Ed Kelley is re-elected mayor of CH, urges city to ‘take back the streets’

Deanna Bremer Fisher

On Jan. 3, the first city council meeting of 2012, Edward Kelley was re-elected mayor of Cleveland Heights by his city council peers. Council member Dennis Willard was elected vice mayor.

In a prepared statement, Mayor Kelley said, “As we look ahead to the next two years, we, as a city council, and every city employee must be prepared to meet our challenges head on, and give an effort of 1,000 percent. We must be proactive and not reactive. The status quo is no longer good enough and should not be accepted as we move forward.”

In his remarks, Kelley outlined several challenges facing the city and issued a plea to residents to “join together with our police, with this city council and other key city personnel to take back our streets.” Kelley said that city residents expect and deserve the best when it comes to public safety. He challenged the police and fire departments to investigate and implement new technologies and employ “new types of communi- cation policing.”

He urged the city to hold the justice system more accountable. “Too many things are slipping through the cracks,” he said, “and our juvenile court and justice system is not serving Cleveland Heights well.”

Kelley also stated that the city must continue to hold expenditures in check and look for new sources of revenue. He spoke of the need to continue policies that support the maintenance of existing housing stock and the creation of new housing. Recreational opportunities should be reevaluated, including those at the community center, which is now ten years old.

Economic development remains a key focus in 2012. “The city is crying out for new development in every business district and Severance Town Center,” he said. He called for additional collaboration with University Circle and pledged to work together with nonprofits, religious institutions, schools and other groups for the betterment of the city.

Cleveland Heights in 2012 continues to be one of the most desirable cities to raise a family, visit and play in the State of Ohio,” said Kelley. “I am grateful and humbled to be re-elected mayor of our city for the eighth time.”

View Mayor Kelley’s complete remarks and a list of city council commit- tees for 2012-13 at www.heightsobserver.org/read/2012/01/10/ed-kelly-is-reelected

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

Forest Hill Church celebrates Black History Month

Vikki Nowak

This past summer, 50 members of Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian (FHC) broke into small, mixed-race groups and had numerous dinners in another’s home. In an initiative called Coura- geous Conversations, they tried to gain a better understanding of racial bias and inclusivity in the community.

FHC is committed to continuing the race conversation with a series of events to celebrate Black History Month. During the four Sunday services in February, FHC youth will speak about African-Americans and their community.

Throughout the month, there will be other special events honoring African Americans and their community.

After the 11 a.m. service on Sunday, Feb. 5, from 12:30–1:30 p.m., the Student Group on Race Relations (SGORR) will conduct a workshop for all interested students and other groups for the best.

March 1 is annual Kindergarten Information Night

Jacalyn Elfvin

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District will host its annual Kindergarten Information Night on Thursday, March 1, from 6:30–8 p.m. at the Canterbaury Elementary School.

This informational evening will be an opportunity for parents to meet with kindergarten teachers and learn about the district’s kindergarten program.

Topics that will be discussed include readiness for kindergarten; kindergarten curriculum and related services; before and after-school programs; student ser-

ices; food service; and transportation. According to Kevin Harrell, coordinator of educational services, “Choosing a school that is the right fit for your child is one of the most important decisions a parent can make. This is an opportunity to learn more about your neighborhood school, meet the superintendent, teach-
ers and other parents. We are very proud of our schools and look forward to show-
ing how 21st century teaching and learning are taking place in our classrooms.”

Child care, provided by Family Connections, is offered by reservation only and on a limited basis. For more information, contact the Early Childhood Center at 216-372-7356.

Jackie Elfvin is administrative assistant in the Office of Communications and Com-

munity Engagement for the CH-UH City School District.

continued on page 3
Going all-in for Heights and the Observer

Three years ago this month, when my corporate job evaporated, I had grown weary of being a visitor in my own hometown. Since then, instead of collecting gold cards to hotels and airlines, I’ve coached Little League, volunteered for community organizations, and enjoyed life within a five-mile radius while working as a consultant from the bonus room of my home.

But I’ve still felt torn in the regular need to set aside work on community projects like the Observer in order to do work that pays the bills. Not any more.

For the past two years, I’ve written this column as a volunteer, with the goal of providing transparency about how the Observer works. In that spirit, I’m using this space to explain that I’ve taken on the paid role of advertising sales and business development for the Observer.

I will be paid solely on commission, and it won’t be my only source of income. But it does represent an investment in the community, as I’ve chosen to drop lucrative work outside the area in order to do this.

It also represents an investment in the Observer’s mission to foster community dialogue and citizen engagement. The Observer will plateau this year without some new investment. So its owner, nonprofit FutureHeights, is planning to hire a paid editor—something we can only afford if we also make a fuller commitment to developing new products and new sources of revenue. As a volunteer, I couldn’t make time for those initiatives. Selling simply isn’t the kind of thing you can ask people to do for free.

Not least, it represents an investment in myself. I’ll be living a truly local life, working with my neighbors to help the community and its businesses to thrive.

This change requires me to step down from my role as a member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors and as chair of the Observer’s editorial advisory committee.

Over the next month, FutureHeights will name a new chairman, and I’ll continue to remain active and vocal on the committee.

I’m not sure who will write this column moving forward; it could even be me. Whatever decision is made, you won’t be kept in the dark about it.

To express your opinion privately, e-mail Bob Rosenbaum at bob@observernews.net.

Bob Rosenbaum, former chairman of the Observer’s editorial advisory committee and FutureHeights board member, wrote this column to provide transparency and understanding about the newspaper.

Feb. 22, 6:30–8:30 p.m. in the Heights High School.

• Check out the Facilities Master Plan.
• Contact your favorite school board member(s) to ask that she or he make certain that this process is handled properly in order to avoid painful and expensive mistakes. E-mail the CH-UH Board of Education.

Here are some possible talking points:

• All facilities project decisions should be made with a view toward reducing harmful environmental impacts from any demolition or construction processes, and with consideration of both immediate construction/renovation energy usage and impacts, as well as ongoing maintenance and operational energy/environmental costs.

• The proposed 20-year timeline being considered as the targeted life expectancy for any new construction may be too short—2,000-year-old Roman roads still carry heavy truck traffic daily.

• The structural design and layout of our buildings should make it easier to—continued on page 7

Sustainability becomes a fashion buzzword to which everyone pays lip service, but for which no one person is actually responsible or accountable. While sustainability has been identified as a key concern, no one individual has been given responsibility as a director of sustainability.

There is currently no such position, one will have to be created. Anyone qualified for this job will easily produce annual savings far in excess of salary, benefits and other costs. I believe we have an ample local talent pool. We need a community resident who is already attuned to our particular values, who is already knowledgeable about sustainability, and who is already familiar with the details of the district’s daily operations. Such a person can be effective from day one.

Meanwhile, please consider these possible avenues for further involvement:

• Attend the next scheduled school facilities planning meeting on Wednesday.
The Wine Spot thanks community, contractors for their support

To the Editor:

Thank you for the wonderful article on The Wine Spot in the Jan. 4 Heights Ob-
server. We are very excited to be up and running and appreciate the enthusiastic
support from the local community. We are

able to take it out.

Finally, we want to thank Rich Bozic,

from Blatchford Architects of Cleveland

Heights, for his work with Bill Mitchell

and us to design the space.

Thanks again for the support.

Adam and Susan Fleischer
The Wine Spot, 2271 Lee Road

Credit for restoration of Bruder tile misplaced

To the Editor:

The article about The Wine Spot in the January issue has significant errors in
detail and an incorrect inference con-
cerning the work done on the former
Seitz-Agin space.

Kevin Monroe, of Monroe Con-

structs, had absolutely nothing to do with the discovery of the Bruder tile or

its restoration. In fact, Monroe Con-

structs did not really begin its fine work

on the space until a significant portion

of the cleanout was completed, and that

was around mid-October.

Credit for discovery and significant

cleaning of the Bruder tile goes to Ray

Hallenstein, who, on my behalf, served

as project overseer and general contrac-
tor. It was Ray who brought it back to

life; and it was he, together with Adam
Fleischer, who convinced me this past
summers to keep it, and try to restore it

as best we could.

Fleischer, who, on my behalf, served

her to design the space.

Thanks again for the support.

Adam and Susan Fleischer
The Wine Spot, 2271 Lee Road

An open letter to Mitchell Schneider of Oakwood Commons

To the Editor:

As I recently drove down Warrenville

Center Road, I saw dozens of felled trees.

Since it now seems inevitable that the

Oakwood development will go forward, I

have a few requests for Mr. Schneider

that I think would minimize the negative
impact of the loss of green space.

• First, please preserve some real, usable
green space for the community (in
contrast to Legacy Village).
• For every tree you cut down, plant two
others elsewhere on the property.
• Have green roofs and solar panels on all
the buildings.
• Use geothermal heating and cooling systems.
• Build a natural playground, like the one
at the Eliot-Pearson Children’s School
at Tufts University.
• Have your tenants use only green
cleaners in the buildings—for the good
of your employees, patrons and the
environment.
• Use only non-toxic building materials,
glues, carpet, etc., and require incoming
businesses to do the same.
• Practice only natural, organic landscape-

ning practices and turf care, foregoing
the use of toxic chemical fertilizers
and pesticides, to protect the health of
the people and animals who visit, and
the watershed.
• Install gray water systems in all the
buildings.
• Use pervious pavement whenever possible.
• Install lovely and educational recep-
tacles for recyclables, compostable
materials and trash (the Cleveland

Botanical Garden is doing this in its
cafe, as are many businesses/est areas
in Ontario and Quebec). Encourage antilitter practices throughout the
development.
• Have your food vendors maximize
the use of reusable dishes and also
work together to order compostable
containers and tableware for takeout
food.
• Encourage the food vendors to create
biodegradable from food waste. Look to
Baldwin-Wallace College and Great

Lakes Brewing Company as examples.
• Have lots of bike racks and bike
paths.
• Save space for a community garden.
• Fund and house a small nature center
(like the Nature Center at Shaker

Lakes) in the country club buildings, and/or
fund an after school program (Open
Doors Academy in Cleveland Heights is a
model program).

See the movie “Dolphin Tale” and
read the book Last Child in the Woods
by Richard Louv.

Think about how you will minimize
the negative impact on local businesses
and how you will help those who lose
business and/or have to close their
shops as a result.

I feel so fortunate to live within
walking distance of the Nature Center
at Shaker Lakes, and know how such
a space improves the property values and
quality of life of its neighbors. I had
hoping for the same for the Oakwood
neighbors, but the above represents my
next best hope.

Joan Spoor
Cleveland Heights

surgeon who overcame obstacles to
change the course of medicine. Ben
Carson struggled in school, and grew
up in a broken home in an environment of
poverty and prejudice. The movie
tells how he was ultimately able to
achieve his dream of becoming one of
the world’s leading neurosurgeons.

On Sunday, Feb. 19, at 11 a.m.,
Maghan Keita will be preaching. Keita
is a human rights advocate, scholar and
author. A professor of history at Vil-

lanova University, Keita is the author of
several books, including Race and the
Writing of History: Riddling the Sphinx

and America’s Culture Wars.

Director of African Studies at Vil-

lanova and faculty member at the university’s Arab and Islamic Institute,

Keita has served as associate director

of Villanova’s Center for Peace and
Justice, and director of its summer
graduate program in world history, as
well as administrator of African affairs
for the National Council of Churches
of Christ in the USA.

February’s events will culminate
with a discussion of Kindred by Octavia
Burler. Interested readers will gather
on Sunday, Feb. 26, from 12:30 to 1:30
p.m. Burler is a well-known writer of
science fiction and fantasy. This two-
time Nebula Award winner and
MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant
recipient had humbling beginnings in
Pasadena, Calif. In a 2006 interview
with book critic John Marshall, Butler
said, “I think people really need to
think what it’s like to have all of society
arrayed against you.”

All events are free and open to the
public. FHC welcomes all as it works
to make the words of Dr. Martin Luther
King, Jr.—the eleven o’clock hour on
Sunday is the most segregated
hour in America—a myth exploded.
Forest Hill Church is located on the
corner of Lee Road and Monticello
Boulevard.

Vikki Nowak is a seven-year resident of
Cleveland Heights and strategic program
director at Nottingham Spark Design.
Her two children attend Heights schools.

ASH WEDNESDAY
February 22nd at 7:00pm
Join us for Ash Wednesday
to practice the
imposition of ashes.

FAIRMOUNT
Presbyterian Church
2777 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights
Sundays 8:30 & 11am | www.fairmountchurch.org

FOREST HILL CHURCH continued from page 1

•  Fund and house a small nature center
•  Save space for a community garden.
•  Have lots of bike racks and bike
paths.
•  Save space for a community garden.
•  Fund and house a small nature center
(like the Nature Center at Shaker
Lakes) in the country club buildings, and/or
fund an after school program (Open
Doors Academy in Cleveland Heights is a
model program).

See the movie “Dolphin Tale” and
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Think about how you will minimize
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Joan Spoor
Cleveland Heights

FAIRMOUNT
Presbyterian Church
2777 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights
Sundays 8:30 & 11am

A Great Summer Camp
Ages 3-14
Ruffing Montessori
3380 Fairmount Boulevard
Cleveland Heights
Fudge and Latourette lead bipartisan effort in letter to President Obama

Belinda Prinz

United States Representatives Marcia L. Fudge and Steven LaTourette, joined by 14 other representatives from Ohio and Michigan, sent a letter to President Obama urging his administration to support efforts that help communities address the large number of vacant and abandoned homes. Fudge and LaTourette believe that action is needed to revitalize communities that were hit the hardest by the foreclosure crisis, and that without market demand for these homes, tens of thousands of properties will remain empty and decaying.

“Our neighborhoods are in desperate need of revitalization. In many cases, vacant and abandoned homes have caused adjacent property values to plummet. Some [neighborhoods] have also become dangerous centers of crime and blight, negatively impacting the quality of life for other residents,” wrote Congresswoman Fudge. Estimates show that, in addition to being abandoned and vacant, more than 70,000 homes in Ohio are in such a state of disrepair that they require demolition. Due to the sheer volume, however, communities lack the resources to adequately address the crisis. The letter to Obama was sent on Jan. 23.

While federal programs to date have offered some relief, Fudge and the other members of Congress urge the President to facilitate a strategic and comprehensive federal response to leverage local and private funds to finance demolition projects that preserve property values and stabilize local economies.

In addition to Representatives Fudge and LaTourette, the letter was signed by Representatives John Conyers Jr., Sandy Levin, John Dingell, Gary Peters, Dale Kildee and Hansen Clark from Michigan, as well as Michael R. Turner, Mary Kaptur, Steve Chabot, Dennis Kucinich, Pat Tiberi, Tim Ryan, Jim Rennaci and Betty Sutton from Ohio.

Belinda Prinz is the communications director for U.S. Representative Marcia L. Fudge, 11th Congressional District of Ohio.

Community News

Volunteer Match

Meals on Wheels seeks volunteers to package and deliver meals to Heights residents

Belinda Prinz

Meals on Wheels, a program that delivers fresh meals to seniors and those with disabilities, seeks volunteers to package and deliver meals.

Volunteers assist program staff by filling containers with hot and cold food, and then placing the containers in a heater or cooler for delivery. Each Heights-area route has from five to nine clients. Volunteers deliver the food to the door of each home on a preassigned route and, if invited in, spend a few minutes visiting with the recipient.

Volunteers are urgently needed for the Heights area, and those who sign up can serve once a week or as many days as they are able to contribute. Without adequate volunteers, this five-day-a-week program may have to be scaled back.

A volunteer can either pack meals, deliver meals, or both. Each day requires about a two-hour commitment, from about 10 a.m. to noon.

For more information, contact Hazel Haffner at 216-382-5967.

Local history enthusiasts needed to help create mobile phone tours

FutureHeights, the Cleveland Heights Historical Society and the Cleveland Heights Landmarks Commission, are partnering with Cleveland State University’s Center for Public History + Digital Humanities this year to develop content for the Caravahoga Arts and Culture grant-funded “HistToric Heights Mobile App Tours” project. The project will add 40 sites to the existing Cleveland Historical mobile app (for iPhone and Android), corresponding to four focal points in Cleveland Heights: Coventry Village, Dugway Brook, Euclid Golf, and Noble Road.

The project organizers seek dedicated, detail-oriented volunteers to research a list of sites for the app. Volunteers should be proficient in researching local history and have experience with (or an openness to learn) scanning of historical photos, using the Plain Dealer Historical Index, or conducting oral history interviews.

Volunteers will contribute 300-400 word narratives, images, and short captions to a WordPress blog, a convenient place that allows easy editing before transferring to the app. Training sessions will be conducted to explain the concept and content of app sites, how to use the blog, and the process of conducting oral histories.

The active research phase of the project will run from February through April. For more information, call FutureHeights at 216-310-1431 or send an e-mail to info@futureheights.org.

Volunteer wanted to research local history for app tours

FutureHeights is seeking a volunteer to research a list of sites for an app that will provide mobile phone tours of Cleveland Heights.

The Cleveland Heights Historical Society and the Cleveland Heights Landmarks Commission are partnering with Cleveland State University’s Center for Public History + Digital Humanities to develop content for the Caravahoga Arts and Culture grant-funded “HistToric Heights Mobile App Tours” project.

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Moving and relocation services provide valuable help for senior adults

Judith Eugene

When senior adults make the decision to move to a smaller home, move in with their children, or relocate to assisted living, the tasks involved can be overwhelming and time-consuming. Seniors are often physically unable to take care of moving on their own, and their children are often busy with work or live far away. Senior relocation services can help take much of the burden off of their shoulders.

One Cleveland Heights senior was having trouble climbing stairs in her two-story house, and was afraid of falling when walking to her garage in the winter. She worked with North Coast Residential Relocation (NCRR) to sell her house and move into an apartment building. The group helped her determine a reasonable price for her home, and rearranged her furniture to make it more appealing to buyers.

NCRR helped a family in University Heights clean out unwanted possessions by working with an auctioneer who purchased the valuable pieces, donating the remaining items to charity, and arranging for the home to be cleaned, organized, and sold. Lee-Ann Spacke, NCRR president, acts as an advocate throughout the relocation process, protecting the best interests of the senior and the family until her or she is safely moved into a new home and the old home is sold.

Caring Transitions, another local company, helped an out-of-state man relocate his elderly aunt from a Cleveland Heights rehabilitation center to assisted living. Caring Transitions staff drew a floor plan of the new home to determine what furniture would fit. They packed, moved, and unpacked the possessions that the aunt was able to take, and held an estate sale for the rest.

Gayle Chillious, president of Caring Transitions, works with seniors and families to develop a relocation plan to fit their needs and timelines. Her team documents the process with photos and keeps families informed along the way. They unpack and arrange everything to recreate the feeling of the old house as closely as possible, so that the senior feels at home.

It is important to hire a competent and reputable relocation company. Interview each potential company and ask for and check its references. Reputable companies will also prescreen cleaning, home repair, decorating, moving and real estate companies.

North Coast Residential Relocation can be reached at 440-248-5281. Caring Transitions can be reached at 216-339-3787.

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 216-488-5578 or Judith@LovingLandsGroup.com.

Local group promotes converting lawns to food production

Mari Keating

The Food Not Lawns movement is both international and hyperlocal, dedicated to replacing lawns—or some portion of them—with edible gardens in the name of sufficiency and sustainability. Edibles in this context broadly includes food for butterflies, birds and other wildlife as well as fruits, vegetables, flowers and herbs. The same plants often serve many functions, benefiting humans and other species alike. The nonnative grass varieties that make up most lawns feed no one, with the possible exception of the Japanese beetle larvae that thrive in their roots.

Last spring, my husband and I applied food-not-lawns principles and permaculture techniques to our Kingston Road front yard, converting about half of it to nicely shaped, sheet-mulched beds. It took two of us (not particularly athletic or something) one afternoon to make the beds, and another to do the initial planting. Ever conscious of aesthetics, we planted a melange of native edible shrubs, perennial herbs and flowers, and annual vegetables that would produce food and seeds for later planting. We also were treated to a number of “volunteer” squash, tomatoes and even potatoes from the compost.

As the weeks progressed, our former yard became a lush, productive, beautiful and ever-changing garden. It inspired our neighbors to stop, comment, smell the flowers or help themselves to cherry tomatoes we intentionally planted at the sidewalk edge. Several people told us that they loved coming by to see what was happening next. After gardening in the backyard for many years, it is a great joy to see the many ways this effort has grown a sense of community, as well as wonderful food.

Food Not Lawns, Cleveland, was established in January 2011 with a seed swap, and the group plans a variety of workshops for 2012. Topics include seed saving, seed starting, organic gardening techniques, lawn conversion and soil maintenance, and the workshops are free and open to the public.

Food Not Lawns is a growing movement (pun definitely intended) and belief that replacing lawn with edible, native plants creates thriving and sustainable habitats for all creatures, reduces our carbon footprint (less pollution from lawn mowers, less toxic pesticide and fertilizer runoffs), and supports rainwater catchment and reuse. Lawns require a huge input of energy and resources to maintain, return very little aesthetically, and reduce, by upwards of 45 million acres, the habitat of countless species of insects, birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

For more information about Food Not Lawns, Cleveland, including upcoming workshops and pictures of the Keating lawn conversion and harvest, contact Mari Keating at beanpies55@att.net or go to foodnotlawnscrewland@yahoo.com.

Mari Keating is a lifelong resident of Cleveland Heights and a facilitator of Food Not Lawns, Cleveland.

Now Offering Sunday Brunch Buffet

Made-to-Order Omelettes, Fresh Carved Meats, Variety of Breakfast Foods, Pastries & Homemade Desserts, Greek & Indian Entree Selections.

Brunch Buffet 11 am - 1 pm $13.95
Dinner Buffet 4 pm - 8:30 pm $17.95
Regular Menu Also Available
Bring this ad in on any Sunday in February 2012 and get 15% off your food bill!

Not valid with other offers or discounts. 1 per table, Monday through Sunday in February 2012 only. Valid for food only.

Japanese Restaurant

Tel: 216-320-2302  Fax: 216-320-2306
Explore Montessori-based program at Hope Lutheran Church in Cleveland Heights

Donald King

Families looking for a Montessori-based Christian education program are invited to a Godly Play Festival at Hope Lutheran Church on Sunday, Feb. 18, from 1 to 3 p.m. Hope Lutheran is located at 2222 North Taylor Road in Cleveland Heights.

Based on the Montessori teaching principles popular in many elementary schools, Godly Play is a hands-on, storytelling, individual-based form of learning. During the festival, parents and children will learn firsthand what Godly Play offers.

Children will have an opportunity to play at the various stations, enjoy arts and crafts, and unwind over hot cocoa, treats, and afternoon snacks and refreshments. It will serve as an introduction to the weekly Christian education program offered at Hope Lutheran Church on Sunday mornings at 11 a.m.

The Godly Play Festival is free and open to the public, and aimed at families with children in pre-K through grade 6.

For more information, call 216-371-2352 or visit Hope Lutheran’s website at www.hopelutheran-clehts.com.

Donald King, a resident of Cleveland Heights since 1985, is pastor of Hope Lutheran Church and an active participant in the Heights InterFaith Council.

Youth worship at a recent Converge service in Cleveland Heights

Peg Weisbrod

A large number of Cleveland Heights teens have been spotted going to church recently. Without their parents. Just by themselves.

Thanks to leaders and young people from more than a dozen churches in Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights, Mayfield Heights and surrounding areas, teens now have their own worship service. It’s called Converge.

The brainchild of Kristen Otte, youth director for Forest Hill Church Presbyterian in Cleveland Heights, Converge is geared for teens, with a full band and a relevant message for young people.

Married to Brian Otte, a worship leader for Mayfield Church in Chesterland, Otte was intrigued by the idea of drawing teens from a variety of denominations. In August, she e-mailed area churches looking for signs of interest in a community youth service. Bruce Becker from Mayfield Church, Curt Campbell from Church of the Saviour, and Jae Williams from First Baptist were the first to respond.

Together they designed a service with lots of “non-church” music and songs wrapped around a meet-and-greet time, announcements, and a message addressing issues affecting teens.

Other churches soon came on board: Church of the Covenant, Church of the Redeemer, Church of the Western Reserve, Fairmount Presbyterian, First Presbyterian Willoughby, Grace Lutheran, Hope Lutheran, Lyndhurst Community Presbyterian, Noble Road Presbyterian, and South Euclid-Hillcrest United Methodist.

According to Otte, Converge has surpassed its goal of drawing at least 40 young people to each service. The kick-off service in November drew a mixture of more than 100 teens and curious adults, with 65 young people attending in December and 75 in January.

Converge meets in the Spahr Center of the centrally located First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland. Visitors will find groups of kids talking, laughing and munching on cookies under colored lights and huge hanging umbrellas.

What you won’t find are pews, ushers, choirs, pulpits or offering plates. “We don’t ask for money,” Otte said. “We encourage the kids to support their home churches with whatever cash they can.”

Instead of cash, Converge collects donated items related to a monthly theme—items the teens usually have at home. Canned goods donated at the first pre-Thanksgiving service were given to local food pantries. Stuffed animals collected in December went to the Cleveland Christian Home. More than 200 books collected in January were donated to a local school.

At the Feb. 12 service, Converge will collect socks for the homeless. Mayfield’s Bruce Becker will lead a message on the topic of “One Life.”

The Converge band features worship leader Brian Otte on acoustic guitar and vocals, Gabe Wright on electric guitar, Bryan Javorek on bass, Abby Calder on vocals, Brye Schull on drums, and Rebecca Salzer on keyboard.

Converge meets on the second Sunday of each month, at 7 p.m., at First Baptist Church, 3630 Fairmount Blvd. Dates for the next three months are Feb. 12, March 11, and, for Easter, April 15. For more information, go to the Converge website at www.facebook.com/convergeworship, or send an e-mail to kristen@thepresh.org.

Peg Weisbrod is a freelance writer and publicity coordinator/webmaster for Forest Hill Church in Cleveland Heights.

Course and support group offered for parents coping with a child’s addiction

Heights Observer Contributor

Take Back Your Life, a six-week course for parents coping with the drug or alcohol addiction of a child, will be offered on Thursdays, April 19-May 24, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Church of the Saviour, 2537 Lee Road. The course will be taught by licensed counselors Ellen Bishko and Amanda Nichols. The cost is $50 per person or $25 per couple.

For the past 12 years, Chagrin Falls residents Nikki and John Corrigan have opened their home once a month, on Saturday, to parents whose children are suffering from addiction. The couple founded the support group Parents of Adult Addicted Children (PAAC) in 1999, after they participated in the Take Back Your Life course.

Their youngest daughter, Elizabeth, was 29 at the time and addicted to heroin and alcohol. Her addiction affected the family in many ways, including money spent on treatment and court fees; stolen property within and outside the home; wrecked cars; and broken family relationships.

The Corrigans organized the group to help parents take control of their lives and overcome the feelings of guilt, shame or failure that they often feel. Their daughter is now 42 and in recovery.

For more information about the course or the support group, contact John Corrigan at 440-840-0177 or john.hcorrigan@gmail.com.
Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

DECEMBER 19, 2011
All council members were present.

City employees benefits
Council passed two resolutions regarding em-
ployee benefits for the period of Jan 1-Dec. 31, 2012. The first authorizes an agreement with Employee Benefits Consultants as a third-party administrator for the city’s self-funded dental program. The second authorizes an agreement with Medical Mutual of Ohio for the provision of administrative services and excess reinsurance cover-
age for the city’s self-funded medical, hospital and prescription plan.

Budget legislation
Council amended the appropriations and expenditures for the fiscal year ending Dec. 31, 2011 and approved appropriations for the period of Jan 1-Dec. 31, 2012. The total budget for 2011 was $82,831,245. The total budget for 2012 is $79,465,339. Council also approved the tax budget, which revises amounts and rates authorized by council and certifies them to the County Budget Commission.

3395 DeSota Avenue
Council declared the property at 3395 DeSota Avenue a nuisance. The city will require the owner to raze the house and garage, and perform an asbestos survey, but will perform
our responsibility to perform an asbestos survey but will perform this task if the owner does not, at a cost of $10,450.

Kenneth Montflock’s last meeting
Throughout the meeting council members praised Council member Kenneth Montflock, who is retiring from council. Council Member Bonnie Caplan pointed out a article in Focus magazine about Montflock, and read a pro-
lamation from the Cuyahoga County Council recognizing his service. She worked with him on council for 18 years, and praised his commitment to diversity and inclusion. Council Member Den-
is Wilcox noted that Montflock had attended more than a thousand meetings, and was instrumental in initiating the First Suburbs Consortium. Mayor Ed-
ward Kelley said that Montflock had chaired each one of the council committees, and called him intelligent and compassionate with a great sense of humor. The mayor noted that Montflock’s fight for improving sidewalks through the First Suburbs Consortium was a step toward regionalism. Thanking his family and friends, Montflock said he was deeply touched by all the comments. He praised the council for “walking the walk” with regard to regionalism. He maintained that council, staff and residents are all a family, and that residents are ultimately responsible for the government. He concluded that Cleveland Heights is committed to respectful, progressive values and represents the closest fulfillment of the promise of America.

IJW observer: Blanche Valencia

Oaths of office
The first meeting of 2012 featured the administran-
tion of the oath of office to newly elected council members. Mayor Danicker and Jason Stein (Stein had been previously appointed), and re-elected council members, Phyllis Evans and Dennis Wil-
cox. Council re-elected Edward Kelley mayor and elected Dennis Wilcox, vice mayor; they were also administered an oath of office.

Committee assignments
The new committee membership for each council standing committee will be as follows:
• Administrative Services: Mary Dunbar (chair), Cheri P. Stephens (vice chair), Bonnie Caplan [member];
• Community Relations and Recreation: Phyllis Evans (chair), Caplan (vice chair), Jason Stein (member);
• Finance: Stephens (chair), Dennis Wilcox (vice chair), Dunbar (member);
• Municipal Services: Caplan (chair), Stein (vice chair), Evans (member);
• Planning and Development: Wilcox (chair), Evans (vice chair), Stephens (member);
• Public Safety and Health: Stein (chair), Dunbar (vice chair), Wilcox (member).

City liability insurance
Council authorized an agreement with Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. for continuation of its protected liability self-insurance program for the city, for the period of Jan 1-Dec. 31, 2012, at a cost not to exceed $334,554.

Parking and recreation 2012
Council approved entertainment and recreation programs in Cain Park and other locations for the year 2012, and established use regulations and admission rates for the described activities. Likewise, council established use regulations and admission rates for other areas for Cum ·erland Swimming Pool, and the provision of indoor swim-
ming programs at the Cleveland Heights High School Pool for the year 2012. The council also established use regulations and admission rates for the described activities. Likewise, council established use regulations and admission rates for other areas for Cum ·erland Swimming Pool, and the provision of indoor swim-

FutureHeights to hold community-building events
Harvey Garrett, executive director of the West Side Community Col-
laborative in Buffalo, N.Y., will be the keynote speaker at the Future-
Heights 2012 annual meeting. Gar-
rett’s talk, Reversing Disinvestment in Our Community, will detail how his organization capitalized on vacant housing stock (much of it slated for demolition) and creative residents to turn one of Buffalo’s most distressed neighborhoods into one of fastest grow-

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University Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

DECEMBER 19, 2011
Councilman Kevin Patrick Murphy was ex-
cused.
Finance director
Mayor Infield announced that finance director
Jennifer Emary had accepted a position with
the city of Brooklyn, Ohio, and that this would be
her final council meeting. The position has been
posted on Cleveland.com and several other sites.
The mayor will oversee the city’s finances in the
interim. There were many messages of thanks
and farewell for Emary, who stepped into major
financial challenges and is leaving the city with
much stronger financial records.
Health care provisions
The council approved health care provisions to
bring in directors, appointed employees, and
nonunion employees to the same coverage as
union members.
Public health services
Council approved the 2012 contract with the
Cuyahoga County Board of Health to provide
public health services, required by law. The
county will provide services for $3.84 per per
son or a total of $31,990, based on the 2011
census.
Compensation plan
Council approved the termination of the Variable
Annuity Life Insurance Company (VALIC) De-
fined Compensation Plan. The previous finance
director put the original plan in place without
authorization, and VALIC was unwilling to work with
the city to rectify this error. Only six employees are
currently participating and they will still be able
to contribute after-tax income. Councilman Sims
obtained a vote from due to his concern about
eliminating a benefit for employees and the lack
of prior information regarding this issue.
McDonald’s
The building commissioner reported that McDon-
alid’s will open in early February due to delays
in the selection of an owner by the McDonald’s
corporation. Dave Stiles, who owns several stores
in the greater Cleveland area, will be the owner.
The company is currently hiring new employees
through its website, and details are posted outside
the building.
Retiring council members
Councilman Frank Consolo and Steve Bolluck
both gave farewell messages, as this was their final
conso. Consolo served for four years and Bolluck
for seven.
DWV observer: Wendy Deuring
University Heights City Council Meeting
JANUARY 3, 2012
Oaths of office
Judge K. J. Montgomery of the Shaker Heights
Municipal Court administered the oath of office
for the recently-elected council members: Pamela
Cameron, Thomas A. Cozzens, Steven Sims, and
Kurt H. Zucker (law director). The new-elected Councilman
Frankie Goldberg as vice mayor and reappointed
the mayor as safety director.
Leap Day at Shaker Heights court
Judge Montgomery issued an invitation to the
“Leap Day” session at Shaker Heights court on
Wednesday, Feb. 29. It will cover the court’s relationship to the community, and how the court
works. The court serves five communities: Shaker
Heights, University Heights, Beachwood, Pepper
Flats and Hunting Valley.
Appointments
Council amended the agenda to reappoint Law
Director Kenneth J. Fisher in an interim capacity,
compat with Sims’s inquiry, Vice Mayor Goldberg explained
that members of the newly constituted council ex-
pressed a consensus that they wished to be part of
the process of appointing the law director.
The following council members were ap-
pointed as representatives: Zucker to the board
of zoning appeals, with Cozzens as an alternate;
Goldberg to the planning commission, with Sims
as an alternate, Pardee to the parade committee;
and Ertel to the City Beautiful commission.
Council committee assignments for 2012–
13 are:
• Building: Zucker (chair), Ertel, Cameron, Coz-
zens (alternate);
• Civic Information: Pardee (chair), Ertel, Gold-
berg, Sims (alternate);
• Finance: Cozzens (chair and liaison to Citizens’
Financial Advisory Committee), Pardee, Zucker,
Cameron (alternate);
• Government Affairs: Ertel (chair), Sims, Cozzens,
Goldberg (alternate);
• Safety: Goldberg (chair and liaison to Com-
munity Emergency Response Team), Cozzens,
Cameron, Ertel (alternate);
• Service: Sims (chair), Goldberg, Pardee, Zucker
(dissident).
February Senior Citizen Happenings in UH
All events take place on Thursdays, at 2
p.m., at the University Heights Library.
Feb. 2 Richard Wiener, principal percus-
sionist and senior member of the Cleveland
Orchestra, reflects on a half-century of performing around the world.
Feb. 9 Michelle Shum, Cuyahoga County
and CWRU liaison to the National Chil-
hood, will speak about the study,
and CWRU liaison to the National Chil-
hood, and Cameron, Ertel (alternate);
• Recreation: Cameron (chair and liaison to
Citizens’ Recreation Advisory Committee),
Pardee, Zucker, Cozzens (alternate);
• Building: Zucker (chair), Ertel, Cameron, Coz-
zens (alternate);
• Civic Information: Pardee (chair), Ertel, Gold-
berg, Sims (alternate);
• Finance: Cozzens (chair and liaison to Citizens’
Financial Advisory Committee), Pardee, Zucker,
Cameron (alternate);
• Government Affairs: Ertel (chair), Sims, Cozzens,
Goldberg (alternate);
• Safety: Goldberg (chair and liaison to Com-
munity Emergency Response Team), Cozzens,
Cameron, Ertel (alternate);
• Service: Sims (chair), Goldberg, Pardee, Zucker
(dissident).
Feb. 16 Karen Ghali-Mills, executive
director of Cuyahoga Arts and Culture, discusses the roles of the arts in the eco-

conomic and cultural development of the
community.
Feb. 23 Donald Rosenberg, arts and
entertainment critic for the Plain Dealer,
highlights the three operas the Met-
ropolitan Opera will present in movie
theaters this spring.
To receive the monthly schedule by e-
mail, contact Sherri Wisnieski at University
Heights City Hall, 216-932-7800 x203, or
swisnieski@universityheights.com.
For more information, contact the
UH Office for Senior Services at 216-
397-0336.

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36
CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL MARCH 22–APRIL 1, 2012 TOWER CITY CINEMAS / CLEVELANDFILM.ORG

36
We are all suburbs of somewhere

Adara Schmiedl

This winter, Cleveland Leadership Center (CLC) and four chambers of commerce are cooperating in a new way. For the last two years, Civic Leadership Institute (CLI) has brought together business owners, executives, and nonprofit and community leaders via seminars designed to foster understanding about how the city and its suburbs work together—and sometimes against each other.

Beginning Feb. 1, the CLI brings its six-part program to Cleveland’s eastern suburbs.

When Angie Polman, executive director of the Heights-Hillcrest Regional Chamber of Commerce, attended the fall session of the CLI at its usual downtown City Club location, ideas percolated. “CLI gave me great insight into the history of our regional economy, and sharpened my civic dialogue skills,” said Polman. “It’s an excellent class for anyone serving on a nonprofit board of directors, or for people looking to put passion to work for their community, and build relationships and effective collaboration. In fact, this program was so good that I just had to help bring it out to the [suburbs].”

CLC has partnered with the Beachwood, Heights-Hillcrest, Solon and Warrensville chambers of commerce to present its East Side Edition—a proactive way for local residents to bear from, and meet, key business and community leaders, engage in networks and conversations, and deepen their understanding of how Cleveland and the region’s social, economic, business and political issues are intertwined.

CLI’s mission and commitment is to broaden “community-think” by tying CLC and Eastsiders in a true civic partnership. There are more than 300 CLI alumni, but this is the first time the program has met outside of downtown Cleveland. Dates and places for the next neighborhood editions have yet to be decided.

Registration is open at www.cleveland.org for this six-part series, which highlights the region’s economy, movers and shakers, arts and culture, public sector and civic interaction. Sessions fit easily into the workday, running from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Vigorous debate is guaranteed.

The CLI East Side Edition begins Feb. 1 with a reception at the Beachwood Buick GMC car dealership, at 25973 Central Pkwy. The first class is Wednesday, Feb. 8 at the new University Hospital Ahuja Medical Center, at the corner of Richmond and Harvard roads. Tuition for the program is $500 per participant, with a nonprofit and government rate of $350. Members of participating chambers of commerce are eligible for a $25 discount.

Bruce Hennes, CLI faculty member and member of the CLI board of directors, said, “I spend much of my time in the suburbs, but when someone asks me where I’m from, I always say I’m a Clevelander. Civic Leadership Institute provides the opportunity to put meat on that phrase.”

Marianne Crosley, CEO of Cleveland Leadership Center, summed it up: “It’s all the culture and reach new audiences in the eastern suburban community. The education and access we provide is critical to making connections and understanding community issues for all Clevelanders—no matter where you are.”

Adara Schmiedl is a Heights resident. She works for the Cleveland Leadership Center.

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Heights Observer  February 1, 2012

Contact us online at www.heightsobserver.org.

Valerie J. McCall, chief of government affairs for the City of Cleveland; and Bruce Hennes of Hennes Paynter Communications, during a CLI session in July.
Heights Libraries wins grant to continue American Sign Language classes

Sheryl Banks

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library has received a $5,000 grant for free American Sign Language (ASL) classes for adults at the Coventry Village Library. The money is from the Friends of the Society for the Deaf, a fund of the Cleveland Hearing and Speech Center. Instructors from Cleveland SignStage Theatre will teach the classes.

“These free classes fill a need in the deaf and hard-of-hearing community,” said Ben Gulyas, adult services librarian and deaf services coordinator. “I just had a call from a woman who is losing her hearing. She wants to make sure that she will have classes available for her when she loses her hearing completely. They can’t afford to pay for classes, so they are all taking our classes—herself, her husband, and their children. She was very thankful and appreciative.”

Coventry Village Library specializes in materials and programming for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Coventry Village Library has been offering ASL classes since the late 1980s. The branch’s collection includes materials on learning ASL, deaf culture, deaf fiction, and societal issues facing the deaf community. It comprises mainly books, but also includes videos and DVDs. Several staff members are trained in ASL and can converse in sign language. The branch also features a monthly Deaf Culture Film Series and monthly Deaf Gathering, a social hour for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, or are just interested in deaf culture.

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

Library celebrates Victorian times this spring

Carola Wallenchek

Queen Victoria’s reign, from 1837 to 1901, spanned a period of British history brimming with innovation and imagination—far different from the repressive society many think it was. This spring, the Lee Road Library will explore the art, culture and literature of the Victorian era with a special series of programs.

Beginning April 17, the library’s Victorian Times Celebration will include special installments of the Third Tuesday Book Club, the Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Discussion, and the popular Art Study Group.

Programs will include a fashion survey of Victorian costume and textiles (April 21); a screening of the 1931 film “Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,” based on Robert Louis Stevenson’s Victorian tale, “The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde” (May 1); and even a birthday party (with cake!) for Charles Dickens, for whom 2012 marks the 200th anniversary of his birth (April 22).

The complete list of programs will appear in the spring issue of Check Us Out, the Heights Libraries program guide, arriving in mailboxes soon.

While all series events are free and open to the public, some require advance registration. You can sign up for programs online at www.heightslibrary.org (look for the Event Calendar link), by phone at 216-932-3600, or in person at any of the Heights Libraries branches, beginning Feb. 14.

Carola Wallenchek is an adult services reference associate for Heights Libraries.
Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board

Meeting highlights

DECEMBER 13, 2011
All board members were present.

Awards and recognitions

Board President Eric Coble presented plaques to the Heights High football team, which was the undefeated Lake Erie League champion, and to the girls’ soccer team, which was a district finalist.

Several students and Achievement Scholars also received recognition along with the Coaches for Heights School levy coffeeshop for successful passage of the levy.

Race to the Top update

Dr. Micheller discussed the partnership with John Carroll University on school and teacher evaluation, including the appraising teachers in a “value added” manner. He stated that a “significant element” will be considered. In 2014, another Ohio Assessment Standard will replace the OGT (Ohio Graduation Test) this year.

Board of education policies

At the second reading of the board of education policies, clarifications of the text were made. The board will retain the internal procedures for child abuse reporting specified under Student Supervision. Student absences do not have to be documented by a written note, which is optional for the parent. Electronic or phone documentation is sufficient. Employee use of technology on school properties will be discussed further at the third reading of the policies. Currently, there are designated smoking places. Suggestions included pooling employees to determine the number of smokers, and the introduction of a smoking cessation program for employees.

Covenants building project

The board approved the first bid for the Coventry Building Fire Suppression Project, which includes installation of a sprinkler system. This would increase the value of the building, and the cost would be recouped from building leases.

Cramer Associates

The board heard a proposal from Cramer Associates, a firm that advises on facilities master plans, to explore and broaden networks and partnerships for the school district. Mark Cramer, representing the firm, explained their role as a strategic fundraising agency that explores local and national partnerships, especially in the nonprofit sector, and engages them for support. No specifics were discussed concerning a dollar amount to be raised, but a timeline for exploring partnerships will be from January to March 2012. Goals would then be determined and partnerships identified.

Project Build creates difference in their community.

Last fall, Heights High senior Ariel Travis set out to start a student club that would support the work of Habitat for Humanity, and give students a chance to learn practical life skills and make a difference in their community. He presented his idea to math teacher Chris Sutton, who enthusiastically agreed to be the club advisor, and soon after that Project Build was formed.

Several students helped Travis publicize the first meeting, and when the Habitat for Humanity staff came to the school to conduct a training, 50 students showed up. “The Habitat trainers were very impressed with the number of interested students,” said Sutton.

Project Build is the first high school club to work with Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity. “It was great to see so many people show up, but that was really only the beginning,” Travis said.

Student interest continues to increase and Travis predicts another major spike in membership when Project Build hosts a February meeting to discuss the club’s future plans and goals.

Project Build’s first build day was Oct. 28, working on a home on E. 84th Street in Cleveland. Since then, the club hosted five more build days at the same site, and on Jan. 14, students hung drywall.

“The thing that I hear most often from students is how much they like working with people whom they didn’t know before,” said Travis. “We met our goals of contributing and learning new skills, but we are also building bridges between students.”

District’s Pathways receives praise from international education expert

Angee Shaker

Bob Pearlman, internationally known school consultant, and author, has praised the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District’s Pathways initiative as a groundbreaking model for education.

“Comparing anything comparable nationally,” he said. “As implementation moves forward, I see the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District as being a national model for 21st-century learning.”

Fielding Nair International, one of the architectural firms working with the district on its master facilities plan, brought Pearlman to the district. Pearlman has been a vocal advocate of reform efforts, school structuring and technology, and was director of strategic planning for the New Technology Foundation from 2002 to 2009. He consults in the United States and the United Kingdom on 21st-century learning, focusing on new school development and district-wide implementation of 21st-century skills.

Recognizing that students have different needs and interests, Pathways emphasizes learning from diverse perspectives, so that students can find a school that is the best possible fit.

The three Pathways are:

- Society Learning from the perspective of people interacting with others (Romford Elementary and Middle, Oxford, Fairview, Renaissance).
- Discovery Learning from the perspective of people interacting with the physical world (Grearville, Boulevard, Monticello, Legacy).
- Creativity Learning from the perspective of experiencing and celebrating the human spirit (Canterbury, Noble, Wiley, Mosaic).

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

Sutton has enjoyed the opportunity to work with the students. “They are very inspiring. They really want to contribute and make a difference,” he said.

Travis and the other club leaders are investigating ways to work more locally in City of Cleveland Heights. They are also considering a disaster relief trip.

Project Build brings Habitat for Humanity to Heights High

Joy Henderson

Last fall, Heights High senior Ariel Travis set out to start a student club that would support the work of Habitat for Humanity, and give students a chance to learn practical life skills and make a difference in their community. He presented his idea to math teacher Chris Sutton, who enthusiastically agreed to be the club advisor, and soon after that Project Build was formed.

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

See disclaimer on page 7.

No problem! I will take care of it...
Black History Month team events feature student debate

Joy Henderson

On Feb. 17 at 6 p.m., the Heights High Black History Celebration will present two student debate teams. They will square off on a topic that stirs strong reactions in many: Heights High Students Should Wear Uniforms.

The debate is part of the Heights High Black History Celebration that focuses on the Harlem Renaissance period, 1920–35. The student debaters are part of the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN), and will even dress the part in vintage clothes from the 1930s.

The evening will include a Harlem Stroll, during which MSAN students will share information about the Harlem Renaissance, serve a soul food potluck dinner, and conduct a soul food contest for the best chicken, macaroni and cheese, and sweet potato pie. Local celebrity judges will determine the winners.

Following the dinner, students will recite poetry from the time period and showcase the debate. The finale of the evening will be a performance by the Heights High Gospel Choir.

The event is organized by the Parent Connection Council at Heights High. For more information, contact event chair Kris Austin at 216-244-5532. The MSAN advisors are David Peake and Shawn Washington. Social studies teacher Nathan Williams will emcee the event, art history teacher Jerome White’s students will display murals they created about the time period.

Larry Sollisch is president of the Lady Tigers Fastpitch Boosters and the parent of two team members.

Heights High softball team raises funds for new home field

Larry Sollisch

After years of playing at Forest Hills Park, the Heights High Lady Tigers Fastpitch Softball team is hoping to play on a new home field at the high school this spring. The newly-formed Lady Tigers Fastpitch Boosters are working with the CH-UH City School District Athletic Department on a plan to build the field for the team, and they need help from the community to make it happen.

Businesses interested in purchasing advertising at the heavily-traveled intersection (the school is located at the corner of Cedar and Lee roads) should contact the Cleveland Heights Fastpitch Boosters at heightsfastpitch@gmail.com or 216-554-2002. Individuals can support the team through a raffle to win an iPad 2, and by purchasing limited-edition “Tiger Nation” license plate frames. The winning raffle ticket will be selected Feb. 10 at the Heights Symphony concert. License plate frames are available at the high school athletic office.

Tax-deductible donations can be made through the Reaching Heights website, www.reachingheights.org.

Head Coach Jessica Kaltenbach, now in her fourth season at the helm, has made impressive strides since taking over a team that had only one win the year before her tenure began. Since then, the team has earned a Lake Erie League Championship and is now competitive in the league. The returning team of players, led by senior catcher Diamond Jones, junior pitcher Alexa Sollisch, and sophomore Cayla Figueroa at third base, has been practicing year-round to prepare for the season. With an exciting crop of incoming freshmen and returning underclassmen, the team is poised to make some noise in the league again this season.

The softball team has never had its own field, but instead has been bussed to Forest Hill Park for home games—an additional expense for the Heights High athletics program. As a result, few fans come to the games and the team has never enjoyed a true home-field advantage. The Heights High baseball team has its own field on the Heights grounds, facing Cedar Road. Fastpitch softball cannot be played on a traditional baseball field because the infield and pitching mounds are of different distances.

The project will include upgrades to the softball field. The team members. The project can be seen on the Cleveland Heights Softball Facebook page (make sure to filter for pages when searching on Facebook).

For more information contact Larry Sollisch at klas1985@roadrunner.com, or Jessica Kaltenbach, head coach, or Kristin Hughes, athletic director at the high school.

Larry Sollisch is president of the Lady Tigers Fastpitch Boosters and the parent of two team members.

Seniors Cameron Reidic and Samaiyah Melton will face off in a Great Debate style at the Black History Celebration on Feb. 17. They are both members of the Minority Student Achievement Network that is sponsoring the debate.

Heights Observer February 1, 2012
Montessori’s Summer Ruffing It program.
Julia Sheehan is the director of Ruffing
Sorri School is located at 3380 Fairmount
ruffingmontessori.net/sri
or contact Julia
For more information, visit
a.m. and 1–6 p.m.
Before and after care is available, 7:30–9
Ruffing’s professional staff, with
own age from other countries.
A Summer To Grow On, ages 3–6,
features indoor games, cooking, art and
storytelling, gardening, weekly nature
walks and a zoo trip.
Creative Arts and Sciences, grades 1–5,
offers a choice of art, athletics,
drama, media, movement, music,
and science and technology. Students create
personalized schedules that may include
movies, musical theater, jug bands, year-
books and newsletters in digital format
and occasional field trips.
Extreme SRI!, grades 6–8, features
two-hour morning classes that take kids
into the Greater Cleveland community
and into worlds that extend beyond the
city. This year, campers will meet young
adults involved with the Peace Corps
and establish links with students their
own age from other countries.
Ruffing’s professional staff, with
student-centered groups, seek to pro-
vide a joyful, high-quality experience.
Before and after care is available, 7:30–9
a.m. and 1–6 p.m.
For more information, visit www.
ruffingmontessori.net/sri or contact Julia
Sheehan at julias@ruffingmontessori.
net or 216-932-7866. Ruffing Montesor-
si School is located at 3380 Fairmount
Boulevard.
Julia Sheehan is the director of Ruffing
Montessori’s Summer Ruffing It program.

Heights Tigers take on Mite Tigers

On Dec. 22, the undefeated Blue East first-place Cleveland Heights Tigers took on their mightiest opponent yet, the Cleveland Heights Mite A2 team, in an exhibition game. The game was especially fun for Eddie Bobone, Tigers head coach. He was a Heights Mite in the first Mite/Heights High
exhibition game in the 1988–89 season and played against the team that would turn out to be the state champs that year.

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Cleveland Heights High School concert brings together graduates from 1942 to 2015

Ditte Wolin

On Nov 12, more than 150 current and former Heights High instrumental musicians combined, and recombined, into several intergenerational bands and orchestras. They came together to honor former music teacher John Farinacci with a spirited concert that highlighted the continuity of music education in the district over the decades. With participating musicians from the class of 1942 to the class of 2015, the concert was an inspirational event. Alumni included professional musicians and music teachers, as well as many who did not choose music as a career.

John Farinacci died a few years ago at the age of 92. Some of the returning alumni have remained in contact with the Farinacci family. Farinacci’s widow returned to Cleveland Heights for the reunion and memorial concert.

Hermes interviewed one of the returnees, John Landis (Class of 1957). She wrote that Landis was in town for the Farinacci reunion concert, where he played trumpet and conducted. Landis has been the conductor and music director of the Cheektowaga Symphony Orchestra for 20 years. He also worked with the Buffalo Philharmonic from 1970 to 1983.

Landis lived in Cleveland Heights for 10 years, between the ages of eight and 18, and although he has lived in 13 cities, he still thinks of Cleveland as home. He attended Fairfax Elementary School, where he started playing the trumpet, and Roxboro Junior High, where his music teacher introduced him to conducting. In high school, Farinacci continued to nourish this newfound ability.

Landis earned his degree in trumpet at the Eastman School of Music. He was accepted into both the United States Navy and Air Force bands after college and served in the Air Force Band for four years. After that, he moved to New York where he worked with the Boris Goldovsky Opera Theatre. The company toured 48 states, October through April, for two years. While performing one night, Landis was offered an opportunity to conduct the Buffalo Philharmonic. He conducted other orchestras and has been a musical radio announcer. He said that John Farinacci’s influence stays with him every day.

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The Rainforest Car Wash, in Cleveland Heights, is now open. Located on the corner of Mayfield and Middlehurst (enter from Middlehurst), this state of the art car wash is open to the public. Featuring a rain forest theme both inside and out, The Rainforest Car Wash will be the best car wash you’ve ever had.