Music Settlement halts plan, but talks continue

Jessica Kohn

One year ago, in September 2009, The Music Settlement, based in University Circle, reached an agreement with the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District to transform the former Coventry Elementary School into a state-of-the-art early childhood center. After conducting a compre- hensive feasibility study, however, The Music Settlement now believes that the campaign goal of raising $16-19 million would be difficult to achieve.

“The Music Settlement’s board and administration are, of course, disappointed about the results of the study,” said Charles D. Lawrence, president and CEO of The Music Settlement. “But after careful consideration, we believe moving forward with our original plans in such an uncertain economy would be detrimental.”

Coventry residents are also disappointed. Mark Majewski, whose home abuts the property, said there have been loud parties near the playground at the back of the building, and reported that his daughter was confronted by a man with a gun near the school. “I’m hopeful that the school district and the city will continue to be aggressive to find a new use for the property,” Majewski stated.

Although unaware of any recent crime on the property, Stephen Sherga- dis, director of business services for the school district, stated that all security systems are being maintained and an off-duty Cleveland Heights police officer was hired to patrol the site at night.

Majewski added that, despite the disturbances, the school district has done a good job in maintaining the building, which has been vacant since June 2007. “I compliment the school district for making the building look nice. It does not look derelict.”

Superintendent Douglas Heuer said that he and the school district “remain committed to finding the best use for the Coventry property, as soon as it’s possible to do so” and added that, “whatever the answer, the people of our community—and especially that neigh- borhood—should know that finding the

Ohio wins Race to the Top

Angie Shaker

CH-UH students will benefit

The U.S. Department of Education chose nine states—Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Ohio and Rhode Island—and the District of Columbia to receive $400 million dollars, half of which will be directly distributed to the 538 districts and charter schools that pledged their support. Cleveland Heights-University Heights is one of those districts.

“This is great news for our students. According to formulas issued at the start of the application process, we anticipate Race to the Top funding in excess of $4 million for our district. These funds will be used in accordance with Race to the Top guidelines.

“We are grateful to have this opportunity to expend grant monies to further improve the quality of education for our students. I would also like to extend

Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition petition

Nicholas Matthew

City Council to improve bicycle infrastructure

Cities across the United States are learning the benefits of becoming more bicycle friendly.

Portland, Oregon, with nearly 100 miles of new bicycle lanes installed in the last decade, is now one of the top eight U.S. cities to attract recent college graduates.

In San Francisco, 66 percent of merchants said that bicycle lanes had a positive overall impact on their business, according to a survey conducted four and a half years after the lanes were painted.

A study of house prices by the Monocle Bicycle Trail in Indianapolis found that homes closer to the bike path sold for an average of 11 percent more than other homes identical in the number bathrooms, bedrooms, and square foot- age, but farther away from the trail.

These are just a few reasons why the Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition is urging Cleveland Heights City Council to improve bicycle infrastructure. In just four weeks, the coalition collected signatures from more than 500 individuals who support its cause. When the coal- ition presented its petition to Mayor Ed Kelley at the Aug. 16 city council meet- ing, more than 30 coalition members attended, applauding when Mayor Kelley announced, “we’re with you on this.”

Along with improved education and awareness, the coalition has requested that the city implement a program of installing bicycle “sharrows” on five key streets in Cleveland Heights. In order of priority, these roads are:

1. Euclid Heights Boulevard to the Cleveland border
2. Euclid Heights Boulevard from South Taylor Road to Cedar Road
3. Coventry Road from Mayfield Road to Fairmount Boulevard
4. Lee Road from Mayfield Road to Fairmount Boulevard
5. Fairmount Boulevard from South Taylor Road, through Cedar Road to Cedar Hill

Sharrows are markings painted on the road to remind motorists and cyclists to share the road, and are an alternative to bicycle lanes when they cannot be installed because the roads are too narrow or because the asphalt is crumbling. Sharrows bear the image of a bicycle with two chevrons, sometimes referred to as “Sergeant Bike.” They can be found on the roads of 86 other U.S. cities, including Columbus and Pitts- burgh, and internationally in England and Australia.

The coalition has asked the city to install the sharrows on Euclid Heights Boulevard and Edgehill Road by Nov. 15 as a pilot program, and on Coventry Road by May of 2011.

If you’d like to learn more, visit www.bikeintheheights.org.

Nicholas Mattiace is an officer of the Clevel- and Heights Bicycle Coalition.

New business alliance partners with FutureHeights in Best of the Heights awards

Megan Johnson

The recently-formed Heights Indepen- dent Business Alliance (HIBA) is collaborat- ing with FutureHeights to build a vital Heights economy based on independent, locally-owned businesses. Together the or- ganizations seek to prevent proliferation of retail chains and similar trends from displacing local entrepreneurs by uniting area independent businesses, citizens and community organizations.

A launch party for HIBA is sched- uled for Oct. 18 in conjunction with FutureHeights’ 2010 Best of the Heights awards ceremony. The event will be held at Motorcars Toyota, 2950 Mayfield Road, in Cleveland Heights, at 6:30 p.m.

“We are very excited about the inception of an independent business al- liance in the Heights, and look forward to teaming up on many projects in the future,” said Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights. “HIBA’s goals support FutureHeights’ mission to promote a vibrant and sus-

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We Recycle

Heights Observer September 1, 2010

OPINION

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

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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Letters to the Editor
welcomes
willing
It is a citizen-based news source
and the Katherine and Lee
FutureHeights, its staff and board of trustees.
The views and opinions expressed in this publication
de not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of
The Heights Observer, published by FutureHeights, is about
engagement: helping to keep residents of University Heights and Cleveland Heights informed, and providing a platform
to actively share information about community issues and organizations.
It’s a chicken-and-egg proposition: The greater the engagement, the more the contributors the Observer receives—and the better informed people will be.

I observe two common barriers to this process:
1. People don’t want to take the time.
2. People don’t know how, or don’t feel qualified, to contribute.

There’s not much the Observer can do about the first barrier, except perhaps to convince people that sharing their knowledge doesn’t take a lot of time. We’re addressing that, and tackling the second barrier in depth with a series of Tuesday-evening workshops to help residents figure out what, and how, to contribute information to the Observer.

All of the workshops are at the CH-UH Main Library on Lee Road. They are free and open to the public, though we are asking people to call in reservations as a courtesy, at 216-320-1423 (the office of FutureHeights and the Observer). You may attend as few or as many as you want. I’ll be at all of them, and hope to see you there.

Tuesday, Sept. 21: Help Yourself, Serve the Community: How to Use the Heights Observer to benefit your team, club or organization, and how to submit information. 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meeting Room A.

Tuesday, Sept. 28: What’s the News: How to be an Educated News Consumer, by freelance journalist and former Plain Dealer columnistefd

Adelia Scruggs. 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meeting Room B.

Tuesday, Oct. 5: You Too Can Write the News: Basic reporting and writing for community journalists, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meeting Room B.

Tuesday, Oct. 12: How to Edit (for community journalists). Why, what, and how editors do what they do. 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meeting Room B.

Tuesday, Nov. 9: Photography for Community Journalists. How to take better newspaper photos, and how to submit them for publication in the Heights Observer. 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meeting Room B.

Tuesday, Dec. 7: The Media Meltdown. What happened to newspapers and magazines, and what’s next. 7:00-8:30 p.m., Meeting Room B.

Bob Rosensbaum, 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 bbr@observerheights.net.

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

Enthusiastic volunteers are helping the Heights Observer thrive...

I’ll be up here sitting on my eggs for a week...do you think the paper could use me as a “heights observer”?

How to Walk to School movement gains traction here
Joan Sporel

Perhaps you’ve read How to Walk to School: Blueprint for a Neighborhood School Renaissance by Jacqueline Edelberg and Susan Kurland, or read about the book in the June issue of the Heights Observer, or Eleanor Mallett’s column in the Jewish issue. Either way, you’re invited to join the local How to Walk to School movement that’s gaining traction here.

Regardless of your connection to the schools, you want your input and assistance. Many community members are reading the book, or heard the author speak here in June, and are inspired to organize and act to uplift the youngest in our community, and thereby all of us.

I’ve been meeting and speaking with community residents and leaders these last few months. Doug Waugh, our school superintendent, is eager to collaborate with the community. In the coming weeks, I’ll continue to spread the word at various community meetings and venues.

Now is the time for parents, teachers, principals and others to compile wish lists and brainstorm ideas for the schools. It’s time to create a community resource list that includes people or businesses with skills or materials to contribute. Next we can match up these resources with the needs of our schools, and get to work on a creative and productive process of embracing these schools, and get to work on a creative and productive process of embracing these schools. While we’re at it, let’s formulate a list of all the positive programs, activities and stories already happening in our schools. I know there are many.

Challenges are different from those of the Chicago school board and Kurland wrote about. Their process, however, can inspire us to see that anything is possible here. I envision groups of people, inspired by their concerns, passions or dreams for the school and community, organizing into committees to work with the school administration to prioritize and act. We may tackle a few positive initiatives this year and others the next. But let’s start somewhere.

Already, there are parents wanting to improve the nutritional value of the food schools serve. Others want to implement safe routes so that more children can bicycle and walk safely to school. This alone could have many positive outcomes by fostering health through exercise, more effective learning from the benefits of exercise, and greater community feeling as more residents escort children to school.

Let’s begin to think outside the box and bring the rich social and intellectual capital of our community to this endeavor. You can support the district’s efforts by conveying positive stories and critical messages to the community.

You can share your ideas and offer your resources by contacting me at joansporel@sbcglobal.net or 216-371-3723. Please provide me with your contact information. Also, let me know if you are able to create and maintain a Facebook page for our growing movement.

Joan Sporel is a Cleveland Heights resident and early childhood consultant with over 13 years of combined experience teaching kindergarten, Head Start, preschool and college.

Workshops for becoming a true Observer
Bob Rosensbaum

The Heights Observer is a non-profit news source published monthly by FutureHeights, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to civic engagement at the local level.

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Today Cleveland Heights is less safe than it has been in years because city officials have slashed the city’s fire department by 10 percent.

The 69 firefighters and paramedics, who remain since City Manager Bob Downey laid off three of them, and demoted two lieutenants, are struggling to respond to emergency calls. We have been forced to work overtime just to maintain minimum safe staffing levels.

The situation could get a lot worse—and less safe—for the residents of Cleveland Heights if city officials continue to whittle away at the fire department.

It did not have to be this way. The city turned its back on a $49,846 federal grant offered back in March to bring firefighters back to work. This is nearly half a million dollars that would have been poured into the local economy of Cleveland Heights to keep the city safe and keep people employed.

In an economy like this, it’s foolish not to do everything we can to preserve jobs.

These grants are called SAFER grants because they help local communities keep their residents safe at a time when the economy is weakening havoc on local budgets. Hundreds of U.S. cities facing similar budgeting issues have accepted modest raises. The city had the opportunity to reconsider its appeal in the first round of arbitration, shortly thereafter. When the union lost its appeal to lay off firefighters or paramedics, the city responded to that decision by laying off firefighters and paramedics.

This is poor city management. Public safety should be a top priority for city leaders. Instead they appear to be waging a political war against first responders at the peril of the residents who rely on their fire department to keep them safe.

Fire chief explains SAFER grant and current department staffing levels

From the Editor: The Observer has received questions from Cleveland Heights residents about staffing levels of the city’s fire department and the city’s rejection of federal stimulus funding for the fire department—questions raised, in part, by recent information distributed by the International Association of Firefighters Local 402/Cleveland Heights. The union perspective is presented separately in this issue as a letter to the editor.

The Observer asked the City of Cleveland Heights to explain its position on current staffing and on the federal grant. The city’s response follows.

Kevin Mohr
President, CH Firefighters
IAFF Local 402

Due to challenging economic conditions, virtually every local government has been forced to make difficult decisions regarding expenditures and staffing. Cleveland Heights is no exception.

Since 2005, our city has had to look at every program and service it offers to determine where cuts could be made. Throughout this process, our priority has been maintaining the safety of our residents.

In February 2009, the city formulated a multipart plan to address budget concerns. Successful implementation of the plan required cooperation of the city’s union and nonunion employees. All unions—except the firefighters—agreed to freeze wages for one year or, in the case of the service union, three. For their part, nonunion employees have had no raises in three years and were required to take 10 unpaid furlough days in 2009. More than 100 positions have been eliminated.

The cuts must end because they jeopardize your safety. Our public officials must stop playing politics with public safety.

Paul Hallie
President, CH Firefighters
IAFF Local 402

Kevin Mohr
Chief of the Cleveland Heights Division of Fire/EMS

While struggling to keep the city running, the city has been forced to work overtime just to maintain minimum safe staffing levels. The cuts must end because they jeopardize your safety. Our public officials must stop playing politics with public safety.

Kevin Mohr
Chief of the Cleveland Heights Division of Fire/EMS

In March 2009, I urged firefighters to ask the City of Cleveland Heights to consider federal stimulus funding for the fire department. The city’s rejection of federal stimulus funding for the fire department—questions raised, in part, by recent information distributed by the International Association of Firefighters Local 402/Cleveland Heights. The union perspective is presented separately in this issue as a letter to the editor.

Kevin Mohr
Chief of the Cleveland Heights Division of Fire/EMS
Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

JULY 19, 2010
All council members were present.

Community Center lighting renovation

Council approved an increase in the cost of the contract with South Shore Electric, Inc. for the Community Center/Ice Rink Lighting Renovation Project. Grant monies will cover the increased cost.

City’s strategic development plan

A draft of the city’s strategic development plan is available for review on the city’s website or from City Hall. A public hearing will take place on Sept. 13, at 7 p.m., at the community center.

Nelaview homes declared nuisances

Council declared two properties to be nuisances: 851 Nelaview Road and 875 Nelaview Road. Rick Wagner, housing projects manager, recommended demolition because, in both cases, the cost of repairs would amount to more than the market value of the properties. Completion of demolition is expected by the beginning of September.

Fall/winter recreation fees

An ordinance amending fees for the Cleveland Heights Community Center and parks for the 2010-2011 fall/winter season was presented. Vice Mayor Phyllis Evans noted that there were only a few slight increases.

2011 tax budget

Council passed the 2011 tax budget. The city’s 2011 income is estimated to be $41,000,000, and the budget would spend approximately $40,500,000.

Heights Parent Center merger

Heights Parent Center is merging with another nonprofit corporation to form a new entity to be known as Family Connections. In order to accommodate the name change, council amended the agreement for Community Development Block Grant funds for assistance with the center’s Family School Connection program.

Municipal court upgrade

Council authorized an agreement with Herschen and Associates Inc. for an integrated document imaging and redaction system for the Cleveland Heights Municipal Court at the cost of not more than $37,310. This will bring the court into compliance with the Ohio Supreme Court order that courts go paperless.

DVW observers: Lisa Peters and Kristen Karosal

AUGUST 2, 2010
All council members were present.

Eucidi Heights Boulevard property

Council declared the residential property at 3436 Eucidi Heights Boulevard to be a nuisance and authorized abatement. This property, owned by Hatathon Moms, has not been maintained for a number of years, and although the owner is approved to be demolishing the property, that effort is proceeding too slowly.

Landlord training

Council Member Ken Morlock noted the correlation between the professionalism of rental property owners and the condition of the property. The police department is offering a landlord training seminar focused on keeping legal activity out of rental properties. The first session took place on July 29 with about 40 people attending. When landlords complete the training and commit to its principles, their properties will be listed on the city’s website.

City commissions have openings

Residents are encouraged to apply for openings on the city’s Landmarks Commission and the Commission on Aging. Applications can be obtained by calling 216-291-3925, visiting City Hall, or downloading from the city’s website, www.clevelandheights.com.

Recreation fees

Council enacted small rate increases for admission and other services at the Cleveland Heights Community Center and parks for the 2010-2011 fall/winter season.

Community Improvement and Tender Loving Care awards.

Vice Mayor Phyllis Evans encouraged residents to attend the annual Community Improvement and Tender Loving Care awards. For a property to qualify, the improvements must be visible from a public right-of-way and must make the area more attractive. A property may be nominated for restoration, renovation, an addition, outdoor furniture or sitting areas, lighting, new construction, signage, painting, and excellent maintenance. Nomination forms are available from Community Relations at 216-291-2225. The award winner will be honored and historic preservation awards will be presented at a ceremony in the City Hall atrium on Oct. 7.

Water division purchases

Council authorized the purchase of a water jet and cab and chassis for the public works department’s water division. The water jet, which is used to clean out water and sanitary sewer lines, will be purchased from Jack Doheny Supplies Ohio Inc. through the Ohio Department of Administrative Services Cooperative Purchasing Program, at a total cost of $46,187.94, which includes the trade-in of an older jet. The issuance of $47,000 in tax-exempt notes or bonds will cover the cost. The cab and chassis for mounting the water jet will be bought from Miami Valley International Trucks and purchased through the Ohio Department of Transportation Cooperative Purchasing Program at a total cost of $60,763. The issuance of $61,000 in tax-exempt notes or bonds will cover the cost for the cab and chassis.

Storm water management at Denison Park

Council authorized Behnke Associates Inc. to prepare a storm water management plan, necessitated by the Denison Park Soccer Field Improvement project, which involves replacing the existing natural turf soccer field with a synthetic turf surface. The total cost of Behnke’s services for this portion of the project is not to exceed $15,000.

DVW observer: Kathleen Sulzender

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

These meeting summaries are abstracted from DVW observers’ written reports. The summaries have been edited and prepared by Anne McFarland, Marilyn McGough and MaryAnn Toma. To receive annual updates of full reports and an e-mail in mailbox935100@gmail.com with the search phrase: Heights Observer, please contact the DVW observers and selected highlights of public meetings and are not official statements of the Heights Independent Business Alliance, City of Cleveland Heights, or the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribution of these reports.

NEW BUSINESS ALLIANCE continued from page 1

A member of the American Independent Business Alliance (AMIBA), HIBA unites locally-owned independent businesses, citizens, and community organizations to support the unique culture of the Heights through public education; cooperative promotion, advertising and purchasing; creating a strong and uncoordinated voice for one-of-a-kind independent businesses; and engaging citizens in guiding the future of the community.

FuturHeights is a nonprofit organization focused on providing tools to promote positive change through volunteerism and community activism in Cleveland Heights and University Heights. Its programs include publishing the Heights Observer and promoting independent merchants through its annual Best of the Heights survey and awards. For several years, the organization’s Heights Shops program has educated consumers on the benefits of shopping locally.

HIBA, a 501(c) 6 nonprofit organization, is still in its organizational stages. Alex Quintana, who owns Quintana’s Barber & Dream Spa with his wife, Dawn, is a cofounder of HIBA. He said he looks forward to bringing together the Heights’s many independent storefront and home-based businesses. “There is a wonderful community here in the Heights, and creating a strong partnership among local businesses will do so much to sustain our future. There is strength in numbers.”

For more information about opportunities with HIBA, visit www.facebook.com/shophiba or contact HIBA cofounders Alex Quintana at equrtna@att.net or Trevor Gile at trevor.gile@motorcarshonda.com. For more information about FutureHeights, visit www.futureheights.org.

Megan Johnson is a public relations volunteer for the Heights Independent Business Alliance. Reach her at megan@theKarenfoundation.org.

We just got better.
Will UH senior adults be shortchanged?

Anita Kazarian

If senior adult residents of University Heights want to keep the services they have come to expect from our city, they need to pay attention to what some councilmen are saying.

On July 26, several members of council proposed to create the new position of economic development director. The position would add up to $80,000 plus benefits to the city's payroll each year, taking a significant bite out of the city's tax revenues.

State law requires UH to have a balanced budget. Adding even a part-time economic development person will require either new taxes or a reduction in current city services.

As one councilman said, “We can’t do everything, there are always tradeoffs.” One likely tradeoff may be a senior services manager. “If I had to place these two things—work on development issues against a senior service manager,” said the councilman, “I believe I would have to say the development person would have a higher priority.”

What these councilmen have in mind is that the economic development director will find tenants for vacant, privately-owned commercial space in UH. This would increase employment and thereby increase tax revenues. What is not to like about that?

The difficulty with the scheme is that the development director would be doing what realtors in the private market already do—find business tenants for vacant, privately-owned commercial space. Driven by the need to earn commissions to feed their families, they are already diligently at work searching for tenants. Realtors are somewhat hampered, however, by the current economic climate and by the political rejection of some businesses that have desired to open here. It is not likely that a hired economic development director, even a good one, would be able to overcome those obstacles more easily than the army of experienced realtors already on the job.

Should our already high taxes be used to replace private sector real estate agents? Should, as one councilman considered and decided, these tax dollars be at the expense of lowering the priority of our senior adults? The question is an important one.

Of all UH voters registered in 2009, around 25 percent were born in 1950 or earlier. They have raised families, planned block parties, financed the new swimming pool and worked to make this a friendly small town of beautiful homes. Many are empty nesters. More important, they have been, and are, the consistent and reliable taxpayers supporting UH by their decision to remain in their homes.

I repeat my marketing proposal to brand and promote our city. We should use our tax dollars for the benefit of the entire city. We can do that without adding to our payroll an expensive executive with vaguely defined duties.

We have many “for sale” signs in our city. We are competing with neighboring cities for future homebuyers. Buyers move here for our housing stock, the quality of the city and our services. We need to market our housing stock to senior adults who are empty nesters in the region.

Council would be wise not to jeopardize this potential market of homebuyers by reducing or eliminating services important to them. Let us hope they do not attempt to balance the 2011 budget by shortchanging our senior adult residents.

I am interested in hearing directly from you. E-mail me your thoughts and comments to anita.kazarian@gmail.com.

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional and a 29-year resident of University Heights.
Noble Neighborhood Library to be renovated; closing October through February

Dean Schmurr

Since 1995, Noble Neighborhood Library has remained substantially unchanged. Next year, however, when you walk into the library, be prepared for a completely different look.

“We wanted to retain the stately atmosphere of the current building, but also make it more visually pleasing, user friendly and functional,” said Heights Library director, Nancy Levin, of the changes, which will begin this fall and should be completed in early 2011.

One of the first elements patrons will notice is a new centralized information desk, which will provide all the services customers need, from answering circulation questions to checking out books. Patrons will also appreciate the use of original woodwork and decorative elements in the main lobby, which will maintain that “classic library” feel.

Other renovations include an entrance from the rear parking lot, so guests will not have to walk around the building, first and second floor bathrooms, and large, open interior areas designed to offer more space. There will also be separate and expanded areas for children, teens and adults.

The children’s area will receive significant changes and will now be located on the lower level, closer to bathrooms. Sundial and airy, the space will have a separate story reading room and will be designed to stimulate the imagination of children.

“Staff worked diligently with the architects to design a library that will make this community proud,” said Levin.

Beyond the basic architectural elements, the renovated library will offer more computers for public use. The newly remodelled building will provide nearly double the present number of computers.

Another critical component of the renovations will be the maximization of energy efficiency. The entire heating and ventilation system is being replaced with small, quieter, more efficient and cost saving equipment. Insulation is being added to the ceilings and walls.

continued on page 11

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Motorcars in Cleveland Heights opens eco-friendly car wash

Marcia Bernstein Lu

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency prefers that you use a professional car wash. According to the EPA, dirty water runoff from driveway washing flows down the street, enters the storm drain, and directly pollutes our lakes and streams. Commercial car washes, on the other hand, are required to route wastewater to treatment plants, where contaminants, such as oil, grease and detergents, are removed. Yet, not all professional car washes are alike.

Car owners now have a greener option with the Sept. 1 opening of the Rainforest Car Wash at the corner of Mayfield and Middlehurst roads in Cleveland Heights. Motorcars, which owns and operates the wash, invested in an expensive water reclamation system that recycles the wash water. Three 500-gallon underground tanks separate the oil and sediment. The water is then filtered and reused for the high-pressure wash cycles, including the undercarriage flush.

Manager Jay Keffer wants to convince as much water as possible, but he also wants people to know their cars will be cleaned, explaining, “This car wash has the ability to do a fantastic job, but if we don’t choose where we use the recycled water it can affect the cleanliness of the car.” Rainforest will use about 15 gallons of freshwater per car to ensure that the final rinse will be spot-free.

Rainforest’s computer-controlled technology consumes less electricity than traditional hydraulic power. It turns equipment on only when needed, and easily adjusts the wash to combat seasonal problems, such as summer bugs and winter salt. The system is also fast—customers are in and out quickly.

Motorcars saw an opportunity to enhance its green image, but also wanted to build a better, more convenient car wash for its Honda, Toyota and Scion customers, who have long enjoyed free car washes. The dealership has more than 2,000 participants in its Platinum Rewards program, which grants, among other benefits, unlimited, anytime car washes. Other customers receive a wash with auto service. Altogether, Motorcars reports it has been washing more than 30,000 cars per year.

With growing demand, Motorcars realized it had outgrown its in-service department wash. Known for top-tier customer service—open until 3 a.m. weekdays—the company did not want to overpromise and under-deliver. “We wanted to give our customers a really good wash,” said Keffer, “so we invested heavily. With the capacity of what we ended up with, it was a no-brainer to open it to the public.” The new, stand-alone facility can wash 900 cars per day.

Rainforest offers four wash options at competitive price points: $6, $8, $10 and $12, and accepts cash, credit or debit cards. Platinum Motorcars members can zip in with their radio frequency sticker (think smaller E-ZPass). Car wash hours are 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., seven days a week. The entrance, located next to Motorcars 1st Choice Used Cars lot, is off Middlehurst Road. Vehicles will exit onto Mayfield Road via a heated driveway that melts ice and snow. If you must wash your car at home, keep in mind that a standard garden hose produces about 20 gallons a minute. This means you use 100 gallons of water in only 10 minutes. To minimize environmental impact, the EPA and other environmental groups advise that you wash on the grass or gravel to allow water to sink into the ground, use biodegradable products, limit hose use, keep soapy water contained in a bucket and pour it down a household sink or toilet.

Marcia Bernstein Lu is a nonprofit and philanthropic consultant residing in Cleveland Heights.
The film features local entre-
preneurs including Darian Tuckett, a
graphic designer in the Cleveland area;
Cleveland State University’s Dr. Michael
Williams, head of the black studies
department; Mike Pratt, who owns a
Honda dealership, and Bob Lanier, of
the Black Pages — a directory of
black-owned businesses. Viewers will learn
how they got started and how they do
their work.

Using professional cameras, light-
ing, Sennheiser microphones and what
Davis deemed a “standard, but cinematic
approach,” Educo Films shot on loca-
tion at more than seven businesses.

Some of the professionals in the
documentary are struggling against chain
stores and larger operations, Gaydos said.
The film not only addresses why there aren’t
more companies run by black men
and women in Cleveland, but also what
individuals within the community can
do to help facilitate a more welcoming
environment, he explained.

“It’s easy to pretend that these prob-
lems don’t exist, especially in the area
where you live,” Gaydos said. “It’s a very
local project to show people that even
within their own community, there’s this
problem, but it’s certainly a problem that
we can solve. It’s saying, ‘There’s a way
to fix this, and it won’t be by people
sitting passively and complaining about
why they’re not getting their fair share.’

Although the indie music scene
was growing in popularity at the
time, the wake of the rock bands, the
Grog Shop faced stiff competition.
Clubs like Peabody’s (in the Flats), the
Phantasy Complex (on the West Side)
and independent promoters, like Larry
Collins (owner of City Buddha), had
locked on the touring business, and the
then popular Euclid Tavern was the
scene’s darling upstart. Apparently,
two years were one too many.

“Initially I had a very hard time
breaking into the booking agent scene,”
Blackman said. “People were very koyal
and didn’t really take my calls or take
me seriously. Eventually I wore them
down and proved myself. Reputation
and honorability go a long way.”

Once the club finally secured its
place on the touring circuit, soon after
celebrating its 10th anniversary, it lost
its lease. The City of Cleveland Heights,
however, rallied around the venue and
helped it find a new home nearby; keep-
ing it in Coventry Village, in the space
vacated when Arabica moved out a few
years earlier.

With the new space came a larger,
literally underground venue, and the
former Café D’Oro (if you were ever there,
there’s no way you could forget those
tiny little club served as a launching pad
for future superstars like the Flaming Lips,
Kid Rock, Oasis, Matchbox 20, Modest
Mouse, Bright Eyes and Fall Out Boy; we
can’t imagine what I would do with my
life.”

“ '</kelli_fontenot>'

This is about giving out there and making
the changes for yourself.”

Another goal of the film, according
to producer Jerome Brown, is to share
insight with students at high schools,
colleges and career centers. Within the
next month or so, Davis is also hoping
to post clips of the documentary on
websites, such as Facebook, YouTube
and Vimeo, with physical copies of the
30-minute TV version and an extended
director’s cut also being sold for be-
tween $15 and $40.

Brown, who helped find and arrange
interviews with the subjects of the docu-
mantary, said the stories within are both
educational and inspiring.

“One of the interviews is with a man
who worked for a printing company for
some time,” Brown remembered. “The
guy who owned the company wanted
to retire and sell the business. And this
man, instead of saying he wanted to
move on and find another job, he went in
and tried to find a way to own the
company. He talked to the owner, and
talked to the right people, made some
connections, and in the end, he bought
the company himself.”

Brown added that starting a business
can be challenging to people who lack
experience, knowledge and even know-
who he calls “the right people.”

“We’ve talked to people who’ve
somehow found the path to get to where
eyou they want to be, and they’re successful
or on their way to success,” Brown said.

“It’s just something you don’t hear about
on a regular basis, and we wanted to
shine a little spotlight on them.”

The main goal of the documentary,
Davis said, is to encourage young people
to see the potential in minority-owned businesses
and see what it takes to make it.

Davis said, “If even one person saw
it and it awakened something in them either
as a consumer, to support minority businesses more; as a contract provider,
to consider a minority business more than
they have; or as a business owner or po-
tential owner, to realize the importance
of providing excellent service, employing
those in the community and learning
ways to better structure and do business
for maximum service and profits,
then it was very well worth it. Because at the
end of the day, that is what it is all about,
making a difference in the world.”

Kelli Fontenot is a journalist living in Clevel-
dand Heights.
The board approved the following field trips:

- College credit
- Ohio Tech Education approval and thus carry program will be upgraded to obtain state of all courses in the district's career and technical program for 2009–2010 was a money saver. Gainer reported that the contract with Renhill to their assigned classrooms. Treasurer Scott of its substitute pool, and do more orientation for the upcoming school year, increase the size or higher. Renhill is working to bring down costs percent felt the substitute quality was average for the district. A staff survey showed that 74 Renhill staffing services Renhill Staffing Services provides substitutes for the district. A staff survey showed that 74 percent felt the substitute quality was average or higher. Renhill is working to bring down costs for the upcoming school year, increase the size of its substitute pool, and do more orientation for substitutes to provide those who are most suited to their assigned classrooms. Treasurer Scott Gainer reported that the contrast with Renhill for 2009–2010 was a money saver. Career and technical program All courses in the district's career and technical program will be upgraded to obtain state of its substitute pool, and do more orientation for substitutes to provide those who are most suited to their assigned classrooms. Treasurer Scott Gainer reported that the contrast with Renhill for 2009–2010 was a money saver. Field trips The board approved the following field trips:

- Gospel Choir’s field trip to Nassau in the spring of 2011.
- Minority Student Achievement members trip to a Network conference in White Plains, NY, in September 2010.

Credit flexibility

The board approved credit flexibility guidelines mandated by Senate Bill 311, which will allow students to receive credit for alternate learning experiences. Discussion followed as to how to ensure adult guidance of student learning and collaboration with other districts concerning such tasks as common record keeping.

Federal technology policy guidelines

The board approved an update to the Student and Staff Acceptable Use Policies for technology to meet new federal guidelines.

Donation

The board accepted miscellaneous science materials for the Heights High science department from a donor who recently passed away. Cleveland Music School Settlement Board President Nancy Peppler reported that the Cleveland Music School Settlement would not go forward with its proposal to buy or lease the Coventry property because it is not feasible at this time for the organization to raise the necessary money.

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Heights High welcomes new parents

Kristina Austin

We all remember how it felt to start high school. The anxiety about making friends and adjusting to a new environment, classes and teachers resonates for each of us. Parents also have some anxiety and lots of questions, which is why the Cleveland Heights High School Parent Connection Council (PCC) is hosting its New Parent Welcome on at Tuesday, Sept. 14, at 7 p.m. at Heights High.

The evening will provide information and guidance to parents and students, an opportunity to interact with seasoned Heights High families. Administrators and staff will also be on hand. They are looking forward to helping families transition and making the students’ first year a very positive experience.

After a brief introduction and welcome session in the social room, parents will rotate through three sessions that include a tutorial on Heights High’s online tool that parents can use to check their child’s progress, a question-and-answer session and information on academic progress. At the end of the evening, parents can return to the social hall to speak with representatives from the various extracurricular programs, and spend time getting to know one another.

Feedback from attendees at last year’s New Parent Welcome indicates the program is helpful and that parents appreciate having their needs addressed. For the PCC, it’s an opportunity to engage with new families and interest them in becoming an active part of the Heights High community. PCC president, Kym Wallace, said, “Having the support of other parents helps to make a big difference in a successful school experience. PCC is all about engaging parents and helping them connect with the school, the students and the community. We are excited about this year’s welcoming event and hope to have a great turnout.”

For more information about the Heights High New Parent Welcome contact Kym Wallace at 216-526-3738 or Kristina Austin, PCC vice president, at 216-244-5532.

CH-UH parents can now access grades online

Angee Shaker

All parents in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District may now sign up for the student information system, the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

Infinite Campus is an important tool for parents and guardians. It is the official grade book for the district, meaning that all grades are maintained in it, rather than paper grade books, for grades 3-12. K-2 parents can benefit from the system, as well, because it allows parents or guardians to check their student’s attendance, assignments and academic progress.

“It’s also another way for parents to communicate with teachers. Signing on to Infinite Campus is quick and easy, and once completed, parents can follow their child’s progress throughout the year,” Assistant Superintendent Jeffery Talbert said.

Parents who don’t have access to Internet can visit either the Lee Road Library (2344 Lee Road) or the University Heights Library (15866 Cedar Road) to use a computer there. Library staff are expecting CH-UH families and are prepared to offer any assistance. An Infinite Campus computer station has also been set up in each school building’s main office, for use during school hours. All parents who sign in before Sept. 15 will have a chance to win an Apple iPod Touch.

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

CH-UH schools launch new website

Jocelyn Elfvin

To make it even easier for parents and residents to stay informed, the CH-UH City School District has redesigned its website, www.chuh.us. The new design is more visually appealing, and it will improve communication with parents, students, staff and the community. It will launch Aug. 31, the first day of school.

“We want to make it easier and more fulfilling for families and community members to become involved in our schools,” Angee Shaker, director of communications and community engagement, said. “The new school website focuses more on providing current information about our district, schools and programs, and it tries to present that information in an easily accessible way. We believe that when parents are involved and informed about our schools, and the options available to their children, students have a better chance of succeeding.”

Visitors to the site will notice several new features, including the ability to register for e-communication updates. By registering, visitors can choose to receive important updates regarding building and district news, announcements, and upcoming events. Once registered, subscribers will automatically be added to the communication e-mail lists.

“Overhauling a school website is an enormous challenge. I was fortunate enough to have a team that was committed to making this a cutting-edge school website. My sincerest gratitude goes to the team: Drew Dallet, Jackie Elfvin, Mike Beckman, Hannah Reid, Kathy Lawrence, and Joy Henderson. Special thanks also to Western Reserve Internet Service for developing the site, Janet Century for the beautiful photographs, and our IT team for their expert guidance along the way,” said Shaker.

Jackie Elfvin is the administrative assistant in the office of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

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Email: mortgage@case.edu

* Participation in study is not required to attend the seminar.

Advertise in the Heights Observer Call 216-513-3070 www.heightsobserver.org

Superintendent Jeffery Talbert said.

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Parenting Q&A
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 a question you would like Barrett to respond to in this column, please e-mail her at ebarrett@heightsparentcenter.org.

Q. My daughter is extremely shy. Whenever we go anywhere she hangs on my leg, and may be reluctant to enter a new place at all. Even after we’ve been someplace multiple times or have been there awhile, she tends to stay very close to me. I tell her that I would never put her in harm’s way, and that all the people we know are nice, but she still has trouble adjusting to anyone new. I am worried that she won’t have any friends and will miss out on all the usual children’s activities. Is there anything I can do to bring her out of her shell?

A. Shyness is a personality trait that is not necessarily a bad quality or a fault. Shy kids are often focused, attentive, and loyal. If you see that your child is slow to warm up or introverted. In fact, shy kids often make great sensitive and observant. Shyness doesn’t always mean a child is insecure; instead, it could use some encouragement in social situations, there are several things that you can do to set her up for success.

• Be sure to emphasize the positive elements of her personality; don’t label her as “shy” to others, but instead use terms such as “observant” and “focused.”

• Provide her with opportunities to interact in safe, small social settings where she may warm up slowly and comfortably; don’t pressure her.

• Be outgoing yourself, so that she may learn from observing your behavior. For example, look others in the eye, be the first to say hello, compliment someone, and offer unsolicited assistance by opening a door for someone, or picking up a dropped item.

• Share with your daughter your feelings about doing something difficult. For example, you might tell her, “It was hard for me to try roller skating again, but I’m glad I did. It was fun！”

Although it may be difficult for you to sit on the sidelines and watch, try to give your daughter time and opportunity to develop her own social personality. With support, she will eventually learn to fit in, however it feels most natural to her.

Q. My son is 9 years old and happens to be one of the few in his class that have yet to learn how to read. Will he never catch up? With support, he will eventually learn to develop his own social personality.

A. It is very common for children to learn to read at different rates. As long as your son is in a supportive and encouraging environment, he will eventually learn to read. There are several things you can do to help him:

• Provide him with opportunities to interact in safe, small social settings where he may warm up slowly and comfortably; don’t pressure him.

• Be outgoing yourself, so that he may learn from observing your behavior. For example, look others in the eye, be the first to say hello, compliment someone, and offer unsolicited assistance by opening a door for someone, or picking up a dropped item.

• Share with your son your feelings about doing something difficult. For example, you might tell him, “It was hard for me to try roller skating again, but I’m glad I did. It was fun!”

Although it may be difficult for you to sit on the sidelines and watch, try to give your son time and opportunity to develop his own social personality. With support, he will eventually learn to fit in, however it feels most natural to him.

Music Settlement continued from page 1
The school district is currently in discussions with The Music Settlement and The Ensemble Theatre regarding the possibility of leasing a portion of the building, and plans to contact other arts organizations they believe might be a good fit.

Lawrence stated that the board’s decision will not affect future collaborations. “We have a great relationship with the CH-UH School District, and we are committed to the school system and to the community. This is not the end of the opportunity.”

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

Sea Serpents win silver
The Cleveland Heights Sea Serpents Swim Team recently captured second place in the ICSL Championships held at the Wembley Club in Chagrin Falls. Pictured are Coach Andrea Chan, Coach Marco Pardo, Eleanor Pippin, Dylan Forrest, Head Coach Paul Wagner, Nicholas Bislich, Monica Chan, Hannah Kausen, Mitchell Fragassi, Juliana Soreo, Adam Goldfarb, Claire Hall, Maddie Hengst and Laina Soreo.

The CH Sea Serpents of Cumberland Pool is open to all residents ages 6-18.
Sustainability Week

Sponsored by the Sustainable Heights Network

OCTOBER 2–10

The Sustainable Heights Network invites Heights residents to participate in Sustainability Week 2010, a week-long series of community events designed to help us build a more sustainable community.

The Sustainable Heights Network is an active and open group of over 50 organizations and individuals who came together in April to 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 network is an outgrowth of Sustainable Cleveland 2019, a process that seeks to mobilize Greater Cleveland to create a green and sustainable economy by the year 2019.

Tour a solar-powered house, ride your bike to the Farmer’s market, hike Donau Brook or participate in a Green Assets Mapping Party in historic Coventry Village. Most events are free and many are family friendly. See a partial list of events below and visit www.sustainableheightsnetwork.blogspot.com for a full list of events. For more information, email the network at sustainableheights@gmail.com or call 216-320-1423.

AVAILABLE ALL WEEK

Keeping Your $Green$: Financial Stability Kits
The Home Repair Resource Center presents ways to trim your budget and save on everyday things. You can download a leaflet from the HRC website, www.shakerhrc.org, or pick one up at the HRC office, 2520 Noble Road, beginning Oct. 1. Friendly. Handicap Accessible. Near Public Transportation.

Sustainable Community Displays of the Cleveland Heights Community Center (1 Monticello Boulevard)
Learn about the various projects and activities initiated by the City of Cleveland Heights that promote sustainable practices: solar panels on the Cedar Lee parking garage, solar bus shelters, energy-efficient lighting at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, Forest Hill Park Clean Ohio project, EPA Cumberland Pool lighting at the Forest Hill Park project, Sustainable Zoning update and other projects. A schedule of Sustainability Week Activities will also be available.

SATURDAY, OCT. 2

8:30 a.m. Nature Center Hike and Run The Nature Center’s annual Hike and Run in memory of Jenny Goldman is held annually to benefit the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and the Jenny Goldman Outreach funding of enrichment programs at the Nature Center. 8:30 a.m. at Shaker Lakes. Meet at the Michael R. White School and John Hay High School. Join in your choice of a 5K race, a 12-mile hike to Dike 14, a 3-mile hike for families (fetched pets welcome), or a two-mile Donau Brook Gorge Hike. Scout troops welcome. Hikes start at 9 a.m. and the 5K race begins at 9:15 a.m. at the center, 2600 South Park Boulevard. FEE: Adults $15 before Sept. 29; $20 after Sept. 29. Children (age 12 and under)/Scouts/Student Club members $5. Family rate (max. 2 adults/4 kids) $35. Sponsored by Baker Hostetler. Call 216-321-5935 to register or visit www.shakerlakes.org.

10 a.m. Farmer’s Market By Bike Ride to the Shaker Square Farmer’s Market with other cyclists to purchase locally-grown produce. Learn to carry load and other items on your bike. Meet at the P.E.A.C.E. Arch on the corner of Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard. FREE. For more information email at Bike@shakerheights.org or visit www.bike@shakerheights.org or shopbybike.html. Family Friendly. Friendly to Near Public Transportation. Sponsored by the Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition.

10 a.m.–4 p.m. Ohio Solar Tour Green Energy Ohio (GEO) is the Ohio Chapter of the American Solar Energy Society (ASES), and GEO’s 8th Annual Ohio Solar Tour is part of the National Solar Tour managed by ASES. This year’s tour features open houses in communities across Ohio. One of the stops is located in Cleveland Heights (10427 Fenleigh Road). This FREE statewide event provides a unique opportunity for people to visit homes and talk with owners living and working with clean energy technologies. For more information, www.greenenergyohio.org.

10 a.m. Tai Chi and Qi Gong These gentle forms of exercise are designed to bring about a total union of mind, body and spirit. Join instructor Ruth Butler at the Coventry Village Library, 1295 Coventry Road, as she teaches the 24 short forms of Tai Chi and Qi Gong exercises, including the “Eight Best Movements for Health.” Classes are ideal for any age group. FREE.

SUNDAY, OCT. 3

A Day at Forest Hill Park Come for one or all of the activities scheduled in the park. Ongoing walking tours will be provided on request. Spend a day discovering and rediscovering historic Forest Hill Park. Sponsored by the City of Cleveland Heights, the East Cleveland Parks Association and Severance Neighborhood Organization.

9:30 a.m. Dog-Walk Dog Walk in Forest Hill Park Bring your well-behaved dog on a leash to Forest Hill Park for a fun group activity. Enjoy the early autumn weather, meet your neighbors and furry companions, see the beauty of the park. Meet in the East Cleveland parking lot of Forest Hill Park, off Lee Boulevard, just north of Forest Hill Boulevard, on the left. FREE. Family Friendly. Near Public Transportation.

10 a.m. Walking Tour of Forest Hill Park Enjoy a walk through Forest Hill Park discovering natural and historic facts led by a trained naturalist. Bring water bottle and binoculars if you have them. Wear good walking shoes and dress for the weather. Meet at the Cleveland Heights Community Center. FREE. Family Friendly. Near Public Transportation.

10:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Forest Hill Park Volunteer Clean-ups Pruna, top, and help eradicate invasive species from historic Forest Hill Park, a gem of nature right in your own backyard! Be a part of a grassroots movement to restore the park’s natural beauty. Park volunteers will greet you either in the City of Cleveland Heights parking lot #2 (off Forest Hill Boulevard), just west of Lee Road), or in the East Cleveland lot off Lee Boulevard (north of Forest Hill Boulevard). Bring your own tools, dress for the weather and the work. Bring your lunch if you plan to stay the day.

There will be a potluck/runner for all volunteers at 4:30 p.m. Bring a non-perishable dish, labeled if it contains common allergens. Sponsoring the City of Cleveland Heights. For more information, contact ECPA (East Cleveland Parks Association) at 216-956-5333. FREE. Near Public Transportation.

12 noon. Forest Hill Park on Horseshoe The Cleveland Mounted Police Unit will be riding around Forest Hill Park starting at noon. Enjoy a walk with them or just have fun watching them in the distance in this beautiful green space. Forest Hill was John D. Rockefeller’s summer home. Sponsored by the Severance Neighborhood Organization. FREE. Family Friendly. Near Public Transportation.

MONDAY, OCT. 4

Noon–6 p.m. Red Cross Blood Donation Help the American Red Cross and your community by donating blood at the Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road. Donors’ names will be entered into a special drawing and receive a buy-one-get-one coupon for the Friends of the Library ongoing book sale. For more information visit www.heightslibrary.org.

5 p.m.–7 p.m. Home Repair Resource Center Open House Drop in to see our facilities and learn about programs to help sustain you in your home. Keeping your home in good repair, keeping your finances in shape, and knowing your options if you are facing mortgage delinquency. Our counselors and instructors will be on hand to meet with you and answer questions. The center is located at 2520 Noble Road. Visit www.hrrc.org for more information.

7 p.m. Energy Audits: Assessing and Improving Your Home Energy audits are a sustainable approach to assessing building performance and improving your older home. Join speaker Whiskey B. Walker, BPI, at the Home Repair Resource Center, 2520 Noble Road. You can make an older home energy efficient and save on heating costs. Learn what techniques and equipment can be used to assess and improve the efficiency of your home. In addition, Ali- bun Urbanik, HRC financial programs counselor, will discuss green energy rebates and tax credits for energy efficient improvements.

http://www.heightsobserver.org
SUSTAINABILITY

gives a brief overview of HRCC programs that can help you to learn about home energy efficiency. Call 216-381-9560 to register. Handicapped Accessible. Near Public Transportation.

7 p.m. Locally-Produced Money: A Sustainable (and Legal) Economic Path Communities across the country are pressing and circulating their own local legal complementary currencies to meet the needs of people and local businesses. Local currencies enable communities to tap into their own local resources. They also help insulate communities from the wide instabilities of the larger unsustainable national and international economies. Learn what people in our communities are doing, what discussions have already taken place in the Heights and what steps are being taken on a community wide level. Meet at the Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road. Sponsored by the Northeast Ohio American Friends Service Committee. For more information, call 216-391-2001 or e-mail gcrolen@gmail.com. FREE. Handicapped Accessible. Near Public Transportation.

TUESDAY, OCT. 5

10 a.m. Brainstorming Session: Connecting Our Schools With the Community. Come with your wish, ideas, resource and good story lists for a working meeting to start planning for better connecting our community with our schools. This conversation is inspired by the work of authors Jacqueline Edelberg and Susan Kurland, whose book, "Beyond Green: the essential components of a series of talks and discussions about the key facets of a sustainable community. "Beyond Green: The Essential Components of True Sustainability" is an online, multimedia magazine about community and environmental education about the role of community dialogue and the important role that racial, religious, cultural, inter-generational and economic diversity plays in sustainability efforts. Location and time to be determined. For more information, call Mary Dunbar at 216-321-1335 (Dunbar) or e-mail gcrolen@gmail.com. FREE. Handicapped Accessible. Near Public Transportation.

12 p.m. Tai Chi and Qi Gong These gentle forms of exercise are designed to bring about a total union of mind, body and spirit. Join instructor Robert Badger at the Coventry Village Library, 1925 Coventry Road, as she teaches the 24 short forms of Tai Chi and Qi Gong exercises designed to "Awaken the Life Movements for Health." Classes are ideal for any age group. FREE.

9 a.m.–4 p.m. Ohio Fair Trade Expo hosted by John Carroll University Chicagos will gather to further the fair trade consumer movement across our state. The Ohio Fair Trade Expo will bring together students, faith community members, community leaders, and business owners who will learn and become active in the international campaign for socially and environmentally responsible consumption. Held at OCU's Dolan Science Center, 20700 North Boulevard, Fee: $8.00–$15.00. Volunteers Needed. Near Public Transportation. For more information, call 216-397-4777 or visit www.ohiofairtrade.org.

1 p.m. Coventry Village Green Mapping Party On your walking tour of the Coventry Village neighborhood identity neighborhood assets and what makes Coventry Village a sustainable place. Add these important sites to the Sustainable Heights Open Green Map, an online mapping project of FutureHeights. There will be refreshments and fun for all. Meet at the Coventry Village Library, 1925 Coventry Road. Family Friendly. Handicapped Accessible. Near Public Transportation. For more information, call FutureHeights at 216-320-1423 or e-mail sustainableheaths@gmail.com.

3:30 p.m. Fenoscaping Workshop Join Childrens for a walk in a garden transformed with recycled materials, including aluminum cans and plastic bags, into eye-catching elements for the permanent public art project, Fenoscaping at Cedar Center. The event takes place at the Heights Arts Workshop, above the Cedar Lee Theatre, 2345 Lee Road, at the corner of Cedar and Lee roads. For more information, visit www.heightsarts.org. Family Friendly. Near Public Transportation.

4 p.m. Open Green Map, an online mapping project of Sustainable Heights Open Green Map. Ohio Fair Trade Expo hosted by John Carroll University Chicagos will gather to further the fair trade consumer movement across our state. The Ohio Fair Trade Expo will bring together students, faith community members, community leaders, and business owners who will learn and become active in the international campaign for socially and environmentally responsible consumption. Held at OCU's Dolan Science Center, 20700 North Boulevard, Fee: $8.00–$15.00. Volunteers Needed. Near Public Transportation. For more information, call 216-397-4777 or visit www.ohiofairtrade.org.

5 p.m.–7 p.m. Community Pot-Luck and Rain Barrel Workshop Join the Ununiversalist Society of Cleveland, 2728 Manchester Road, as it celebrates its community garden and makes rain barrels for its building. Bring a dish from your garden or favorite farmers' market and learn how to catch rainwater, and reduce runoff, at your home. FREE. Family Friendly. Handicapped Accessible. Near Public Transportation. For more information, call 216-932-1898 or visit www.usscl.com.

SUNDAY, OCT. 10

2 p.m.–5 p.m. Adopt A Tree The Furys Peace Fund and Council Gardens want to keep our cities green with trees. Their goal is to have 100 new trees planted in the yards of local residents. Heights residents are invited to adopt a small hardwood as flowering tree to plant in their yard. Free trees will be available at Council Gardens, 2501 North Taylor Road, to residents who promise to plant the trees and care for them. The Furys Peace Fund, Council Gardens, The Cleveland Botanical Garden and Lawn Lad are teaming up to make trees and knowledge about tree care available through workshops and printed materials. For more information, call 216-382-8625 or contact Scotti Libar at saoshi@gmail.com. On the contact the Futures at 216-371-8600.

5 p.m.–4 p.m. Organic Gardening and Tree Planting Program Come to Council Gardens, 2501 North Taylor Road, for an afternoon of basic organic gardening and tree planting education from local experts. Learn to go pesticide-free and see how organic gardening works in cooperation with nature for a healthier environment. See Council Gardens community garden and urban farm project. Family Friendly. Handicapped Accessible. Near Public Transportation. For more information, email Spencer Caress at spencer1612@yahoo.com.
Forget the tux. Stay at home!

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Heights photographer publishes book on 21 now-shuttered churches

James Toman

When Debra First learned that the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland was planning to shutter many churches, she knew she had to get involved.

A professional photographer who lives in Cleveland Heights, First set out to preserve the lifetime memories which, for so many Greater Clevelanders, were tied up with their parish church.

She wanted, however, to do more than simply record the scenes on film. She knew that there were also moving stories to be told. Most of the churches that were to be closed had their roots in ethnic communities, and these churches not only served a spiritual mission, they were of incalculable importance in helping immigrants adjust to their new home.

First decided to make her project a family affair. With her husband Rick and their four sons, she made Sunday morning pilgrimages to all the targeted churches. From parishioners, she learned about the church's history and what parish life meant to these people who would soon be losing their religious anchor.

The result of months of travel and countless hours of interviews is her first book, Founded in Faith: Cleveland's Lost Catholic Legacy, which is making its way to area bookstores this month.

Published by Cleveland Landmarks Press, the softcover book tells the stories of 21 of the closed churches. The volume contains 144 pages and 127 photos. It retails for $19.95 and can be purchased at local bookstores or online at www.clevelandlandmarkspress.com.

James Toman, publisher of Cleveland Landmarks Press Inc., is a retired college professor, a writer of Cleveland history, and author of the introduction to Founded in Faith.

EightsWrties

Poem for September 2010

Solitaire or Patience, as it used to be called, is more than a card game.

—Meredith Holmes

Solitaire
By Mary E. Weems

I used to wonder why grown folks, my grandmother in particular, could sit still long enough to play a game of solitaire? What was it about shuffling through a deck of cards long enough to line up all four suits that appealed to them?

Back then when I was tall and gangly as a just-born more, I’d spend all my free time somewhere learning the latest dance moves, my body shaking in the air, my feet stomping out funk rhythms.

I didn’t even know how to play cards, and any time my grandmother tried to sit me down to learn, I’d pretend to be interested, then break all the rules, until she finally let me go outside where time was waiting to take me for a long ride,

And why grown folks learned to play.

Mary E. Weems is a poet and playwright and served as the 2007-2008 Poet Laureate of Cleveland Heights. She is assistant professor in the Department of Education and Allied Studies at John Carroll University. Her new play Closure opens the fall 2010 season at Karamu Theatre.
Cleveland Chamber Music Society's 61st season

Eric Kisch

The Cleveland Chamber Music Society, in its first season, welcomes return visits by three popular string quartets—the Takacs (Oct. 12 at Fairmount Temple), the Cuarteto Casals (Feb. 22 at Fairmount Temple in Beachwood), the Jerusalem (Nov. 2 at Plymouth Church in Shaker Heights) and the Pontremoli, at Fairmount Temple. A fourth string quartet, the Cavani (Dec. 6 and 7), will also perform at the institute's Chamber Music Festival.

The society's season closes May 15 with a recital featuring Desmond Hoebig, former principal cellist of the Cleveland Orchestra, and pianist Anita Pontremoli, at Fairmount Temple.

Ticket prices remain the same as last season, and season subscriptions offer substantial discounts off the cost of individual concert tickets. For tickets and information, visit www.clevelandchambermusic.org, or call 216-291-2777.

In addition to its concert season, the Cleveland Chamber Music Society continues its outreach program, bringing fine chamber music to Cleveland schools. In the past two years, the society has sponsored, in collaboration with the Cleveland Institute of Music, a series of programs by a senior student quartet to 3rd- and 4th-graders in Cleveland, East Cleveland, Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights public schools. Annie Fullard, first violinist of the Cavani Quartet, is artistic director of the outreach program.

Eric Kisch is the marketing manager for the Cleveland Chamber Music Society.
League celebrates Women’s Equality Day

Joan Hirsh

Ninety years ago, on Aug. 26, 1920, women gained the right to vote with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. It has been said that no other single event in the 20th century has had a more profound influence in shaping our country, our government and our lives. It is commemorated each year on Aug. 26, as Women’s Equality Day.

More than any other organization, the League of Women Voters (LWV) claims ownership of this defining moment in American History. Anticipating the need to educate women about the mechanics and responsibilities of voting, the LWV was formally established in February 1920 in Chicago.

Today’s nonpartisan, political organization evolved from the Women’s Suffrage Movement. Now the LWV has more than 500,000 members and supporters and 5,100 chapters throughout all 50 states.

There are three chapters serving our area: the League of Women Voters of the Cleveland Area; the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area (with a chapter in Cleveland Heights/University Heights); and the League of Women Voters Shaker Heights.

With its 90th anniversary and the 90th anniversary of the 19th Amendment this year, the League of Women Voters rightfully celebrated Women’s Equality Day. The three area LWVs organized a dinner cruise for members with the theme, “90 Years of Women Making Waves,” honoring the legacy of the suffragists, whose sacrifices and public advocacy led to equal voting rights.

The path to women’s suffrage began in Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19, 1848, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others first proposed women’s right to vote. In 1919, suffragist leader Carrie Chapman Catt spoke at a National American Suffrage Association convention in St. Louis, Missouri, and proposed the formation of “a league of women voters.” One of the first state leagues to be recognized in 1920 was the League of Women Voters of Ohio.

Because many attempts to amend the Constitution were thwarted by the U.S. Senate, a campaign began on June 4, 1919 to win the vote by amending every single state constitution. It took six days for Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin to ratify the amendment. Kansas, New York and Ohio followed on June 16, 1919. The last state required to ratify was Tennessee. There, the vote hinged on a 24-year-old state legislator named Harry Burn. He had originally voted against ratification, but changed his mind after his mother urged him to do so.

With the Tennessee ratification, the 36 states met the constitutional requirement. The remaining 12 states took more than 60 years to adopt the amendment. Mississippi was the last of the 48 states to ratify the 19th Amendment on March 22, 1984.

The sacrifices that suffragists made to win the right to vote for women were amazing, amid circumstances that few people recognize today. It is almost impossible to conceive how difficult their lives were, what hardships they endured—public humiliation, ridicule, jail, torture, and sometimes loss of life,—and they did it so that the women of yesterday, today and tomorrow could exercise their right to vote.

The LWV recommends the HBO film, “Iron Jawed Angels,” for without reminders, few of us can really know what these brave women endured.

Women’s Equality Day reminds us how the 19th Amendment has changed the nation.

Today, the nonpartisan League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic engagement. The League encourages citizens to get involved. For more information call the Cuyahoga Area League office at 216-781-0555 (referral will be made to a local chapter), or visit these websites: League of Women Voters of the Cleveland Area at www.lwvcrc.org; League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area at www.LWVCuyahogaArea.org; League of Women Voters Shaker Heights at www.shakerlwv.org.

Joan Hirsh is the media contact for the League of Women Voters Cleveland Heights.

Step It Up invites residents to dine together

Mark Chupp

Step It Up Cleveland Heights announces the second round of Best Suburb Dinners, where a diverse group of Cleveland Heights residents come together to share a meal, get to know one another and to talk about what they value about their community.

Step It Up arranges each dinner to create a mix of people from different neighborhoods, new and long-time residents, people of differing ethnicities, ages and backgrounds. Hosts open their homes and provide a main course.

Guests bring a dish to share, stories and photos of the community at its best. During dinner, the hosts collect ideas for making Cleveland Heights the best suburb in the nation.

Step It Up Cleveland Heights is now accepting dinner reservations for the fall. To ensure a place at the table and a date that suits, interested people should contact Diana Woodbridge at dwoodbridge@sdowbridge.com or 216-291-3745. Hosts and cohosts are also needed.

For more information about Step It Up Cleveland Heights, visit www.stepitupheights.org.

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For more information about Step It Up Cleveland Heights, visit www.stepitupheights.org.

Mark Chupp lives in the Coventry Neighborhood and is a member of Step It Up Cleveland Heights.

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Now the boys are gone and Sheila is gone. I feel comfortable where I am. I love my house and my neighborhood. How did you get the idea [for the book]? Where did you begin? I wanted to know.

“I started with three scenes or images,” Chaon said. “A motel on a dirt road up in Nebraska, the Arctic, and a father and son driving to a hospital with the son’s severance hand.” These three disconnected scenes open the book and flow into three stories, which then intertwine. “I knew they were connected—by mood,” he said. “I wanted the iconography of a thriller, of suspense and horror.” He likens the mood to film noir with “the slipperiness of people who have all kinds of secrets, and no one tells the truth. Not until the middle did I get into identity theft.”

Identity theft is just one assault on identity. Chaon covers a spectrum from mental illness to how flimsily many people are put together, especially young people who seem to slip with ease into new identities.

Chaon says his acute awareness of identity, its blank spaces and pieces that don’t fit, may come from having been adopted, with all its attendant secrets. At 30, with the help of the Adoption Network of Cleveland, he searched for his birth parents. He came to know his birth father, Huck. “We look alike and many of our gestures are the same.”

Now with both sons away, his 25-year-old half-brother, Huck’s son, has moved in with him and is going to school at Tri-C.

I came to know of Chaon when I read the book Long Way Gone, by Ishmael Beah, the story of being forced to become a boy soldier in Sierra Leone. Beah was a student at Oberlin and Chaon was his creative writing teacher and mentor. This fall the two men will be featured at a conversation on the college’s long-standing tradition of mentoring.

Chaon considers narrative a way of thinking, just as analytic and scientific are ways of thinking. “It is a complicated thought process, why people do what they do, what happens next. You use intuition, and you must develop empathy. It is a complicated set of skills, but it’s a discipline that can be taught.”

“I started writing stories when I was eight or nine and sent them off to magazines. The editor of TriQuarterly actually wrote back to me, ‘You are not ready, but this is good stuff.’ I was going to be an actor, writer and director.”

He may be on his way. A new Dan Chaon attraction may appear at the Cedar Lee one day. His first novel, You Remind Me of Me, is being made into a movie.

Eleanor Mallet's column, “A Heights Observer,” explores the nooks and crannies in the Heights. She can be reached at cledonmalett@yahoo.com.
HCC’s Home and Garden tour returns this year

Shirley Kasey Stockton

It’s been only a year, but it seems like forever. After taking a year off from the event, the Heights Community Congress will present “Imagine If . . .,” the 33rd Heights Heritage Home and Garden Tour. The tour is a community-wide celebration of diversity in Cleveland Heights—it’s people and the homes in which they dwell.

The festivities will begin on Saturday, Sept. 25, at the Preview Party, with a toast given by local author and historian, Marian Morton, this year’s honorary tour chairperson. Lolley the Trolley will convey patrons and partygoers to a preview tour of the featured homes and then return to the benefit party at the College Club of Cleveland, located in Cleveland Heights.

According to Martha Goble and Claudia Cull, cochairs of the tour, “There will be delicious food, fantastic music by Blues DeVille and lots of fun and fellowship, in addition to getting a sneak peek at the amazing homes featured this year.” They added, “This year we will be unveiling HCC’s new specialty drink, which comes in both alcoholic and nonalcoholic varieties—the Trolley-tini!”

Then on Sunday, Sept. 26, from noon–6 p.m., “tourists” will begin their trek through Cleveland Heights to visit the seven homes and four gardens featured in this year’s event. The selection of homes and gardens represents a truly diverse group—in architecture, history, design and décor. There is something for all tastes.

As a self-guided tour, people can travel at their leisure and by their preferred mode of transportation. Many people drive, some bike, and the truly hearty walk or run it. “It’s all up to you,” said Kasey Greer, executive director of Heights Community Congress, “It’s a fun way to spend a Sunday afternoon with family and friends.”

The Home and Garden Tour is HCC’s largest fundraiser and all proceeds benefit the organization and its mission of preserving fair housing practices, diversity and community engagement programs and activities. For more information about the Preview Party, the self-guided tour, or to purchase tickets, visit www.heightscongress.org or call 216-321-6775.

Shirley Kasey Stockton, a Cleveland Heights resident of 26 years, recently moved to Texas, but remains deeply committed to the mission of HCC and the City of Cleveland Heights. So much so that she has already purchased her tickets for the tour.

The tour is a community-wide celebration of diversity in Cleveland Heights—its people and the homes in which they dwell.
Overcoming the odds
A lot of people, including educators, gave up on me. But, my mother never did. As a matter of fact, she became my biggest advocate. She believed in me and made me feel that I could accomplish anything I put my mind to.

Since about the age of six, based on my experiences, I decided I wanted to be an orthopedic surgeon. I also wanted to make a difference in the lives of others who faced the same challenges that I have had in my life.

In the spring, I received two letters both based on my GPA of 3.78 and my PSAT scores. One said I was accepted into the National Honor Society for my scholarship. I had the chance to go to Delaware and New Jersey to visit various hospitals to enhance my medical knowledge.

I would like to give a special thanks to all the people who, with their donations, helped to sponsor this trip. God willing, I hope to be able to attend the Global Youth Leadership Forum, which will be in Spain and I will be seeking donations for that.

Cameron Williams is an aspiring orthopedic surgeon who lives in Cleveland Heights.

Fall Chamber Music Program  
CIM presents a 10-week experience for piano, string and woodwind students interested in exploring and expanding their musical horizons.  
September 20 - December 5  
Auditions are open to students age 11-18 who study privately  
For more information call 216-791-5000 x371 or visit cim.edu

HRRC to offer special events for Sustainability Week

Rebecca Stager

During Sustainability Week (October 2-10), residents will have several opportunities to gain information about how to live a more sustainable lifestyle, thanks to Home Repair Resource Center. From 6 to 7 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 4, HRRC will host an open house at its office/reaching center, 2520 Noble Road. Residents are invited to drop in to view HRRC’s facilities and learn about programs to help keep them in their homes: keeping their homes in good repair, keeping their finances in shape, and knowing their options if they face mortgage delinquency.

HRRC’s counselors and instructors will be on hand to meet with visitors and answer questions.

Immediately following the open house, at 7 p.m., Wesley B. Walker will share his expertise as a Building Performance Institute certified energy auditor in a talk titled “Energy Audits: A sustainable approach to assessing building performance and maintaining your older home.”

Attendees will learn about the techniques and equipment used to assess and improve the performance of an older home, making it energy-efficient and saving on heating costs.

Call 216-381-9560 to register for this free presentation.

On Thursday, Oct. 7, HRRC’s Home in the Heights subsidiary will hold a special open house to showcase its current purchase and renovation project. From 7-8 p.m. visitors can tour the latest rehabilitation project at 3795 Berkeley Road and learn how HRRC is working to sustain our neighborhoods by renovating foreclosed, vacant properties and selling them to responsible owner-occupants.

The open house will showcase a work in progress: the renovation features high energy efficiency and low maintenance costs, utilizes green technology, high-quality materials, and superb finish detail to match neighborhood standards.

Finally, throughout October, HRRC will offer Financial Stability Kits as a way of helping people “keep their green.” The kit includes ways to trim budgets and save on everyday things. Download it from the HRRC website or pick it up at the HRRC office beginning October 1.

You can find information on these offerings and other HRRC programs at www.hrrc.ch.org.

Rocky Stager, home repair education program coordinator at HRRC since 1989, is always excited when workshop attendees use the skills they learn to improve their homes.

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Heights Observer September 1, 2010

COMMUNITY NEWS

My father and the facts of life

John O’Connor

Born and bred on a farm in West Virginia until he was 26 years of age, my father came to Cleveland to take a job on the railroad in Collinwood. He worked for the New York Central, first in the steam engine roundhouse, and later in the diesel shops.

His work was dirty, grimy and physically hard on him. But because of his hard work, he was able to raise two of us children to be mature adults.

Tall and slim, he was a simple man of few words. Yet, he wore a suit well and could converse with anyone. Even though he washed up after work each day, for me the smell of the shops became associated with him. Years after his death, I could even smell him on the work clothes still hanging in the basement.

My father was a very religious man, attending Mass every morning before work. His modesty would never let him swear, or utter a dirty joke. Because neither he nor I were interested in sports, we would walk to Wildwood Park, a place to launch boats. Going out on the lake was a special treat for me—to have time with him alone. After dinner, my dad would always ask me to go for a constitutional to “walk off the meal.” A walk down to the lake was a special treat for me—to have time with him alone.

We would walk to Wildwood Park, where there was a breakwall and a place to launch boats. Going out on the breakwall, built of massive stone blocks stacked on top of each other like giant ice cubes, was the most fun for me. I remember that I would have to hop over the gaps between the blocks as we walked out into the water.

There were always anglers on the breakwall, with their buckets of worms and fish. We would wait our progress, as we would watch theזרו the fish. We would walk to Wildwood Park, a place to launch boats. Going out on the lake was a special treat for me—to have time with him alone. After dinner, my dad would always ask me to go for a constitutional to “walk off the meal.” A walk down to the lake was a special treat for me—to have time with him alone.

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There were always anglers on the breakwall, with their buckets of worms and fish. We would wait our progress, as we would watch the

Greek Festival, an August tradition in the Heights

Anita Kazarian

Sts. Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Cathedral held its annual Greek Festival Aug. 19–22. People come from all over Northeast Ohio to Cleveland Heights each year to celebrate the music, dance, food, culture and Greek hospitality.

According to Pantelis “Pete” Moisissis, the festival chair, planning for this major event started in April, the baking started in June, and hundreds of people helped with the final arrangements starting early August.

The rain on Saturday evening didn’t dampen any spirits. Lines for food sales were long and two bands played continuous music.

Food was being served in several locations in addition to the tented outdoor picnic area. Shops sold jewelry, art, books, plants and apparel. There was a huge flea market and even a cigar stand.

Go to www.heightsobserver.org for more photos of the festivities.

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

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The case of the disappearing mansions: the Overlook and Carlton Road

Chris Roy

In 1910, some of the grandest homes in all of Cleveland lined Overlook Road. Several others ran down Carlton Road, extending almost to the tip of the precipice overlooking University Circle.

In 2010, only a few of those architectural masterpieces remain.

What happened to all those magnificent homes and why did they disappear? Find out at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 16, as author, lecturer and history professor emeritus, Marian J. Morton, discusses the life and eventual death of Cleveland Heights’s own “Millionaire’s Row.”

The event will be held at Cleveland Heights Historical Center at Superior Schoolhouse, at the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Superior Road. Admission is free, but seating is limited to 50 people. Call 216-291-4788 for reservations.

Parking is available at the Cumberland Pool parking lot. Parking for the elderly and disabled is available in the lot immediately east of the schoolhouse.

Morton’s newest book, The Overlook of Cleveland and Cleveland Heights will be available for sale at the event, which is sponsored by the Cleveland Heights Historical Society and the Landmark Commission of Cleveland Heights.

Chris Roy is the president of Cleveland Heights Historical Society.

From martyrdom to hope

Mary Ann Kerr

Nasser Abufarha, scholar, writer and founder of the Palestinian Fair Trade Association (PFTA) and Canaan Fair Trade (CFT), will be visiting Northeast Ohio this month to discuss how his work as a “human bomb” has given Jenin’s citizens reason to live and hope. Dr. Abufarha will be speaking at John Carroll University of Wisconsin. His book, Making of a Human Bomb: An Ethnography of Palestinian Resistance, based on his dissertation, was published by Duke University Press in 2009.

Abufarha’s work merited an invitation to the Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship in Washington, DC, last April. President Obama described this meeting of international Muslim entrepreneurs and American business and government leaders as a “new beginning” in strengthening business ties with the Muslim world.

For more information, contact Mary Ann Kerr at 216-371-1815 or by e-mail at maryandkerr@aol.com.

Morton has visited Israel and the Palestinian territories several times.

Sometimes circumstances rip it from our hands. Sometimes we just drop the ball in a key area of our life.

How can we strengthen our grip to avoid a tragic fumble at a key time?

The Kelley mansion.

The Kelley mansion is razed.

Mary Ann Kerr and her husband, Doug, are longtime residents of Cleveland Heights. They became involved with Middle East peace issues after Doug’s brother, Malcolm Kerr, president of American University of Beirut, was assassinated in 1984. The Kerrs have visited Israel and the Palestinian territories several times.

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get a grip on the Spirit-controlled couple
get a grip on the Spirit-controlled life
Zoo Crew works in Forest Hill Park

Elsa Johnson

The Metroparks Zoo Crew, made up of teen volunteers, ages 14 to 17, have been working in Forest Hill Park this summer. They have been clearing trees from a sapling circle that had grown up under one of the venerable old oaks in the Great Meadow.

The sapling circle originated with the idea that the saplings, while still small, could be dug up and sold individually as part of a fund-raising effort to help with the care and feeding of all the big oaks in the meadow.

The acorns that produced the saplings fell during a mast year, and many of the saplings grew too close together to harvest without damage to the parent tree. A dozen or more saplings on the outer edge of the sapling circle, just beyond the parent tree’s drip line, have been tagged to be saved. A few of these will be left to grow where nature placed them. The remainder of the smaller saplings will be transplanted in the fall to other locations in the Great Meadow as part of a tree replacement program.

The Metroparks has sent out from five to a dozen Zoo Crew volunteers each week. Zoo Crew teens come from all over the metropolitan area. Asked what their favorite job has been as Zoo Crew volunteers, the teens responded, “This one!” A sign saying “This tree has been adopted by the Zoo Crew” was placed on the tree in recognition of their efforts.

The Great Meadow Task Group of the East Cleveland Parks Association is working to organize a similar program for next summer.

Many important tasks remain, including clearing saplings under other Great Meadow trees and invasive species eradication. The Great Meadow Task Group will be promoting an Adopt-a-Tree program, through which Great Meadow trees will be fed and treated for thefunguses that have been killing so many of the big trees in the park.

For more information about volunteering in the park, the teen program, or Adopt-a-Tree, e-mail Elsa Johnson at vicnelse@earthlink.net.

Elsa Johnson is a community volunteer.

Auction supports yoga nonprofit

Rick Szekelyi

Every now and then, it strikes me that I really do very little that affects the greater good. Every day (OK, most days), I try to have a positive impact on people I come in contact with and events that I have an opportunity to touch. No matter, the feeling always revisits me that I am doing little to cause a farreaching benefit to those outside my immediate sphere.

My guess is that I am not all that different from most folks. Well, here is a farreaching benefit to those outside my immediate sphere.

On Aug. 27 through Sept. 12, the second annual North American Gurukul (NAG) online auction will be held at www.biddingforgood.org/northamericangurukul.

NAG, headquartered in Cleveland Heights, is a not-for-profit organization that supports and spreads awareness of Satyananda Yoga throughout North America, in order to enhance the health, well-being and human potential of individuals and society.

The money raised through the online auction is used to support NAG’s various activities, including yoga service projects, known as Sesa, which bring the tradition of yoga to various groups of people such as incarcerated individuals and those going through recovery from addiction.

When people place bids for the antique lamp, guitar, massage, or even private belly dancing lessons, they will be doing something for the greater good. Not only can you bid on these treasures, but there is also still time to donate items or services to the auction. Donations can be made on the same website, or by calling 216-371-9760. The auction staff are available Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

For more information about NAG is at www.northamericangurukul.org.

Rick Szekelyi is a 12-year resident of Cleveland Heights and a 10-year yoga practitioner at the Atma Center on Lee Road.
Community events

Monday, Sept. 13
Public Hearing: City of Cleveland Heights Strategic Development Plan Draft 7–9 p.m. Cleveland Heights Community Center, 1 Monticello Boulevard Visit www.clevelandheights.com/whatsnew

Tuesday, Sept. 21
Workshop: Using the Heights Observer to Help Your Organization 7–8:30 p.m. Lee Road library, 2345 Lee Road Call 216-320-1423

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Call 216-320-1423
7–8:30 p.m.
help your Organization
Workshop: What’s the News? How to Be an Educated News Consumer By freelance journalist and former Press Dealer columnist Al-Oadies Scroggs 7–8:30 p.m. Lee Road library, 2345 Lee Road

Wednesday, Oct. 6
District 11 General Election Forum 7–9 p.m.; League of Women Voters Brink High School, 4875 Glenlyon Road, Lyndhurst

Saturday, Sept. 26
Home & Garden Tour Heights Community Council Noon to 6 p.m.; Tickets $20 in advance Call 216-321-6775 or visit www.heightscongress.org

Tuesday, Sept. 28
Workshop: What’s the News? How to Be an Educated News Consumer By freelance journalist and former Press Dealer columnist Al-Oadies Scroggs 7–8:30 p.m. Lee Road library, 2345 Lee Road

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