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Happy New Year!



The *Heights Observer* and the staff and board of directors of FutureHeights wish you and your family a Happy New Year. The *Heights Observer* exists to provide a voice for Heights residents. Please keep your stories coming! Contribute your story at www.heightsobserver.org.

Sustainable Heights Network seeks to promote community gardening

Jeff Coryell

The Sustainable Heights Network—an informal group created to connect people and ideas to help build a more sustainable future for the community—has launched an initiative to facilitate community gardening. Goals include locating sites that could be used for community gardens, providing a mechanism for people interested in community gardening to connect with one another, and accessing resources that support new community gardens.

“The community gardening program would be a central area for information for, and participation by, residents,” said Sarah Wean, Sustainable Heights Network Steering Committee member. “We want to be of assistance in providing the networking opportunities that can support a grassroots community program.”

An informational meeting about the Sustainable Heights Network’s community gardening initiative is planned for 7 p.m., Jan. 24, at the Lee Road Library. Everyone interested in seeing community gardening thrive in the Heights is encouraged to attend.

Community gardens are a tremendous asset to the community. They provide an opportunity for those who either cannot garden at home or desire additional or better garden space, and they promote sustainable practices, such as food waste recycling and local food production. In addition, community gardens improve local food security by enabling residents to grow their own food or to donate what they have grown for hunger relief. They provide an engaging and educational activity for youths, and they enhance the appeal of the neighborhoods in which they are situated. Gardens also provide social benefits by bringing residents together and encouraging healthy recreation.

At Cleveland Heights’s Canterbury School Garden, individual plots measure 10 feet by 50 feet, and a \$20 annual fee covers the cost of water. One plot is reserved for growing produce for the Cleveland Foodbank and other hunger relief programs.

Interest in community gardening runs high in the Heights, and existing community gardens in the area all have waiting lists. These established gardens include the Canterbury and Oxford school gardens (both started as Victory Gardens during World War II), Hampshire Road Garden, and Fairfax School Garden. This past year, University Heights launched the Taylor Road Learning Gardens near the Delisle Center on South Taylor Road.

Potential locations for new community gardens might include schools, churches and synagogues, and vacant

Nietert and Kazarian receive University Heights honors

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The City of University Heights recognized several residents at its Dec. 5 city council meeting. Patrolman Kyle Nietert was honored as Public Servant of the Year. Anita Kazarian was named Citizen of the Year.

Nietert was the first responder to a burning home, occupied by the Seltzer family, on July 9. A resolution from city council said that Nietert “displayed selfless action” in saving the family and that his actions “serve as a shining example of heroism and courage to a grateful community and an inspiration to all of us.” Nietert was in attendance Dec. 5 to accept the honor.



Patrolman Kyle Nietert is University Heights Public Servant of the Year.

Kazarian, a 29-year resident of University Heights, was honored for her service to the community. She served as a member of the Police Auxiliary, the City Beautiful Commission, and the Community Emergency Response Team, and chaired the city’s 45th Memorial Day Parade. Kazarian volunteers with many nonprofit organizations, including the Cleveland Institute of Music Women’s Committee and the Friends of Apollo’s Fire. She is a volunteer journalist for the *Heights Observer*, an ambassador to ClevelandPeople.com, a WJCU 88.7 FM radio host for the Armenian Radio Hour, a member of the International Piano Competition Gala Committee, a member of St. Gregory of Narek Parish Council and of the Entrepreneurs Association of John Carroll University.

The proclamation said, “The City of University Heights considers our resident Anita Kazarian to be a civic treasure because of her tireless efforts to improve our community and make

Ken Montlack retires from CH City Council

Deanna Bremer Fisher

At the final 2011 meeting of the Cleveland Heights City Council, Council Member Ken Montlack was honored for his 24 years of service on the city council.

“Ken, over the years, has always looked for solutions to any issues that our city has faced,” said Mayor Ed Kelley. “His goal has been to make our Cleveland Heights community the best that it could be.”

During his six terms, which spanned the administrations of four Cleveland Heights mayors, Montlack chaired all

six of the council committees. “On each committee he has done his best for our community,” said Kelley, who went on to highlight Montlack’s key contributions to each.

For his part, Montlack downplayed his achievements. “I was an excellent eater,” he joked when asked about his service. None of the accomplishments he mentioned went without tribute to someone else who helped him along the way. “I chaired the planning and



Ken Montlack

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Letters Policy

Letters to the Editor
The *Heights Observer* welcomes letters to the editor. They must be submitted electronically, along with the writer's name, phone number and e-mail address, to:
www.heightsobserver.org/members or e-mail: info@futureheights.org

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Around the blog Highlights from blogs.heightsobserver.org

Wanted: Transparency

Transparency was a frequent topic of discussion with voters during my campaign to win a seat on city council in Cleveland Heights. If you attended this month's special Municipal Services meeting on the Taylor Road resurfacing project, you got to witness a problem that resulted from a lack of it.

It has been about ten years since Cleveland Heights began efforts to re-design and resurface Taylor Road, from Euclid Heights Boulevard. (the southwest entrance to Severance Town Center) to our north border with East Cleveland. Many people complain it is the worst road in our city. The potholes defy description, and I met many Taylor Road residents while campaigning who shared their stories of expensive car repairs suffered from driving on it. I also listened to their concerns about safety (only 52 inches separate pedestrians on the west sidewalk between Euclid Heights Boulevard and Mayfield Road), and the snowplows that push three lanes of heavy snow and ice onto residents' yards. I have seen the winter walkers here in the roadway because our city has left it up to these homeowners to try and clear this heavy ice and snow from their sidewalk on this major thoroughfare. Not a good situation, from any perspective.

—Mike Gaynier

The police are using Twitter—and look who's got something good to say

On Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend, a 16-year-old boy named Artwon Oliver was shot and killed at the intersection of Lee and Superior roads in Cleveland Heights.

Within 24 hours, the police had posted news of the shooting on their Twitter feed—which was set up a couple months ago to provide people with exactly this kind of information.

After the shooting, the CHPD kept the community informed via Twitter. Two days later they used Twitter to tell us that four suspects had been arrested. And the next day, they even gave us mug shots of three (the fourth is a juvenile, so his identity is protected by law). I guess the police thought we would want to put faces to the names of the accused.

Based on my own reaction, they were right. I was eager to see the mug

shots.

Only about 115 people follow the police on Twitter right now, but their feed provided the first information that anybody in the community had about the shooting—including the news media. At the first opportunity, I posted the information at the FutureHeights/Observer Facebook page.

I'm pretty sure Twitter is going to prove itself the wrong tool for the job the police are trying to do—which is to inform and engage residents about their own public safety. Too many people don't follow Twitter and would hate it if they tried. Twitter's signal-to-noise ratio is so low that you have to manage it proactively if you expect it to deliver good information.

The city will figure that out over time, but right now what's important is that the police department is trying to be proactive in giving us information we want and need, and I want to thank them for it.

—Bob Rosenbaum

We need some new ideas

A couple of weeks ago, the Cleveland Heights 6 p.m. curfew for teenagers under 18 years of age in the Coventry and Cedar Lee business districts was expanded to include the Severance Business District. Council Member Bonnie Caplan cast the lone dissenting vote.

It isn't easy to break from the crowd and dissent on such an important issue. Antisocial and criminal behavior by juveniles is a red hot issue in our community, and there have been some serious incidents at Severance Town Center, particularly at the Regal Cinemas. And Thanksgiving weekend, 16-year-old resident Artwon Oliver was murdered near the intersection of Lee and Superior roads, in a another senseless act of violence. I hope Caplan doesn't change her mind following this tragedy, which our curfew couldn't prevent. I think it took guts for her to take an unpopular stand and say, "We need to have another solution."

—Mike Gaynier

'Stars and Stripes Forever'—or at least for a really, really long time

At the Cleveland Heights High School Instrumental Music Department fall concert on Nov. 13, current students were joined on stage by alumni who

had gathered for a reunion of musicians from the John Farinacci era (music director, 1949-62).

The grand finale was John Phillip Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever," performed the way Farinacci always did it. About 150 musicians—with an age range of more than 65 years—played together. (See the video online.)

—Bob Rosenbaum

Coffee for the common woman, part I

I'm on a quest to find the best tasting "cuppa" coffee at the best price on Cedar Hill. From where I sit this morning, I can walk about a minute in each direction and find several cups of coffee. Here we go . . . a cuppa coffee for the common man, woman, person, friend, mom, dad, boyfriend, girlfriend, Bella dog . . . no Bella dog, not for you.

Today, Monday Dec 12: Starbucks on Cedar.

Normally \$1.65 but free today, paid for by Key Bank. How nice of them. I wonder how much the CEO makes at Key, does she know about this free coffee. Nice way to start the investigation.

—Tiffany Laufer

Sponges and rocks

True story.

My grandmother was a sharecropper. For a span of years, she and my grandfather picked cotton on a parcel of land owned by Mr. Charles in Natchitoches, Louisiana. I remember the day my grandmother showed me a cotton boll and demonstrated how to separate the stems from the cotton from the seeds.

My grandmother and grandfather both worked the land and raised their family as they worked through a debt that had been accumulated in the hopes of doing better. When they realized Mr. Charles was continuously invoicing them without ever being satisfied with any amount of payment, they began to discuss the possibility of running away. They considered it for some time because, after all, they were the ones who had agreed to the initial contract in the first place.

—Andrea Davis

Snow, driving and kids

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!

Though it was a delayed start with

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We can overturn the rezoning of Oakwood

Garry Kanter

It's come to this. Finally. I'm begging. I'm begging for a pro bono lawyer, or for someone(s) with deep pockets.

Because. I. Don't. Want. To. Lose. We can't lose. It's way too important.

Unless we get it reversed in a court, the ill-advised and unconstitutional rezoning of the Oakwood golf course in South Euclid will, too late, be recognized as the turning point upon which the Near East Side suburbs began their rapid descent.

"Unconstitutional? What the heck is he talking about," you may well ask.

OK, that's a fair question. You're familiar with Shemo, right? Shemo was the bogeyman court case that the developer and his pals kept threatening the South Euclid voters with all the time. Nothing anybody said or did would matter, because of Shemo. Shemo was all-powerful. Shemo was great. Shemo was the developer's ace-in-the-hole, no matter what.

Sooo, being as we're certain to have Oakwood: Round II in Cleveland Heights one of these days, I decided I'd better know what Shemo is all about. That's one of my tricks, by the way. I gather facts. Then I bring them up at the appropriate time.

And here's what Shemo really says. This is from the Supreme Court of Ohio:

"Since there was competent, credible evidence supporting the trial court's conclu-

sion that the U-2-A zoning classification does not substantially advance a legitimate health, safety, and welfare concern of Mayfield Heights, we reverse the judgment of the court of appeals and reinstate the trial court's judgment declaring the zoning ordinance unconstitutional."

Pretty simple, isn't it?

No way will that huge, crappy development going up where it doesn't belong "substantially advance a legitimate health, safety, and welfare concern of" South Euclid. Everyone knows this. They know this. Heck, they even had a consultant write up a report that advises them to change the 2010 Updated Comprehensive Plan since the rezoning is such a stark contradiction of it.

I've asked lawyers to look this idea over. It's valid. There's no guarantee of winning. Not by a long shot. But I will guarantee that if the Super Walmart and the fast food drive-thrus are built, we lose.

I've asked everybody and anybody for help. I've got a couple of logs on the fire, but nothing nearly enough. Please, someone who cares, contact me.

We can overturn the South Euclid Oakwood rezoning. But I need your help.

Garry Kanter attended the CH-UH schools from K-12, graduating in 1975. He lives in Cleveland Heights in a home that he's fixing up. He also owns a house in South Euclid.

Certified letter from CH irks former resident

Editor,

The other day I received a piece of certified mail at my home address on Meadowbrook, University Heights, Ohio. The certified mail was a court summons from the City of Cleveland Heights for "Failure to Obtain a Certificate of Occupancy for 2011" for the home located on Princeton Road in Cleveland Heights (housing file number 113067). You can imagine my complete confusion and alarm upon reading the inspection complaint, and, even more so, the accompanying notice of the warrant for my arrest based on said violation. But here's the thing: the mail was forwarded by the postal service to my current address, where I reside, on Meadowbrook in University Heights. I have not owned or occupied the Princeton Road, Cleveland Heights, property in question since August of 2004.

While many could consider this a harmless administrative error, to me it is frustrating on many levels. I strongly feel that, at the community level, residents of Cleveland Heights deserve better than this. Cleveland Heights residents pay high taxes and deserve competent services from their city, including properly managing records and enforcing laws. The absurd and inexcusable issue here is that ALL

of the necessary property ownership information needed to avoid mistakes like the one I described is available to everyone, free of charge, at the Cuyahoga County Fiscal Officer's website. This parcel search service is free to everyone, including City of Cleveland Height employees. As such, I would strongly suggest the City of Cleveland Heights do a little fact-checking of these types of issues BEFORE sending out erroneous, unwarranted and costly court summons via certified mail.

The cost of this one mistake isn't outrageous, but I imagine that this isn't an isolated incident. Better recordkeeping is essential if there is any hope of running a financially efficient operation. The time and process of the waste of certified mail that I received (violations inspection sheet, court documents, etc.) is certainly not what I would consider sound fiscal management. Given that the City of Cleveland Heights is already an extremely tax-heavy city that is burdensome to the majority of its residents, I think it's fair to say doing some homework first could certainly save residents a few hard-earned dollars.

Marcie Lambrix
University Heights

Thank you for remembering sacrifices of WWI

Editor,

Thank you so much for the article "Veteran honors the fallen" in your December issue. I was very curious about the handmade WWI Memorial sign when it appeared on North Park, and I have been curious for years about the bronze plaques at the base of trees around Horseshoe Lake. Now I have the answer for both! What a wonderful way

to honor the dead of WWI.

I bet many people don't know the meaning of the plaques, which is a sad. Thank you to Al Oberst for working to restore them and to plant more trees and to Maxwell Embrescia for writing the article.

Susan Murray
Cleveland Heights

SUSTAINABLE HEIGHTS continued from page 1

lots. (Even if a vacant lot appears to be abandoned, an agreement must be formalized with the landowner—whether the city or some other public or private owner—before establishing a garden.) Suitability of locations for community gardens depends on factors such as sun exposure, water access, slope, drainage, fencing, and soil conditions.

One important resource for starting new community gardens is the Urban Agriculture Program of the Ohio State University Extension. Program coordinators Amanda Block and Nicole Wright gave a presentation about the program at the Lee Road Library on Dec. 5.

The program provides educational and technical assistance to new community gardens, including soil testing, site visits and one-on-one advice, print and Internet resources, and networking and event opportunities. It also provides a community gardener training program and makes mini-grants for start-up materials and services, available through a competitive bidding process. More information is available online at <http://cuyahoga.osu.edu>.

Jeff Coryell is a visual artist, writer, and former attorney. He was a candidate for City Council in 2011 and a former president of the Cleveland Heights Democrats.

BLOGS continued from page 2

hicups and dustings here and there, the snow has finally returned to Cleveland. In the Heights, one of the struggles of morning routines usually involves dusting off vehicles, cleaning driveways, driving kids to school, driving to work. Unfortunately, no matter the reason for the rush, all behind the wheel must remember that we are not driving on the winter roadways of Florida.

As we gear up for another winter season (not too elongated, I hope), please shift down into a slower moving process while navigating elementary, middle and high school parking lots. Not only are there scores of students being dropped off at school, Heights also has numerous walkers. Taking a moment to think about the far reach-

ing implications of a short term, split second decision can mitigate the near misses and close calls that are a hallmark of arrival and dismissal times.

—Andrea Davis

Coffee for the common woman part 2

One of the earliest credible descriptions of the experience of drinking coffee comes from German physician and botanist, Leonhard Rauwolf in the 1500s. He described coffee as "almost as black as ink and very good in illness . . ." Leonhard was a people watcher. Just like myself, sitting here in Luna Bakery—I too am keen to sit and people watch people—and their coffee.

—Tiffany Laufer

FutureHeights launches dinner series to support local economy

Deanna Bremer Fisher

FutureHeights will launch a new dinner series in 2012 to raise funds for its community engagement programs and support its mission of creating a vibrant, sustainable future for the Heights by supporting the local economy.

FutureHeights plans to launch the series with a "Meet, Greet and Eat" dinner at Rockefeller's Restaurant on Wednesday, Jan. 25. "We're excited to launch this new effort," said Richard Stewart, vice president of the FutureHeights Board of Directors and chair of the marketing committee. "Community members are invited to show their support by having dinner at Rockefeller's anytime that evening. FutureHeights staff and board members will show up at various times to meet and greet all who attend."

Patrons must bring the promotional flyer (available on page 5 of this issue of the *Heights Observer*; and online). Rockefeller's will then donate 15 percent of the food proceeds of each dinner check to FutureHeights.

Rockefeller's is also offering 10 percent off any bottle of wine. "We are thrilled to do this in support of Future-

Heights," said Michael Adams, Rockefeller's owner and longtime Cleveland Heights resident.

Since 2002, FutureHeights has worked to build community in the Heights by providing information, education and advocacy on issues that matter to Heights residents. In 2008, FutureHeights launched the *Heights Observer* community news project.

"All citizens can contribute energy, ideas and action to strengthening their quality of life and place," said Lloyd Bell, president of the FutureHeights Board of Directors. "Patronizing our locally-owned businesses is but one way to strengthen our local economy and build a strong, resilient community."

"Housed in the former banking hall of the historic Heights Rockefeller Building, the restaurant is one of the coolest spaces for dining in the Heights. If you haven't visited yet, and tasted the world-class cuisine of executive chef Jill Vedda, now is your chance," added Stewart.

For more information, call the FutureHeights office at 216-320-1423.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

Jazzercise students raise funds for Cleveland Foodbank

Heights Observer Contributor

Since 2003, the Jazzercise students of instructor Mary Beth McCann have spent the holiday season raising money for worthy causes. In past years, the students raised money for needy families through the MetroHealth Foundation and Malachi House.

This year, McCann asked her students to nominate their favorite charities and vote to determine which would be the recipient of this year's drive. The clear winner was the Cleveland Foodbank.

McCann uses several tactics to engage her students in raising money. A \$20 donation enables a student to request a favorite routine for that week's class. For \$25, a student can request that her least favorite routine be dropped for the week. For \$10, students can purchase a raffle ticket for a chance to win three months of Jazzercise classes, and McCann stages a "Bag-A-Buck" day when one student volunteers to wear reindeer ears, and other students drop \$1 into the holiday bag she holds during class.

This year, McCann addressed the Foodbank's need for peanut butter by giving students extra credit on their class attendance cards towards a free T-shirt when they brought in a jar of peanut butter.

McCann is proud of the generosity of her students. The donations provided 75 jars of peanut butter and \$2,690 for the Cleveland Foodbank.

HONORS continued from page 1

University Heights known as a wonderful place to live."

Kazarian chose not to attend the ceremony. In an e-mail to Mayor Infeld, Kazarian declined the honor, saying, "I appreciate your consideration of me. However, I believe there are others who would be more appropriate recipients than I."

University Heights also presented certificates of recognition to the Gesu Boys Baseball Team for winning the CYO City Championship and to Beaumont School's Varsity Volleyball Team for advancing to the state semifinals.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

County prosecutor candidates coming to Cleveland Heights January 11

Anastasia Pantisios

One of the most watched races in Cuyahoga County next year will be the one for county prosecutor. It is one of only two countywide offices authorized by the new charter, which was voted in place in 2009. It carries considerable power because it sets priorities for the types of crimes that are prosecuted more vigorously. When sitting prosecutor Bill Mason announced last year that he would not be seeking re-election, it left a wide-open field that has attracted six candidates so far, all Democrats.

Those candidates will be participating in a forum at the Cleveland Heights Community Center at 7 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 11. The forum is sponsored by the Cleveland Heights Democratic Club, and everyone is invited—Democrats, Republicans, Independents and undecideds. Admission is free and open to all.

With no announced Republican challenger, it is likely that the winner of the Democratic primary—date to be decided—will be the next prosecutor. The Cuyahoga County Democratic Party executive committee did not issue an endorsement in the race, so the field is wide open. The candidates include Subodh Chandra, former Cleveland law director and candidate for state attorney general; Stephanie Hall, former police-woman and current Cuyahoga assistant prosecutor; Kevin Kelley, Cleveland City Councilmember; James McDonald, former North Royalton prosecutor; Judge Tim McGinty, who stepped down from the common pleas court to run; and Robert Triozzi, former judge and former Cleveland law director.

Anastasia Pantisios is a trustee of the Cleveland Heights Democratic Club.

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Be a good neighbor to a senior in need



THE SENIOR SECTION

Judith Eugene

The beginning of the New Year is a time when many of us resolve to make positive changes in our lives. This year, consider resolving to be a good neighbor to a senior adult in need.

Is there a senior in your neighborhood who lives alone, or a senior couple who have trouble getting around? It is common for older people to feel isolated and depressed, especially during the winter months when it is difficult for them to leave home.

There are many things we can do to reach out to our older neighbors. One of the most appreciated gifts is simply to spend time talking with them. Helping people feel special and cared about is one of the greatest gifts we can give.

Here are some ways to help our local seniors:

- Buy a Groupon and take a senior to dinner. (They will love that you didn't pay full price.)
- Take someone to a class at the Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center.
- Pick up groceries, or take someone to the store.
- Make an extra serving of dinner once a week to deliver to a senior.
- Help a senior cook a meal from a favorite family recipe—yours or theirs.

- Take a senior to the library to check out a book or movie, or to attend a class or discussion.
- Teach a senior to use the Internet or Skype.
- Stop by for tea once a week; bring a new tea flavor each time.
- Videotape a senior telling his or her life story and make copies for the family.
- Help a senior label family photos with names, dates and places.
- Ask for a list of their favorite songs, then download them onto a CD.
- Take a senior to a museum. (Call ahead for a wheelchair, if necessary.)
- Take your child, grandchild, or pet to visit an older adult.
- Take a senior to a movie, or rent one for home viewing, with popcorn.
- Take someone to Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park for Music and Movies night during the summer.
- Picnic with a senior at Shaker Lakes or Lakeview Cemetery.
- Take a senior on a nostalgic drive past the houses where he or she lived when they were younger.
- Call a senior before bedtime to ensure that he or she is OK.

Best wishes to all of our readers for a wonderful New Year!

Judith Eugene, a native of Cleveland Heights, provides enrichment classes and activities for senior adults and those with physical and mental challenges. She can be reached at 216-408-5578 or Judith@LovingHandsGroup.com.

John Carroll alumnus pledges \$16 million to fund scholarships

Tonya Strong-Charles

John Carroll University alumnus Frank Schilling and his wife, Helen, have pledged a total of \$16 million to endow scholarships for undergraduate students at the university. The Schillings had previously agreed to give \$10 million to create the Schilling Endowed Scholars Program in 2004, but they now have increased their gift to \$16 million. Rev. Robert L. Niehoff, president of John Carroll University, made the announcement at the university's 125th Anniversary Gala, held Dec. 2. The gala capped a year-long celebration of John Carroll's history and Jesuit educational tradition (see www.jcu.edu/125).

"The Schillings are among our most generous benefactors and the additional funding will be transformational for John Carroll University," said Father Niehoff. "Their generosity has given—and will continue to give—the best students the opportunity to earn a John Carroll degree and make a positive difference in the world." Currently, there are three Schilling scholars enrolled at John Carroll. The Schillings' endowment will eventually fund more than 20 scholarships each year, which are renewable with continued academic achievement.

Schilling, a native of Newark, Ohio, is a member of John Carroll's Class of 1953. He served in the Korean War,

and had a successful career at General Electric.

The Schillings reflected on the impact of their commitment to the university: "This is an investment in an institution we strongly believe in, and it will help the university recruit the very best students. We expect the scholarship recipients to understand that they, too, have an obligation to continue the tradition of giving in support of education." All scholarship recipients will be asked to contribute to the fund after their graduation, to the best of their ability, so that the program continues to grow.

John Carroll University, founded in 1886 as Saint Ignatius College, is located in University Heights. The university was renamed in 1923 to honor America's first Catholic bishop, John Carroll of Maryland. Its Jesuit Catholic mission inspires individuals to excel in learning, leadership, and service in the region and the world. John Carroll University is recognized nationally for an exceptional four-year graduation rate, teaching excellence, and a commitment to living a faith that does justice to its mission. John Carroll is one of 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States.

Tonya Strong-Charles is the director of media relations and communications at John Carroll University.



From left: Wayne Malz, Jeff Kaplan, Merna Wolfe, Candy Anker-Roehl.

Officers elected to head Maltz Museum volunteer organization

Adam J. Teresi

At the Nov. 16 meeting, the Friends of the Maltz Museum elected a slate of four officers. Jeff Kaplan, a University Heights resident, was elected president; Wayne Malz, vice president; Candy Anker-Roehl, a Cleveland Heights resident, secretary; and Merna Wolfe, treasurer.

The Friends of the Maltz Museum is a new group of volunteers who engage in educational and charitable fundraising

activities for the museum. In the past year, the group has run the Cleveland's Funniest Rabbi contest, the Jewish Food and Culture Festival, a speakers bureau, and several interfaith Shabbat dinners, which have raised more than \$9,000 for programs and initiatives at the museum.

For more information, contact Martha Sivertson at 216-593-0587.

Adam J. Teresi is the operations and media coordinator for the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage.

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FutureHeights



Instructor Jim Cline watches Sarah Dick practice making electrical connections at one of HRRC's hands-on workshops.

HRRC's repair workshops now open to all

Rebecca Stager

Residents of all communities can now attend the Home Repair Resource Center's (HRRC) home repair workshops. Previously, workshop participation had been limited to Cleveland Heights residents.

"Upcoming classes include HRRC's popular electrical and plumbing series," said Kathryn Lad, HRRC director. "Reservations are required, and I would encourage early registration—especially for these classes—as they can fill quickly."

"HRRC has kept workshop fees modest," she continued. "Classes are \$10 for Cleveland Heights residents

and \$15 for nonresidents, with scholarships available to low-income Cleveland Heights residents."

Professional tradespeople serve as instructors, and most classes are held at HRRC's teaching center, 2520 Noble Road, from 7-9 p.m., on Monday evenings.

For additional information, including a schedule of upcoming workshops, visit www.hrcc-ch.org, or call 216-381-6100, ext. 16.

Becky Stager is the home repair education coordinator at the Home Repair Resource Center.

Heights organizations receive CAC grants

Deanna Bremer Fisher

At its Dec. 12 meeting, the Cuyahoga Arts & Culture's (CAC) Board of Trustees approved 66 general operating grants, totaling \$13,980,960, to arts and cultural organizations in Cuyahoga County in 2012.

Heights-based organizations received a total of \$301,563 in general operating support. Apollo's Fire received \$97,094; the Contemporary Youth Orchestra, \$27,696; Dobama Theatre, \$33,680; Heights Arts, \$22,090; Heights Youth Theatre, \$19,144; the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, \$60,711; and Roots of American Music, \$41,148.

"General Operating Support (GOS) grants strengthen our community by providing critical support to Cuyahoga County's arts and cultural organizations," said Karen Gahl-Mills, executive director of CAC. "These investments play a key role in keeping Cuyahoga County's great cultural institutions available and accessible to all in our community."

"We've been receiving Cuyahoga County tax dollars since the voters passed Issue 18 in 2006," said Peggy

Spaeth, director of Heights Arts. "We are very lucky to live where people recognize that public sector funding is essential to the sustainability of arts and culture. We return every tax dollar invested by the public many times over in the services that we provide to our community."

The GOS grant program is designed to provide unrestricted core support for established, fiscally sound arts or cultural organizations in Cuyahoga County that consistently offer high-quality services to a broad audience. The GOS grants are offered every two years through a highly competitive application process. The grants announced on Dec. 12 represent funding for the second year of the cycle.

Since 2007, CAC has invested more than \$80 million in 182 local arts and cultural organizations. In 2009, CAC grantees generated nearly \$280 million in local economic activity and supported 5,000 local jobs. For more information, visit www.cacgrants.org or call 216-515-8303.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

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Cleveland Peace Action to reveal military/wars funding

Nina McLellan

On Jan. 17, at 7 p.m. at the Lee Road Library, Cleveland Peace Action will present "Our Tax Dollars Off To War," led by longtime Cleveland Heights resident Francis Chiappa, Cleveland Peace Action copresident. The program is free and open to the public, and will be followed by discussion.

Chiappa's presentation will show how the military/war budget has grown and how the Pentagon uses tax dollars (the United States accounts for about 47 percent of the world's total military spending). He will contrast America's military spending to its spending on domestic needs.

"Cleveland Peace Action believes that if we can know the amount of military spending, and where it goes, useful public discussion can occur regarding trade-offs between domestic and military spending, to decide which expenditures make us more or less secure," said Chiappa.

"By now, the public knows that the congressional Super Committee, assigned to cut \$1.2 trillion from the national budget, failed its assigned mission," he said, "thus triggering mandated cuts of about \$1 trillion from domestic and military budgets to commence in 2013."

"While we don't yet know where and how these cuts will happen," Chiappa continued, "we do know that Ohio communities will be severely impacted. Vital funding for social programs, schools, hospitals, Great Lakes cleanup, the Cuyahoga National Park, and domestic safety net programs are on the chopping block. Meanwhile, military proponents are trying to shield the Pentagon budget from cuts, claiming any funding reduction jeopardizes U. S. security."

Chiappa said that Cleveland Heights taxpayers will pay \$97.4 million for proposed Department of Defense spending for 2012, and paid \$21.5 million more for the Afghanistan war in 2011. "That's a



In addition to lobbying Congress, Peace Action and its affiliates often "take to the streets" as shown in this photo of an anti-Iraq war demonstration in Washington D.C.

total of almost \$119 million," he said. "Cleveland Peace Action believes that, as responsible citizens, we must learn the vital facts then act upon them."

Chiappa's activism goes back to 1984 when he was a leader of the Cleveland Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign. Then, joined by other Heights area residents, he raised public awareness about the dangers of nuclear weapons and organized opposition to nuclear testing, along with a call for nuclear weapons abolition. He was involved in numerous anti-nuclear demonstrations in downtown Cleveland, at the Nevada test site, and in the Great Peace March that came through Cleveland in 1986.

The national anti-nuclear movement evolved with a broadened agenda in 1993 to become Peace Action. Today, it is the largest grassroots peace group in the United States, with affiliate chapters in 27 states and a national office near Washington, D.C.

Following the Jan. 17 presentation, Cleveland Peace Action will ask area city councils to pass a "New Priorities" resolution, similar to those passed in other cities around the country. The resolution will ask Congress to end the wars, cut military spending and prioritize spending on community needs.

To learn more about Cleveland Peace Action, visit www.peaceactioncleveland.org.

Nina McLellan is copresident of Cleveland Peace Action.

UH senior citizen happenings

Sherri Wisnieski

Jan. 12, 2 p.m.

Lisa Cellura, outreach educator for Cleveland Sight Center, will present the award-winning video, "Hope & Coping with Macula Degeneration."

Jan. 19, 2 p.m.

John Habat, facing challenges as the newly named executive director of Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity.

Jan. 26, 2 p.m.

Caitlin Lynch, concert violist in the doctoral program at the Cleveland Institute of Music, and scholarship student in Judson Manor's Intergenerational Initiative, will perform a medley of classical and popular compositions.

Sherri Wisnieski is the administrative assistant to Mayor Susan Infeld of the City of University Heights.



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Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

NOVEMBER 21, 2011

All council members were present.

Transportation study

Council authorized an agreement with Michael Baker Jr. Inc. for a Missing Links Transportation Planning Study to identify improvements needed to facilitate alternate means of transportation from Cleveland Heights to the Greater University Circle area. The city, RTA, and University Circle Inc. were awarded a grant for this study by the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency. The amount of the contract is \$93,750; \$75,000 will be covered by the grant and \$18,750 will be paid by the city.

Curfew changes

In a six-to-one vote, council approved amendments to the minors' curfew ordinance in order to:

- Extend certain curfew provisions to the Severance Business District;
- Clarify language, as well as clarify and expand the exceptions to the curfew ordinance.

Council had previously established the 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew for juveniles, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian, in the Coventry Village and Cedar Lee business districts. That ordinance also allowed for the establishment of temporary special curfew areas. Since its enactment, improvements in the affected areas seem to indicate that the curfew, and its subsequent amendments, have been effective. Given verified reports of problems in the Severance Business District, council is acting to build in exceptions for a rational approach to the problems. Council Member Ken Montlack

noted the useful input from the community and acknowledged that the curfew is not a "silver bullet," but is one of a group of actions. Earlier in the meeting several residents expressed concerns about the curfew limiting the freedoms of children who are not causing problems and stating that problems continue to exist outside the curfew areas. Montlack maintained that safety and security are the most critical obligations of city government. Council Member Bonnie Caplan voted no on this measure saying it is too controlling and too punishing of those young people who are law-abiding. She said she understands the need for safety and security, but wants young people to feel they are growing up in a free society. She would like to see the city explore other alternatives. Mayor Kelley stated that he will support the ordinance because of the responsibility to maintain safety in the city.

Nuisance properties

Council declared two neglected properties on Brunswick Road (house numbers 954 and 956) to be nuisances and authorized abatement. The properties will likely be razed if repairs are not satisfactorily made.

Taylor Road resurfacing

The Taylor Road resurfacing project is scheduled to begin in April 2012 and will include not only repair and resurfacing of the road from Euclid Heights Boulevard to Bayreuth Road, but also a reduction from seven to five lanes

LWV observer: Katherine Solender.

DECEMBER 5, 2011

Council member Dennis R. Wilcox was absent.

Overnight street parking

Council approved the suspension of enforcement of parking violations on selected streets in high-

density housing areas (Kensington, Hillcrest, Belmar, Glenmont and Eddington roads) from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2012, in order to provide for on-street overnight permit parking. Permits will be available for sale at a cost of \$100 per quarter.

City expenditures

Two ordinances relating to city expenditures, one making adjustments to eight fund categories for the fiscal year ending Dec. 31, 2011 and a second making appropriations for expenditures in the 2012 fiscal year, were presented on first reading.

Clarification of special funds

Council passed legislation to clarify the purpose of special revenue funds (the Local Programming Fund and the Ring Road Restoration Fund) and to clarify the legal authority to make transfers or temporary advances from the city's funds in keeping with the city's appropriation ordinances. With this legislation council declares that the two funds are not restricted, but are "assigned balance funds" intended to be used for local programming and reconstruction of the Ring Road. Money in these funds may be transferred and used for any public purpose determined by the city council or the city manager.

Municipal court construction work

In order to provide for additional construction work needed in connection with the Cleveland Heights Municipal Court technology and security upgrade project, council amended an agreement with Royal Cabinet Design Company Inc. The amount to be paid is \$10,492.

Kent Road waterline replacement

Council authorized a contract with Mackay Engineering and Surveying Company for engineering and surveying services in connection with replac-



ing a waterline in Kent Road. The cost will be \$19,900.

Sewer work on Delamere and Glenwood roads

Council approved an agreement with Northeast Ohio Trenching Service for emergency sewer repairs and partial storm sewer replacements at Delamere Road and Glenwood Road. The cost will be \$56,726.

Unsalted side streets

Mayor Edward Kelley reminded residents to drive carefully this winter, especially on side streets, which the city does not salt.

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

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

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

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

MONTLACK continued from page 1

development committee when it was easier for cities to help spur redevelopment," he said. "Working with the mayor, council and staff, we helped spur the redevelopment of the city, including new housing units, upgrading of existing housing, and redevelopment of mixed-use commercial areas, such as Coventry and Cedar Lee."

Montlack was instrumental in the founding of the First Suburbs Consortium, a coalition of 19 suburbs that works to maintain the vitality of inner-ring, built-out suburbs, including Cleveland Heights. Montlack said he will continue to volunteer with the group, serving on its development council and housing committee.

Montlack said he decided not to run for a seventh term because he believed it was time for new perspectives on council. "The newly elected council members are very involved and aware of the issues facing our city," he said. "They will do well."

"In all of my years, it has always been all about the residents," said Montlack. "As long as we have people who understand the issues and are committed to our community, we will thrive."

Council Member Jason Stein said, "His wisdom and humor will be missed. Ken's 'fingerprint' on Cleveland Heights will continue to be seen for years to come."

"Anyone who knows Ken would describe him as intelligent and committed. He understands the issues and is the ultimate consensus builder to get things done," said Mayor Kelley. "He made a difference and we are grateful for [his] years of dedicated service."

Newly-elected council members will be sworn in at the first Cleveland Heights City Council meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 3.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

Cleveland Heights honors sports teams



Cleveland Heights High School Women's Soccer team.

On Dec. 15, the City of Cleveland Heights honored Cleveland Heights sports teams at a Special Recognition Night at the Community Center. A spokes person for the city said, "The city was honoring our young people, and their coaches and families, for their dedication, discipline and teamwork."

The sports teams honored were: Communion of Saints Football team, Beaumont School Varsity Volleyball team, Beaumont School Varsity Cross Country team, Beaumont School Tennis team, Heights High School Men's Soccer team,

Heights High School Women's Soccer team, Heights High School Cheerleaders, and Heights High School Varsity Football team.

Pictured are the members of the Heights High School Women's Soccer team, their coaches, and members of Cleveland Heights City Council.

"It was special to be in a packed room, full of our Cleveland Heights youth that are accomplishing great things," said Council Member Jason Stein. "These young people represent our future, and our future looks bright!"

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University Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

NOVEMBER 21, 2011

Mayor Susan Infeld was absent.

Police and fire personnel

Council passed ordinances requiring that members of the police and fire departments live in either Cuyahoga County or an adjacent county.

Mutual Aid Agreement with JCU

A Mutual Aid Agreement with John Carroll University (JCU) for the provision of police services was presented on first reading. Police Chief Hammett explained that the agreement would provide additional resources within a Mutual Aid Agreement area outside the university's boundaries, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. Councilman Steven Bullock stated that the safety committee met with the mayor and police chief to review the agreement and recommends its passage. UHPD would remain the primary law enforcement agency responsible for investigating felony and misdemeanor offenses within University Heights, including the agreement area. JCU police would provide assistance upon request. JCU police have authority to handle minor misdemeanors, but not felonies. Councilman Steven Sims asked for more information about

what constitutes the Mutual Aid Agreement area. It applies to the campus, Gesu Parish and properties, and "the annex," which includes specific houses on surrounding streets. The law director will also look at clarifying the area boundaries.

Assistant clerk of council

With one dissenting vote council approved establishing the part-time position of assistant clerk of council with compensation up to \$15 per hour, depending on qualifications. The assistant clerk of council shall have the same rights as permanent part-time employees of the city. Councilman Kevin Patrick Murphy voted no, but there was no discussion.

Emergency services billings

Councilman Bullock, safety committee chair, reported new guidelines for emergency services billings and collections. The Life Force agency will send letters to residents who have no insurance and high deductibles with a hope of collection, but take no further action. Names of nonresidents who fail to respond to the letters will be sent to a collection agency. Indigents who can prove hardship will have their cases dropped. Jennifer Esarey, finance director, looked into collection agencies and recommended First Federal Credit Control, which has a high success rate, although the 35 percent fee is 10

percent higher than others. First Federal will handle only those cases sent to them by Life Force, and will bill on what they collect. No vote was required as this is an administrative function.

LWV observer: Patricia C. Solomon.

DECEMBER 5, 2011

Councilman Phil Ertel was absent.

Patrolman Kyle Nietert

Council passed a resolution honoring Patrolman Kyle Nietert as Public Servant of the Year. Patrolman Nietert was the first responder to the fire on Milton Road in July 2011, and rescued the family from the burning home.

Anita Kazarian

Mayor Infeld issued a proclamation naming Anita Kazarian Citizen of the Year.

JCU Mutual Aid Agreement

Council authorized a Mutual Aid Agreement with John Carroll University (JCU) for the provision of police services. The agreement area includes the JCU campus, the Green Road Annex (old Temple Emanu El), and a list of properties owned by the university. At the request of Gesu Parish, the agreement area also includes the parish properties.

City police will be the primary law enforce-



ment agency within the city, including all property within established university boundaries. They will respond to calls for service and investigate felony and misdemeanor offenses. University police will have authority to take enforcement action within university boundaries, and outside university boundaries, in accordance with the terms of the agreement and when assistance is requested by city police. They will investigate and take corrective action for minor misdemeanor violations that occur in their presence within university boundaries. Both departments will notify each other of felony and misdemeanor offenses that occur within the agreement area. Vice Mayor Frankie Goldberg asked about court appearances for minor misdemeanors. Steve Hammett, police chief, said normally that would be handled by the university, unless discussion of the case with the city indicates a need to take it to the Shaker Heights court.

LWV observer: Patricia C. Solomon.

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

See disclaimer on page 7.

Is UH council at risk of becoming a rubber stamp?



POINT OF VIEW

Anita Kazarian

In the past four years, University Heights City Council has kept a watchful eye on the city administration, exercising the checks and balances of government, as they should. This will change with the 2012 council.

Many on the new council, along with the mayor, have close ties to one another and to Jeffrey H. Friedman, an attorney. Most members are supported and/or endorsed by both the mayor and Friedman.

This change is important to understand. Why? With a cozy relationship among our elected officials, legislation and administrative action may be expedited—expedited without the strict scrutiny that protects taxpayer interest, and expedited without full disclosure and public discussion.

Jeffrey Friedman is active in city politics, raising money to support favored candidates. Although he maintains a house in University Heights,

Friedman is actually a homestead resident of Marco Island, Florida, and is registered to vote there, not in University Heights.

The 2012 council members are Pam Cameron, Tom Cozzens, Phil Ertel, Frankie Goldberg, Susan Pardee, Steve Sims and Adele Zucker.

The newly-elected members—Zucker, Cozzens and Cameron—are Friedman's handpicked candidates and come with the active support of Mayor Susan Infeld and former Mayor Beryl Rothschild.

These ties also extend to Pardee and Ertel. In 2008, then Councilwoman Zucker had one appointment to make to the charter review commission and she appointed Pardee, Friedman's choice. In the crowded field of 2009 candidates for council, Infeld publicly supported Ertel.

Vice-Mayor Goldberg was ward leader in the University Heights Democratic Club through the 2011 elections. Her executive committee had four endorsements to hand out in the council elections. Three went to Friedman's slate. The fourth endorsement, expected to go to the only other Democrat, incumbent Councilman Sims, was unused.

To summarize, Friedman was ac-

tively involved with Infeld's election in 2009, the election of three new council members in 2011, and the recommendation of Pardee in 2008. Given Friedman's active involvement in the 2009 elections, it is reasonable to believe he also approved the mayor's support of Ertel. Friedman stated, during his 2011 campaign meetings in July and August, that he expected to endorse Goldberg in her 2012 campaign.

With this much alignment before people are even elected, it raises the concern of expensive consequences for the taxpayers.

For example, in June 2011 the mayor presented council with an ordinance to create a new city job—human resources manager. Council members refused to create the costly new staff position, citing that our city is small, departments are cutting back employees, and other, less expensive options, are available to taxpayers.

In November 2011, following the election of the Friedman slate, Infeld said she will reintroduce the ordinance to the new council with the expectation that the motion will pass.

Meanwhile, the city is running without a full-time finance director at a time when it faces major budget challenges and cuts. Sims, a former

certified public accountant, heads the finance committee.

Sims will need the cooperation of the mayor and the new council members if he is to successfully help navigate our city through responsible budget cuts.

Jeffrey Friedman enters the picture again. In his Oct. 6 letter to the *Sun Press*, he made derogatory statements about Sims. Neither the mayor nor the new council members distanced themselves from the Friedman statements.

By not distancing themselves, they may attempt to marginalize the only person left at city hall with a strong background in finance. The only influence we expect of our elected officials is from UH residents.

We face questions about backyard garbage pick-up, combining our fire department with another city, to name just two. We look forward to real transparency from this administration and council. We hope council will not become simply a "rubber stamp."

Anita Kazarian is a marketing professional, founder of Noah's Landing, and one of the two council candidates who withdrew from the Friedman slate. She can be reached at anitakazarian@gmail.com.

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The Wine Spot opens on Lee Road

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The Wine Spot, a purveyor of wine and microbrew beers opened on Lee Road on Dec. 16. The opening, attended by an estimated 400 people, featured the inaugural exhibit of The Art Spot, a student-run gallery exhibiting the works of Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA) students.

Four of the student paintings were sold during the opening, and Wine Spot owner Adam Fleischer said he expects the exhibit to be the first of many quarterly shows of student work.

“The cooperative gallery venture is one of many partnerships that The Wine Spot hopes to cultivate with local artists and artisans,” said Fleischer.

Fleischer worked to preserve the history of the building, which had once been home to Bruder’s Dairy and, most recently, Seitz-Agin Hardware. One of the many surprises uncovered during renovation of the 95-year-old building was the tile floor, bearing the Bruder’s Dairy name, which contractor Kevin Monroe found beneath three layers of linoleum. Fleischer decided to preserve the floor, which, though imperfect, adds



Kevin Monroe, of Monroe Constructs; Adam Fleischer, owner; Tommy White, CIA professor of painting; and Chris Whittey, CIA vice president of faculty and academic affairs.

to the store’s character.

“Monroe Constructs designed the store, counters, custom racks and cooler—all of the cool stuff in the store,” said Fleischer. “I think it captures the essence of the Heights area—reclaimed, organic, old, new and beautiful.”

Fleischer said that all of the tables

were built from repurposed wood by A Piece of Cleveland. “The pine tables came from an apartment building on Eddy Road and the purple-heart tasting table is from the Lakewood High park bleachers,” he said. Attached to each piece is a certificate with information about its origins.

Custom-made racks line one wall and feature wines from throughout the world, including domestic wines. “We are building up our Ohio wine section slowly as we develop relationships with local vintners,” said Fleischer.

A large cooler of microbrews lines the opposite wall. “Our beers are from the United States, Scotland, Germany, Belgium, France, with many more coming in. Our focus is on small-batch craft beers and mead,” Fleischer said.

A large bar and comfortable furniture make the large space seem cozy and comfortable. There is a private tasting room for business presentations and social events. Fleischer plans to provide opportunities to educate customers on the unique qualities of the wines and brews he sells.

True to Fleischer’s goal of promoting partnerships with local businesses, The Wine Spot offers chocolates, provided by landlord Bill Mitchell, owner of Mitchell’s Fine Chocolates, to accompany the wines.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

Irish and independent, Parnell’s Pub celebrates 15 years

Elizabeth Synnott

For more years than anyone can remember, 2167 Lee Road, next door to the Cedar Lee Theatre, has been a bar. For the last 15 years, it has been the Charles Stewart Parnell Pub, under the watchful eye and keep of Irish-born owner Declan Synnott. Better known in the neighborhood as simply Parnell’s Pub, it’s likely the old oak bar holds more stories and secrets than most high school students.

Arriving in Boston in 1994 from County Meath, Ireland, Synnott was enticed to move to Cleveland by the promise of opening a family-owned Irish restaurant—Flannery’s on East 4th Street. After opening and managing the place for a few years, he knew it was time for him to have his turn.

Enter Parnell’s on Lee Road, Feb. 1, 1997. After a time, Synnott bought out his partner, Sean Gormley, and Parnell’s became a one-man show. Last year, when Synnott tied the knot with a local lass, Parnell’s became a family-run Irish pub. (Look for signs of another family expansion early this year.)

Now settled in Cleveland Heights, Synnott is an active member of the Cedar Lee SID. In addition to running a bar and pouring pints all night, he somehow finds time to lobby Congress and attend neighborhood improvement meetings.

Synnott has created a friendly atmosphere for both 20-somethings and older patrons. No matter who you are, as you walk through the old oak door and sidle up to the bar, you are surrounded by friends and a special coziness found only in a true Irish pub.

On Friday, Jan. 27, Synnott and his staff invite guests to celebrate the 15th anniversary of this independent Heights



Declan Synnott, owner of Parnell’s Pub, pours a pint behind the bar.

business. Partnering with Thirsty Dog Brewing Company of Akron (which is celebrating its 15th anniversary in February) the hosts challenge you to “drink us out of glassware” for the night. Buy a pint and keep the commemorative glass—when they’re gone, they’re gone for good. (Well, maybe they’ll bring them back for their next milestone anniversary.)

Although the price of a proper “imperial pint” may have risen over time, two things have stayed the same—the quality and the *craic* (loosely translated as “fun, entertainment, and enjoyable conversation”).

Elizabeth Synnott is the Cleveland Heights lass mentioned in the article.

‘Lunites’ to gain more room soon

Hugh Fisher

Die-hard denizens of Luna Bakery and Café will no longer have to brave the cold and drizzle in order to enjoy their crepes and pots de crème au chocolate. The popular spot at Fairmount and Cedar is small, and close to one-half of its available seating is on its outdoor patio. With only about 25 seats inside, panini munchers and kids eating cupcakes could be found seated outside even on the worst of days.

But there is good news for these dedicated Lunites. The café and bakery is expanding its indoor dining area. This is being accomplished by expanding into the space next door, walling off a portion of one of the dining rooms occupied by The Mad Greek.

Lunites can expect at least 20 more seats. Construction is underway, and the new space is expected to be completed in early January.

Hugh Fisher lives in the Cedar Fairmount neighborhood.



Winners named in Heights Libraries photography contest



First Place: Victoria Dumesh, "Blue Hydrangeas and Fruit."

The judges of the Heights Libraries fourth annual photography contest faced a challenge selecting ten finalists from more than 75 entries.

"This year's theme, Focus on the World, really inspired our contestants," said Jennifer Greene, contest organizer and adult services librarian. "This year's entries were fantastic—it was hard to choose!"

Staff from both the Heights Libraries and Cedar Center MotoPhoto, the contest sponsor, whittled the entries down to ten finalists. During November, the top ten photographs were displayed for one week at each library branch, where library visitors could view them and vote for their favorites. In total, 630 votes were cast, resulting in the following five winners:

First Place: Victoria Dumesh, "Blue Hydrangeas and Fruit"

Second Place: Keith Lubbers, "At Least Someone Enjoyed All the Rain this Year"

Third Place: Chela Crinnion, "Coca-Cola Sculpture in Costa Rica"

Fourth Place: Carl Jenks, "Petra Through Crack-Sinai Peninsula"

Fifth Place: Nora Eagan, "The Boy in the Alley"

Cedar Center MotoPhoto provided the contest prizes, which included a one-year membership to Club Moto, archival reproductions of the winning photographs, and gift certificates. The winning photos are on display at the Lee Road Library and online at www.heightslibrary.org.

Sheryl Banks is the marketing and community relations manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights



NOVEMBER 21, 2011

All board members were present.

Sound system for meeting rooms

The board approved the purchase of a complete sound and projector system for the meeting rooms at the Lee Road Library in the amount of \$11,521. The system will work for individual rooms or all three rooms when a large community meeting takes place.

Two retirements

Board president Audrey Cole read the retirement resolutions for Leola Capers and Nancy R. Jamieson. Capers, circulation supervisor of the Coventry Village Library, is retiring after 31 years of outstanding service. The resolution praises her patience and welcoming attitude toward new staff. "She has survived the ideas and changes of five managers who have moved the collection this way, that way and back again. . . . And she has accepted it all with benign good humor. . . ."

Jamieson, who began at the library as a page in 1989, was promoted to full-time children's services clerk in 1995, and became technical services assistant in 2007, where she was known for her expertise in processing children's materials and was awarded the title Queen of Labels.

Heights Library a Five-Star Library

Nancy Levin, library director was pleased to announce that the library has again been designated a Five-Star library by *Library Journal*.

Celebration of Harvey Pekar

Approximately 90 people attended the celebration of the art and life of author Harvey Pekar on Oct. 25.

October public service report highlights

- The Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Club is the latest discussion group at the Lee Road Library and began with a discussion of *The Sparrow* by local author Mary Doria Russell.
- The fourth annual library photography contest,

sponsored by the Cedar Center MotoPhoto had 82 submissions and ten finalists. Library patrons can vote for their favorites and winners will be announced on Dec. 5.

- Teen librarian Jessica Robinson organized a week of events for the annual Teen Read Week. About 40 teens attended each day.
- Librarians Sam Lapidés and Amanda Rome were co-presenters of "The New Face of Reader's Advisory" at the Ohio Library Council convention.
- At Coventry Village Library, the October author series featured Emily Mitchell, who spoke about her novel *The Last Summer of the World*. More than 30 people attended.
- At Noble Neighborhood Library, Friday Reading Rumpus attracted 97 children and caregivers at four story times in October.

LWV observer: Anne S. McFarland.

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

See disclaimer on page 7.

Heights Libraries welcome new board members

Sheryl Banks

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library is pleased to announce the appointment of two new board members, Abby Botnick and Richard Louis Ortmeier. Their terms begin in January.

They replace two outgoing board members Audrey Cole, board president, who retired at the end of 2011 after a seven-year term; and Jason Stein, who resigned in June, after two years of a seven-year term, to serve on the Cleveland Heights City Council. Botnick's term will be seven years and Ortmeier's will be five.

Abby Botnick, a University Heights resident for seven years, is an attorney with the Cleveland law firm Shapero & Roloff, and is also an associate board member of the Anti-Defamation League: Ohio, Kentucky and Allegheny Region. She brings many years of legal and advocacy experience to her board position, in addition to her love for libraries. "Public libraries are an invaluable asset to any community, and serve so many important interests," she said. "Heights Libraries provide literacy and culture, and resources, such as educational classes that enrich the public and assist people who might otherwise not have access to these things." As the mother of young children, Botnick feels



Abby Botnick



Louis Ortmeier

strongly about literacy, and believes libraries provide a crucial service by bridging the gap between "the skills that children learn at school and the encouragement they receive at home."

Louis Ortmeier, a Cleveland Heights resident for nine years, is a principal at the architecture firm Bostwick Design Partnership in Cleveland, where he has worked on several local library projects, including the Cleveland Public Library's Rice branch and the Cuyahoga County Public Library's Gates Mills branch. With more than two decades as an architect, Ortmeier has had the opportunity to work on more than 40 library projects in nine states, experience that he hopes to put to use on the CH-UH library board.

"Those projects taught me to be a skilled communicator, as they required discussions across all organizational levels, from one-on-one with staff to board presentation to large community forums," he said. "I've developed a deep appreciation for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities inherent in library projects in particular, but also any institution supported through public funding." Ortmeier has also been a member of the Friends of the Heights Libraries, a nonprofit group dedicated to supporting the libraries through fundraising and advocacy.

The new members were selected by the CH-UH Board of Education at its Dec. 6 meeting. Ohio law requires that the local school board be the tax authority for a community's public library, so library trustees are, therefore, chosen by the school board.

Sheryl Banks is the marketing and community relations manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

What's going on at your library?

Start the new year with programs for all ages at the Heights Libraries. Learn sign language, join a book discussion group, make a shadow puppet, and more. Visit www.heightslibrary.org for a complete program calendar.

Coventry Village Library

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400
Mon., Jan. 9, 7 p.m.

Reading Comics. These aren't your kid brother's comics. They're complex works of literature and nonfiction in an imaginative, visual format. Join us for a discussion of *The Imposter's Daughter: A True Memoir* by Laurie Sandell.
Sat. Jan. 21, 11 a.m.

Basic American Sign Language for Kids. ASL classes for children ages 6-10 that teach basic signs for numbers, colors, the alphabet, everyday words, and simple phrases.

Lee Road Library

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600
Thurs. Jan. 19 and 26, 3:30 p.m.

Library Afterschool Fun: Cozy Crafts. For school-age children, a different craft project to take home each week.
Wed., Jan. 25, 7 p.m.

Science Fiction and Fantasy book discussion. This month the group will discuss *Good Omens* by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett.

Noble Neighborhood Library

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665
Thurs. Jan. 12, 7 p.m.

Noble Mystery Evening book discussion. January selection is *Bury your Dead* by Louise Penny.

Thurs. Jan. 26, 6:30 p.m.

Diary of a Wimpy Kid party. If you love the Wimpy Kid books and movies, this is the party for you. Ages 7-12.

University Heights Library

13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700
Wed. Jan. 11, 12:30 p.m.

Senior Spot book discussion at Whole Foods Market. Meet Heights librarians to discuss *The Man Who Loves Books Too Much* by Allison Hoover Bartlett.
Thurs. Jan. 26, 7 p.m.

Shadow Puppet Extravaganza. For family fun. Attend a shadow puppet show, then create your own shadow puppet.

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Master facilities planning for CH-UH schools is underway

Angee Shaker

Approximately 100 residents participated in the first community meeting for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District facilities master plan on Nov. 30.

The meeting was an opportunity for the district to share its educational vision and explain the planning process to the community. It also provided residents with a means to communicate their priorities and goals.

"This is our moment," Superintendent Doug Heuer said. "Now is the time for our well-educated, vibrant, well-intentioned community to come together and reinvent itself for a successful future."

During the meeting, Dave Tabor, a parent in the district and a member of the school facilities committee, explained the first phase of the work. He focused on how the committee, comprising parents, teachers and school administrators, validated a report by the Ohio School Facilities Commission last year that stated the district's facilities were outdated, inefficient, and in need of renovation or replacement.

Following Tabor's presentation, James Seaman, the project leader from Fielding Nair International Architects,



Local residents discussed community values as part of the master facilities planning session. The next community meeting will take place on Jan. 11 at Heights High.

one of the three architectural firms the district contracted to work on the project, presented his firm's initial findings. Seaman's firm has designed schools throughout the country and around the world.

"Our team has never received this much feedback from a community meeting," he said. "This level of engagement and feedback will be enormously helpful."

Following the discussions, attendees offered feedback and suggested priorities to guide the master plan. Their list of priorities included aligning facilities to educational programs; balancing historic preservation with new

construction; environmental sustainability; flexible learning spaces (but not open classrooms); globally-connected schools; spaces for community education; reasonable initial project cost; neighborhood-connected schools; manageable operating costs; safety and security; support for the arts; support for families and children; and support for healthful living.

Three additional community meetings are scheduled for 2012. They will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on Jan. 11, Feb. 22, and Mar. 21 in the social room at Heights High. Parents are encouraged attend and to bring their children. Childcare, food, and thousands of Legos will be available.

The master facilities team will summarize community input from the first meeting, and participants will once again have an opportunity to discuss priorities during the Jan. 11 meeting.

Angee Shaker is director of communications for the CH-UH City School District.

Expanding music instruction

Joy Henderson

Dan Heim, Heights High orchestra teacher, teaches students to read and play orchestral music, but he also wants them to learn contemporary music. "We want to encourage students to create music spontaneously and creatively," said Heim. To help teach students to improvise, Heim invited master jazz violinist Christian Howes to lead three master classes that culminated in an informal concert on Nov. 30.

"To improvise, you use what you know," Howes told the students. "You will use your knowledge of scales, chords, harmony and rhythm." With those building blocks, students can improvise and play with other musicians in less structured environments.

This emphasis on improvisation is part of the required course of music study in Ohio. When Heim met Howes at an Ohio Music Education Association conference, he knew that Howes's approach would resonate with students.

Howes brought his electric violin and effects pedals and played jazz, classical, reggae and R&B. He helped students follow a bass line and then join in with a melody. He encouraged the drummer to improvise and create grooves for the group to follow.

At the concert, students practiced improvisation in many different forms. The students spoke enthusiastically about the work and trying something new. They were especially drawn to the electric violin.

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

Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board Meeting highlights



NOVEMBER 15, 2011

Board Member Nancy Peppler was absent.

High school courses

Jeffery Talbert, assistant superintendent, presented recommendations for new high school courses that are aligned with Pathways for the 2011-12 school year.

Freshman Experience

Currently the Freshman Experience is separate, but will be included in each small school.

Dual credit

Students in the REAL small school taking Advance Placement (AP) courses will be able to earn dual credit from the high school and from Kent State University.

AP test

Students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses must sit for the AP tests. At present, only 30 percent of AP students take the tests.

LWV observer: Adele Cohen.

DECEMBER 6, 2011

All board members were present.

Library board interviews

There were 12 applicants for two slots on the library board. One slot was for a full seven-year term and the other was for an unexpired term of five years. Each candidate was interviewed separately for no more than 15 minutes and asked the same five questions.

Question 1: What do you propose to do to continue and expand support to students in our community?

Candidate answers ranged from "no set agenda" to establishing new partnerships with nonprofit organizations and the school district to "erase" the library walls. Also of concern was the need for preschool, along with evening and weekend programming, for working parents and other adult outreach.

Question 2: (A) Why is a library board important? (B) What is the role of the library board versus the role of the administrative staff?

Candidates noted that the board is necessary to oversee the entire system. It has a stewardship role that includes planning and a fiduciary responsibility to the public because the library is publically funded.

All said that the board is involved in governance and ensuring that administrative staff is able to carry out the library's policy and mission.

Question 3: (A) Which branches have you visited and which do you know best? (B) Aside from checking out books, what other involvement

have you had with the library (or any other library system)?

Most had visited at least two library buildings in the CH-UH system: the Lee Road Library and the branch closest to their homes.

Most had participated in at least two other activities, one of which was checking out DVDs. Several mentioned nonreading activities, such as the knitting circle, children's birthday parties, and musical events.

Question 4: (A) What would you uniquely bring to the board? (B) Can you fulfill the term that you are seeking?

Their experience ranged from public sector financing, consensus building, and nonprofit board experience to experience as a library architect. Other qualities were a passion for books, extensive community involvement, and past library board experience.

As to completing the term, all answered affirmatively, except one candidate, who noted that she had indicated on her application that her husband was ill and that she could not foresee what might happen.

Question 5: What are the major challenges facing the system over the next few years and what knowledge and experience do you have to address these challenges?

Almost all said finances and budgeting were the main challenge. New relevant services must be provided even in the face of state cutbacks. Almost no one said what they would do to address the budget problems, although several mentioned that as business people they were used to managing budget and financial issues.

Selection of candidates

The board selected Richard Ortmeyer and Abby Botnick. The criteria for selection included having done the "homework," geographic representation (Botnick lives in University Heights and Ortmeyer lives in Cleveland Heights), and a sense of an ability to work with others and come to consensus. Nancy Levin, library director, also pointed out that Ortmeyer had been very modest in describing his volunteer work with the library.

LWV observer: Adele Cohen.

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

See disclaimer on page 7.

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Third grade reading guarantee

Angee Shaker

During the 2010-11 school year, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District reviewed its resources to ensure that all children experience a challenging curriculum. The district's goal is to have every student reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade.

Meetings with elementary teachers were conducted on three occasions to gather feedback and suggestions regarding the strengths of the district and changes that would better support its students. The common themes presented by teachers were to eliminate interruptions during instructional time, increase instructional time in English Language Arts (ELA) and math, reduce the student-to-teacher ratio for struggling students, and provide an alternative for addressing the wide range of students' abilities within each classroom. From these meetings, the district's performance grouping structure was created and organized.

A Q&A with Kelly Stukus, coordinator of educational services, follows:

Q. What has been the reaction from teachers?

A. The teachers have enthusiastically embraced the structure for performance grouping of students. Their positive energy was observable during our first district ELA sessions held in October for teachers in grades one through four. During these sessions, teachers had the opportunity to share what they liked about the reorganized structure and to identify additional resources needed to support their students.

Q. What has been the reaction from students?

A. During our ongoing teacher feedback sessions, it has been noted that new student leaders are emerging. These new leaders are emerging because of the opportunity they have to more actively participate by speaking up and taking risks. A second grade teacher shared that he has seen a decrease in student behavior problems and an increase in student motivation.

Q. Any parental input yet?

A. We are putting a parental feedback structure into place. Three parents are being identified at every school. The parent group will work together to address topics including, but not limited to, the following:

- Educating parents about ELA assess-



Kelly Stukus, coordinator of educational services, for the CH-UH City School District.

ments, flexibility, reading behaviors, and serving as an informational resource for other parents;

- Discussing the role of parents in student achievement;
- Acquiring strategies for supporting the achievement of all CH-UH children;
- Creating a plan for welcoming new members into the school community.

Q. What types of benchmarks are in place to determine how it is working? What were the results?

A. Currently we are using observational assessments to determine what is working and where additional support is needed. These observations are gleaned through weekly on-site school visits and continued feedback sessions with teachers. In grades one and two, students are being assessed on their reading level during the month of November. This is one current source of data to determine student growth, as well as day-to-day teacher observations of student performance.

Q. What are some of the downsides?

A. Some of the downsides include the need to increase the number of staff members for our ELA support team as a result of new students entering our dis-

trict with below-grade-level reading levels. This unanticipated need has caused a re-examination of district resources. An additional downside is that even with the increased instructional time during the ELA block, teachers are reporting that there is still not enough time to provide quality instruction in all the components of the Literacy Framework. We continue to look for ways to be more efficient with the time we have.

Q. Overall, how would you say the performance grouping is going?

A. Performance grouping has enabled teachers to focus instruction on meeting students' needs because the range is smaller. This enables the teacher to spend more time with students, meeting them where they are, so that all students grow to their potential. In previous years, students were instructed in home-room groupings for ELA instruction for shorter lengths of time. Student needs ranged from below-grade-level to above-grade-level readers within one classroom. Our new performance grouping structure provides the opportunity for more individualized student attention within a larger block of instructional time.

Q. What changes will be made next year?

A. At this point, it is too early to say what changes will be made. Teachers will have more strategies and tools to draw from at the conclusion of the year because they will have experienced a full year of performance grouping with students. This experience will increase everyone's understanding of the Literacy Framework and how to provide all students with individualized attention so that individual student needs are met.

Angee Shaker is the director of communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

Heights High graduate gets boost in paying for college

Becky Rocker

Avital Lugasy was visiting her sister in Austin, Texas, last summer when her parents informed her that she had been awarded the Jewish Family Service Association's (JFSA) Raskind Family Scholarship.

"I screamed when I opened the e-mail," said Lugasy. "I was extremely happy to receive it and felt I had really accomplished something."

The Raskind scholarship was one of many scholarships Lugasy, a 2011 Cleveland Heights High School graduate, applied for during her senior year.

"Toby Bresky [manager of JFSA's college financial aid program] really pushed me to apply for scholarships I didn't think I was qualified for," she said. "She helped me realize any money helps."

As Lugasy finished the fall quarter at The Ohio State University, she reflected on experiences that her scholarship helped make possible. "I love being in a new and challenging environment, meeting new people and being able to live on my own. But I do miss my mom's food," she joked.

While she has not declared a major, Lugasy said she is interested in radiological sciences and therapy and would like to work with cancer patients.

"I enjoy helping people who need it the most," she said.

JFSA is accepting applications for the Jack W. and Shirley J. Berger and Yoda Newton "Share The Luv" scholarships for the 2011-12 academic year. For details, go to www.jfsa-cleveland.org or contact Toby Bresky at tbresky@jfsa-cleveland.org.

Becky Rocker is the marketing and public relations associate for JFSA.

Merengue in Spanish class

Heights High students in Olivia Fatica's Spanish classes spend several days each year learning the traditional dances from Spanish-speaking countries. A dance instructor from Cleveland Swing and Salsa recently taught students the merengue. "When students learn a culture's dance traditions, they learn more about the people and history," Fatica said. "The dances tell a story and express emotions between the dancers."

The students in Fatica's freshman honors class were enthusiastic learners, taking direction from instructor Christine DelZoppo about foot, hip, shoulder, and hand movement. Then they advanced to more complicated turns and slides.

DelZoppo began the instruction by demonstrating and talking the students through the motions. The next step was to add music . . . and that is when the fun started. The lively merengue music, coupled with the dance instruction, energized the room. The students caught on to the dance quickly and let the music and energy guide their movement.

Merengue dance and music is originally from the Dominican Republic but is popular in all areas of Latin America.

Joy Henderson is the parent/community liason at Heights High.



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Heights High senior to play in Army All-American football game

Angee Shaker

Some teachers say that they learn as much from their some of their students as the students learn from them. Kyle Dodson, senior at Cleveland Heights High School, is one of those students.

An offensive lineman for the Tigers, Dodson will play in the U. S. Army All-American Football Bowl game on Jan. 7, in the Alamodome, in San Antonio, Texas. He is one of 90 high school seniors who were chosen to play in this prestigious game.

It sometimes takes a lifetime to learn the skills Kyle Dodson possesses. "Kyle is a gift from God," said Jeff Rotsky, head coach for the Heights Tigers football team. "He is a kid who has battled so much adversity and never gave up. He's one of the finest young men I've ever had the privilege to coach. If he continues to progress, and I believe he will, we will be proud to watch him on Sundays."

In 2005, Dodson's mother was killed when a driver, high on crack cocaine and fleeing from the police, slammed into her car as she drove home from a shopping trip with a friend. Kyle was 11 years

old. Since that day, his memories of his mother, and the crash, have motivated him to do his best—on and off the field.

Dodson has also experienced frustration from injuries that threatened to keep him from the sport he loves. At the beginning of his junior year, a back injury kept Dodson benched for seven games. His doctors told him he might never play football again.

Later in the season, however, the pain disappeared and Dodson received clearance to play. He came back more determined than ever, running extra drills with teammates and scaling the school stairs on Sundays.

Dodson's determination and leadership skills helped the Tigers achieve an undefeated season and advance to the playoffs. To his teammates, he is an inspiration.

Dodson will be attending the University of Wisconsin in the fall, where he will play freshman football. Meanwhile, CH-UH will be watching on Jan. 7 and cheering for this local football star.

Angee Shaker is director of communications for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.



Kyle Dodson, Heights High offensive lineman, was selected to play in the Army All-American game in San Antonio.

COURTESY: CH-UH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Harvard professor outlines changes needed in children's education

Krista Hawthorne

It's not just the economy that makes employers nervous about the future, said Ronald F. Ferguson, senior lecturer in education and public policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. According to Ferguson, "Big employers are scared that we will not be able to replace the baby boomers when they retire" with young people equipped with the basic skills needed. As our population shifts racially, Ferguson added, our emerging workforce will be "disproportionally from our lowest achieving groups" unless all students make dramatic gains in achievement.

Ferguson spoke recently at Plymouth Church in Shaker Heights as part of the City Club of Cleveland's Speaker Series. He has conducted more than 30 years of research on how to reduce economic and educational disparities in schools. He believes we need a movement toward excellence with equity. "We need a culture change, a lifestyle change on a national basis" in our ap-

proach to education, he said.

One important change he suggested is to bring adults who are satisfied with their lives into classrooms to talk about the pathways they followed. Employers and organizations could help schools arrange monthly visits from adults in a variety of professions, and range of incomes, to give students "a whole menu of possible selves."

Adolescent peer culture plays a significant role in achievement. Ferguson emphasized the need to help students create a "conspiracy to succeed." Surveys of students show that they want to succeed but feel "afraid to openly aspire to high achievement." He suggested creating a parallel grading system that measures improvement or increased knowledge and skills. This would enable a larger group of students to receive recognition and feel successful. Ferguson also cited recent studies that show that when students work in small groups, the high achieving students are not supportive of the lower achievers. "Intellectual bullying happens. We need to find ways to get kids to work together

that lifts them up."

Research shows that the quality of teaching improves when teachers have the time and training to collaborate on "improving their craft." Teachers should also study their students' work as a regular part of the teaching and assessing process. "[Teachers] will notice patterns from mistakes and infer from those mistakes why [students] don't understand, and then make changes," he said.

Ferguson believes that parents are willing to do more to be part of the education process, but don't know what to do. Harvard recently presented a parenting summit and has many of the videotaped presentations available online at www.agi.harvard.edu. One of these presentations focuses on a recent study showing that using hand signals and gestures with young children will accelerate language development. Another examines the positive effects of playing board games, which "helps children learn about sequencing and ordinality—math skills."

Ferguson emphasized the need to talk to children, even in utero. "Narrate your life to them. Whatever you are do-

ing, just talk," he said. He wants parents to know that they can increase their three-year-old's mental capabilities by not just reading to them, but also talking about the story and asking questions combining low and high levels of thinking. For example, is that a dog? (low level). What do you think the dog will do next? (high level).

Ferguson mentioned an analysis of parenting styles that concluded that children are more successful students if they have parents who provide a good balance of high expectations and emotional support. He mentioned that researchers thought the best parenting style might differ among ethnic groups but found that a combination of "demandingness, structure and clear rules with responsiveness, warmth and expressions of love is the optimal parenting style for all children."

Following the presentation, a young man from the audience asked why people aren't doing these things already. Ferguson replied that many are taking some of these actions but that the slow pace of change is due to a lack of leadership. He believes our nation is in the early phases of a national social movement to improve educational outcomes for students from all racial, ethnic and social class backgrounds and that our political and business leaders need to make this reform process a priority.

Krista Hawthorne is assistant director of Reaching Heights, a nonprofit community organization in support of public education in the CH-UH school district.



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Award-winning documentary, *Bicycle Dreams*, to premier in Cleveland Heights

Brandon Henneman

"Bicycle Dreams," the award-winning documentary about the Race Across America (RAAM), has its Cleveland premiere at the Coventry Big Dog Theater in Cleveland Heights on Thursday, Jan. 26, at 7 p.m.

The Race Across America is an epic, 3,000-mile bicycle race from the Pacific to the Atlantic. First held in 1982, RAAM is considered the most challenging sporting event in the world. Top riders finish in under ten days, riding more than 300 miles each day and sleeping only a few hours each night.

The film is "an up-close look at what RAAM riders go through," said Stephen Auerbach, the director and producer of the documentary.

"They deal with searing desert heat, agonizing mountain climbs, and endless stretches of open road. And they do it all while battling extreme exhaustion and sleep deprivation. It's a great subject for

a film," Auerbach added.

Local RAAM rider Jim Karlovec will be on hand for a question-and-answer session about his RAAM experiences after the film.

The Big Dog Theater is located at 2781 Euclid Heights Blvd., on the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road, on the second floor of the historic Centrum Building.

Tickets are \$11 in advance and \$15 at the door. To purchase advance tickets, order online at www.imatblete.com/events/bicycledreams.

The screening is a benefit for the Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition and Cleveland Bikes. The event is sponsored by HubBub Custom Bicycles of Chesterland.

For more information on the film, go to www.bicycledreamsmovie.com or e-mail info@bikesintheheights.org.

Brandon Henneman is an avid cyclist and serves on the board of directors for the Cleveland Heights Bicycle Coalition.



A RAAM competitor is followed closely by his support crew.

COURTESY CLEVELAND HEIGHTS BICYCLE COALITION

Youthful activism grows up in Thrity Umrigar's latest novel

Jewel Moulthrop

Thrity Umrigar, author, neighbor and professor of English at Case Western Reserve University, said that a chance meeting with an old friend was the inspiration for her fifth and latest novel, *The World We Found*.

While on a visit to India in 2008, Umrigar encountered an old friend whom she had not seen in 25 years. During their conversation, the friend spoke about how the Hindu-Muslim riots of the early 1990s had changed her forever. The conversation lingered in Umrigar's mind as she pondered how youthful idealism often changes over time, an idea she explores in her new novel.

The World We Found is the story of four women and the two men who loved them. All were university students, close friends and political activists during the 1970s, a time when the Indian government declared a state of emergency and suspended elections and civil liberties.

The novel opens with the news that Armaiti, the friend who left India to study in the United States, married and later divorced her American husband, has developed a brain tumor.

This devastating news will bring the

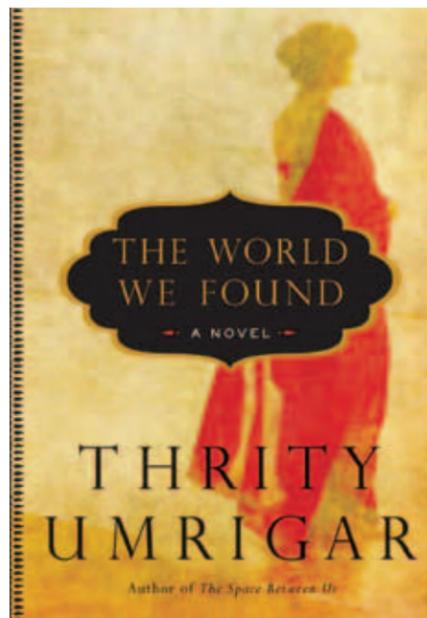
four women together once again. But this is not a book about only the women. What prevents this novel from falling into the "chick lit" category is that Umrigar develops her male characters as fully as her female ones.

Iqbal, the only Muslim in the group, has married Nishta against the wishes of both families, and has become a religious fundamentalist.

The author describes his religious devotion with compassion and a deep understanding of what he has suffered for his faith.

"Iqbal rose from the floor. He could still feel the imprint of the cool tile of the masjid floor where he had prostrated himself a moment ago. The cool was a welcome comfort from the hot, busy thoughts that raced like red ants through his mind. So was the peace that he'd felt during the evening namaaz, as the sonorous, musical chanting and the repetition of prayer . . . fell like raindrops over his fevered brow."

Umrigar takes her time, allowing this engrossing tale to unfold at a leisurely pace. She has certainly done her homework, and the scenes in which Armaiti begins to experience new and frightening symptoms of her illness are



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electrical impulse in her body was ready for battle, to go into overdrive. And Armaiti gave into her fear, caught in its undertow. She blinked furiously and shut her eyes, but each time she opened them the world remained unclear."

Of the book's six main characters, some are more believable than others. Adish may seem a little too good to be true, but who wouldn't want a spouse as understanding, loving and supportive as Umrigar presents him.

Umrigar has said that "in the West, we conflate Islamic fundamentalism with terrorism," and that she "wanted to write a novel that spoke of religious conservatism from a non-American, non-9/11 perspective, but one that still captured the anxieties of our age." She has succeeded in doing just that.

among the most affecting and authentic in the book.

Armaiti, walking on the beach, turned to face the ocean, when suddenly "she felt something come loose inside her head. That's how she remembered the feeling later." The world around her, so sharp a moment ago, disappeared and became a fuzzy image. "The inclination was to panic, of course. Every cell, every

The cold, dark days of winter in Cleveland are here—a great time to curl up with a good book. Thrity Umrigar's *The World We Found* may be that warm and satisfying read you're seeking. Pick up a copy at your local independent bookstore or library.

Jewel Moulthrop, a resident of Cleveland Heights, is a member of the Observer's editorial advisory committee.

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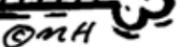
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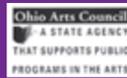
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