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Volume 3

Number 8

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Observer election policy

With the November election coming into focus, the *Heights Observer* is announcing its policy for contributions by candidates for local office.

As a community newspaper staffed by volunteers and committed to equal access for everyone, the *Observer* is unique among publications in providing opportunity for any member of the Cleveland Heights and University Heights communities to raise and discuss issues of local interest.

At election time, however, this commitment creates a singular challenge in managing the finite space that can be made available for community members who are running for public office.

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FutureHeights inducts four to innovators circle

Deanna Bremer Fisher

FutureHeights, a nonprofit dedicated to civic engagement, honored four Heights residents at its annual meeting in June by inducting them into the Innovators Circle.

Gina Cheverine, board president said, "FutureHeights created the Innovators Circle in 2009 to honor the vision and efforts of people who exemplify the organization's mission of promoting active and dedicated citizens who give their vision and energy to make our communities the best they can be."

Tuni and Lee Chilcote, Heights residents for more than 40 years, were honored for their involvement in community issues. Lee Chilcote, an attorney, served on Cleveland Heights City Council. Tuni Chilcote was involved in numerous volunteer projects at her church and neighborhood school. Through their family foundation, The Katherine & Lee Chilcote Foundation, they invested in numerous Heights initiatives, including the launch of the *Heights Observer* community newspaper.

Diana Woodbridge was honored for her community activism. Reverend John Lentz, who introduced her at the induction ceremony, said she exempli-



Lee and Tuni Chilcote are inducted into the Innovators Circle by Sarah Wean, FutureHeights founder and Innovators Circle member at the FutureHeights annual meeting in June.

fied "the Cleveland Heights way—you name the problem, you don't shy away from it, you say what has to be said, then call everybody to the table and get down to work." Woodbridge was involved in many Heights projects, including the founding of the Forest Hill Housing Corporation, which later became the Home Repair Resource Center.

Mark Majewski served as the president of FutureHeights and led the organization's transition from a start-up nonprofit to an established institution. Majewski joined FutureHeights's advocacy committee in 2003 and became a strong leader, helping to keep the organization focused as it struggled to define and prioritize the many advocacy issues

it sought to tackle. Under Majewski's watch, the organization launched the *Heights Observer*.

"We recognize, value and continue to be inspired by their example," said Cheverine, "and thank them for their service to the community."

Last year's inductees to the Innovators Circle were Bill Buss, Greg Donley, Julie Langan, John Milgram, Chuck Miller, Andrea Morris, Sarah Wean and Bob Youdelman.

For more information about FutureHeights and to see video clips of the 2010 inductees, visit www.futureheights.org.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights.

Coventry summer music and movie series ends with tribute to Harvey Pekar

Suzanne DeGaetano

The Coventry neighborhood will honor the memory of writer Harvey Pekar on Thursday, Aug. 12 as part of the Party in the P.E.A.C.E. Park, a community picnic and the final event in this summer's Coventry Village Music & Movie Series.

The movie "American Splendor," based on Pekar's life and work, will screen, preceded by locally produced film and video trailers featuring Pekar. Some of his friends and collaborators will speak and provide anecdotes. There will be a table where community members can draw and write their own tribute to the memory of Harvey Pekar. These will be posted in Coventry Village shop windows and on the website, www.coventryvillage.org.

Pekar made Cleveland Heights and the Coventry neighborhood his home, and wrote about their characters and personalities (and a lot of other stuff) in his comic, *American Splendor*. The first issue came out in 1976 and the comics were published almost yearly through 2009.

The tribute is part of a larger event, sponsored by Coventry Village and FutureHeights, which begins at 6 p.m. at the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park at the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road. The evening will feature music by Mo Mojo, an energetic zydeco jam band, and activities for the whole family.

Suzanne DeGaetano is the owner of Mac's Backs on Coventry and a friend of Harvey Pekar.

Voting season heats up with community forums

Jessica Kahn

It promises to be an exciting voting season: more than 90 candidates have filed to run in the elections for Cuyahoga County Executive and County Council.

The primary election will be held on Sept. 7, and the general election on Nov. 2. Polling places for both elections will be open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The following people are candidates for Ward 10, which includes Cleveland Heights, East Cleveland, Bratenahl, and parts of Cleveland: Matt Brakey, Sharon Cole, John Crist, Albert K. Oberst, K. C. Petraitis, Alan Rapoport, Julian Rogers, Barbara J. Thomas and Danny Williams.

The following people are running in Ward 11, which includes University Heights, Beachwood, South Euclid, Lyndhurst, Richmond Heights and Euclid: Rose M. Allen, Philip R. Fine, Kathryn E. Gambatese, Jim Jovner, Joe Liptow, Patrick McLaughlin, Nino Prodan, Phil Robinson, Raymond J. Schmidlin, Jr., Sunny M. Simon and Gregory D. Smith.

The candidates for Cuyahoga County Executive are the following: James F. Brown, Terri Hamilton Brown, Edward FitzGerald, Dianna Lynn Hill, Paul Casey, Matt Dolan, Victor S. Voinovich, Sr. and David Ellison.

The League of Women Voters is hosting several community forums to give voters an opportunity to meet the candidates. Upcoming events for Wards 10 and 11 include the following:

District 11 Primary Election Forum
Aug. 3 at John Carroll University, Dolan

A remembrance by Harvey Pekar's personal reference librarian

Tara Johnson

Comic lovers everywhere are mourning the death of writer and local legend Harvey Pekar. He was found dead by his wife, Joyce Babner, at his Cleveland Heights home just before 1 a.m. on Monday, July 12. Though the exact cause of death of the 70-year-old is still being investigated, Pekar had a history of poor health including lymphatic and prostate cancer, high blood pressure, asthma and—most famously—clinical depression. It was his melancholy



Harvey Pekar

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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:
www.heightsobserver.org/members or e-mail: info@futureheights.org

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PUBLISHER
Deanna Bremer Fisher
dbfisher@futureheights.org

ADVERTISING
Jim Kuth
216.513.3070 or 216.320.1423
jekdoc@yahoo.com

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
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Dan Ott

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
Temma Collins and Ruth D'Emilia

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Opening up the Observer: It's a soapbox, not the soap



Bob Rosenbaum

Retailers spend the year preparing for the holiday shopping season. For accountants, the big month is April. For newspapers, it's whenever there is a major election—which is how I'd classify the selection of Cuyahoga County's first county executive and its new 11-member council.

The election is in two parts: a partisan primary on Sept. 7, and the general election Nov. 2. Voters will cast two ballots—one for the county executive, and another for a single district representative. Cleveland Heights is in District 10; University Heights is in District 11.

As an entity that relies almost solely on submissions from community members, we're not covering the election like a traditional newspaper, which would present a "comprehensive package" of interviews and insights on every candidate.

If we ended up with contributions from every candidate (there are 27 in all for county executive and the two relevant districts) we wouldn't be able to fit them all into the newspaper. That's why, among other election items this month, we've published a policy on contributions from candidates.

In a nutshell, it states that from August-November we will not print anything on any topic that was writ-

ten by a candidate. Why? Because we don't have space in that time frame to offer equal consideration to every other candidate. We will continue to run any candidate contributions at our website, where space isn't an issue. Our policy also states that the *Observer* and its nonprofit parent, FutureHeights, do not endorse or support candidates. It's a soapbox, not the soap.

You'll also find in this issue a brief article that lists the candidates and offers some resources to find information about them, which I hope everyone will do. Our fellow *Observer* papers in other communities have interviewed some of the candidates and we've posted those interviews at www.heightsobserver.org.

As a volunteer newspaper that publishes once a month, the *Observer* simply isn't going to succeed as your primary information source about this important election. Instead, the goal is to be evenhanded with the information we receive.

Bob Rosenbaum, chairman of the Observer's editorial advisory committee and member of the futureheights board, writes this column to provide transparency and understanding about the Observer. Send questions to bob@therosenbaums.net.

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

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

John Crist for District 10 County Council

Last November Cuyahoga County voters decided by a vote of 2-1 on a new form of county government.

On Sept. 7, primary election day, we take the next step in reforming Cuyahoga County government by selecting party candidates to run in the general election on Nov. 2. Cleveland Heights residents will elect a county council member from District 10.

Changing county government will not be easy. To quote H. L. Mencken, "There is always an easy solution to every human problem—neat, plausible and wrong." The new government will have to come up with complex and equitable solutions to a \$19 million budget shortfall, deal with major department reorganizations, and build new relation-

ships with local and state government officials.

I have confidence in John Crist and I encourage Cleveland Heights residents to vote for him for District 10 County Council. John is a Case Law School graduate and has an MBA from Weatherhead School of Management with a concentration in finance.

I have confidence in him not just because he is smart, down-to-earth and articulate, but because you can talk with him—really talk with him and exchange ideas. Try it yourself—invite him to your block party, or gathering of friends, or call him to get to know his stand on the issues. Even if you don't agree with him on everything, he will listen and learn from your point of view, and you will come away from the conversation a more informed citizen.

Maybe he is young, but I like that in a person—no matter what their age. He is too young to think only about "no" and what we "can't do," he still really likes people and has faith in them. He is not pie-in-the-sky, he is hopeful. He believes things around here can be better and he is willing to work hard to make it happen.

There will be plenty of the same-old same-old on the new 11-person council. I'm voting for someone new; I am voting for John Crist and I urge you to vote for him, too.

Fran Mentch
Severn Road
Cleveland Heights

PEKAR continued from page 1

outlook on everyday worries that gave Pekar's comics their distinctiveness. Pekar's *American Splendor* comic book series, which was first published in 1976, illustrated his cynicism regarding daily life in the aging neighborhoods of Cleveland. In 2003, the series inspired a critically acclaimed film adaptation of the same name, with Paul Giamatti portraying Pekar.

To many, the self-proclaimed curmudgeon was just that—a grouchy old man who found success in broadcasting his amusingly honest grumbles on the tribulations of life. According to one of his friends in Cleveland Heights, however, Pekar was more gentle soul than cranky old man. Carole Wallencheck, a reference assistant at the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library, where Pekar was a frequent visitor, began her friendship with him around five years ago when she became his go-to reference assistant.

"I would help him find books he was interested in or reviews that had come out about one of his works," said Wallencheck with a warm, reminiscent smile on her face, "He would come in and ask for me when he needed help and soon after I was calling him Harvey instead of Mr. Pekar."

After hearing of Pekar's death, Wallencheck posted a blog remembering some of her fondest times with the late author. She tells of the time when she called him out on his secret—that he is really a "pussycat."

"I have seen his grumpy side before, but I saw Harvey for who he really was, and that was a gentle soul with a large heart." When Wallencheck helped Pekar in the library, he sent her copies of his new book, with a personal note thanking her for lending a hand. "He was always very grateful," remembered Wallencheck, "Once you got Harvey one-on-one, he let that wall down and anyone could see that he was really a kind man."

The library has set up a display case of Pekar's works as a small tribute to him. The Cedar Lee Theatre held a screening of *American Splendor* on Thursday, July 29, followed by a post-screening discussion on Pekar's work led by Wallencheck and a coworker.

"People are often described as one-of-a-kind, but in Harvey's case that really is true," expressed Wallencheck, "There is no one like Harvey Pekar. He will be missed."

Tara Johnson is an intern with the Fairmount Group.

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Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights



JUNE 21, 2010

All council members were present.

Bonds to fund projects

Council passed three ordinances providing for the issuance of notes in anticipation of the issuance of bonds to fund important capital projects and purchases. They included \$215,000 for the purchase of vehicles for the police department; \$380,000 for reconstructing, resurfacing and otherwise improving city streets; and \$590,000 for rebuilding Monticello Boulevard and Taylor Road. The latter project, already underway, is largely funded by Cuyahoga County, but the approved measure enables the city to pay its share, which includes the engineering costs.

Block grant funds to nonprofits

Council agreed to the dispersal of federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, for the time period July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011, to six nonprofit organizations:

- Center for Families and Children - \$27,000 for its Pinpoint program at the RapArt Center;
- Heights Community Congress - \$18,000 to assist with programs to promote integration and fair housing;
- Heights Parent Center - \$37,500 for its Family School Connection program;
- Heights Youth Club, Inc. - \$35,000 for its Project Learn program;
- Jewish Community Center of Cleveland - \$20,000 for its Nutrition and Afternoon Out program;
- Noble-Nela Merchants Association - \$6,000 to assist with the administrative costs of the association and its activities.

Soccer field project

Council approved an agreement with Behnke Associates, Inc. for services related to the Denison Park Soccer Field Improvement project at a cost of \$27,500. These funds derive from the passage in 2004 of Issue 27, which provides capital funding for recreational facilities each year.

Additional bond-funded projects

Three more capital expenditures made possible by the issuance of bonds were approved. The first two were the acquisition of a 2010 truck cab and chassis for the streets division of the Public Works Department for \$67,948, and engineering services from Wade Trim Ohio Inc. for Phase II of the Taylor Road Rehabilitation Project for \$220,000. The third authorized an agreement with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency to accept grant funding of \$232,074 for surface water discharge restoration of the Cumberland Park parking lot. Council Member Dennis Wilcox noted that, thanks to the efforts of city staff members, none of the expenditures for these measures, and others passed this evening, came from the city's general fund.

LWV observers: *Katherine Solender, Kirsten Karakul.*

JULY 6, 2010

All council members were present.

Assessment notifications

Responding to questions from Fenley Road residents, Director of Finance Thomas Malone explained that, as required by state law, the city sent certified letters to all property owners whose operating assessments for street lighting and forestry services will be more than \$250 over the next three years. The rate of these assessments,

which have been in existence for many years, is now \$1.80 per front foot. It was \$1.27 during the last assessment period, but First Energy has since increased its rates. More than 9,500 such certified letters were sent to city residents.

Water line repairs

Council authorized an agreement with the Ohio Water Development Authority (OWDA) for financing and construction of the Runnymede Road Water Main Replacement project. Under this agreement the city will apply to the OWDA for a 20-year loan of \$362,000.

Council approved contracting Consulting Engineering Inc. for a waterline survey at a cost not to exceed \$42,000. Such surveys substantially reduce water losses as leaks are detected and repaired.

Street repairs

Council approved contracting CT Consultants Inc. for engineering and support services related to the planning and implementation of the city's 2010 street chip sealing and crack sealing project, at a cost not to exceed \$15,000.

Cumberland parking lot project

Council approved contracting Neff & Associates for engineering services for the Cumberland Park Parking Lot Improvement project. This project is being funded through a grant of more than \$250,000 received through the Ohio Surface Water Improvement Fund (SWIF). The fee to Neff, not to exceed \$16,950, will be reimbursed from SWIF grant funds.

Ice rinks maintenance

Council approved five-year agreements with Tempest, Inc. for preventive maintenance for the

Community Center ice rinks. The annual cost will be \$21,540 for the South Rink and \$25,140 for the North Rink. The agreements also provide for emergency repairs on a time-and-materials basis and a payment, not to exceed \$45,000, for emergency repairs already performed.

Green zoning

Council approved an agreement with Camiros Ltd., an urban planning firm, for consulting services to incorporate sustainable practices into the city's zoning code—the Green Zoning project. The total fee is not to exceed \$40,000, half of which will be supported by Community Development Block Grant funds and the other half by the water fund. The process is expected to take six to seven months and will include opportunities for public input.

LWV Observer: *Katherine Solender.*

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

These meeting summaries are abstracted from LWV observers' written reports. The summaries have been edited and prepared by Anne McFarland, Marilyn McLaughlin and Maryann Barnes. To receive e-mail postings of full reports, send an e-mail to mbarnes9515@gmail.com or join through Google groups using "lww-chuh observer reports" as a search phrase.

These reports contain member observation and selected highlights of public meetings and are not official statements of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribution of these reports.

City of Cleveland Heights posts strategic plan

Vince Reddy

The City of Cleveland Heights has posted a draft Strategic Development Plan 2010 on its website, www.clevelandheights.com. The strategic plan, designed as a framework for action by city government, is the first strategic plan put forth by the city since 1993.

The plan is organized around seven ambitious goals related to issues of concern. A concise summary of existing conditions in the city sets the stage. This is followed by in-depth discussions of each goal. The goals, as one would expect, focus on some of the challenges that the city has faced for generations—maintaining the community's unique character, holding onto existing residents and attracting new ones, renovating and upgrading housing stock, keeping a unique collection of commercial districts prosperous and relevant, and improving the city's aging

physical infrastructure. Topics that were nonexistent or on the fringe of most people's consciousness in 1993, such as the foreclosure crisis and sustainable development practices, are given serious attention in the 2010 plan.

The plan, authored by the seven-member planning commission, with substantial support from the city's department of planning and development staff, encouragingly references studying the feasibility of an overall city master plan, or comprehensive plan, the lack of which puts Cleveland Heights in a nearly unique position among municipalities of its size and character. Also encouraging is the plan's redoubled emphasis on the city's immediate adjacency to, and interdependency with, flourishing University Circle.

Development opportunities are enumerated and analyzed in terms of

**Strategic Development Plan
Public Hearing**
7 p.m., Monday, Sept. 13
Cleveland Heights Community
Center, 1 Monticello Boulevard

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Time for resident participation in the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission strategic plan

Fran Mentch

OPINION

The Cleveland Heights Planning Commission, with assistance from the city's Department of Planning and Development, has released its *Strategic Development Plan 2010: Planning Commission Recommendations to City Council June 25, 2010*.

Richard Wong, director of the planning and development department describes the plan this way: "This document provides perspective on how best to plan for, encourage and prioritize future development and community initiatives in conjunction with private investments."

As a management strategy, the plan is envisioned to:

- Establish goals and tactics;
- Identify community and development issues;

- Prioritize these issues;
- Provide a vehicle for progress measurement and process monitoring; and
- Establish a timeline and initiatives to move the city forward.

You can read a copy of the draft strategic plan online at the city's website www.clevelandheights.com. This 41-page document has three parts: Pages 1-7 provide a good overview for those who do not plan to attend the public hearing.

Pages 8-20 define the commission's seven goals and the nitty-gritty suggestions for meeting those goals.

The last 20 pages provide a history of development in Cleveland Heights. Appendix A describes the goals and outcomes of the city's last strategic development plan in 1993. (The new plan wisely requires review of the strategic development plan every year.) Appendix

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University Heights City Council Meeting highlights

JUNE 21, 2010

All council members were present.

Concerns about McDonald's

The public expressed concerns primarily about traffic, noise, litter and a negative social impact. Jeri Shore of Bushnell Road suggested adding speed bumps and a triangular divider and adjusting the traffic signals on Warrensville Center Road. Thomas Rucks of Washington Boulevard noted that two traffic studies were done for the Waterway proposal, including one proposal that showed that prohibiting right turns when exiting the business would force all traffic back onto Warrensville Center Road. Mayor Infeld said that traffic control measures would be researched, and signs stating that children are present could be posted immediately.

Purvis Park pool

Thomas Vlieg of Eaton Road asked council to reconsider the rule forbidding children under age 12 to use the high dive at Purvis Park. He noted that other communities use a swimming skills test to determine qualification for using the diving boards and that the rule was made after a child was injured. He cited research that injuries were very infrequent on diving boards. Mayor Infeld said she would discuss his concerns with the head of recreation for the city.

Take-out pizza at Heights Jewish Center

Talla Gahanian and Zahava Seltzer protested the zoning board's decision to deny them a special permit to operate a take-out kosher pizza restaurant at the Heights Jewish Center at 14270 Cedar Road. The synagogue is in front of Purvis Pool and shares a drive and parking lot with the pool. The principle concern was for the safety of the children using the pool with the



increase in traffic from people picking up pizzas. Although the planning commission oversees religious organizations, this situation involves a multi-use permit, which puts it in the hands of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

Deputy Police Chief Rohel had visited the site and felt that the addition of a take-out restaurant would create dangers from customers, delivery trucks, and garbage trucks. The lot is owned by the synagogue and leased to the city. The city shares the cost of paving and repairs, and this cost might increase due to the added truck traffic. The appeal was tabled until Councilman Steven Bullock could visit the site with the deputy chief and the owners to consider options.

City services for seniors

Councilman Frank Consolo announced that the Civic Information Committee is researching options for providing services to senior citizens in the city, determining if there is a need for social service support, and whether recreational programs could be shared with neighboring cities.

LVW observer: Wendy Deuring.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 3.

Heights bowling in University Square



Anita Kazarian

When I moved to University Heights 29 years ago, the bowling alley at Cedar Center was where we spent time with friends and relatives, met new people and had a lot of fun.

It closed a few years back and now there isn't a single bowling alley left in the Heights.

Do you have a bowling ball taking up space in your closet? If you don't, I bet you know at least three people who do. But where do you go bowling around this part of town?

University Heights has space in University Square that was recently vacated by Tops Supermarket, and which is large enough to accommodate a competition-quality bowling alley. Let's call it "Heights Bowling."

I believe that the Heights Bowling concept would meet a business plan's criteria for success. Investors should be clamoring to develop, design and build Heights Bowling at University Square before South Euclid proposes the idea in its own Cedar Road development plans.

Think about the following points and see if you agree: (1) Bowling is a popular sport; (2) Bowling at University Square would have no nearby competitor; (3) Customers will continue to bowl even during tough economic times because it's a low-cost form of entertainment; (4) The development, construction and operation of a bowling alley is a low-cost investment and an easy entry for the entrepreneur; (5) Low maintenance costs keep prices reasonably low; (6) Income earned from lane rental, food and alcohol sales, and vending machine use, including electronic games, will contribute to a long and

successful business life span.

University Square is centrally located and offers bowlers a safe, small town, friendly atmosphere with plenty of covered free parking, major shopping facilities, several restaurants, and numerous services.

Unlike other sports, bowling is a year-round activity played by anyone who can roll a ball down a lane. It is played alone, with family and friends, on a team or in a league.

Heights Bowling would be a success because it is a destination business. People go out of their way to make a special trip to a destination, such as Ikea. Heights Bowling could be such a destination that would help generate greater income for the other businesses in UH because of the new consumers it would draw. This additional income for businesses in our city would help to alleviate the burgeoning residential tax burden.

Mayor Susan Infeld traveled to Chicago this year to discuss several specific solid business opportunities with the Inland Company, owner of University Square. I propose that, as University Heights residents, we follow Mayor Infeld's lead in searching for businesses to attract to our city. Heights Bowling is but one viable and attractive option.

I am interested in hearing directly from you about what types of businesses you want to see come to University Heights. Write and tell me your thoughts and perhaps together we may be able to offer our city many more opportunities.

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional and a 29-year resident of University Heights. Reach her at anitakazarian@gmail.com.

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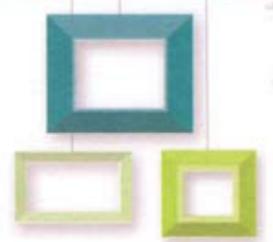
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CH-UH Public Library Board Meeting highlights

JUNE 21, 2010

Note: No observer was able to attend the June library board meeting. However, library director, Nancy Levin, made available to this observer a copy of her response, given at the meeting, to a list of 15 goals for 2010. Board president, Glenn Billington, had presented the goals, which were a list of what he would like to see implemented during his term as board president, at the January board meeting. Due to space limitations, only a few goals and responses are set out here.

Collections development

Goal: Understand how the selection process for our collections works and be sure that it reflects the needs of our community.

Response: The circulation rate of authors and/or types of materials plus reviews determines fiction selection. The library continues to experiment with new authors and trends to see what patrons will check out.

A tool called Director's Station monitors nonfiction. The library has been honing the collection at each building based on circulation data of specific books, areas of Dewey, subjects, authors, etc.

Finances and state funds

Goal: Monitor our finances with a view to being prepared for whatever the governor and state legislature to be elected in 2010 may do in 2011.

Response: The fiscal officer continues to provide five-year plan updates, which include building and technology spending. State funding has dropped 14 percent since 2009 and the library has taken steps to adjust to this reduction.

Children's services

Goal: Strengthen children's services staff and programs with increased outreach to any under-



served population.

Response: The library is:

- Allocating Teen Spot hours to the children's department for the summer.
- Reaching the underserved by hosting the Cleveland Foodbank summer lunch program and staffing it with a combination of volunteers and managers.
- Providing meeting space for home-school groups at all branches.

Activity Center computer classroom/boardroom

Goal: Maximize the usefulness of the computer classroom/boardroom in the Activity Center.

Response: The library has:

- Added 20 hours of instruction time to the supervisor position in May.
- Added the Senior Citizen Computer Series (six classes).
- Launched weekly computer classes for the deaf, with an interpreter.
- Reintroduced one-on-one sessions at Lee Road.
- Given technology trainers the ability to log on to the classroom PCs and add and remove software as needed for their classes. They can also add links or documents needed for their classes or class evaluations.

LWV observer, Anne S. McFarland.

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

See disclaimer on page 3.

What's going on at your library?

Coventry Village Library

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400
 Teen Knitters Guild,
 Tues., Aug. 3 & 31, 4 p.m.
 Healthy Cooking Demonstration,
 Tues., Aug. 10, 6:30 p.m.
 Step Out of Time,
 Thurs., Aug. 12, 7 p.m.
 Ukulele Jam,
 Tues., Aug. 31, 7:30 p.m.

Lee Road Library

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600
 Explorastory,
 Thurs., Aug. 5-26, 10:30 a.m.
 OddyFest Presents: Ready for Publication,
 Fri., Aug. 6 & 20, 7:30 p.m.
 Third Tuesday Book Club,
 Tues., Aug. 17, 7 p.m.
 Healthy Cooking Demonstration,
 Tues., Aug. 24, 6:30 p.m.

Noble Neighborhood Library

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665
 Healthy Cooking Demonstration,
 Tues., Aug. 3, 6:30 p.m.
 Stay and Play,
 Fri., Aug. 6-27, 9 a.m. to Noon
 Reading Rumpus,
 Fri., Aug. 6-27, 10:30 a.m.
 Mystery Evening: Victory Square by Olen Steinhauer, Thurs., Aug. 12, 7 p.m.

University Heights Library

13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700
 The Senior Spot,
 Wed., Aug. 4-25, 12:30 p.m.
 Karaoke Wednesdays,
 Wed., Aug. 11 & 25, 4 p.m.
 Giving Grill at Whole Foods,
 Wed., Aug. 18, 5-7 p.m.
 Foreclosure Prevention,
 Thurs., Aug. 26, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Gardening/cooking classes

Dean Schnurr

Growing Communities cooking demonstrations

Tues., Aug. 3, 6:30 p.m. at Noble
 Tues., Aug. 10, 6:30 p.m. at Coventry
 Tues., Aug. 24, 6:30 p.m. at Lee Road
 Personal chef Robin Blair demonstrates healthy ways to cook using fresh produce grown in the Heights Libraries' gardens.

Cooking Up Fun from the garden

Thurs., Sept. 30, 6:30 p.m. at Lee Road
 This exciting, hands-on presentation brings out your child's inner chef. Using fresh fruits and vegetables children in grades K-5 prepare creative and fun recipes. Bring your aprons. Younger children may need adult assistance.

Dean Schnurr is the marketing and community relations manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

Giving Grill to benefit the Friends of the Heights Libraries

Tonya Davis

The Giving Grill, located outside the main entrance of the Cedar Center Whole Foods, is hosting a benefit for the Friends of the Heights Libraries on Wed., Aug. 18 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

For a \$5 donation, one can enjoy a hot-off-the-grill meal, including a hot dog (beef or soy), side dish and beverage.

Chow down, relishing the fact that all of the proceeds from the evening will be do-

nated to Friends of the Heights Libraries, a service organization supporting the libraries' programs for children and adults. A representative from the Friends of the Heights Libraries will be present to provide more information about the group's programs.

The Giving Grill will also feature a mini used book sale.

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

Library summer lunch program



Cleveland Heights' Kyra Nickson enjoys a free and nutritious lunch provided at the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Lee Road Library through a partnership with the Cleveland Food Bank. Open to the public, the daily noon-time event attracts upwards of 100 children, who also reap the benefits of books and reading materials presented by library staff.

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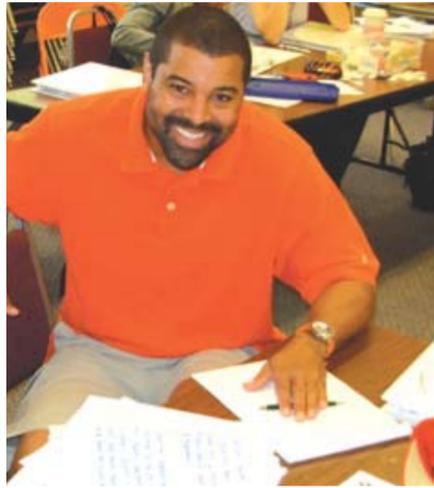
Ari Klein and Beth Rae

Boulevard reading teacher Laura Preston probably looks forward to summer as much as her students. Most of them don't realize that Preston and 45 other district teachers become students during the off-season, spending up to four weeks in all-day classes.

The Cleveland Heights Teachers Union has been running professional development courses for teachers since 2003. Local teachers are trained on a national level through the American Federation of Teachers using the Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) program. Jen Bennett, a reading teacher and Title I teacher leader for the district, is one of the coordinators of the program. In this role, she instructs teachers from around the country.

All classes are college level. The union currently offers three math classes and one class each in reading, managing antisocial behavior and instructional strategies. Teachers can earn up to two graduate hours for purposes of salary enhancement and to receive license-renewal credit.

Many of the district's teachers have taken advantage of the classes, and most who have participated have taken more than one class. Co-coordinator with Bennett is instructional coach for literacy, Beth Rae. Together, they teach the reading comprehension class. Rick Gulick, Wiley math teacher, and Aimee Banas, Gearity fourth-grade teacher, present the math classes. The instructional strategy class is taught by Tina Reynolds, Boulevard kin-



Teacher Darren Campbell learns about the foundations of mathematical thinking.

dergarten teacher, and Nancy MacDonald, Wiley sixth-grade teacher. The behavior class is taught by Mary Ann Brennan, high school guidance counselor and Marc Baker, Bellefaire art teacher.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights teachers appreciate the ER&D program because the classes provide them with current research and give them a chance to reflect on their work. Lori Ross, an intervention specialist at Roxboro Middle School, summed up the program best: "ER&D builds a strong foundation of support and unity among staff that are spread around so many different buildings."

Ari Klein is a math teacher at Cleveland Heights High School and is a vicepresident of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union. Beth Rae is a district literacy coach at Roxboro Elementary, secretary of the union and one of the ER&D site coordinators and instructors.

CH-UH Board of Education Meeting highlights



SPECIAL MEETING—JUNE 21, 2010

The special meeting's topic was a continuation of policy review.

All board members were present.

Credit flexibility

The new state initiative under HB 1 for the 2010-2011 school year gives high school students the opportunity to earn alternative credit toward graduation. The board was chiefly concerned about maintaining the integrity of the district's educational program, especially in regard to students who transfer between districts. The district will have to act in consortium with other districts from which it receives students to ensure that the granting of flexible credit is consistent. Currently, the policy developed by NEOLA (an organization that provides school districts with services to assist in updating board bylaws, policies, etc.) was recommended to ensure consistency between districts.

Superintendent Heuer pointed out that HB 1 is vague in defining flexible credit waivers. If a district is not prepared to define what it will grant as a credit waiver, the local board can request a one-year waiver from the state to allow adequate time to determine if a waiver can be granted for a specific activity such as travel abroad.

Eligibility for interscholastic athletics

Kristin Hughes, director of athletics, addressing the board's concerns about helping students meet eligibility guidelines, stated that review sessions, study halls before practice, and programs with John Carroll and Cleveland State universities to provide tutoring are being implemented. Infinite Campus, the district's electronic student information and official grade book has been used to conduct eligibility checks at the end of each quarter. The policy concerning the grade average a student must maintain, as well as the number of failing grades a student can have, was clarified. The policy is more stringent than that of the Ohio High School Athletic Association.

Career tech and school-to-work

No specific policy language for educational options was recommended at this time because once the credit flexibility program is developed, it will supersede policies for such programs as career tech and school-to-work.

Eligibility for extracurriculars

The board concurred with the district's educational services department that no eligibility standard was needed for district sponsored clubs and activities. The board said such a standard would not be congruent with the district's mission to be inclusive, encourage participation and provide opportunities for all students. However, the board suggested language such as "monitoring" could be used since some type of accountability mechanism would be needed if participating students' grades suffered.

LWV observer: Cassandra Talerico.

JULY 6, 2010

Board Member Eric Coble was absent.

Problems with AVID

Five parents noted problems with Advancement

Via Individual Determination (AVID), which is designed to help students prepare for and succeed in colleges and universities. The parents said the program at the high school did not follow all the essentials of the program. Joseph Micheller, director of educational services, reported that the AVID program at the high school was examined and changes would be made for the 2010-2011 school year to address the parents' concerns. The program would also be expanded to all middle schools.

Picnic tables on Millikin ground

Vickie Knight, representing Millikin neighbors, stated that the group was planning to add picnic tables and benches to the Millikin grounds. Board member Ron Register asked for a check on board liability.

Grant submissions

The following grant submissions were approved:

- Get Healthy Get SmART: An interdisciplinary approach to fitness, to HP EdTech Innovators Award - \$40,000 in HP (Hewlett Packard) equipment
- Adult Basic and Literacy Education (ABLE) and English Literacy and Civics Education (EL Civics) to the Ohio Board of Regents through the Ohio Department of Education - \$240,00 for ABLE, \$23,472 for EL Civics
- Career-Technical and Adult Education, to the Ohio Department of Education - \$274,153.62
- Moving School from a Noun to a Verb, to the U.S. Department of Education - \$653,471 (over three years)

Policy Sections 2000 approved

The board adopted Policy Sections 2000 revisions as a continuation of updating board policies.

Achievement assessments and graduation tests

Assistant Superintendent Jeffery Talbert reported on the draft of the results of the Ohio Achievement Assessments and the Ohio Graduation Tests. He provided few details, as this is only a draft. The final results will be out the end of August.

New principal

Superintendent Heuer introduced Denice Leddy, the new principal for Oxford Elementary. Stacy Stuhldreher, former principal of Oxford, has become director of elementary education.

Donations

The school board accepted the following donations:

- \$100 to the Jason D. West Scholarship Fund;
- A Pfretzschner violin to Roxboro Middle School.

LWV observer: Adele Cohn.

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

See disclaimer on page 3.

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Heights teachers learn by observing their peers

Joy Henderson and Susie Kaeser

In mid-May, 15 Cleveland Heights-University Heights educators gathered at one of the district's seven elementary schools to observe and analyze one aspect of the practice of teaching in that school.

It's akin to how physicians use the medical rounds model to help find ways to improve the practice of medicine. Such observation and analysis is at the heart of the Instructional Rounds process—a professional development tool designed to establish high-level teaching and learning as standard practice in classrooms throughout the district.

By the end of the 2010-2011 school year, every school in the district will be involved in the IR process.

"Instructional Rounds is a tool to provide a high-quality education to all of our children," Superintendent Doug Heuer said. "Our goal is to create a common understanding of high-level instruction and spread it to all classrooms."

CH-UH district staff became involved three years ago through the Ohio Leadership Collaborative and has implemented the process locally for two years. Instructional Rounds is being implemented building by building using a method developed by Dr. Richard Elmore, a professor of educational leadership at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, and his colleagues.

According to Elmore, observations are focused on a problem of practice, which is an instructional issue inhibiting desired results. Educators use feedback from the rounds team to focus a school's professional development program, part of a long-term process to make understanding and implementing effective instruction the professional norm.

While some think of teaching as an art—more a personality trait than something that can be learned and mastered—the IR approach classifies teaching as a practice. Effective teaching actions that meet a defined goal can be identified, developed in a school staff and applied by all teachers. By building a shared commitment to results and a common understanding of the connection between teaching practices and results, the rounds process promotes effective instruction for every child.

Teachers are central to all aspects of the process. Teacher leader Jen Bennett is the district's lead rounds facilitator, while Robert Swaggard, a social studies teacher, guides the process at Heights High.

Cleveland Heights Teachers Union president, Tom Schmida, a teacher at Heights High, likes the process for its emphasis on teacher input.

"Part of the strength of the rounds process is that teachers develop the problem of practice and are on the rounds team," he said. "We are working to make sure the feedback from the rounds team translates to good profes-

sional development that addresses the problem."

Before a school's leadership team invites an observation team into their school to check on the school's progress, the school conducts a thorough self-examination and identifies an instructional barrier—the problem of practice. The school then develops questions to guide the IR team's observations, which generates feedback to address the identified problem.

The IR team that met in May was invited to look at classroom conversation and its impact on what Bloom's Taxonomy, a classification of learning objectives, calls higher-level thinking. For example, while students need to memorize multiplication facts, at some point they also need to apply that knowledge and use it to analyze, evaluate and create.

The IR team conducting classroom observations that day included the district rounds facilitator, the director of elementary education, the principal and five teachers from the host school, two teaching specialists, two high school teachers and a John Carroll University education professor. The day-long process began with the school principal and teachers describing the evidence that led the faculty to define its problem of practice. They also shared the guiding questions that they hoped would elicit the feedback they needed.

With this information in mind, the observers organized themselves into

three groups, each visiting four classrooms. Their task was to objectively describe what students and teachers were doing, creating snapshots of instruction in the school. The debriefing that followed was an intense conversation that included correction from the facilitator when subjective language slipped into the descriptions.

The evidence and feedback from the IR team will be used to improve the level of classroom conversation and the intellectual work done by students.

The adult teaching and learning cycle is ongoing and will continue over several years as educators identify, describe and agree on norms for teaching. This work will make education more intellectually stimulating and engaging for students, and will prepare them for life and citizenship.

Joy Henderson and Susie Kaeser worked together at Reaching Heights for 11 years. This is their first post-Reaching Heights retirement project and it was great fun to collaborate again. Susie is an active Cleveland Heights volunteer and Joy is the parent/community liaison for Heights High.

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New principals at CH-UH

Angee Shaker

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District prides itself on being able to attract top talent to the schools here. The district welcomes the following principals to their new positions.

Joseph Nohra, Jr., PRIDE at Cleveland Heights High School

Joseph Nohra became an administrator seven years ago, after eight years in the classroom. In his last position, he served as the principal for freshmen at Austintown Fitch High School, where he led a successful effort to improve preparation for students taking the Ohio Graduation Test. Before working at Austintown Fitch, Nohra was the athletic administrator, assistant athletic director, and principal at an alternative school. He has a degree in special education from Youngstown State University, a master's degree in administration from Westminster, and is currently working on his doctorate at Youngstown State University. Nohra will replace Patrick McNichols.



Patrick McNichols, Roxboro Middle School

Patrick McNichols is moving from the PRIDE School at Heights High to Roxboro Middle School. While at PRIDE, McNichols achieved improvement throughout the school. At



Roxboro, he plans to use his background in international education to develop an international baccalaureate campus, which will include the Mandarin Chinese program offered through a partnership with the Confucius Institute of Cleveland State and Capitol University in Beijing. Before joining the CH-UH team, McNichols served as principal at Lakewood High School, principal of The School of Applied Science & Technology at East High School in Cleveland, and as a 9th-grade unit principal in the Cleveland Municipal School District. He taught social studies for several years before becoming an administrator.

Brian Sharosky, Monticello Middle School

Brian Sharosky currently leads Monticello Middle School, taking over for the former principal, Sheldon Smith, who resigned over the summer. Sharosky is eager to work with Monticello teachers and staff members to improve the academic performance of every student. Sharosky's professional experience includes five years as principal of Roxboro Middle School. Prior to that, he worked for the Twinsburg School District as the assistant principal of Chamberlin Middle School, the athletic director for George G. Dodge Middle School, and as a teacher and coach. Sharosky holds a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Dayton, teacher certification and a master's degree in administration from Cleveland State University.



Michael Woods, Bellefaire School
Michael Woods comes to the Bellefaire School with extensive experience in



special education and curriculum development. For 15 years, he has been a leader in district policy, community relations, program coordination, and strategic planning and implementation. Woods comes from Mogadore, where he served as the director of special services at Field Local Schools. Prior to working in Mogadore, an Akron suburb, he was an elementary principal for Austintown Local Schools, assistant superintendent for Johnstown-Monroe Schools, and a guidance counselor and middle school principal for Coventry Local Schools in Akron. Before that, he spent 12 years as a middle school teacher for Green Local Schools in Uniontown, Ohio. Woods has a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a master's degree in counseling and school administration from the University of Akron. Woods replaces Odessa Johnson, who has retired.

Rachel Coleman, Noble Elementary School

Rachel Coleman began her career in education right here in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. She taught English at Monticello Middle School for 10 years, then went to the Garfield Heights School District to serve as assistant principal at Garfield Middle School. Within a year, Coleman became principal of the school. Her education includes a degree in English from Hampton University and a master's degree in education from John Carroll University. She is certified in administration and supervision. Coleman plans to pursue doctorate studies in urban educational affairs. She will replace Julie Beers, who accepted a position with the Cleveland Municipal School District.



Michael Wasser, Fairfax Elementary School

Michael Wasser joins the district as the new principal of Fairfax Elementary School, taking over for Jacky Brown, who retired over the summer. Wasser comes to the district from the McDonald Local School District, outside of Warren, Ohio, where he served as superintendent since 2003. Before that, he worked in the Warren City School District as a teacher, middle school assistant principal, and elementary school principal. Under his leadership, the McDonald Local School District achieved an "Excellent" rating. Wasser received a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Youngstown State University, and a master's degree in education administration and superintendent certification from Ashland University.



Denise A. Leddy, Oxford Elementary School

Denise Leddy comes to the district from the Kent City School District, where she has worked since 1996. While there, she served as elementary school teacher, K-5 principal at two elementary schools, math specialist, and as principal of alternative programs for high school students. Throughout her career, Leddy has had a particular interest in innovative curriculum ideas and developing successful intervention programs for challenged or struggling youth. Leddy holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from John Carroll University and a master's degree in education from Kent State University. She is currently pursuing her doctorate in educational administration at Kent State University. She will replace Stacy Stuhldreher.



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

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Alumni support Heights class of 2010

Eric J. Silverman

On June 2, the Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation awarded scholarships to 16 members of the Class of 2010 at Senior Awards in the auditorium at Heights High.

Beginning with one scholarship a decade ago, the foundation's scholarship program has grown to 13 awards, totaling over \$21,000. In 2010, more than 15 percent of the senior class applied for one or more the foundation's scholarships.

Funds for the scholarships are raised at the foundation's pancake breakfast held in the spring, a holiday cocktail party and winter gala held in December, and the generous support of Heights High alumni.

This year the foundation awarded the following scholarships:

Dana Walker, Deb Delisle Scholarship; Eve Tranchito, Sandra Beck Wessler Memorial Scholarship; William Huggins, Dr. Goldstein Class of '52 Scholarship; Jaiye Sampson, Career Prep Scholarship; Ashley Johnson, James Cipolletti Future Educator Scholarship; Rachel Root, Judith Glickson Creative Writing Scholarship; Lewis Pollis, Legends Scholarship; Alexandra Miller, Marian Katz Magid Memorial Scholarship; Eric Graham, Victoria Lee, Candice McKinney, Johnnaya Norton, Bethany Rudy, Dana Walker and Kelly Ward, Barbara & Harold Mendes Scholarship; Hannah Apple, Bertram "Bart" Wolstein Entrepreneurial Scholar-

ship; and Eric Brock, Viktor Schreckengost Design Scholarship.

Each year the foundation ends its presentation with a goal of increasing the size and number of scholarships awarded, and 2010 continued this tradition.

Clips from the senior awards presentation will soon join those from the 2010 Cleveland Heights High School Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on the foundation's website. Details about specific scholarships, past recipients and more about the alumni foundation can be found at www.heightsalumni.org.

Eric J. Silverman, CHHS'87, is president of the Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation.

COMMISSION continued from page 3

B was written in February 2009 and reports the city's progress in relation to the strategic development plans of 1988 and 1993.

The planning commission consists of seven residents, appointed by council for six-year terms; their compensation is \$90 a month. This commission makes recommendations about the physical development of the city to council and the city manager. Current members of the planning commission are Michael Ungar, chair; Leonard Horowitz, vice-chair; Ezekiel Burrows; Russell Baron; James Cull; Alexander Pesta and Diana Woodbridge.

Based on my reading of this report, the planning commission sees new and upscale housing as the city's best

new source of income. They correctly identify the Oakwood Country Club property as the largest piece of undeveloped land in the city, and discuss several options for its development. Severance Neighborhood Organization opposes plans to develop this beautiful greenspace for several reasons, and is working with the Trust for Public Land to preserve it. Our community has to have amenities that appeal to new residents of all kinds, including those who can afford new and upscale homes. Oakwood could be connected to other community greenspaces via biking and hiking trails and this would build on the planning commission's proposal to reconfigure the retail areas nearby.

This strategic plan is a good working document with many exciting ideas. A few ideas are, of course, missing, such as a plan to work with other cities to build an indoor swimming facility, including a pool to accommodate the frail and disabled. And an aggressive, broad and comprehensive plan to improve the entire city's aesthetics, particularly those of its 7,643 rental units.

How can you participate in Cleveland Heights' planning process? Attend the public hearing on Sept. 13. Or e-mail your questions and comments to devplan@clvhts.com. City council members have to approve the strategic plan before it is implemented, so it is important that they hear from you before they vote.

Fran Mentch is the president of the Severance Neighborhood Organization.

STRATEGIC PLAN continued from page 3

their ability to bolster the city's tax base and thus its ability to maintain a competitive level of services. Obvious development sites, such as Top of the Hill and Meadowbrook Lee, are discussed, and the plan does not shy away from addressing controversial topics, such as the reuse of the decommissioned Millikin School campus or development scenarios for the Oakwood Country Club property.

The strategic plan is as thorough as a 41-page document can be. The city's commercial districts, for example, are examined in detail, and the less prosperous commercial districts, primarily those north of Mayfield Road, are considered thoughtfully. Various futures are put forth for consideration for these less-privileged districts, but, to the comfort of northside residents, their wholesale abandonment is not recommended.

The last 11 pages of the plan look back at the 1993 plan and the ways in which the goals set out in that plan have or have not been realized.

As we go to press, it appears that there will be only one public meeting, on Sept. 13, at which those interested will be able to express their opinions of the plan. In the meantime, citizens are encouraged to view the plan online—it is an interesting read—and to send their comments or questions by e-mail to devplan@clvhts.com.

Vince Reddy, who works for Cleveland Public Art, has lived in Cleveland Heights for nearly 14 years.

VOTERS continued from page 1

Center for Science and Technology auditorium, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

District 10 General Election Forum
Sept. 23 at CH-UH Library on Lee Road, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. (cosponsored by FutureHeights).

District 11 General Election Forum
Oct. 6 at a location to be announced, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

County Executive General Election Eastside Forum
Oct. 12 at Shaker Heights Middle School, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

In the meantime, read interviews with the candidates at www.heightsobserver.org. To check your registration or to find your polling center, go to the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections website <http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/>.

Jessica Kahn is a PR professional who loves crosswords, crepes and Cleveland Heights.

ELECTION POLICY continued from page 1

The policy, approved by the FutureHeights board of directors, is designed to address that challenge. It states:

- The August–November issues of the printed publication will not carry any editorial contributions from candidates for office.
- During this period, any coverage of election issues will be produced by regular Observer contributors who are not running for office.
- The October issue will contain information submitted by candidates; this information will be uniformly formatted by the Observer, and will be drawn solely from a standardized questionnaire supplied by the Observer itself.
- During this pre-election period, all candidate contributions of news or opinion will continue to be accepted for publication online at www.heightsobserver.org.
- Candidates seeking to place information in the August–November printed editions of the Observer may do so through advertising space purchased from the Observer.

The Heights Observer and its parent organization, FutureHeights, do not endorse candidates or issues.

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Heights Parent Center connects Parenting Q&A



Louisa Oliver

The Heights Parent Center has exciting news. Effective Aug. 1, HPC will merge with Family Connections, its partner family support center in Shaker Heights. HPC and Family Connections have a long history of working together and sharing the same mission. The partnership enables these two centers for families with young children to become stronger and to offer expanded services. The new entity will use the Family Connections name, as it best reflects the organization's focus on programs that enhance relationships between parent and young child, parent and other parents, and families and other community organizations.

Heights Parent Center participants will see few, if any, changes in existing programming. All existing programs and staff located at the Family Connections sites at Taylor Academy and at Shaker Family Center will continue as usual, and remain open to all families with young children. Off-site programs will go on as usual, too, including Little Heights at Lee Road Library and Play and Learn Station at the Shaker Heights Public Library and within the elementary schools.

Joanne Federman, Family Connections executive director, will become the director of the newly merged organization. Louisa Oliver, director of Heights Parent Center for the last 11 years, will retire. Federman emphasized that area parents and young children will now have even greater access to learning experiences and expertise that enhance family relationships and help parents prepare



their children for success in school.

Family Connections will serve 2,000 families from more than 20 Cleveland neighborhoods and suburban communities. In addition, the merger will increase the organization's capacity to provide home visits to families with young children, and develop new partnerships with corporations to help international employees and families acclimate to the community.

According to Federman, the two strong and financially stable entities combined as one now gives local communities a true "best practices" organization in the field of strengthening families and promoting parent involvement in their children's education. The organization derived its motto—Strong Families Build Strong Communities—from research indicating that strengthening families is paramount to the process of building and sustaining strong communities.

Federman expressed her appreciation to everyone involved in the merger and said, "Family Connections is a name that will represent everything our communities have come to know and trust. . . and so much more."

To learn more or to make a donation, please visit www.familyconnections1.org.

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

Ellen Barrett

Ellen Barrett, a parent educator at Heights Parent Center (now known as Family Connections) for the last 12 years, fields questions from parents about the daily ups and downs of parenting. The same issues impact many parents. If you have questions you would like Barrett to respond to in this column, please e-mail her at ebarrett@heightsparentcenter.org.

Q. My five-year-old is always biting his nails. Although it doesn't seem to bother him, it drives me crazy! I've tried to keep him from putting his hands in his mouth to keep him from spreading and catching germs, but most of the time I don't think he even knows he is doing it. He'll be starting kindergarten in the fall, and I think it could become an even bigger problem. Is there anything I can do to help him stop this nasty habit?

A. It is not always easy to figure out what causes a habit like nail-biting, but it is usually a learned behavior that has some positive benefit. For example, your son may be more likely to bite his nails to entertain himself when he is bored, to soothe or comfort himself when he is anxious, or to relax to go to sleep. He might also be copying the behavior of others. If you, or your husband, is a nail-biter, it is not surprising that your child might be one, too. Finally, be aware that nail-biting, or similar habits, may be used to get attention, so make sure your response doesn't inadvertently reinforce the behavior.

Although it's likely your child will outgrow this habit in time, there are a few things you can do to help him reduce or stop the behavior.

- Notice when he bites his nails. If you see a pattern (when he's bored, when he's anxious, when he's sleepy), see if you can head off the behavior before it starts. Try gently holding his hands in yours or distracting him with an object he can hold.
- Calmly point out to him that he is biting his nails, so he becomes aware of the behavior. Encourage him to take his hands out of his mouth. Be sure not to ridicule, scold or punish him.
- Suggest alternative behaviors. For example, suggest tapping rhythms on the table.
- Praise any increase in self-control. Notice when he has been able to go for a period of time without biting his nails. Some kids respond well to sticker charts. Gradually increase the time allotted for his reward (all morning, all day, all week).

Above all, be patient. Remember that it takes time for a behavior to become a habit, so it will also take time for it to disappear.

Please note that if your child's nail-biting habit is causing bleeding or pain, or if you think he is more anxious than usual, contact your primary care physician for advice.

Fairmount Coop Preschool enrolling for 2010-2011

Carolyn Foss

Fairmount Cooperative Preschool is currently enrolling students for the 2010-2011 school year.

The school, celebrating its 28th year, offers programs for children two-and-a-half to five years of age, providing exposure to art, music, science and dramatic play. Professional teachers guide their intellectual growth and physical development, in a controlled atmosphere that provides space and equipment scaled to the students' size and capabilities.

Various classes, including extended-day options, are offered for the coming school year. For more information or to arrange a tour of Fairmount Coop Preschool, 2757 Fairmount Blvd. in Cleveland Heights, visit www.fairmountcoop.org or

call 216-321-5800.

Carolyn Foss is the comembership chair for Fairmount Coop Preschool.



Brady Foss and teacher Lynette Bates prepare for the day at Fairmount Cooperative Preschool.



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Blush Boutique: new chic on the block

Marci Lu

Have you noticed the changing window displays at Blush Boutique, Coventry Road's newest fashion-forward shop for women? Step inside and co-owners Gina Dudik and Laurie Warshawsky patiently let you browse. "I don't like to hover," says Warshawsky. But she does hope you'll request help.

"Older customers, they'll buy our jewelry, but don't even think to look around." A recent walk-in was convinced she wouldn't find anything among the hip, eclectic collections, until Warshawsky showed her their Treehouse28 line of sophisticated organic cotton dresses and tops. "I called her when a new shipment arrived. She bought more!"

Warshawsky acknowledges boutique shopping can be intimidating. When naming their store, the partners avoided words too young sounding, or too mature. "We did not want to alienate any one age group," says Dudik, adding, "Blush has sold the same label to girls in high school, women in their 70s and everyone in-between."

Edgy and classy coexist at Blush. Holding up a Suzabelle black dress, Warshawsky chimes, "any lawyer could wear this." If you're an off-the-rack gal, Blush may not appeal. "But people looking for something different, who are a little bit more open-minded and creative in their dressing, will find something here," explains Dudik. For those looking to add a "wow" piece to their wardrobe, customers will find colorful, handmade items not easily found elsewhere. Bestseller Iheartfink's screen-printed garments are in only half a dozen stores nationwide.

Alongside funky labels from such places as Seattle and San Francisco, Blush sells Dudik's own bright and whimsical clothing line, Dutchess von Dudik, and Warshawsky's elegant Elle a Belle gemstone jewelry. Blush also proudly promotes other homegrown talent. Warshawsky points to popular resin earrings by Sionann Monroe's Erie Design Group, fanciful hand-painted shoes from Rachel Lanese's Craftastrophe, and ruffled mufflers handknit by Pavia Lewis. All, including Warshawsky, live in Cleveland Heights.



Blush Boutique owners Gina Dudik (left) and Laurie Warshawsky appreciate the warm welcome they received from Coventry merchants, particularly next-door neighbors Brigade and Heart & Sole.

Blush Boutique

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The owners chose Cleveland Heights because it offers a diverse customer base. Dudik, who owned Gina's Gallery in Little Italy, was itching to move and focus on fashion, her primary passion. She called Warshawsky, whose jewelry was her top seller. "I kept thinking Laurie would be the perfect partner. She has great style and energy." The stars aligned. Warshawsky, mother of two, had just quit her day job as a lawyer. "I said yes, but it had to be Coventry."

Dudik raves about the Coventry foot traffic. "If I had stayed in Little Italy, I honestly would have ended up closing. It wasn't busy enough. If we had opened in a suburban shopping center, we'd probably be closed by now. People are choosing to live and shop here and support their local neighborhood because they want it to remain nice. What good will it do if all these storefronts remain empty?"

Blush's business model is affordable chic (most items cost between \$20-\$200), and based on the owners love for wearable art. As designers, they appreciate original pieces because they make these things themselves. Even the interns can be found crafting belts and headbands at the worktable in back. "One intern sold a belt right out of her hand after she made it, and that was the biggest thrill to her." Dudik is delighted her business partner can now see the reaction of customers. "For Laurie to see how people love her stuff, I love that."

Marci Bernstein Lu is a nonprofit and philanthropic consultant residing in Cleveland Heights.

Our own homegrown hardware dude

Lita Gonzalez

Nestled among the businesses on Lee Road is a store as unique as the surrounding community—and as the needs of the historical homes that line its streets. It wasn't long after moving into our more than 90-year-old house that I first met Joel Borwick, owner of Seitz Agin Hardware. "I have to replace the grate thingy on one of my radiator covers," I told him, bracing myself for the same "don't carry that" I had heard at the bigger stores I had visited. "They're at the end of this aisle," he responded, smiling at the look of relief on my face. Over the years, my encounters with Borwick and his staff would be many.

There were visits based on necessity. "I need three screws just like this one," I would say, holding up the sample I had brought. Digging into a series of drawers one of the staff would produce three matching screws—not a prepackaged bag of 10 or 20, but the three single screws I needed to complete a stalled project.

There were the visits based on desperation. "My daughter has a project on electricity due tomorrow for school, and I have no idea if this is wired right. Can you help?" I pleaded one day as my daughter proudly held up a board with wires and a battery. Patiently Joel examined the project and declared it to be one hundred percent correct.

It is those special touches that make Seitz Agin rise above its competitors. Borwick points out that the personal approach and learning how to listen and talk to his customers has helped Seitz Agin make it through the big box invasion.

"So, how did you get into the hardware business," I asked him on one of my visits. He explained that he had worked at his father's business since he was 13. In his 20s he started looking for a retail business or store to invest in. The



Right to left: Gary Chambers, Joel Borwick and Bill Sheck of Seitz Agin Hardware on Lee Road.

owners of Seitz Agin were looking for a buyer. Fate intervened and Borwick became the owner of Seitz Agin Hardware. That was 37 years ago.

Borwick's success is based on more than just service with a smile. "You make it work because it is an investment," he states, quickly adding that he and the same four people who work for him—Bill Sheck, Gary Chambers, Norm Lippe and Ramone Smith—collectively bring 160 years of experience to the store. "We understand and carry what many of the older homes need."

"I would not be here, though, if it wasn't for the people in this community," Borwick is quick to point out. "It is important for businesses to give back to the community as a way of saying 'thank you' to the customers who support us." The walls of his crowded office show that over the years he has put those words into action. There are pictures of him as the coach of a baseball team and colorful "thank you" letters from grade school children. He was president of the Cedar-Lee Business Association and presently sits on the board of the Boys and Girls Club.

Borwick calls himself a "home-

grown hardware dude." He grew up on Edgerton Road in University Heights, and attended Wiley Middle School and Heights High School. He admits that he still has fun coming to work, which, he says, is the way it should be. "Knowing so many people makes owning the store more interesting."

Lita Gonzalez is a community volunteer.



The Promise Tree

Mary Courtwright

There are countless people who have affected my life, who I have never met. I know some of their names, while other names I will never know—the people who designed, made and packaged the laptop where I store my daily thoughts and reflections; the author whose writing saw me through some of the most difficult decisions in life; the person who cared for my daughter just after my emergency C-section; and a woman who used the power of the word to tell the tale of her family's demise in the Holocaust—Sonia Schreiber Weitz.

Sonia Weitz's story came to me through Facing History and Ourselves, a nonprofit organization with which I work to help teach others about history's darker moments, in the hope of bettering ourselves and our world. The intent is to consciously revisit our collective pains of the past, examine the mistakes people made or atrocities they committed, and avoid making those same mistakes in the future. We also explore the brave choices that were made, and honor those who stood up for justice in the face of darkness. Sonia, a victim of the Holocaust, was one of those brave people.

Weitz's story is like those of many who have endured horrific treatment based on hatred due to group membership (in this case, the Jewish community). In her book, *I Promised I Would Tell*, Weitz fulfills the oath she made before her mother's death, which was to share their experiences with the world.

For a year now, I have been sharing Weitz's story, and though I never met her, I feel as though she is a dear friend. So when I received the news about her recent passing, I felt compelled to do something in her honor.

This semester, my students and I will be building a Promise Tree, an art project that will evolve in our classroom at Bryant & Stratton College, Eastlake. It will be imperfect, to be sure, but so is history—and so are we. It will stand as a symbol for continuing to fulfill not only Weitz's promise, but perhaps those promises that were made during other painful partings—those experienced by enslaved Africans en route to the Americas, countless Native American peoples during relocation and forced "education," and all those who have been victims of hatred based on perceived differences. We promise to remember, to retell and to honor the legacies of those who have been wronged. We promise to lay a more conscious foundation for the future generations. We promise to begin with ourselves.

Sonia Weitz had no way of knowing what kinds of ripples she would create when she published her book, but she

did it anyway—to fulfill her promise. The power of this decision is not lost on me. Perhaps I will never meet those whose lives I may change—they may never know my name, but I will send the messages anyway, through my writing, through my actions, to fulfill my promise. You never know whom they might reach.

Weitz, S. S. *I Promised I Would Tell*. Brookline, MA: Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation, Inc., 1993.

Mary Carroll Courtwright teaches psychology, sociology, and philosophy courses at Bryant & Stratton College in Eastlake. Her novel, *Song of the Messenger* (2007), is set in Cleveland Heights. For more information, visit www.marycourtwright.com.



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HeightsWrites

Poem for August

Clevelanders have learned not to expect much from economic recovery plans, professional sports teams, and road repair projects, but, as the poet reminds us, there are some things we can rely on.

—Meredith Holmes

Only Hope

by James Hagan

Breezy night, oak tree limbs
in the neighborhood
are writhing in history
but the streetlight
blinking through them
is a signal lamp spelling
S-U-M-M-E-R.
Warm rain pinging the gutter
telegraphs the same message.

Tomorrow is Saturday
and sun is expected.
A man will be playing catch
with a daughter;
a woman will be marching
her son to the barbershop
just down the street;
a cardinal will look especially red.

James Hagan grew up in Youngstown, Ohio, and now lives on Cleveland's West Side. He spent 24 years as a union organizer and advocate for the rights of working people. Recently, his poem "Pins" was published in Ploughshares, a literary journal of Emerson College in Boston.



— Cheryl Burke
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Art and community development

Joseph Gruber

Landscapes are an integral part of a community, and landscaping is a prominent aspect of community development. The idea is less about raising awareness of the environment, and more about bringing people into a neighborhood. Yet more goes into landscaping than planting and weeding.

Many commercial districts throughout Cuyahoga County have programs to beautify their streets with hanging flower baskets or flowerpots. Coventry, Larchmere, Cedar Fairmount and Cedar Lee all have flowers. Along the Euclid Corridor, curly concrete flower pots resembling paper wrapped around a bouquet—designed by Mark Reigelman II, a 2006 graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Art—were a gift to the city.

The lasting effects of these and other aesthetic efforts may improve an area's real estate value. In the short run, things like crime, violence, and vandalism may all be reduced with the presence of artistic elements.

Chinese-born Lily Yeh was the guest speaker at the Cleveland Foundation's annual meeting last June. She is the founder of Barefoot Artists, Inc., a group based in Philadelphia. Yeh transformed vacant properties in distressed neighborhoods into artful spaces and outdoor meditation centers.

Today, Barefoot Artists has worked throughout the world to create public spaces of peace and comfort. Recognizing that creativity and beauty are powerful means to bring on healing and change, Barefoot Artists works with

poor communities around the globe practicing the arts to bring healing, self-empowerment, and social change.

Barefoot Artists may have inspired Richard Klann, a graphic artist and Canterbury Street resident. A tall dead tree trunk stands in front of the Canterbury School in Cleveland Heights. On July 4, Klann painted swirls of red, yellow, and blue on the tree. He used interior wall paint, so he figures it will fade by January. Klann had decided to beautify the desolate timber, which the city had not yet cut down.

Like any piece of art, critiques soon emerged. Many people complimented Klann, but a man who lives across from the tree didn't seem to like it. Klann approached his neighbor one day and said, "Look, I realize I basically put this thing right in your living room, and if you don't like it that's fine. I just felt like I had to do something."

Klann takes the situation lightly, saying with a chuckle "The tree's been there forever. I spent all that day painting and now finally someone wants it taken down!" To Klann, art is a means of beautification and progression. To someone else it means highlighting the blighted tree. Either way, art stirs the human emotion. "Art causes conversation. Whether it's good art or bad art, it brings people together to question it," said Klann. That is community development.

Joseph Gruber is an intern with the Cleveland Foundation and a senior at the University of Dayton.



Mame Daiko Taiko drummers perform at the Cleveland Buddhist Temple's annual Obon Festival.

Taiko drumming, Obon dancing

Anita Kazarian

The Cleveland Buddhist Temple held its annual Obon Festival on July 24. In addition to Obon dancing, this year's festival again presented the Mame Daiko, a regional Taiko drumming youth group.

Craig Horton, senior leader of the Zen Shin Sangha mediation sessions, said he was pleased with this year's attendance at the Obon Festival. Organizing the front garden with numerous traditional Japanese lanterns, the grill and food sales, the Japanese Obon dancing and the Taiko drumming was a major undertaking for the small congregation. "People come from all over to lend a hand to make this festival a success," said Horton.

Mary Gove, a Cleveland Heights

resident associated with the Zen Shin Sangha group of the temple, explained the upcoming reprint of *Zen Shin Talks*. Gove compiled and edited the talks of Sensei Ogui into this book, first published in 1998. Gove expects the reprint will be complete by the end of the year, and for sale in local bookshops.

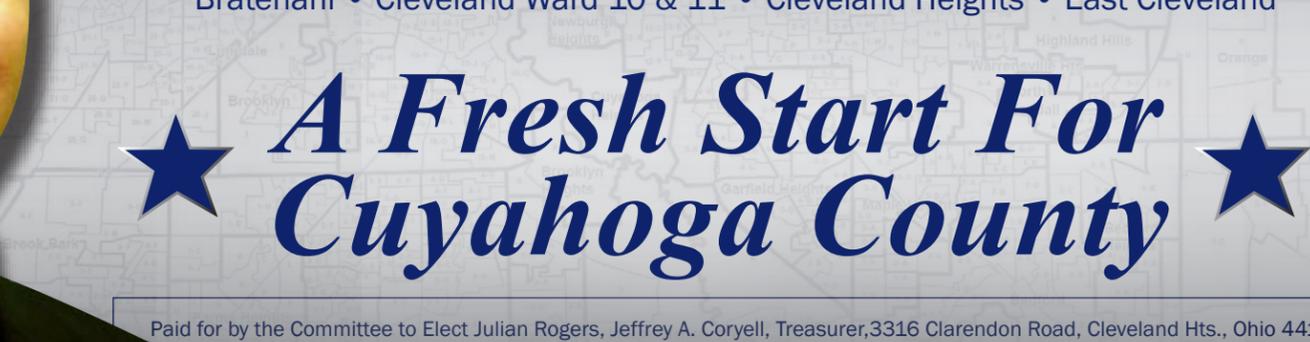
Anyone interested in Dharma School or Zen Shin Sangha Mediation should visit www.ClevelandBuddhistTemple.com or the group's Facebook page, created by volunteer Damon Ramsy. Become a fan to receive messages about upcoming events.

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional and longterm resident of University Heights. She may be contacted at anitakazarian@gmail.com.

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Green thumb bookworms

Growing communities through gardening at the library

Dean Schnurr

It is not unusual to see people gardening at their homes throughout the summer, but how about at your local library?

This summer, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Libraries are coordinating two sustainable garden projects—Growing Communities and the Children's Garden.

Growing Communities

Designed and monitored by local sustainable gardening expert, Michael Jerman, the Growing Communities gardens are filled with a variety of herbs and vegetables, including tomatoes, dill, scarlet runner beans, collard greens, chard, anise hyssop, perilla, fennel and much more.

"We wanted the garden to be colorful, edible, and most importantly, to be representative of the many different cultures that populate this community," said Nancy Levin, Heights Library director.

The gardens were created primarily as a service to the community and thus all the herbs and vegetables will be available to the public. A "Take Some, Leave Some" table at each branch is stocked daily with the bounty of the gardens. Library patrons are welcome to take anything from the table, or, if their personal gardens are producing abundantly, to donate produce for others to consume.

In August, when crops yield the most, the library makes a bulk delivery of produce to the Heights Emergency Food Center for use in their community meal program.

The Growing Communities project is supported by a \$5,600 Library Services and Technology Grant through the State of Ohio Library. "We started the program last year, but were eager to continue and expand the scope of the

project," said deputy library director Cathy Hakala-Ausperk. "The grant allowed us to do just that."

Grant funding has enabled the library to create sustainable gardens at each of the four branches in 2010 (last year there was only one, at Lee Road). Funding has also allowed the library to purchase books on gardening, vegetables, cooking and nutrition, and to offer a variety of programs during the summer.

Children's Garden

Funded through a grant from the Cyrus Eaton Foundation, the Children's Garden is a sustainable environment that is aesthetically pleasing and provides space for children and adults to relax and reflect. Although the Children's Garden offers some vegetables, it is stocked primarily with flowers. Located just outside of the large bay windows in the children's room at Lee Road, the garden was planted this summer and is gradually developing. One of the major additions slated for the garden is a work by local sculptor Raymond Bugelski, who is employing recycled bicycles in his creation to reinforce the sustainability goals of the library.

The library has also developed special programming related to gardening for children, teens and adults, including cooking demonstrations on how to use home-grown produce. Programs are offered July through September and can be reviewed at www.heightslibrary.org. Finally, special book collections are on display that promote cooking, gardening and nutrition.

Community effort

The gardening projects have been a true community collaboration and their success is due in large part to the many volunteers who contributed time and energy preparing the grounds, planting

the seeds and flowers, and watering and cultivating on a daily basis.

"My mother and brother were gardeners and I wanted to follow in that family 'green thumb' tradition," said Phillip Martin, a Noble Neighborhood Library volunteer. "I'm always happy to help at the library, and with gardening you really get to see the fruits of your labors," said Martin, as he headed out the door to water the flowers.

"We wanted the garden to be colorful, edible, and most importantly, to be representative of the many different cultures that populate this community,"

A core of 16 volunteers supports the efforts of staff and contractors. "We rely heavily on the contributions of our Friends and volunteers," said Levin. "We certainly could not have achieved so much without them." Levin also credited several individuals and groups who made donations to the gardening projects, including several trees from the Wolpert family and enormous pots from Bremec on the Heights.

August, Levin promises, will bring the big harvest: "The tables will be overflowing with vegetables."

Dean Schnurr is the marketing and community relations manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

Sustainable Heights Network hosts week of community activities

Sarah Wean

Sustainability Week 2010, a week-long series of community events from Oct. 2 through Oct. 10, will be hosted by the Sustainable Heights Network, an active and open group of over 50 organizations and individuals.

The week will celebrate the work undertaken by the people, the community, and the organizations of Cleveland Heights and University Heights to improve their quality of life and to inspire others to become involved.

The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, the Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition, FutureHeights, Council Gardens Organic Gardening program, the City of Cleveland Heights and many others, are sponsoring a week of education and fun activities for the entire community.

If an organization, group, or individual would like to host an event highlighting sustainable activities, practices, workshops, speakers, services or products, visit www.futureheights.org to submit your information online. (Event submission deadline for inclusion in the September *Heights Observer* calendar, and on 10,000 fliers, is Aug. 20.) All are welcome to submit an event and help grow the Sustainable Heights Network.

Pick up the September issue of the *Heights Observer* for the calendar of activities. All Sustainability Week events will be open to the public.

For more information visit www.futureheights.org, e-mail sustainablehts@gmail.com, or call 216-320-1423.

Sarah Wean is a community volunteer.

Sustainability Week
Oct. 2 - Oct. 10
www.futureheights.org



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Great Lakes keeps Cleveland competitive and green

Anita Kazarian

John Carroll University, in conjunction with the Standard Products Dr. James S. Reid Chair in Management, will host a daylong second annual conference on the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Marine Highway, titled "Fitting the Pieces Together," on Aug. 30 at the Dolan Science Center. The purpose of the conference is to explore how the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence Seaway give Northeast Ohio manufacturers and shippers a competitive advantage in the global economy.

Dr. Bradley Hull, associate professor and Reid Chair in JCU's department of management, marketing and logistics, wants to raise the awareness of Northeast Ohio shippers to the potential of using water transportation between northern Europe and the cities of Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago.

Shipping by water is the lowest-cost method when compared to rail, truck and air. Today, another component makes transport by water attractive to business owners and consumers who are interested in sustainability. Water transport has the lowest carbon footprint of all.

Hull, an expert in domestic and international logistics, has an impressive lineup of speakers and panelists. The keynote speaker is Terry Johnson, administrator of the St. Lawrence Seaway Development. Also speaking will be John Baker, president of the Great Lakes District Council of the AFL-CIO; William Friedman, president and CEO of Cleveland-Cuyahoga Port Authority; Rear Admiral Michael Parks, USCG Commander Ninth Coast Guard District; and Charles de la Porte, honorary consul, Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The registration fee of \$25 includes breakfast and lunch. The conference is expected to attract more than 250 national and international participants. For further information, or to register, telephone 216-397-4386 or e-mail abuda@jcu.edu.

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional and longtime resident of University Heights. She may be contacted at anitakazarian@gmail.com.

See where 'it' goes at Sewer District event

Jennifer Elting

"Where does it go?" Citizens of Northeast Ohio can now get the answer to this popular question.

The Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District is opening its doors to the general public at its "Where Does It Go?" open house on Saturday, Aug. 7, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Guests are invited to take a walking tour of the Easterly Wastewater Treatment Plant, where all Cleveland Heights water goes for processing. The tour will include an overview of the extensive process required to clean water, how garbage and waste are managed, and how public health and the environment are protected in the process.

"This is one of our most popular events, and we have been completely booked the past two years," said Mardele Cohen, community relations specialist for the district. "This year, visitors will have an exciting opportunity to visit our Easterly plant, first built in the 1930s and operating ever since."

The family-friendly event will take place at 14021 Lake Shore Boulevard in Cleveland (just north of I-90), where guests can learn the science behind the Sewer District's work. Activities for kids include making slime, testing pH levels, seeing the aquatic insects used to identify if water is clean, participating in a coloring contest, and hopping aboard the large trucks used to clean the sewers. Wally Waterdrop will also be on hand to greet guests.

"There's a great deal involved in transporting and cleaning waste water, and it's important that the public understand the process and how their money is used to protect public health and the environment," said Julius Ciaccia, executive director of NEORS. "We want our guests to leave with a greater understanding and sense of the Sewer District's positive impact on the community."

Attendance at the "Where Does It Go?" open house is limited, so guests should register by calling 216-432-7304 or visiting www.neorsd.org/OpenHouse. This is a walking tour; closed-toe shoes are required for safety and long pants are preferred.

Jennifer Elting is a public information specialist with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District.



Sewer District employee Bobby Larken greets guests at last year's open house.

COURTESY NORTHEAST OHIO REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT

Green events at Alcazar Aug. 8

Janet Hildebrandt

Interested in going green? If so, the historic Alcazar offers some interesting events with you in mind on Sunday, Aug. 8, during the Discover Cedar Fairmount Festival.

From noon to 2 p.m., there will be a continuous showing of WVIZ's *Applause* program, highlighting unique homes in Greater Cleveland. One of these homes is the straw-bale house on Cedar Road, just west of Fairmount Boulevard. See how this new Craftsman-style house was built with straw and beautifully finished

both inside and out.

At 2 p.m., Jan Kious, the owner of the house, will talk about one of her passions—green gardening.

From 3 to 4 p.m. in the Alcazar lobby, enjoy the music of the 1940s and '50s, as the 16-piece SCIMITARS swing band plays a free concert.

The Alcazar is located at 2450 Derbyshire Road in Cleveland Heights.

For more information, call 216-321-5400 or visit www.thealcazar.com.

Janet Hildebrandt is the marketing director for the Alcazar.

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August 19th

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- Take a ride in the Euclid Beach Boys Rocket Ship Car
- Zany balloon art with Swifty the Clown
- Complimentary ice cream at Phoenix Coffee (coupon required)
- Visit the Photo Magic Booth at the Heights Library
- Hands-on fun and tattoos with Heights Arts
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All events run from: 6 - 8 p.m. ★ Door Prizes ★

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Find solutions, urges FutureHeights speaker

Afi Scruggs

When community organizer Kirk Noden asked members of FutureHeights to name problems facing the city, the room buzzed.

Participants called out many issues: abandoned homes, foreclosures, and the decline of neighborliness. But the crowd quieted when Noden, the director of Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative explained why confronting those challenges is so important for the Heights, and for the state as a whole.

"We can count on one hand the number of successful, integrated cities that are in Ohio, and this is one of a handful," said Noden.

On June 30, more than 100 people attended FutureHeights' annual meeting, which was held at the Rockefeller Building on Mayfield Road. The theme, "Beyond Block Parties," spoke to organizing for qualitative change, said executive director, Deanna Bremer Fisher.

"When people think about community organizing in the Heights, they think 'Well, we are organized. We have block clubs, and we have block parties every year.' With foreclosures, and vacant properties and an increase in crime, most people would agree that the organizations we have, are not as effective as they once were," said Bremer Fisher.

After participants identified problems in the community, Trevelle Harp, the executive director of the Northeast Alliance For Hope and a co-speaker at the meeting, said that communities all over the region share these problems.

"I think foreclosures, abandoned

vacant properties ... you're starting to see those in Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights," said Harp.

Noden ended the meeting with a charge. He reminded listeners that Cleveland Heights and University Heights had been pioneers when it came to integration, and urged them to take a leading role in finding solutions to the problems plaguing the state.

"Ohio, quite frankly, is in a lot of trouble. Seven out of eight of our core cities have lost 50 to 60 percent of their population in the last 30 years," he said.

FutureHeights is planning the next step in organizing. For more information, go to www.futureheights.org.

Afi Scruggs is a freelance writer and multi-platform journalist. Listen to her "Heights Now" podcast on this topic at www.wjcu.org/media/heights-now.



Community organizers Trevelle Harp (left) and Kirk Noden speak with community activist Diana Woodbridge (right) at the FutureHeights annual meeting June 30.

HRRC expands foreclosure prevention staff

Kathryn Lad

Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC), a HUD-certified counseling agency, welcomes two new additions to its staff: Denise Black and Doris Honsa. They are experienced housing professionals who focus exclusively on providing free foreclosure prevention services to Northeast Ohio homeowners.

Both bring passion and experience in working successfully with homeown-



HOME REPAIR RESOURCE CENTER

ers, and make it easy and convenient for homeowners in the Heights and neighboring suburbs to

access foreclosure prevention information and services. In addition to offering weekday and evening appointments at HRRC's office at 2520 Noble Road, Black and Honsa also schedule workshops and consultations at area libraries each month.

While both have long been involved in the housing industry in the Cleveland area, each comes to HRRC via a different but complementary path.

Denise Black came from the mortgage lending side, having worked in home retention with mortgage lenders, including Ohio Savings (Amtrust Bank), Leader Mortgage Company and USBank Home Mortgage. "Finding solutions was one of my favorite tasks," Black said. "I hate to see anyone lose their home."

Doris Honsa came from a nonprofit housing and consumer education background, working with the Cuyahoga Community Land Trust and Living in Cleveland Center, as well as developing consumer education programs in financial fitness and combating

predatory lending. Honsa noted that, while predatory lending practices have contributed to the foreclosure crisis, so too has unemployment or reduced income or benefits. "That can happen to anyone," she said, "and it can happen anywhere."

While some of HRRC's home repair services are limited to Cleveland Heights residents, any Ohio homeowner can utilize HRRC's foreclosure prevention services. As a HUD-certified counseling agency, HRRC can help people with such things as sorting through possible options to avoid foreclosure, applying electronically for Making Home Affordable or HAMP (the government program to lower a monthly mortgage payment to 31 percent of monthly gross income), or checking out a foreclosure rescue ad or solicitation. Black and Honsa advise that homeowners steer clear of anyone who charges for services or guarantees a specific result.

Black and Honsa invite readers to spread the word about HRRC's foreclosure prevention services. "If you don't need it, pass it on to someone who might," suggested Black. "We're all in this together," Honsa said. "Each foreclosure threatens not just one home or one family, but also the whole community."

Kathryn Lad is the executive director of the Home Repair Resource Center.

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Fairfax: a garden's thriving life



By Eleanor Mallet

I've taken Lee Road going north at least a few thousand times on my way to almost everywhere. This day, as always, I try to peer into the garden at the Fairfax school, long a curiosity. Most gardens are hidden away; this one is out in the open on a busy road. In midsummer, like a sentinel, a single sunflower towers above all else, beckoning. Today, I answer its call.

It's hot and breezy. School's out. Two kids meander on a bicycle and teens play basketball.

I meet the barefoot garden manager, Samantha Provencio, and her two children who are joyously spraying themselves and each other with the hose.

The Fairfax garden is divided neatly into 12- by 25-foot plots, nine in all worked by 13 gardeners, some in pairs. Gardeners bring their own tools. Most live within walking distance. It is one of six community gardens in Cleveland Heights getting help from the Ohio State University extension program.

The neat rows, exploding with growth, are beautiful to see—cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, all kinds of lettuce, chard, Brussels sprouts, beans, broccoli and beets. One gardener has planted sweet potatoes, another leeks.

Sarojini Rao grows Indian vegetables, such as snake gourd, which looks

like a zucchini only longer, and a colored cucumber called southe. "I get such a thrill growing the vegetables I grew up with," Sarojini said. She was raised in India, where her father was a farmer. She has been here 40 years.

Sam Wolfe, who volunteers three days a week in a third grade class, gave an interested teacher some space in his plot for her children to plant. They put in marigolds, which will be at their peak when they return to school.

"Lots of Cleveland Heights houses have shade," Samantha Provencio said. "This garden is in full sun and needs lots of watering. I grow beets and pickle them. My son loves them."

The garden has had its own growing cycle. It was started 18 years ago by Marty Grey, a Fairfax parent at the time, and has been passed along like a prized heirloom. "It began as a children's garden," Marty said. "For the first seven years the teachers used it for teaching. The garden even won an award from the City of Cleveland Heights."

"Marty Grey worked tirelessly," said Rita Bar, who became the next manager. She grew flax and would take it into the school and show the students how it was made into linen. She put her heart and soul into it."

As teachers felt more pressure to meet new academic standards, Grey said, the focus shifted to community gardeners.

"I kept it going," Rita Bar said modestly. "Three years ago, Samantha picked it up. She added a lot of creative things."



This year Samantha put in a post and rail fence along Lee and the north side of the garden. Everyone worked on planting what is now a lush border of lilies, roses, daisies, lavender, rhubarb and more. All share in the chives, wandering garlic, sage, strawberries and a raspberry bush.

The gardeners meet once a month to discuss communal issues. They water for one another, when needed, and at the end of the season hold a harvest party. They give excess produce to neighbors and to a food pantry.

After the tour, Samantha and I sit on a bench facing the garden. I am wet and sticky, but my shirt dries in the breeze. It feels good. We could be in a Kansas field, not with our backs to busy Lee Road.

Samantha told me that over the winter a cover crop of vetch, peas, winter rye and oat is tilled in to restore the soil. Then the whole garden is tilled in the spring and covered with organic fertilizer.

This year, not everyone who wanted a garden plot got one. Nine people remained on a waiting list. Samantha mentions a dream of expanding.

As I leave, gardener Kirsten Hagesfeld is watering. She marvels at the joy of tending her plot. "It is so healthy," she said, "to be on the ground, alone, working."

Eleanor Mallet's column, "A Heights Observer," explores the nooks and crannies in the Heights. She can be reached at eleanormallet@yahoo.com.

4th annual pie fight at Coventry



SPLAT! was heard all around the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park on July 15 around 10:30 p.m. for the fourth annual pie fight. Steve Presser, owner of Big Fun, started the fight in 1982 in his backyard with his close friends. Gradually it evolved into a larger event at the P.E.A.C.E. Park. More than 200 people attended last year.

Marc's on Coventry donated 150 pie crusts. Participants had to supply the whipped cream. The fight lasted about 15 minutes, ending with whipped cream, pie crusts, cans and pie tins all over the place. Some people were covered head to toe with cream and some were covered with other toppings, such as caramel. All participants stayed around to help clean up, but Coventry sure smelled sweet the next morning.

Presser said, "It is a nonsensical way to celebrate life by throwing a pie in your best friend's face," which was certainly achieved by the groups of friends in attendance. Word about the pie fight was spread through Facebook, newspapers and posters.

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

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Goodbye to Denison Pool

Fran Mentch

Celebrate the last days of summer and the end of Denison Park Pool at a potluck dinner at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 22, in the Denison Park Pavilion. Dinnerware and charcoal will be provided. Please bring a dish to share and anything else you might need for your meal. A free concert by the local folk-rock band, oldboy, will start at 3 p.m.

Losing Denison Pool means losing a wonderful community amenity. Many of us have fond memories of the fun we had there with our friends and families.

We will have a "Goodbye and Cel-

ebration of Life" ceremony for Denison Pool during this event. Please bring mementos, flowers, or photos to place at the fence. If you have a story about Denison Pool, please come and share it with the group. It would be especially great to hear from former lifeguards and staff.

The event is sponsored by Severance Neighborhood Organization. For more information about the celebration, contact sno@heightssno.org or call 216-381-5356.

Fran Mentch is the president of Severance Neighborhood Organization, www.heightssno.org.

Dog walk at Cedar Fairmount benefits Animal Protective League

Kaye Lowe

The Cleveland Animal Protective League will be the beneficiary of the registration fee for a dog walk at the 9th Annual Discover Cedar Fairmount Festival & Arts and Craft Show on Sunday, Aug. 8 at 2 p.m.

The fee is \$5.00 per dog. The walk will be one mile, starting on the sidewalk at the corner of Cedar Road and Bellfield Drive. Registration starts at 1 p.m. at the tent located at nearby Chase Bank, 12388 Cedar Road. Each dog will receive a free gift.

The festival includes other activities from noon to 4 p.m. Adults and children will enjoy free Euclid Beach Rocket Car rides, a bounce house, Muscial Mark Show, musicians, a green garden lecture, meet the authors, arts and crafts, clowns, face painting, hair coloring, tattooing, food, merchants' specials, and much more.

Go to www.cedarfairmount.org for more information and a schedule of events.

Kaye Lowe is the executive director of the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District.



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Community events

Thursday, Aug. 5
University Heights Summer Concert Series
 Frank Moravcik Polka Band
 7-8:30 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"
 Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park at Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard

Sunday, Aug. 8
Discover Cedar Fairmount Summer Festival & Arts and Crafts Show
 Noon to 4 p.m., Cedar Fairmount business district

Thursday, Aug. 12
University Heights Summer Concert Series
 Straight-Six Dixie
 7-8:30 p.m., Wiley Middle School lawn
 2181 Miramar Blvd.

Thursday, Aug. 12
Party in the P.E.A.C.E. Park and Tribute to Harvey Pekar
 6-9 p.m. music by Mo' Mojo
 9 p.m. "American Splendor"
 Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park at Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard

Thursday, Aug. 19
University Heights Summer Concert Series
 Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band
 7-8:30 p.m., Wiley Middle School lawn
 2181 Miramar Blvd.

Thursday, Aug. 19
Cedar Lee Rock the Block - Anatolia Cafe
 Complimentary appetizers, soft drinks and entertainment by the Summit Jazz Duo.
 6-8 p.m., Anatolia Cafe, 2270 Lee Road

Thursday, Aug. 19
Cedar Lee Rock the Block - Lee Road Library
 Family-friendly evening includes balloon art by Swifty 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

Sunday, Aug. 22
Potluck, free concert and "Goodbye" to Denison Pool
 Sponsored by Severance Neighborhood Organization
 2-5 p.m., Denison Park Pavilion

Thursday, Sept. 16
"Insisting on Life" by Nasser Abufarha, PhD, founder of Palestine Fair Trade and Canaan Fair Trade
 Nasser Abufarha will describe how Palestine Fair Trade grew from a small cooperative of a few farmers to more than 1,700 farmers, a state-of-the-art olive oil refinery, and distribution throughout the world. Profits from olive oil sales provide micro-loans for women, college scholarships, and jobs for a depressed community.
 7 p.m., John Carroll University, Lombardo Student Center

Sunday, Sept. 26
33rd Heights Heritage Home & Garden Tour
 Noon to 6 p.m. Benefits Heights Community Congress.
 Friday, Oct. 15-Sunday, Nov. 21

Friday, Oct. 15- Sunday, Nov. 21
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