars: NOE schools separate eligibility requirements for athletics and extra-curriculars, but the board could handle this within its present structure.

Ohio High School Athletic Association: athletic eligibility policies must be consistent with the eligibility requirements set by OHSAA, which owns the intellectual property. Micheller said he would bring a revised document to the next meeting.

Heights senior recognized for scholarship and civic activism

Joy Henderson

Lewis J. Pollis, recent Heights High graduate, is a Presidential Scholar semifinalist and National Merit Commended Student. Pollis has been selected as a finalist, I would have nominated Mr. Meister for the teacher’s award,” Pollis said. “He taught me how to really look at history, to be a better writer and to think critically. Pollis’s exceptional writing skills have already paid off. He recently won a $2,000 scholarship from the Negro Leagues Committee, Society for American Base ball Research. Pollis received the award for an essay he wrote about Jackie Robinson and the Civil Rights Movement.

Community involvement is impor tant to Pollis, who is also a National Merit Commended Student. As a member of the Cleveland Heights citizen group Step It Up, he helped interview Bergson received this award in recognition of her innovative use of technology and interdisciplinary programs in elementary art instruction, her work as a mentor to Case Western Reserve University’s art education graduate students, and the consistently high quality of the artwork produced by her students.

Ms. Bergson is most deserving of this honor,” said Kevin Harrell, Canterbury principal. “She has elevated the level of art instruction at Canterbury candidates for city council and made recommendations during the last election. He is currently on the editorial board of Green Pages, the official publication of the Green Party, and writes about the Cleveland Indians for bleacherreport.com.

Pollis spent his senior year in the Post Secondary Enrollment Option, taking classes at Cleveland State University in western civilizations, Arabic, introduction to fiction and jazz. At Heights High, he was the editor of The Black & Gold, and a member of both the model United Nations team and the political philosophy club. He also played saxophone in the school’s jazz ensemble.

Lewis will attend Brown University in the fall, where he plans to study political science.

Joy Henderson is the parent/community liaison for Heights High.

Bergson is “Outstanding Art Teacher of the Year”

Jaclyn Efjvin

The Northeast Region of the Ohio Art Education Association has voted Ida Bergson, an artist specialist at Canterbury Elementary School, Outstanding Art Teacher 2010.

Bergson received this award in recognition of her innovative use of technology and interdisciplinary programs in elementary art instruction, her work as a mentor to Case Western Reserve University’s art education graduate students, and the consistently high quality of the artwork produced by her students.

“Ms. Bergson is most deserving of this honor,” said Kevin Harrell, Canterbury principal. “She has elevated the level of art instruction at Canterbury
Graduating senior receives the Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship

Lita Gonzalez

Graduating senior Courtney Lovelace is the 2010 recipient of The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship. Lovelace received the award on June 1 at the Cleveland Heights High School Senior Recognition Awards program. She will attend the University of Minnesota in the fall.

The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund was established in 2008 in memory of Officer West, a dedicated member of the Cleveland Heights Police Department who lost his life in the line of duty on May 26, 2007.

The scholarship is awarded each year to a graduating senior from the Law Enforcement/Criminal Justice program at Heights High, who exemplifies Officer West’s honesty, sincerity and commitment to protecting citizens in the community. The scholarship consists of two parts, with $500 awarded on graduation from high school, and a second $500 award.

Collectively, the Cleveland Heights High School Class of 2010 received over $92,000 in local awards, and over $9 million in national scholarship awards.

The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship is made possible by contributions from residents and businesses in Cleveland Heights.

Lita Gonzalez is a community volunteer.

Ad hoc committee forming to consider CH-UH facilities mix

Angela Shaker

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education announced at its June 1 meeting the creation of a new ad hoc facilities committee that will review the district’s school buildings, their condition and usage, and the community’s current and future educational needs.

The committee will begin its work with a review of a recent report by the Ohio School Facilities Commission. The OSFC report, released in April 2010, contains a comprehensive assessment of all of the district’s facilities, including these findings:

1. In terms of their ability to support our current education program, all of the buildings are considered, at best, borderline.

2. The current configuration of the building forces the district to maintain an excessive amount of facilities.

3. Maintaining these excess facilities contributes to a significant cost that could be otherwise used for educational purposes.

4. The total cost to renovate all current facilities to meet OSFC standards is $336,409,000.

The enrollment projections show the current enrollment of 5,053 dropping to 5,980 by the 2019–2020 school year.

For the sake of planning purposes, the commission recommends the district use the projected 2014-2015 figure of 5,744.

The OSFC also provided two sample plans:

1. Construction of all new facilities; and


In response, Superintendent Douglas Heuer said, “These are just samples and are not indicative of the direction the district may choose to take. The OSFC report makes the facts clear. The CH-UH City School District simply has too much building space for the number of students we have, and the configuration of those buildings is inadequate to meet our educational needs. Now is the time to address these issues and we are proposing a measured, cautious approach that seeks the widest input and analysis. We have the chance now to look at our schools and really reimagine our facilities and configuration so that they meet the needs of this community into the future.”

The members of the ad hoc facilities committee will be selected by the administration. The first meeting of the committee is expected to be in September 2010, and the group’s work should be finished by June 2011.

The ad hoc facilities committee will be tasked with the following duties:

1. Review the OSFC assessment report and gather additional data.

2. Develop a recommendation to the board regarding renovation vs. building new; grade configuration; number of facilities; timeline for implementation; and an approach for funding the project.

Angela Shaker is the coordinator of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.
SAGE Initiative (Preparing All Students of Education,” Micheller said. “These initiatives at Cleveland State University, East China University, and the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District are focusing on helping teachers and administrators gain insight into the Chinese educational system, so that they may better educate and prepare students.

In June a team of district administrators and teachers visited several cities in China to meet with Chinese educators, build relationships and immerse themselves in the Chinese educational system. The group included Roxboro Elementary School Principal Tara Grove, and Roxboro teachers Valerie Arnett, Monica Rogers, Sue Miracle, Amy Miracle, Debbie Hirsh, Jennifer Steng, Betsy Neylon, Sheri Fried and Amy Miracle, Debbie Hirsch, Jennifer Grove, and Roxboro teachers Valerie Arnett, Monica Rogers, Sue Miracle, Amy Miracle, Debbie Hirsh, Jennifer Steng, Betsy Neylon, Sheri Fried and Amy Miracle. Also traveling with the group were Dr. Joseph Micheller, director of educational services, and Jeffrey Talbert, assistant superintendent.

“The district has formed important partnerships with the Confucius Institute at Cleveland State University, East China Normal University in Shanghai, Capital University of Economics and Business in Beijing, and the Shanghai Ministry of Education,” Micheller said. “These partnerships are a crucial part of our PASGE Initiative (Preparing All Students for Success in a Global Economy). The district is working on converting the Roxboro campus, over time, into a K-8 International Academy; with the International Baccalaureate curriculum and Mandarin as the primary foreign language. Every year we build stronger relationships with our Chinese counterparts, and this is already paying off for our students.”

“While in China, we participated in conferences, visited schools and furthered dialog with teachers and administrators,” Talbert said. “We signed partnership agreements establishing sister schools for Roxboro Elementary and Roxboro Middle School, and set up technological systems to remain in contact with these schools throughout the school year. We’re looking forward to future initiatives that may include teacher exchanges and joint curriculum projects.”

“This was a great opportunity for our teachers, but our students are the ones who will really benefit,” Grove said. “Our staff brought back photos, videos and many cultural artifacts to share with our kids. We corresponded with our students during the trip, and they were able to follow our journey online. This fall, teachers will be making presentations in their classrooms. This is another way for us to open up the world to our students, and help them look across the globe for sources of knowledge.”

Angee Shaker is the coordinator of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

The winning playwrights received a $100 U. S. Savings Bond. Out of the 21 winning plays, seven were produced from the grades 1–8 entries and three of the high school plays were produced for the Night Kitchen at the Dobama Kids’ Festival.

The Kids’ Playwriting Festival took place at the Dobama Theatre, 1340 Lee Road, from June 17–19. For information, call 216-932-6838 or visit www.dobama.org.

Jacalyn Elvin is the administrative assistant in the office of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.
Goal! U.S. makes it to second round in World Cup
Christine McBurney
When my 17-year-old son asked me if I wanted to go to breakfast with him, I dropped everything and cancelled my workout and lunch plans. Why? Yester-
day, he wasn't even speaking to me.
Soon, however, I figured out just why he wanted to spend time with his mother. The “breakfast” was at the Car-
dee Lee Pub and Grill, which opened early for World Cup fans. My son, one of three senior captains on the Heights High soccer team, puts the “fan” in fanatic. He needed me there to be ad-
mitt ed, to drive, and to pay.
But I didn't care. It was quality time with my son. He and one of his Heights High teammates sat across the bar from us soccer moms. I watched a screen above his head and he above mine. Between missed goals, we talked about college admissions, the upcoming season, and goals, grades, grades. Sometimes, I caught myself watching my son watch the match, especially for the first frustrating 90 minutes as it took overage time for USA to score against Algeria.
In the 91st minute, when Landon Donovan finally scored, the place ex-
ploded. The atmosphere was electric—Donovan finally scored, the place exploded. The atmosphere was electric—
My husband was watching me tend to my son, so I reminded myself to kick the ball the day he learned to walk.
Though we are no longer together, my son’s father and one of his father and his son stay connected via phone.

Every Student, Every Day.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
The Board of Education of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District (the “District”) is seeking Letters of Interest from entities interested in the lease of the former Milliken Elementary School Property located at 1700 Crest Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44121, in Eastern Cuyahoga County (the “Property”).

Entities interested in leasing the Property may obtain from the District at the address set forth below its Request for Letters of Interest detailing the procedures for submitting a Letter of Interest. Letters of Interest should be submitted to the District at the address set forth below not later than 12:00 noon Eastern Standard Time on Friday, August 6, 2010. Letters of Interest received after this date and time will not be accepted.

REQUESTS FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST

The District will select the entity proposing a re-use of the Property the District deems to be in the District’s best interest and in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Requests for Letters of Interest.

Pat Pavichov is currently a resident of the Alazar in Cleveland Heights.
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Mark R. Reich owns the Brew-n-Bistro, located at 20630 North Park Blvd., near the eastern entrance to John Carroll University. His wife plays in an Irish band, the Terriers, and she loves to par-take in jam sessions with her handmates and friends. Naturally, she thought the Brew-n-Bistro would be a great spot to play.

So every third Monday of the month, from 7 to 9 p.m., the Brew-n-Bistro now hosts an acoustic music jam session for all ages. Reich says that anyone who can play an instrument can come in and jam, and anyone can come to listen to the assembled musicians play swing, oldies, bluegrass, Celtic and other genres.

Reich sets up a stage area in a semi-circle, but when more people show up it can become a full circle. “They love to have people hear them,” Reich says, “but they are really playing for themselves. They don’t care if people are applauding, or not.”

If these jam sessions become popular, Reich hopes they’ll take place every other Monday. He would also like to start an open mike night on the Mondays the jam sessions are not taking place.

Besides the new jam sessions, the Brew-n-Bistro is making other changes. Starting in July, it will become a sit-down restaurant in the evenings. The daytime counter service will remain, but after 5 p.m., customers will order from servers who will come to the tables.

The next jam session will take place July 19. The open mike sessions—which Reich thinks will bring in a younger crowd, including high school and college students—will begin in late August, when schools are back in session.

The newly renovated Brew-n-Bistro welcomes musicians every third Monday.

Jennifer Kuhel is a former reporter, trade magazine editor and marketing professional who lives in the Heights. Kuhel writes a blog, http://livewriterepeat.blogspot.com, an essay-style blog that captures her life experiences as a stay-at-home mom to three young girls.

The parent tarp keeps clothes clean

Jennifer Kuhel

Where her boss saw remnants of baby’s breakfast, Meredith Ferguson saw opportunity. The 35-year-old Cleveland Heights resident and advertising executive remembers the exchange that triggered her inner entrepreneur.

“Meredith,” her boss said nearly three years ago, “Seems like every day, you’ve got something new on your clothes.” And she didn’t mean that as a compliment. First, Ferguson was humiliated, then annoyed.

“Every morning, I was trying to do so much—nurse my youngest daughter before work, get myself ready, pack a lunch, think about client meetings I had coming up, and get out the door,” she recalls. “And then without fail, I’d manage to soil my clothes without realizing it, no matter how hard I tried to cover up.”

Ferguson started looking online for a smock that would help. She found nothing that was attractive enough, thick enough or waterproof enough to keep her daughter’s morning mess off of her clothes.

That’s when Ferguson decided she would create a product herself. So for the next few years, Ferguson devoted all of her spare time to developing the Kikou (pronounced “kee-koo”), a stylish, waterproof, machine-washable wrap that protects parents’ clothes from the inevitable dousing of spit-up, formula, rice cereal and peas.

Ferguson launched the product last month, along with her company, Calm the Crazy, LLC.

“I’m proud of her dedication and how hard she’s worked at it,” says Ferguson’s husband, Josh, who stays at home with the couple’s two daughters, Ella, 4, and Evie, 3. “She’s really done it all. She came up with the idea and sold it, but she’s also stuck out all the little things in between that don’t necessarily yield immediate results.”

Ferguson still works full-time in advertising and desired no part in actually making the product. “I wanted it to look and feel high-quality, so I knew that I wanted it professionally manufactured,” she explains, adding that she tried several manufacturers before finding a match right here in the United States. The Virginia-based manufacturer also makes high-end children’s clothing, so Ferguson knew every Kikou would meet her expectations.

So far, Ferguson’s Kikous have mostly local users, like Shaker Heights resident Jenny Steadman, who has two young daughters. Steadman says she uses her Kikou daily. “My youngest daughter spits up all the time and it’s nice to not have to change my clothes as often during the day.”

Ferguson’s goal for the Kikou this year is to continue to build on the steady word-of-mouth success she’s had so far. Right now, the product is available for purchase online at www.calmthecrazy.com. Ferguson is also busy developing two more products that are in keeping with Calm the Crazy’s mission to, as she says, “help manage the chaos of everyday life with kids.” She hopes to launch those products in 2011.

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Revive: A local store with international reach

Kim Sergio Inglis

Amid a unique selection of clothing and accessories, there are thousands of stories inside Revive, Cleveland Heights’ Fair Trade boutique. One story describes the work of Mercado Global, a group of artists in Guatemala, whose skillful crafting of jewelry and textiles is helping to break the cycle of poverty for their daughters. Another story belongs to Gloria, a single mother in Central America, who supports her family with a line of crocheted handbags sold at Revive.

All of the stories are linked together by Lisa Dunn, Revive’s owner, who founded the Lee Road store in 2006, and has since expanded to a second store in Legacy Village. Dunn and her staff make sure the tag on each item includes information about the artisan who created it. “We put a lot of work into the description, making sure there is a story,” says Dunn.

Dunn’s own story merges her background in retail management with subsequent work for a Cleveland-based human rights organization. In that position, Dunn explains, “I learned about the struggle for human rights in labor. In many areas, minimum wage is not a living wage. Fair Trade is an alternative commerce structure—one that is committed to paying producers a living wage, so that they can eat nutritiously, take care of their health and educate their children.”

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Cedar Lee Pub and Grill opens new patio

Anna Schade

After two years under its current ownership, the Cedar Lee Pub has celebrated the grand opening of its new patio. Shaun Bosko, co-owner and general manager, believes the addition will be the focus of the bar this summer.

The patio, located behind the pub, is about 2,000 square feet with a full-service bar, two flat-screen televisions and a large projection screen off to the side. The patio has bar and table seating, with an awning covering about a third of the area. Bosko thinks the patio is a great addition to the place, adding a nice feel to eating outside. He hopes the menu, with a summertime $5 burger-and-beer special, will be a hit. The special runs daily from 3-7 p.m. and into the evenings on Monday. It includes a burger, fries and a 16-ounce Labatt Blue.

The Cedar Lee Pub and Grill serves 30 different burgers and a range of other dishes from $8-$9. Also, on Monday nights, from 10 p.m. until 2 a.m., the bar features karaoke singing—popular among area college students.

Anna Schade is a senior at John Carroll University and a Heights Observer intern.

During a trip to El Salvador several years ago, Dunn met a group of women; all skilled tailors, they were unable to find work in their community because they could not compete with cheaper clothing imported from China. Impressed by their craftsmanship and moved by their story, Dunn commissioned them to make 20 pairs of embroidered pants, which she gave as holiday gifts. Dunn recalls, “In spite of the obstacles they faced, they still lived every day with hope. I was inspired by their resilience to take chances, and work in Fair Trade to bring their work to a retail setting.”

“At the same time I was learning about Fair Trade,” says Dunn, “I felt like a new eye was opened to me for fashion. I learned about hand-blocked fabrics, vegetable and clay dyes, and organic fabrics. I work on product development with the artisans, and buy from about 70 different groups, from 37 different countries.”

She adds, “I am struck by the skill level and desire for work of the people I meet. I know my store has a real social impact. At the same time, we work with the artisans to keep the items we sell unique, fashionable and current.”

New this month is a travel-inspired organic cotton line from Uganda, exclusive to Revive: “These are great basics,” Dunn points out, “with unique details, such as ruching on the side of some pieces.”

While much of her inventory is imported, Dunn sells several domestically produced lines, including belts made in Chicago from factory-discarded seat belts and vintage ribbon. “The same husband and wife who make them also make guitar straps used by my favorite band, Wilco, and sold at Heights Guitars,” reveals Dunn.

Revive’s website, www.revivestore.com, includes links to other Fair Trade stores and organizations, as well as an online shop. A monthly e-newsletter focuses on a particular collection or artisan, and highlights special events, such as trunk shows and fashion shows, and private shopping parties.

“With all the traveling I do, I’m really happy to call Cleveland Heights home,” says Dunn, who has lived here, with her husband, for 10 years. “I think there is something special about this community,” Dunn observes, adding, “Everyone here is committed to keeping the Heights vibrant. There is a strong devotion to independent businesses and restaurants. And when things happen in other parts of the world, because it affects the artisans we work with, Heights residents understand.”

A former marketing professional, Kim Sergio Inglis recently relocated to Cleveland Heights from Brooklyn, NY.
Studio Taylor expands on Fairmount

Debuting a 1,500 square-foot space for manicures, pedicures and keratin relaxer treatments, Studio Taylor owner, Nancy Taylor, said her staff looks forward to pampering clients in the newly expanded Fairmount Boulevard salon.

Tall windows next to manicure stations allow clients to peer out at passersby, while spherical chandeliers, placed above the new area, are reflected in large mirrors. Pops of red accent a new seating area with a couch and director chairs. Shampooing sinks and makeup stations have been shifted to give everyone a little more “elbow room,” Taylor noted.

“The staff is incredibly enthusiastic about the space, especially all the natural light,” she said, “and the clients love it. We’re also seeing a return of clients we haven’t seen in a long time because the space has improved.”

Designer Judy Kushner developed the concept for the chic, welcoming space, and architect Todd Mayher was instrumental in constructing the addition.

Studio Taylor opened in 1996 with two manicure stations and four chairs for cutting and styling hair. Today, 11 hairdressing stations line the walls of the 3,580 square-foot facility. Four complete manicure stations and a few pedicure chairs are available, and the salon continues to update services, with spray tanning under consideration for the future. The studio is the first in the area to go almost completely ammonia-free, which is better for customers and for the environment, Taylor explained. Clients seem pleased with the service—and the new digs. Curtains on either side of each pedicure station can be drawn for privacy or pulled away for groups, according to Taylor, who remembered: “We once had three women in here for pedicures, and they were all expecting babies at the same time.”

All generations are welcome at Studio Taylor, from children to their mothers and grandmothers, Taylor said, noting her clients are friendly and eclectic. The salon’s new look, she said, aims to please them all.

“We wanted to maintain a connection with the neighborhood,” she explained. “If they’re finishing up working out, or walking their dog, or coming from work, we want them to feel comfortable in what they have on.”

Kelli Fontenot is a journalist living in Cleveland Heights.

Quality service and a friendly atmosphere are priorities for Nancy Taylor (right), owner of Studio Taylor on Fairmount Boulevard. Designer Judy Kushner developed the concept for the chic, welcoming space, and architect Todd Mayher was instrumental in constructing the addition. Studio Taylor opened in 1996 with two manicure stations and four chairs for cutting and styling hair. Today, 11 hairdressing stations line the walls of the 3,580 square-foot facility. Four complete manicure stations and a few pedicure chairs are available, and the salon continues to update services, with spray tanning under consideration for the future. The studio is the first in the area to go almost completely ammonia-free, which is better for customers and for the environment, Taylor explained. Clients seem pleased with the service—and the new digs. Curtains on either side of each pedicure station can be drawn for privacy or pulled away for groups, according to Taylor, who remembered: “We once had three women in here for pedicures, and they were all expecting babies at the same time.”

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Kelli Fontenot is a journalist living in Cleveland Heights.

Cedar Fairmount district sports new street signs

Kaye Lowe

Neighbors, merchants and professionals turned out for a June 23 patio party celebrating the installation of 15 new street signs in the Cedar Fairmount business district. The Mad Greek and the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District hosted the reception to thank all who had contributed to making the signs a reality.

Fifteen signs along Cedar Road, from Norfolk Road to Euclid Heights Boulevard, have replaced the generic green ones. The signs, designed by artist Raymond Bugelski, feature the historic Heights Center Building and the individual street names. Peggy Spaeth, executive director of Heights Arts, oversaw the project.

Councilman Kenneth Montlack and Sal Russo, Sr., president of the Cedar Fairmount SID, presented certificates of appreciation and proclamations to Bugelski, Spaeth, and neighbors Michael Weil and Jan Kious.

For the past two years Weil and Kious spearheaded Friends of Cedar Fairmount’s fund drive for the signs. Neighbors raised money at block parties and through solicitation letters. The SID also contributed funds.

The new signs, along with the four gateway signs at the district’s entrances— unify street elements with the district’s architecture. The SID plans to raise additional funds to replace the masthead street signs, install a new sign on the traffic island at the intersection of Cedar Road and Fairmount Boulevard, and purchase street benches incorporating the logo.

There will be a Friends of Cedar Fairmount meeting in July to discuss the group’s involvement in the Cedar Fairmount neighborhood and future projects. For information, call 216-891-3172.

Kaye Lowe is the executive director of the Cedar Fairmount SID.

Funky Hippo opens on Lee

Dawn Ward and her daughter-in-law, Lauren, have opened a new store in the petite storefront that formerly housed Simply Charmign. Funky Hippo is located at 2265 Lee Road and is open 12 p.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

“The store offers an eclectic mix of clothing, housewares and other items for anyone who lives, or is trying to live, outside of the box,” says Ward.

This is the second location for the store. Ward has operated the original Funky Hippo in downtown Akron for eight years.

Attend Funky Hippo’s open house on Saturday, July 24, from 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. Raw Purr (www.rawpurr.com) will give a special closing performance at Kobalt next door from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m.

For more information visit www.funkyhippo.com or call 216-233-0774.
Heights Writes

Meredith Holmes

Between the celebrations, graduations, and milestones, life is made of smaller, private moments, no less important, and often more poignant.

Elegy for Our Old Car

By Amy Kesegich

Our old car carried us “Just Married,” squinting in the March sun eighteen years ago. We had the red Chevy towed the other day. We waved as if we were sending it off to college, or war—some quest that didn’t include us. The tow-truck driver grunted as he harnessed one battered nag to the other. Our children took our picture where we stood once before, rosy in our blue jeans in front of our blushing new car.

Amy Kesegich, Ph.D. is an assistant professor of English at Notre Dame College of Ohio. She has published poetry in Whiskey Island, California Quarterly, Frost Notes, Poetry Motel, White Pelican Review Rubbertop Review and Poetography. She has a chapbook, Space Change, published by Bits Press. She lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband and their two children.

Community to choose movie for Aug. 12

Deanna Bremer Fisher

This summer the Coventry Village Special Improvement District is offering free family movies and music at Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park on Thursday nights.

Every week, through Aug. 12, families are invited to gather at the park (at the corner of Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard) to play, enjoy live performances and catch a summer movie. Bring a picnic or grab a bite to eat on Coventry before the show. Musical entertainment begins at 7:30 p.m. and the movie screenings begin at 9 p.m.

The series culminates Aug. 12 with the Party in the P.E.A.C.E. Park, a community picnic, sponsored by your community newspaper, the Heights Observer. Festivities begin at 6 p.m. and will include jugglers, balloon twisting and the Bubble Lady. Mo Mojo will provide the musical entertainment.

Heights residents will choose the Aug. 12 movie. Vote online for your favorite one of the following: Babe, Man in Black, Groundhog Day, Hairspray (the remake) or ET. You can also write in a movie for next year’s schedule. Voting ends at 3 p.m. on July 31. The movie with the most votes will be shown Aug. 12.

For more information and to vote, go to www.futureheights.org or www.coventryvillage.org.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of Future Heights, the nonprofit that publishes the Heights Observer.

Book Review

Morton tells another important CH story

Hugh Fisher

Marian Morton’s latest chronicle of Cleveland Heights, The Overlook of Cleveland and Cleveland Heights (Arcadia Publishing), is another example of the author’s skill at uncovering heretofore unpublished vintage images, and knitting them together with sound research and a good story. Aficionados of Cleveland Heights history are the beneficiaries.

Morton and coauthors Patrick Calhoun’s development of the Euclid Heights Allotment generally, but focuses more specifically on the westernmost portion of the allotment known as The Overlook. Falling within both Cleveland Heights and Cleveland, The Overlook largely duplicated the grandeur of Euclid Avenue, when some of that storied avenue’s most prominent residents made the Heights their new address.

Perhaps inevitably, The Overlook fell on hard times with the changing fortunes of its residents. Some of these difficult-to-maintain houses became multifamily dwellings, and many more were repurposed by institutions, notably Ursuline College. When the wrecking ball began to swing, at least one of these properties became something arguably better—the First Church of Christ, Scientist, now Nottingham-Spark Design Associates—while most were replaced by buildings ranging from mediocre to unsightly.

Morton’s reporting leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions. One view is that this is a chronicle of another great loss for Cleveland Heights and Cleveland. Ursuline College can be commended for becoming good stewards of several of these properties, but when Western Reserve University demolished them. Indeed, the destruction of the residences on Cuff Road by CWRU is tragic and myopic.

Euclid Avenue was a victim of an era. Many decades later, from the late 1960s to as late as 1990, both Cleveland Heights and Cleveland were still failing to protect some of their greatest and most unique assets, showing a lack of vision and insensitivity to the history and fabric of a neighborhood.

Hugh Fisher is a resident of Fairmount Boulevard and coauthor of Euclid Golf Neighborhood, published by Arcadia.

The Overlook of Cleveland and Cleveland Heights, $21.99, Arcadia Publishing. Available at local retailers, such as Mac’s Book and Applebee Books, online bookstores, or through Arcadia Publishing at www.arcadiapublishing.com or 888-215-9665.

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Dobama previews 51st season

Evan Komito

It was less than 24 hours after the lights went down on the extended run of the season’s biggest hit at Dobama. The set had already been struck, so you might think that there would have been a good opportunity for the troupe to do a little resting on its laurels. Think again.

At a reception held at its Lee Road home on June 6, Dobama’s board members and directors talked with subscribers about what had been accomplished during the theater’s 51st season. They were equally eager to cast a spotlight on the hits for the past.

Board President Bill Newby recounted the long hours and hard work that took place last September to get Dobama’s new home ready for a full season. All available resources were put to work, and the smiles on subscriber faces told Newby it had all been worth it. The power of the press was abundantly clear, as news for Humble Boy led to full houses and an extended run.

Managing Director Diane Boduszek was pleased to announce plans for both new and ongoing programming at Dobama. Leading the way this summer is the 32nd annual Marilyn Bianchi Kids’ Playwriting Festival, inspiring the creation of plays by area 1st through 12th graders. This year, festival judges received more than 300 manuscripts, from which 21 have earned awards, seven will be presented in showcase productions, and an additional three will be staged for more mature audiences in Night Kitchen productions.

The nurturing of local theatrical talent is also a key component of Dobama’s mission. Aspiring actors should take note of the Dobama Emerging Actors Program. Aimed at high school and undergraduate college students, this comprehensive month-long program focuses on acting technique, and culminates with performances for the public during the last week of July. Other ambitious plans include a Playwrights Gym to give emerging playwrights a chance to workshop their scripts with local directors; a new collaboration with Kent State University that will bring MFA students to the Dobama stage; and Late Night Productions, an effort to bring edgy plays to twenty-somethings during the season.

The sound you hear from the base of 2340 Lee Road is the buzz of activity that it takes to secure Dobama’s place in the community for years to come. Artistic Director Joel Petermann plans to present plays and playwrights that are new and different. In fact, 98 percent of Dobama’s mainstage productions have been Cleveland, American or world premiers. That will continue during its 51st season with Ena Walsh’s award-winning The Walrus & the Calf, Sarah Ruhl’s captivating Dead Man’s Cell Phone, Paul Rudnick’s outrageous comedy The New Centurty and Annie Baker’s off-Broadway hit Circle Mirror Transformation. Arrangements for a fifth mainstage production are still in the works.

Boduszek announced that Dobama is celebrating its 51st year with Enda Walsh’s award-winning Circle Mirror Transformation. Arrange for a clutch-popping trip through the states of klezmer, Yiddish (“trouble”) for a clutch-popping trip through the states of klezmer, Yiddish and Jewish Theater, 1919–1949,” presented at the Jewish Museum in New York City in 2008 and 2009, and San Francisco’s Contemporary Jewish Museum in 2009. “Driving Mr. Klezmer” will be performed Thursday, July 29, at 7 p.m., in Cain Park’s Alma Theatre. Tickets are $20 in advance, $23 day of show. For more information, contact www.cainpark.com or 216-371-3000.

Bert Stratton is a Cleveland Heights resident and leader of the klezmer band Yiddishe Cup.

Local artists take Long Road back to Elektra’s ‘60s heyday

David Budin

Last summer I read Follow the Music, the autobiography of Jac Holzman, the visionary founder and longtime president of Elektra Records. Elektra became the premier label of the original singer-songwriter movement in the 1960s. Reading the book, I realized that 2010 is the 60th anniversary of the label’s founding.

Because my group, Long Road, has performed in Cain Park’s Alma Theater for the past few years, and always with a themed concert, I decided that Elektra would make a great theme for a 2010 concert. Long Road’s show, on Tuesday, July 27, is titled “The Power and the Glory: A Tribute to Elektra Records in the ’60s.”

Tickets are $20 in advance, $23 the day of the show, and are available through Cain Park: 216-371-3000 or www.cainpark.com.

The means we get to play songs by all of Elektra’s major ‘60s artists, including Phil Ochs, Tom Paxton, Tom Rush, Judy Collins, Tim Hardin, Tim Buckley, Bob Gibson, Hamilton Camp, Fred Neil, and even Theodore Bikel and the Limeliters. And because Rush and Collins were the first artists to record songs by James Taylor, Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen and Jackson Browne—even before those artists recorded their own songs—we’ll do those, too.

The singer-songwriter movement, in which those artists played major roles, proved highly significant for several reasons. Among them is that the songs helped to spread the messages of the day, more effectively than at any previous time in history. There were many messages to be spread, given the number of burgeoning social movements of the time. Of course, all of these artists wrote plenty of love songs, too. Another of their long-lasting legacies is that from that point on, almost all folk and pop musicians have written their own songs.

I used to write all my own songs, too. But I “retired” from performing for a long time, and when I began to perform again, I decided that there were too many great songs that most people haven’t heard, or heard too long ago. So Long Road mostly performs these, in intricate arrangements involving combinations of 16 instruments, with lots of vocal harmony.

Long Road’s musicians have played professionally for a collective total of more than 200 years, and all have local roots. Kevin Richards, Ray DeForest and I all live in Cleveland Heights. Shaker Heights native Celia Hollander Lewis and her husband, Charlie Lewis, used to live in Cleveland Heights, but now live in Athens, Ohio. Bob Sandham, who also used to live in Cleveland Heights, lives in Chesteland.

David Budin, leader of Long Road, is a lifetime Cleveland Heights resident.
Heights doctors trip the light fantastic

Linda Gilmore

Heights doctors have found that the graceful movement of the Viennese waltz, the sophistication of the fox-trot, the romance of the tango, and the smooth flight of the quick-step dance are not only fun but may provide health benefits for the body and mind.

While researchers at such institutions as the Mayo Clinic and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine have reported on the health benefits of dance, Heights doctors know from personal experience that dance is a good way to condition the body, increase stamina and flexibility, improve balance, aid memory, and relieve stress while having fun at the same time.

R. John Leigh, M.D., and Diana J. Leigh, LISW, have studied ballroom dancing for seven years with award-winning teacher and choreographer Dick Blake. Initially motivated to prepare for three weddings they were attending in 2003, the couple has remained serious students of dance, taking two one-hour lessons per week.

Leigh, the Blair-Daroff professor of neurology and professor of neuroscience and biomedical engineering at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and director of the ocular motility laboratory at the Cleveland VA Medical Center, recommends dance to his patients with neurological disorders, to improve balance.

When asked what he and his wife liked most about dancing, Leigh responded, “the thrill.”

James Jacobberger, Ph.D., and his wife, Suzi, have studied dance with Blake for 18 years. Recently celebrating their 43rd wedding anniversary, Jacobberger recalls how Suzi enrolled the couple for lessons as a 25th anniversary gift. They have been dancing ever since.

Through dance they experience the joy of movement and romance. Hollywood-style via Blake’s choreographed routines, similar to those of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers.

“If I had been born with a different trait of Surfing in Cleveland, Ohio,” a film about people who surf in Lake Erie. The film played to three sold-out screenings at the Cleveland International Film Festival in March. “Out of Place” provides rare insight into the lives of some of these surfers, including Cleveland Heights’ own Rich Stack.

“He basically steals the show,” says codirector Darrin McDonald, “but we love the home crowds most.”

While surfing is normally viewed as a warm-climate and ocean activity, Lake Erie surfers rely on harsh fall and winter storms for waves. This film has made people aware of the shockingly cold conditions the surfers endure. The region’s weather, with Cleveland as a backdrop, makes for some striking imagery. The soundtrack, by all local musicians, enhances the mood.

The film premiered at the New York Surf Film Festival at Tribeca, winning the Audience Award for Best Feature. Invitations to screen in California, New Zealand, Hawaii and the Netherlands soon followed. “It’s been fun traveling,” says McDonald, “but we love the home crowds most of all.”

The screening of “Out of Place,” which coincides with the exhibit Lake Effects at the Heights Arts Gallery (next to the Cedar Lee Theatre), takes place on Saturday July 24, at 4 p.m., at the Cedar Lee.

For more information visit www.outofplacemovie.com.

Scott Ditzenberger is a filmmaker who loves Cleveland Heights, especially the Cedar Lee Theatre. He directed “Out of Place, A Portrait of Surfing in Cleveland, Ohio.”

Linda Gilmore has lived in Cleveland Heights for 35 years. Currently manager of interdisciplinary programs at Case Western Reserve University, she will retire in July to pursue personal interests, including ballroom dancing.

Local surfing film coming to Cedar Lee

Scott Ditzenberger

Northeast Ohioans will get another chance to see “Out of Place: A Portrait of Surfing in Cleveland, Ohio,” a film about people who surf in Lake Erie. The film played to three sold-out screenings at the Cleveland International Film Festival in March. “Out of Place” provides rare insight into the lives of some of these surfers, including Cleveland Heights’ own Rich Stack.

“He basically steals the show,” says codirector Darrin McDonald, “You just love characters like Rich, who are so dedicated to the lake.”

While surfing is normally viewed as a warm-climate and ocean activity, Lake Erie surfers rely on harsh fall and winter storms for waves. This film has made people aware of the shockingly cold conditions the surfers endure. The region’s weather, with Cleveland as a backdrop, makes for some striking imagery. The soundtrack, by all local musicians, enhances the mood.

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“Out of Place” chronicles Lake Erie surfers.

Acknowledgments

Linda and Grover Gilmore learned to dance for a wedding and haven’t stopped yet.

The Heights Observer, July 7, 2010
Special assembly at Heights High: how safe is the water?

Peg Weissbrod

On May 27, a select group of Heights High students participated in a special assembly in the school auditorium. Their topic was water quality, specifically that in the Dugway Brook Watershed.

The assembly was the culmination of an unusual student-community collaboration. Participating students were from Janett Korb’s 9th-grade honors biology class and Steve Warner’s and Samantha Greene’s special education classes in science and English. Two years ago, working with Transition Coordinator Laura Stuart-Lilley, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, the Cuyahoga County Board of Health and the City of Cleveland Heights, students collected data about water quality in portions of Dugway Brook.

The book is part of the Dugway Brook Watershed, a nine-square-mile basin. It flows through Cleveland Heights, University Heights, Shaker Heights, South Euclid, East Cleveland, and Bratenahl before emptying into Lake Erie. A section of the brook runs behind the Cumberland Pool.

According to Richard Wong, director of planning and development for Cleveland Heights, the city received an EPA grant of $318,876 to make the Cumberland parking lot safer for the watershed. Wong contacted the school to suggest an educational component to the project.

Data collected by the students will be used to compare water quality before and after changes have been made. The changes include bioswales to capture rainwater, allowing it to seep slowly into the ground instead of flowing directly into the brook.

Working with Domenica McClintock and Laura Travers from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Korb’s biology students learned water-sampling protocols and volunteered their time to test samples from Dugway Brook. They collected samples at four different sites along the brook, and tested them on four different days.

The students presented their test results at the assembly. Emily Klein and Alex Radivoyevitch reported on the pH levels and turbidity of the water. Ethan Tucker and Nate Schuck measured the amount of phosphates they found, while Samantha Clark and Lily Gould looked for the presence of dissolved oxygen and chlorine.

Joe Cook tested the water for fecal coliform bacteria, and Japera Benson measured the amount of nitrates in the water.

The students explained that they wore protective gear when obtaining the water samples. But when asked by an audience member whether the brook was “stinky” after it rained, Lily Gould gave an emphatic “yes!”

Warner’s and Greene’s classes studied ways to keep pollution out of our drinking water. They produced a video encouraging their fellow students to follow smart water practices in their daily lives.

The classes also designed an educational handout on ways to protect the watershed.

When Zoe Cook was asked whether the project might lead her to pursue a career in science, she gave a qualified “yes,” but added that she was “more interested in forensic science than water management.” Classmate Japera Benson hopes to study psychology, but believes the project helped prepare her for the many science classes she will need to take in college.

Peg Weissbrod is a freelance writer and a Heights High alumna.

City of CH seeks nominations for awards programs

Heights Observer Staff

The City of Cleveland Heights’ Community Improvement Awards Committee and the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission are accepting nominations for their annual awards programs.

Residents may nominate a deserving homeowner for a Community Improvement Award or a Tender Loving Care Award. Residents who have worked hard to improve their property may nominate themselves.

For nomination forms, visit www.clevelandheights.com.

The forms should be completed and returned to the City of Cleveland Heights, 40 Severance Circle, by Aug. 1. The winners will be honored at the Community Improvement Awards Ceremony on Thursday, Sept. 10.

For more information about the Community Improvement Awards, call the community relations department, 216-291-2123. For more information about the Historic Preservation Awards, call 216-291-4885.

If we give up the movie series it sends the wrong message,” said Presser.

“We should come out in numbers. This is our neighborhood and we will not be run out of our own backyard.”

Attendance at the July 1 showing was described as an average size crowd for such events held in the past.

Anna Schade is a senior at John Carroll University and a summer intern at the Heights Observer.
Painting aluminum siding: is it a good or a bad idea?

Don Milewski

Many Northeast Ohio homes that were built in the 60s, 70s and 80s were finished with aluminum siding. Homeowners were led to believe that the exteriors of their homes would be “maintenance free.” In fact, repainting your aluminum siding for vinyl siding. Moreover, vinyl siding is not only more expensive but also harder to maintain. Vinyl siding is not as maintenance as you might think. Actually, repainting your aluminum siding is a great solution, if it is done correctly. Under normal circumstances, a properly completed job will last upwards of 15 years. Most homeowners will power-wash their siding before painting it, and this is an essential step. The key to a long-lasting job, however, is to hand-scrub the entire exterior surface with detergent. Several people—some even painting contractors—skip this step because it’s very time consuming and requires a lot of elbow grease, but this single step can make your paint job last up to four times longer. It is also important to note that some companies mix bonding additives to the paint before applying it, claiming this enables them to skip the power-washing and scrubbing steps entirely. At Neubert Painting, we have found that this solution is not effective because the paint still needs a sound surface with which to bind. Thinking about replacing your aluminum siding with a vinyl product? Consider this. First, it is much more cost-effective to repaint aluminum siding. In fact, refinish aluminum siding is approximately one-third the cost of new vinyl siding. Moreover, vinyl siding is not as maintenance free as you might think. After about 15 years, the vinyl begins to fade and lose its finish as well. Finally, while vinyl siding manufacturers may offer a dozen or so color choices, paint offers almost unlimited color options.

Better to hire a pro

While it is possible to repaint your aluminum siding on your own, keep in mind that the materials and equipment needed for the job are expensive. This cost, combined with the extensive prep work exterior painting requires and the difficulty of mastering a paint sprayer—it’s harder than it looks—might make housepainting too challenging for most homeowners. If you decide to hire a professional for your siding project, research the contractors who advertise this service. Ask for references that go back at least five years. This will give you a better idea of the quality of their work and the longevity of their completed jobs. Also, check with the Better Business Bureau. A good contractor should have an “A” rating, or at least will have resolved any complaints made against the company. Be sure that all job specifications, including the products that will be used, length of time to complete the job, and any warranty information, is spelled out in the contract. Repainting aluminum siding is a viable and economical solution. Getting a professional result, however, requires intense surface preparation, high-quality products and proper execution of the project from start to finish.

Don Milewski is operations manager for Neubert Painting in Lakewood, Ohio.

HRRC workshops make home remodel affordable

Rebecca Stager

Larry Coleman returned with his wife, Lisa Lock, to his home town of Cleveland Heights in 2008 after 27 years away purchasing a house on Scarborough Road just west of Lee Road. Built in 1917, the house had undergone a major remodeling in the 1970s, with the addition of glass block walls, rounded corners, and other art deco features. Since then, however, the house had been let go, and was now a “serious fix-upper” with more than 80 point-of-sale violations.

Early on, Coleman discovered the hands-on workshops offered by Home Repair Resource Center. He enrolled in electrical and plumbing classes and started to remodel the five bathrooms in his house, none of which were in working order. Coleman, who describes himself and his wife as pretty adventurous, jumped right into the one that was least problematic, and moved on to more serious remodeling—including completing a half bathroom that literally started out as a hole in the floor. Perhaps their biggest project was the kitchen, a project that involved gutting walls, creating an entranceway, and constructing a countertop, in addition to plumbing and electrical work.

Coleman credits HRRC’s workshops with preventing problems, although he admits to making a few mistakes along the way. Even with those errors, he is sure that doing the work himself was much cheaper than hiring a professional, and he takes satisfaction in how his skills have improved.

Coleman also learned plaster repair and installation—key steps in his job. He declares that he “hates plaster.” So, for the ceilings he designed a system of removable OSB panels that provide easy access to run new electrical, water and drain lines for the bathrooms above and fit nicely with the décor of the home.

Self-described “perfect green citizen,” Coleman and Lock are regular workshop attendees use the experience to find materials in different ways. He credits HRRC for helping him to bring to life the vision he and his wife have for their home.

Becky Stager, home repair education program coordinator at HRRC since 1989, is always excited when workshop attendees use the skills they learn to improve their home.
Chan awarded Zonta Scholarship for the second year

Maria Chan was presented with a Zonta scholarship award for the second year at the “Cocktails and Cabaret” event at Executive Caterers at Landerhaven on April 17. Chan was selected because of her outstanding leadership, community service and scholastic achievement. She has just completed her freshman year at MIT where she is studying chemistry and Arabic. She plans to eventually earn her Ph.D. in biochemistry.

Chan traveled to India this past January and had the opportunity to study contemporary and Mughal architecture. To find out more about the Zonta Club of Cleveland, visit www.zontacleve.org.

The Nettelhorst Revolution

By Eleanor Mallet

Jacqueline Edelberg came to town to talk about innovation—a key word in education—but she actually put forth a surprisingly retro idea: the neighborhood school.

Edelberg, with school principal Susan Kurland, wrote a book about their experience with a Chicago public elementary school. Theirs is a story about the energy and creativity that is unleashed when moms, whose bonds were forged on the play lot, connect with strong, capable school leadership.

“We believed that we were entitled, that the system should work for us,” Edelberg said.

I had the same conviction when my children were about to enter school: I live here and pay my taxes, why shouldn’t my children go to school here?

The book, titled How to Walk to School: Blueprint for a Neighborhood School Renaissance, was Edelberg’s topic when she spoke to about 25 people at the Lee Road Library in June.

Eight years ago, the Nettelhorst School and the East Lakeview neighborhood were alienated from each other. Almost all the children were bused in from seven overcrowded schools. The turnover of students was over 50 percent a year, and only 30 percent were functioning at or above grade level.

Edelberg loved her neighborhood, which she compared to Tremont in Cleveland. Rather than move to the suburbs, a group of eight moms decided to meet with the principal, Susan Kurland.

“What do I have to do to get your kids here?” Principal Kurland asked, after hearing them out. The women returned the next day with a five-page list. “Let’s get busy,” Kurland said. “We have a lot of work to do.” A partnership was born.

“The building was uninviting. Artists painted the halls and classrooms with murals. ‘We woke it up,’ Edelberg said. ‘Schools should be delicious.’”

“Schools are at every sandbox in America.” Edelberg said. “But,” she insisted, “money did not power the Nettelhorst revolution. People did. Nettelhorst is a product of good leadership and the neighborhood buying it.”

Many forces eroded neighborhood schools: busing, working parents, security issues, poverty, the divisiveness of race and class, mobility and more.

Public schools are in a tough market, competing not only with private and religious schools, but also with charter schools and voucher programs. Edelberg, however, is not daunted. Nettelhorst, she believes, can hold its own with any school.

Joan Spoerl, whose son will enter Fairfax Elementary in the fall, initiated the invitation to Edelberg to speak in Cleveland Heights. “She is me eight years ago,” the author said, looking over at Spoerl. “[Potential school advocates] are at every sandbox in America.”

Is the Nettelhorst experience unique? Of course it is. But every school is a living organism, and each must solve its own problems. To the public school naysayers, Nettelhorst is a shining example of what can be done. For more information about Edelberg’s book and the Nettelhorst revolution, go to www.bowdoralknitsbschul.com.

Eleanor Mallet’s column, “A Heights Observer,” explores the nooks and crannies in the Heights. She can be reached at claramal le@yaoo.com.

Join the book discussion July 14 and August 19 at 7 p.m. at the Lee Road Library.

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Kelley Robinson

Cedar Lee business owners aren’t letting the economy get them down. Instead, they are focusing on summer activities and customer appreciation.

Recognizing that consumers have many options when it comes to shopping, dining or essential services, the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District wants to thank customers for continuing to support local businesses.

Each month, on popular patio locations in the district, free “Rock the Cedar Lee” events offer hearty appetizers, soft drinks, door prizes and live music courtesy of the Cedar Lee SID. The first event occurred on the new patio of the Cedar Lee Pub & Grill, and featured the tropical melodies of the University of Akron Steel Drum Band Trio.

The next appreciation event will take place on July 22 at 6 p.m. at Brennan’s Colony, and features the indie rock sounds of Northeast Ohio favorite, Zach. One of the door prizes includes an overnight stay at the Lodge and Conference Center at Geneva-on-the-Lake.

The final “Rock the Block” event will be held on Aug. 19 at Anatolia Café from 6-8 p.m., and features the Summit Jazz Duo. In addition, it’s the annual Family Night Out, featuring area favorites—the Euclid Beach Rocket Car and the zany balloon art of Swiftly the Clown. There also will be fun activities at the Heights Library, ice cream, games and more.

Watch for further details. The Cedar Lee business owners hope to see everyone on the patio! Kelley Robinson is the director of the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District.

The Home Repair Resource Center’s annual spring fundraiser was a tremendous success. This year the event, which ran from April 19 through May 2, was held at Bremec Garden Center on Cedar Road.

In the past, the fundraiser featured a bagged mulch sale. Supporters placed advance orders for pick-up or delivery, with a portion of each sale donated to HRRC.

This year Bremec donated a portion of every sale accompanied by an HRRC voucher, which were widely distributed and advertised in the Heights Observer. HRRC’s executive director, Kathryn Lad, said, “This year’s event was terrific, and generated much excitement in the community.”

HRRC board members were on hand to provide vouchers to shoppers and information about the programs that this fundraiser will support. On the two Sunday event days, shoppers were treated to free hot dogs while they purchased plants and supplies for their gardens.

Bob Bremec, owner of Bremec Garden Centers, said, “It is great to work with HRRC because they make a real difference in the community [by] helping to maintain the vitality of homes and neighborhoods. I am looking forward to working with HRRC again next year.”

HRRC thanks Bremec on the Heights and everyone who made purchases during the fundraiser.

Mike Gaynier is president of the HRRC Board of Trustees.
Community events

Thursday, July 8
Music & Movies Under the Stars
7:30 p.m. music by Booker Night with Eve n’ Stephen and Harry Bachrach
9 p.m. “Grown”
Cowhey P.E.A.C.E Park at Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard

Thursday, July 8
University Heights Summer Concert Series
Clear Fork Bluegrass Quartet
Family Fun Night with Heights Parent Center
7:30–9 p.m., Wiley Middle School lawn, 2181 Miramar Blvd.

Thursday, July 8
Music & Movies Under the Stars
7:30 p.m. music by Revolution Brass Band
7–8 p.m., Van Ness’s Colony, 2299 Lee Road

Thursday, July 22
Cedar Lee Rock the Block
Complimentary appetizers, soft drinks and entertainment by Zach
6–8 p.m., Van Ness’s Colony, 2299 Lee Road

Thursday, July 22
Music & Movies Under the Stars
7:30 p.m. music by Dave Brower Drums
9 p.m. “Madagascar”
Cowhey P.E.A.C.E Park at Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard

Thursday, July 22
University Heights Summer Concert Series
Mark Grey & the Northcoast Jazz Collective
7:30–9 p.m., Wiley Middle School lawn, 2181 Miramar Blvd.

Thursday, July 22
University Heights Summer Concert Series
Music & Movies Under the Stars
7:30 p.m. music by Roots of American Music Jug Band
9 p.m. “Chasin’ Gus’ ghost”
Cowhey P.E.A.C.E Park at Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard

Thursday, July 29
University Heights Summer Concert Series
Straight Six Date
9 p.m., Cedar Farmhouse business district

Thursday, Aug. 5
University Heights Summer Concert Series
Frank Morsiek Polka Band
7–8 p.m., Wiley Middle School lawn, 2181 Miramar Blvd.

Thursday, Aug. 5
Music & Movies Under the Stars
7:30 p.m. music by The Music Settlement Suzuki students
9 p.m. “August Rush”
Cowhey P.E.A.C.E Park at Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard

Sunday, Aug. 8
Discover Cedar Fairmount-Discover the Arts Festival
Noon to 4 p.m., Cedar Farmhouse business district

Thursday, Aug. 12
University Heights Summer Concert Series
7:30 p.m. music by The Music Settlement Suzuki students
9 p.m., Wiley Middle School lawn, 2181 Miramar Blvd.

Thursday, Aug. 19
University Heights Summer Concert Series
Yiddish Cup Klezmer Band
7–8 p.m., Wiley Middle School lawn, 2181 Miramar Blvd.

Thursday, Aug. 19
Cedar Lee Rock the Block-Annaoth Cafe
Complimentary appetizers, soft drinks and entertainment by the Summit Jazz Duo.
6–8 p.m., Annaoth Cafe, 2570 Lee Road

Thursday, Aug. 19
Cedar Lee Rock the Block- Lee Road Library
Family friendly evening including balloon art by Swiftly the Clown, free rides on the Euclid Beach Rocket Car, ice cream and games at the Heights Library.
6–8 p.m., Lee Road Library

Community events

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