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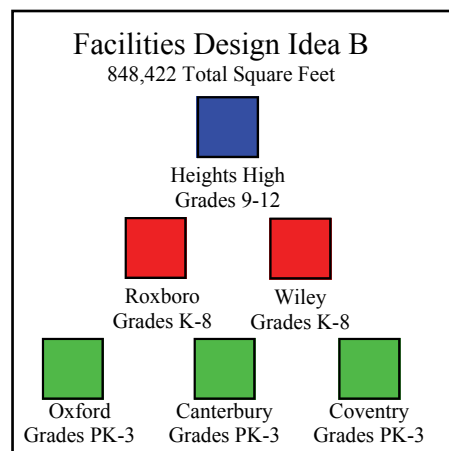
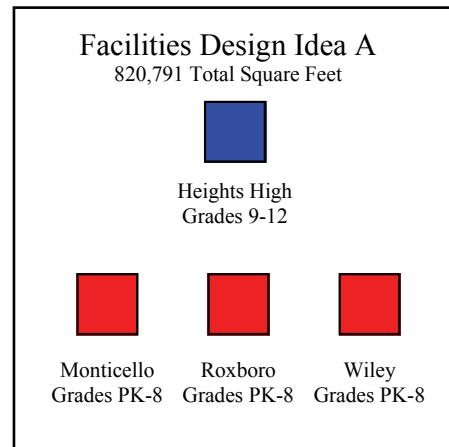
Facilities ideas presented by district show big changes to elementary schools

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The two ideas for new school facilities presented by the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, at the third in a series of four community input meetings, show dramatic changes to the way the district's elementary schools are configured. Currently, the district has seven elementary school buildings (kindergarten through fifth grade) and three middle schools (sixth through eighth grade). One plan would close all but one of the current elementary building sites, the other would close four.

The district intends to narrow the options to a single plan over the next few weeks, and present it in more detail at its fourth, and final, community input meeting on March 21. In the meantime, FutureHeights and the Sustainable Heights Network will host a community forum to discuss the issues raised by the plans at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 1, at Noble Road Presbyterian Church (learn more at www.futureheights.org).

According to Angee Shaker, communications director for the CH-UH schools, the district considered nine



ideas for school facilities configuration, but eliminated seven of them because

they were cost prohibitive or did not follow current state guidelines for grade configuration and minimum number of students per building. The two remaining ideas, A and B, were presented at the Feb. 22 meeting.

Idea A would consolidate elementary and middle school education at three sites: Monticello, Roxboro (which currently has both an elementary and middle school building) and Wiley. Each site would also add a pre-kindergarten. Approximately 660 preschool through third grade students would be housed in one portion of the building, while another portion would house about 700 fourth through eighth grade students. The two sections would share certain common resources, such as cafeterias and auditoriums, but social separation between the lower and upper grades would be maintained.

All three sites would house each of the district's learning pathways, or approaches to learning: science, arts and society. Classrooms would be reconfigured into learning communities of 80 to 150 students that would share learning studio, commons, seminar, project area, small group and

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Heights High alumnus returns after 75 years

Joy Henderson

On Jan. 28, 1937, Meyer "Mike" Frank graduated from Cleveland Heights High School and began a life full of adventure, love and family. Seventy-five years later, almost to the day, he returned to Heights High for a visit filled with fond memories and life stories.

Frank had lived at Bellefaire orphanage and walked to the school every day. His favorite memories include playing basketball and volleyball, and, most of all, he fondly recalled his shorthand and English teacher.

After graduation, Frank hitchhiked to California, joined the army, and was assigned to a division with orders to interview generals, soldiers, and prisoners for the war archives. "I had learned shorthand at Heights High and that landed me a great job in the army," he



Meyer Frank took a trip down Memory Lane 75 years after his graduation from Heights High. He is shown here holding his diploma from 1937.

said. During his service, he traveled throughout Europe recording people's stories about World War II.

After the war he went to Africa

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CRACC hosts Project Clean Lake meeting

Patricia Wright

Are you concerned about high water and sewer rates and wish you could do something about it? The Citizens Reform Association of Cuyahoga County (CRACC) will host a town hall meeting at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 29, at the Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road, to explore this issue. The group will provide information and updates on the status of Project Clean Lake, and its anticipated impact on the Heights.

Joe Miller, candidate for the Republican State Central Committee and president of CRACC, believes the project is unwarranted, excessive and may be illegal. The guest speaker at the March 29 meeting is Thomas Kelly, host of "Kelly & Company" on WHK radio, and executive director of CRACC.

"The tax dollars of Cleveland Heights residents are literally going down the sewer, thanks to the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and the EPA," said Kelly. "The staggering increase in sewer rates this year is just the beginning. Before it's over, every household in Cleveland Heights will contribute more than \$30,000 to the ill-conceived Project Clean Lake.

"As one of the largest of the 61 municipalities in Northeast Ohio affected by the Project Clean Lake Consent Agreement between the Sewer District and the EPA, Cleveland Heights will be hit hard. The real cost will not be limited to skyrocketing sewer rates,"

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New report shows that poverty has increased in Heights cities

Vince Reddy

In a recent report, "The Changing Face of Poverty in Northeast Ohio," the Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development at Case Western Reserve University (povertycenter.cwru.edu) reported that the number of people living in poverty has markedly increased over the past decade. Inner-ring suburbs, including Cleveland Heights, are among the most affected. The report cites unemployment, lower wages, and increased living costs as some of the reasons. Another factor is the abandon-

ment of some areas by wealthier citizens who are then replaced by poorer ones, or not replaced at all.

The CWRU report used city-level data. When poverty rates are compared among the 24 census tracts that make up Cleveland Heights and University Heights, it is clear—and not surprising—that some neighborhoods have experienced more growth in poverty than others. Eighteen of the 20 Cleveland Heights census tracts experienced increases in the percentage of residents living below the poverty line, as did three of the four in University Heights.

In one Cleveland Heights census tract, 1410 (the area known as North Coventry), the poverty rate has more than doubled since 2000 and now exceeds 40 percent.

The story of poverty in the Heights is more complicated than a cursory glance at the statistics may make it seem. For example, the presence of college and graduate students in a neighborhood is one factor that can sometimes skew poverty statistics. Students often live below the poverty line, despite sometimes having financial resources

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Deliver to addressee or current resident

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 216.320.1423
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PUBLISHER
 Deanna Bremer Fisher
dbfisher@futureheights.org

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
 Kim Sergio Inglis
city.editor@heightsobserver.org

ADVERTISING
 Bob Rosenbaum
 216.401.9342
bob.r@themarketfarm.com

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
 Carrie Buchanan, David Budin, John Ettore, Greg Donley, Frank Lewis, Jewel Moulthrop, Vince Reddy, Clare Taft

EDITORS
 Jamison Babb, Maryann Barnes, Deanna Bremer Fisher, Ben Bubnick, Carrie Buchanan, David Budin, Greg Donley, Kelli Fontenot, Frank Lewis, Eleanor Mallet, Jewel Moulthrop, Vince Reddy, Bob Rosenbaum, Jessica Schreiber, Kim Sergio Inglis, Dermot Somerville, Clare Taft

WEBMASTER
 Dan Ott

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
 Temma Collins and Ruth D'Emilia

DISTRIBUTION
 Hannah Baldwin

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Introducing our new editor-in-chief



**OPENING
THE OBSERVER**

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The *Heights Observer* has a new editor-in-chief, Kim Sergio Inglis. Kim, who served as an enthusiastic volunteer editor and writer for the *Observer* for the past several years, is now on board in an official capacity. I am thrilled!

As the executive director of FutureHeights, a small nonprofit organization, I wear many hats. When we launched the *Heights Observer*, in April 2008, we decided to delay hiring a dedicated editor. So the task of coordinating volunteer writers and editors to publish a monthly print newspaper fell on me. Then the recession hit, and the decision to hire an editor was put off indefinitely.

Despite the difficult economy, the *Observer* grew, and continues to grow.

Heights residents discovered how easy it is to submit stories through the member center. Local businesses discovered that the *Observer* is a cost-effective way to reach their target customers. Readers discovered that the Heights is more than what one might surmise by reading the police blotter. Interesting and engaged people live here, and positive things are happening in our community every day.

The *Observer* is now a reliable community asset—and a pretty good read. But last year, we hit capacity. Several issues topped 24 pages and we began publishing the e-news every week, which put a strain on our volunteers, and our small staff. Now was the time to invest.

Like me, Kim doesn't have a journalism background. Prior to moving to the Heights from New York City in 2009, she worked in the publishing and marketing fields, where she juggled multiple

priorities, interacted with a variety of people and met deadlines. She discovered the *Observer* soon after moving to town and began volunteering with us, editing stories, writing stories and sitting down with me (and another key volunteer, Jewel Moulthrop) to copy edit and proof the final layout before going to press each month.

As editor-in-chief, Kim will encourage volunteer writers, assign stories to volunteer editors, post stories to the Web, publish the weekly e-news, and work with our graphic designers to layout the print issue each month.

In last month's column, Bob Rosenbaum announced that he had stepped down from the FutureHeights Board of Directors to head up our advertising and business development efforts. With Kim and Bob on staff, and the community's continuing support and participation, we expect the *Observer* to continue to grow and, with it, we hope, so will the Heights.

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



Kim Sergio Inglis

Highlights from blogs.heightsobserver.org

It's almost official: Oakwood Commons brochure names Walmart

Fran Mentch, the bloodied and bruised volunteer who tried to prevent big-box retail development of the former Oakwood Golf Course, gets to say "I told you so."

For more than a year, there has been a persistent rumor that one of the first tenants in the new development would be Walmart—meaning that it will leave Severance in Cleveland Heights. I heard Mentch cite this tidbit often.

All indications are that she was right.

—Bob Rosenbaum

What to do with Millikin: If you listen, you can hear the community's voice

In rejecting a \$550,000 offer for the

decaying Millikin School building by Orthodox-Jewish school Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, I think the CH-UH School Board might be making a mistake.

Millikin hasn't been used as a public school since the 1970s, and has been falling apart ever since. It was left vacant in 2006 when the Heights Parent

Center moved out. The facility sits on the wooded boundary between a predominantly Orthodox neighborhood and Severance Center.

But with the offer coming in at less than a quarter of the building's appraised value, there is some logic behind the board's rejection.

—Bob Rosenbaum

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OP ED: Feeling like public enemy #1

Dan Mesh

The view from down here:

I saw in the last issue that the re-elected Mayor Kelley is encouraging the community to “take back the streets.” Sadly, there are several hours during the day when my friends and I are prohibited from being on the streets near my house, so I don’t know how I can help. I’m an honors student, have never been in trouble at school or with the police, and dedicate hours of my time entertaining the community in the Heights High Marching Band and Symphonic Winds. There are a few thousand middle and high school students in our community who are similarly good citizens, but are being punished for the actions of a few dozen. I don’t want mobs, fights, or melees any more than the adults of the community, but I think there are much more proactive ways to prevent them. But we’re kids, and you’re adults, and it is easier to just push us around.

Maybe Mr. Kelley means that he

wants to tackle the disturbing problem that adults seem to have in this community when it comes to drinking and driving. On any given week, there are more OVI, DUI, DWI, and public intoxication violations in the police blotter than there are assaults on the streets by teens. That was the case before the curfew as well, I’m sure. The number of injuries and deaths in this country that are caused by intoxicated adults far outnumbers the injuries and deaths caused by teen mobs. Perhaps Mr. Kelley plans to use the same strong-armed approach to combat this problem, as well. Maybe banning driving and the sale of alcohol on certain streets, during the hours when these violations occur in greatest number? Who am I kidding; that is a ridiculous idea! No citizen with the right to vote would allow a mayor to take away his or her right to drink and drive!

Dan Mesh is a Cleveland Heights resident with teenage children. This represents a compilation of perspectives Mesh has heard from youths in the community.

POVERTY continued from page 1

not reflected in their own incomes, and students are much less likely to remain poor than others with incomes below the poverty threshold (\$22,190 for a family of four in 2010).

The student factor may be significant in some Cleveland Heights neighborhoods, where college and graduate students not living in dorms can account for large shares of the population. In tract 1413, for example, in the southwest corner of the city, the most recent poverty rate is 28.5 percent of the population; but among nonstudent residents, it is just 8.8 percent. By contrast, in the aforementioned North Coventry tract, the overall poverty rate is 43.4 percent, but registers at 47.3 when the student population is excluded. Students are but one factor in the advance of poverty in the Heights [see map and table online at www.heightsobserver.org], and only students living off campus are considered in these calculations. The census bureau does not determine poverty status for residents of group quarters, a category that includes students living in dorms.

Poverty statistics drawn from Census 2000 are not directly comparable to more recent numbers. The 2000 figures were based on responses from the randomly chosen households that were required to fill out the census “long form.” Since then, the long form has been replaced by the American Community Survey (ACS), which continuously gathers information from samples of the population. For small areas, such as census tracts, information is gathered over five-year periods, rather than at a single point in time, and the small-area data obtained through the ACS comes with significant margins of error.

Vince Reddy, a Future Heights board member, is a 13-year resident of census tract 1401.

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Noble Road landmark: Endangered

To the Editor:

Noble Road Presbyterian Church has been a beacon of light in this community for 90 years. Our spiritual outreach includes worship, counseling, baptisms, weddings, memorial and funeral services.

We partner with Noble Elementary School, providing school supplies, winter gloves and hats, and holiday angel gifts. The Noble and Roxboro schools have supported our fundraising for the Liberian Dougbe River School and church. We donate money, food items, and holiday angel gifts to the Heights Emergency Food Center, as well as provide clothing, household items, and services to the Family Promise temporary shelter in Cleveland.

We are a gathering place for the Girl Scouts, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Recovery, Emotions Anonymous, and Heights Interfaith Council meetings. NACA (home ownership information) meets here monthly. We are home to Abundant Praise Church and Kingdom Life Faith Ministries. Church activities open to the community include the community garden and meal, strawberry festival, rummage sale, pancake breakfasts, dances, advent meal festivities, and the silent auction.

We share Lenten and Advent services with other Heights Lutheran churches, as well as being an active member of the Heights Interfaith Council. For more than 20 years, until recently, we were home to Discovery Preschool. Due to the ever-changing economic environment, rising costs, and declining membership, we are facing a financial crisis. Is there any help on the horizon? Fundraising ideas and donations will be gratefully accepted and appreciated.

Contact Noble Road Presbyterian Church (2780 Noble Road) by phone

at 216-382-0660, or by e-mail at nrpc@sbcglobal.net

Marcelo Atanasio
Cleveland Heights

Citizens group advocates for Saybrook Park

To the Editor:

Citizens for Saybrook Park was recently formed as a grassroots movement to urge the City of University Heights to purchase the former Fuchs Mizrachi School property between Saybrook and Fenwick roads. Our group would like to see the site converted into a city park.

This is a golden opportunity to create a large open space for University Heights residents. As residents know, most of our yards are small, and we would love to have a park where we’d be able to play with our kids, throw a football around, or take a stroll away from the street noise. This is the type of asset that helps a city attract new homebuyers and improves the quality of life of its current residents.

To show our support, residents have contacted city hall to offer words of encouragement. We have also started a Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CitizensForSaybrookPark) where residents can collaborate and share their message.

On behalf of Citizens for Saybrook Park, we look forward to making history with city council and the mayor by creating this new park in University Heights.

Brett Teacher
University Heights

Support the sale of Millikin to Mosdos

To the Editor:

As a Cleveland Heights homeowner, I care deeply about making this a wonderful place to live and raise children.

One of the most effective ways to strengthen and grow a community is to place our utmost attention on the educational needs of the children who live there. Great schools are the building blocks of all great communities.

Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, a Jewish private school in Cleveland Heights, has been providing superb Jewish and secular studies education for many years.

Mosdos is a school that is not only well respected in Cleveland, but also nationally. The school has attracted many families throughout the country to settle in Cleveland Heights and the student body is growing every year. It is truly a local educational gem.

Mosdos’s boys division on Warrensville Center Road has outgrown its current building to such an extent that the school has purchased a trailer that sits in the parking lot to serve as a classroom. In addition, the school’s auditorium stage has been converted into a classroom.

Ironically, as the students travel to Mosdos every day they pass by the former Millikin School, which has been abandoned for almost six years. The once beautiful and sprawling Millikin has fallen into disrepair, and has been struck by repeated vandalism. The once beautiful sound of children playing and learning has been replaced by eerie sounds of silence.

Mosdos has made a generous “fair market” offer of \$550,000 to purchase Millikin. Considering that Mosdos will need to invest over \$1,000,000 into the building to make it an adequate school and re-establish a playground, this is a very fair offer. More important, selling Millikin to Mosdos will strengthen the entire Cleveland Heights community by providing a great educational anchor that will serve to retain and attract many families to the area.

I urge all the members of the school board and the city council to do the right thing for our city and support the sale of Millikin to Mosdos.

Mitch Cohen
Cleveland Heights



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Holy Week Worship

Maundy Thursday, April 5
Lord's Supper and
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Easter Sunday, April 8
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Family Easter Egg Hunt

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Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

JANUARY 17, 2012

All council members were present.

Neighborhood websites

Resident Susan Miller explained the use of www.nextdoor.com in her neighborhood to connect residents of several adjacent streets. It provides a forum to discuss vacant homes, events that are normal and not normal, and crimes that occur. She also recommended a tool used by the City of Cleveland called www.crimereport.com that allows authorities to map crimes and send alerts of exact locations of problems. Mayor Kelley said he would forward this information to the police department.

Fracking gas wells in the community

Susan Miller also stated that citizens should know about fracking gas wells in the region. For example, four were drilled in Oakwood in 2006. She would like the city to examine gas lease parcels, look at the proximity of proposed and existing wells to dwellings, and resolve not to drill on public land.

Waterline replacement change order

Council approved a change order with Terrace Construction for the Whitby Road waterline replacement to cover an increase of \$4,225.94 for additional labor and materials.

Mortgage fraud case

Council Member Bonnie Caplan announced that two people, Uri Goffman and Tony Viola, had been convicted in a mortgage fraud case. City employee Rick Wagner had worked with the FBI to collect evidence used to bring them to justice.

Sale of city-owned lots

Council voted to adopt procedures for the sale of city-owned vacant lots to adjoining property owners.

Altamont property declared nuisance

Council declared the property at 3387 Altamont Avenue, which has had numerous violations and no progress toward correction over the past three years, to be a nuisance and authorized abatement. The total estimated cost is \$10,450.

Roethlisberger Foundation grant

Council accepted a grant from the Ben Roethlisberger Foundation at the Giving Back Fund for the purchase and training of a new police dog and a ballistic vest for the dog.

Citizen appointments

Council approved appointments to the Architectural Board of Review, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Landmark Commission, and the Citizens Advisory Commission.

Restaurant anniversaries

Mayor Edward Kelley congratulated two local businesses for important anniversaries: Tommy's Restaurant, on Coventry Road, has been in business for 40 years; Parnell's Pub, on Lee Road, has been in business for 15 years.

LWV observer: Blanche Valancy.

FEBRUARY 6, 2012

All council members were present.

Online activities registration

Council approved an agreement with Active Network, for professional services and software relating to the creation, installation, and operation of an online registration and payment center for

the city's recreational activities and programs. The company will receive \$10,400 for its services, plus a \$2.50 service charge for each registration, plus three percent of the cost of the activity. The city plans to have the registration center up and running in early March.

Doan Brook Watershed Partnership

Council authorized an agreement, in the amount of \$18,000, with the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership, a nonprofit corporation, for the partial funding for the organization's operating expenses for April 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013. The cities of Cleveland, Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights, along with interested organizations and individuals, previously formed the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership to develop and implement a watershed management plan for the preservation and improvement of Doan Brook. The organization has achieved significant progress in its years of operation, with significant funding now received from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, as well as private donations and other sources.

Cleveland Restoration Society

Council approved renewal of an agreement with the Cleveland Restoration Society for historic preservation consulting services in connection with the Heritage Home Loan program. The services include identifying eligible properties, working with borrowers to develop specifications for historic rehabilitation plans, consulting during construction, and inspecting properties at the conclusion of construction for compliance with preservation specifications. Cost is not to exceed \$26,300 and the period covered will be Jan. 1 through Dec. 31.



DeSota property

Council declared the property at 3294 DeSota Ave. to be a nuisance and authorized abatement.

HRRC Fair

Council Member Phyllis Evans announced that the Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) Fair will be held March 24 in the City Hall atrium.

Cain Park auditions

Council Member Evans announced that auditions for the Cain Park production of "Avenue Q" will take place March 2-4. Appointments are required; call 216-291-2323, starting Feb. 28.

Anniversaries

Mayor Ed Kelley noted the one-year anniversary of www.patch.com, the 10th anniversary of FutureHeights; the 20th anniversary of the Open Doors Academy; and the 38th anniversary of the Laura Lee Salon.

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 "lwv-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.

HEIGHTS HIGH ALUMNI continued from page 1

and worked in Tanzania, Swaziland and South Africa. He also met the woman who became his wife. His adventures in Africa included contracting tick bite fever, jobs as sheriff and bartender, and working in the security business. "I've had a full and wonderful life!" Frank said.

Frank arrived at Heights High, after a 75-year hiatus, with his diploma, report cards, graduation program, and one of his sons. "My grades weren't great, but they weren't bad," he said. The grading system in 1937 consisted of five options: E (excellent), G (good), F (fair), P (poor) and D (failure). Superintendent Frank L. Wiley, whose name

graces the CH-UH middle school, signed his diploma.

Asked what brings a man back to his high school after more than seven decades, Frank replied, "I guess it is the memories of people—like an English teacher who required this shy boy to recite poetry out loud."

Frank, now 93 years old and a master storyteller, added that perhaps that high school English teacher had something to do with launching a young man's life—around the world and back home again.

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

Teen sentenced for attack on CH resident

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Judge John O'Donnell sentenced 17-year-old Edwonte Bryant to seven years in prison for an attack on a Cleveland Heights resident last summer.

The victim was assaulted as he walked home from dinner at a Lee Road restaurant on June 18, 2011. He was present at the Feb. 14 sentencing, as were several other community residents.

In a statement he read at the sentencing, Mayor Ed Kelley urged the judge to give Bryant the maximum sentence permissible by law. "This incident has disturbed the fabric of a neighborhood and our city," he said. "This attack on one of our residents has affected not only [the victim] and his family and friends, but also the entire neighborhood and the Cedar Lee commercial district. Safety in any community is a top priority. Cleveland Heights has worked hard to keep our streets and neighborhoods safe. Our residents should be able to walk home

from a restaurant in the evening and not feel afraid. On the night of the attack [the victim] was stalked by the defendant and made to feel vulnerable and afraid."

Bryant was convicted of one count of felonious assault in the attack. He was also convicted on three counts of burglary, one count of attempted theft and one count of receiving stolen property in the robbery of two Maple Heights homes on March 31, 2011.

Last year, Cleveland Heights City Council instituted a curfew that prohibits youths (under 18) from being in the Cedar Lee, Coventry Village and Severance commercial districts after 6 p.m., unless accompanied by an adult. The curfew was a direct result of the Lee Road attack, in combination with other incidents, including the disturbance last June 26, after the Coventry Street Fair.

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

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University Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

JANUARY 17, 2012

All council members were present.

Audit

Mayor Infield announced that the state auditor's office has sought bids from external firms to conduct the review of University Heights's 2011 financial books. This is done when the state auditor's office does not have capacity. The city will pay the cost.

Fire services

Emergency Services Consulting will begin a review of fire services in mid-February for University Heights and Shaker Heights.

New McDonald's

Dave Stiles, owner of the new McDonald's restaurant on Warrensville Center Road near Cedar Road, spoke about his 35 years of experience with McDonald's, starting as a line cook and now owning six restaurants. The new restaurant will open for business Feb. 8, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Feb. 10. He received 300 applications for employment and had to close the application site. Eighty percent of the employees are from the surrounding community.

House on Silsby

The county land bank has received the deed to the house at the end of Silsby Road and will move to demolish it. After this, the land bank will deed the property back to the city. The city will then decide whether to sell the lot or to maintain it as a green space.

Street repairs

Responding to questions from Councilman Steven Sims, Joseph Ciuni, city engineer, explained how the priority of streets needing repair or replacement is determined. Ciuni explained that he maintains a list of streets and ranks them from one to ten. He reevaluates the list each spring. He noted that Lansdale Road should be eligible for Community Development Block Grant funds for repair. Although the application was denied in 2011, Ciuni will submit Lansdale Road again in 2012.

LWV observer: Wendy Deuring.

FEBRUARY 6, 2012

New park

Resident Brett Teacher, chair of Citizens for Saybrook Park, urged council to create a park at the site of the old Fuchs Mizrahi School. The property is 6.8 acres and is located between Saybrook and Fenwick roads.

State of the City address

Achievements

Mayor Infield highlighted ways in which 2011 goals were met:

- Increased communication and accessibility includes department relocation within city hall, new operating hours, updated welcome packets, online payment options, and shredding and recycling days.
- Preservation of green space includes development of a community garden on Taylor Road, installation of a rain garden on Ashurst Road, and new green space on Jackson Boulevard.
- Participation in regional initiatives was expanded

by contracting for garbage transfer services with Cleveland Heights and joining a twelve-city consortium of the County Solid Waste District for processing recyclable garbage.

- Use of grants for capital projects, reduced personnel costs, and the implementation of operational changes at city hall controlled costs, generating a \$1.3 million revenue surplus in 2011.

Green space

The County Land Bank will demolish a house at 3578 Silsby Road to allow for new green space. The mayor and council will investigate the feasibility of acquiring the former Fuchs Mizrahi property for a community park.

Regional programs

Continued cooperative regional programs include a joint bid with Shaker Heights for roadway projects, a Cleveland Foundation-funded study for possible consolidation of fire service with Shaker Heights, and a study to consider the establishment of a regional police dispatch center with Euclid, South Euclid, Beachwood and Shaker Heights.

JoAnn Fabrics moving

JoAnn Fabrics will move from University Square to Golden Gate Plaza. The mayor will schedule a meeting with Inland Realty, the owner of University Square.

Council action on regional study

Council authorized a memorandum of agreement with the cities named in the mayor's address to conduct a feasibility study for the aforementioned consolidation. Police Chief Steve Hammett noted that South Euclid will serve as fiscal agent and will submit a grant application to the Local Government



Innovation Fund for the estimated budget of \$60,000. South Euclid and Euclid have grant writers on staff and will prepare the request.

County Health and Human Services

Council passed a resolution in support of the Cuyahoga County Health and Human Services Levy 2012.

Waste processing service

Council approved an agreement with Aljon, LLC for the 2012 yard waste processing service. Service Director Jamieson said the company, which has contracted with UH for several years with no problems, is the closest commercial composting company available. He said the proposed cost of \$5,500 is an advance flat fee as before, and that the 2011 contract was for \$5,000.

911 equipment

Police Chief Hammett reported that Cuyahoga County will be providing University Heights with \$75,000 worth of new 911 equipment to upgrade the system.

Police and fire exams

Nancy English, clerk of council, reported that application and testing dates are set for the next few months for police and fire promotional exams. Interested parties should contact her.

LWV observer: Patricia C. Solomon.

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

See disclaimer on page 4.

CRACC continued from page 1

said Kelly. "Property values and property taxes may be affected as sewer costs climb to among the highest in the nation."

CRACC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan group. The March meeting is open to all.

For more information, contact citizen-reform@gmail.com.

Patricia Wright is the treasurer of CRACC.

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Congregations are green, but unseen

Chris Hanson

With so much media attention currently being given to sustainability, environmental stewardship, and “going green,” many businesses have been jumping on the green bandwagon. It is a quick and inexpensive way to receive attention while bolstering the bottom line. Whereas many businesses are just “green-washing” (deceptively promoting the perception that a company’s actions or products offer some environmental benefit), other organizations have been quietly doing the real thing—all too often without recognition. Such is the case with some religious institutions in the region.

Fairmount Presbyterian Church and Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian, both located in Cleveland Heights, have made strong efforts to become the environmental stewards that their congregations expect them to be. Both institutions are Earth Care Congregations, which means they follow “a structured certification program for Presbyterian churches to function in a manner consistent with God’s call not only care for creation, but also to commune with creation,” according to the guide “Earth Care Congregations: A Guide to Greening Presbyterian Churches.”

These certified churches take their role as stewards seriously. Certification comprises four components: worship, education, facilities, and outreach. The first certification for the church requires meeting 25 points in an audit. The following year, the point requirement goes up, requiring the congregation to continually make improvements. The only two certi-

fied Earth Care Congregations in all of Ohio are located right here in Cleveland Heights.

Dave Neff, from Forest Hill Church, said of the program, “It wasn’t too difficult to reach the first 25-point level. Actually, it was very easy for Forest Hill Church. Requiring improvements is much tougher—once you take care of the ‘low hanging fruit,’ a commitment to sustainable practices and programs gets harder.”

Similar certifications are available to other houses of worship. The Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) created the Green Sanctuary Program to green up services. The National Council of Churches of Christ created a rich curriculum of Eco-Justice Programs designed to unite faiths—Disciples of Christ, Baptists, Episcopalians and others—around these important issues.

GreenFaith is another option that is open to members of all religions. GreenFaith is marking its 20th anniversary this year, and the number of new certifications is increasing. They offer resources for those of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jewish faiths, as well as for Christians.

Doing one’s part as an environmental steward does not always mean receiving certification, or even recognition. It is often a quiet course, one that works much like many of the earth’s processes: silently accomplishing its work in the background, while the world goes on.

David J. Ernat, pastor at Grace Lutheran, explained how his congregation is doing its part. “We are holding community conversations for Sustainable

Heights. We also have a new rain garden, and we are conscious of food issues.”

Sister Linda, from Gesu School, said that the school doesn’t have any certifications, but has been recycling for a long time. The school also underwent an audit with the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste Department to look at ways to be more effective in its efforts.

Realizing that sustainability is also about social capital, Kate Klaber, secretary at Church of the Redeemer, mentioned the partnership between Canterbury Elementary School and the church. “The partnership has two approaches,” she said. “The church regularly gives items to help out children in need at the school. The other component of this partnership is for us to volunteer at the school.”

Any religious institutions that are interested in green initiatives should look at www.churchesgogreen.org, which provides an extensive list of resources for all faiths. Some faiths even offer loans for new projects, such as the United Church of Christ, as outlined in its Partners in Building website.

“In every faith tradition I know of, there is a very clear directive toward care of the earth and all that dwell there upon,” said John Lentz, pastor at Forest Hill Church. “Furthermore, a common ecumenical belief is that human beings are connected in a greater web of life including all of nature.”

Chris Hanson is a senior in the Urban Studies program at Cleveland State University, a consultant at The Urban Cash Cow, and an intern at FutureHeights.

SCHOOL FACILITIES continued from page 1

teacher collaboration area spaces.

Idea B would reduce the number of middle school sites to two: Roxboro and Wiley. Each site would house kindergarten through eighth grades, and share resources and social separation as in the first scenario. In addition, Idea B would preserve two existing elementary sites, Oxford and Canterbury, while adding a third, Coventry. Each of these elementary sites would also house a pre-K.

In this scenario, each of the two combined middle/elementary sites would house about 336 kindergarten through third grade students and 1,050 fourth through eighth graders. Each of the three elementary sites would house about 436 pre-K through third graders. As in Idea A, classrooms would be reconfigured into learning communities.

Both plans represent a significant reduction in square footage per student and in utility and operational costs. Both also call for the closing of four elementary school sites: Boulevard, Gearity, Fairfax and Noble. Idea A calls for the closing of the Oxford and Canterbury sites. Consultants presented several ideas for the reuse of these sites that they have been exploring with community stakeholders.

Both ideas would relocate the board of education and administration to the Delisle Center on Taylor Road, and the Options program to the site of Boulevard Elementary School. The district would preserve and renovate the original 1925 portion of the high school and demolish all subsequent additions, including the science wing. New additions, housing athletic facilities and other specialized functions would be compatible with the original structure. Classrooms would be reconfigured into learning communities and circulation for student drop-off and pick-up would be improved. The district aims to achieve LEED Silver status, an energy efficiency and sustainability measure, for all buildings.

The district’s planning process began with a facilities report issued by the State of Ohio in April 2010. The district created a Citizen’s Facilities Committee in June 2010, which analyzed the report, agreed that the district’s facilities required renovation, and urged the district to engage the community in the planning process.

After the March 21 meeting, the district administration will recommend one of the options to the board of education. The board must then vote to accept it and by early August, request that a levy be placed on the November ballot.

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

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Home Remodeling Fair set for March 24

Rebecca Stager

How can homeowners get good repair information without a sales pitch? Home Repair Resource Center offers an annual event for just this purpose. This year’s Community Home Remodeling Fair will be held on Saturday, March 24, at Cleveland Heights City Hall. Doors will open at 9:30 a.m., with presentations from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.


In addition to attending presentations on specific topics, attendees can consult one-on-one with professionals from a variety of specialties, such as roof repair or replacement, furnaces and boilers, insulation, electrical and plumbing work, basement waterproofing, concrete, asphalt, masonry, exterior

painting, new garages, and door and window replacement.

Representatives from other non-profits, civic organizations and banks will also be on hand to advise homeowners on various home-related issues. These include researching the history of a house, assessing the threat of lead-based paint contamination, and learning about available loans and grants designed to help with the cost of a remodeling project.

This free event, held in cooperation with the City of Cleveland Heights, is open to residents of all communities. The complete event schedule will be posted at www.hrhc-ch.org.

Becky Stager has been the HRRC’s education coordinator since 1989.




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Reversing disinvestment is topic of FutureHeights annual meeting

Chris Hanson

If increasing numbers of vacant homes and commercial structures indicate a downward spiral of disinvestment driven by market forces, is it possible for individuals to reverse the trend?

FutureHeights examines this issue at its annual meeting, “Reversing Disinvestment in Our Community.” The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 20, at Grace Lutheran Church on Cedar Road, and is free and open to the public. Keynote speaker Harvey Garrett, founder and executive director of the West Side Community Collaborative in Buffalo, New York, will explain how, over 10 years, his organization transformed one of Buffalo’s most distressed neighborhoods into its fastest-growing real estate market.

“Tearing down a house or building is the ultimate disinvestment,” said Garrett, “yet this is exactly how many communities are dealing with the foreclosure crisis.” Garrett believes that vacant housing stock can be leveraged to increase property values and turn neighborhoods around through private investment.



Harvey Garrett will be the keynote speaker at the FutureHeights annual meeting.

In his talk, Garrett will show how Buffalo residents took back their city—block by block—without significant financial resources. Garrett will describe how demolitions were halted, vacant houses were reclaimed, crime was significantly reduced, new businesses were started, and new buyers were attracted to the community—from both inside and out.

For more information and to RSVP, call 216-320-1423 or visit www.futureheights.org.

Chris Hanson is a senior in the Urban Studies program at Cleveland State University, a consultant at The Urban Cash Cow, and an intern at Future Heights.

Heritage Home Program announces changes

Mary Ogle

The Heritage Home Program is a unique home repair program that gives homeowners of older or historic homes the appropriate tools to maintain their houses and neighborhoods. Sponsored by Cuyahoga County, the Ohio Treasurer, and the Ohio Housing Finance Agency, the Cleveland Restoration Society (CRS) administers the program, offering technical assistance and low-interest, fixed-rate financing.

To be eligible for the loan program, the house must be at least 50 years old, three units or less, and zoned as a residential property. The home can be owner or nonowner occupied.

CRS has made several changes to its program this year. Houses with vinyl or aluminum siding are now eligible for a loan through the program. The loan, however, cannot be used to pay for new vinyl siding or windows. CRS has also reduced the technical assistance fee for loans. Projects valued at \$3,000–10,000 have no technical assistance fee; projects valued at \$10,001–25,000 will have a one percent fee; and projects \$25,001 and up will have a two percent fee. The after-rehabilitation loan escrow fee has been reduced from \$500 to \$200.

Free technical advice sets the program apart from other similar programs. CRS staff members are old-house experts, and will answer questions and

give free advice to enable homeowners to get their projects done properly.

Staff members provide in-depth assistance to homeowners via site visits, custom construction specifications, historic color consultations and support materials. Homeowners can take advantage of the free consulting services, or use the low-interest, fixed-rate, 7-10-year term rehabilitation loan to pay for a large variety of home maintenance and improvement projects. Projects can include roof replacement, addressing city violations, exterior paint renovation, porch repairs, new insulation, a new furnace, and interior renovations.

The CRS team of historic rehabilitation specialists has provided free technical assistance to more than 450 Cleveland Heights residents and facilitated more than 100 home repair loans. For more information, contact CRS at 216-426-3106.

CRS is the region’s largest nonprofit preservation organization, and is a Local Partner affiliate of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Founded in 1972, CRS is dedicated to the preservation of Greater Cleveland’s historic resources. Learn more at www.clevelandrestoration.org.

Mary Ogle is the Heritage Home Program assistant for Cleveland Heights and the east side of Cleveland. She has a master’s degree in historic preservation, and joined CRS in 2011.

Talk to explore University Circle’s impact on CH is March 8

Can Cleveland Heights benefit from the robust economic development occurring next door in University Circle? The Cleveland Heights Democrats Club is hosting a panel discussion on the issue at 7 p.m. on Thursday, March 8, at the Cleveland Heights Community Center.

Featured panelists are Edward J.

Kelley, mayor of the City of Cleveland Heights; Debbie Berry, vice president of planning and real estate development for University Circle Inc.; and, Mark Chupp, professor at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.

The meeting is free and open to the public.

Income limits raised for HRRC tool loan

Allison Urbanek

If you need a tool to repair your home, check out the tool loan program at Home Repair Resource Center, (HRRC). Now Cleveland Heights homeowner-occupants with higher incomes are eligible to borrow tools. A family of three earning up to \$68,800 can qualify.

HRRC has tall ladders; electric snakes for sinks, tubs, and sewers; a wet saw for ceramic tile; a floor sander; and many other hand and power tools. Fees are affordable, and loan periods are longer, to encourage people to do repairs themselves.

Tools can be reserved at any time by e-mailing toolloan@hrrc-ch.org or by calling 216-381-6100, ext. 18. HRRC will confirm your reservation. You can pick up (or return) tools weekdays 5-7 p.m.

One recent tool borrower was surprised to learn how affordable it was to rent a sander to refinish his floors. “I could borrow the sander from HRRC for three days for less than I would pay for one day at a commercial tool rental company,” he explained. “When you are doing the job after work, that extra time really helps!”

The tool loan is just one of the programs HRRC offers to help people keep their homes in good repair.

For more information about eligibility and fees, check HRRC’s website, www.hrrc-ch.org, or call 216-381-6100.



HRRC has many hand and power tools for loan.

Allison Urbanek is the financial programs coordinator at HRRC. She enjoys working one-on-one with residents to solve their home repair issues.

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Meals on Wheels needs additional volunteers to provide critical assistance



THE SENIOR
SECTION

Judith Eugene

For senior adults and people with physical or mental challenges, simple tasks like shopping and cooking can be difficult to perform. The Meals on Wheels program (MOW) offers a helpful solution, providing nutritious meals delivered right to the door.

MOW volunteers package and deliver two meals a day, five days a week, to people in need throughout our community. The food is prepared fresh each morning at the A.M. McGregor Home, divided into individual packages at Fairmount Presbyterian Church, and delivered to clients between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Each client receives one hot and one cold meal at a cost of \$6.25 per day. The hot meal consists of protein, starch, vegetable, salad, dessert, and milk. The cold meal consists of a sandwich and fruit. Meals are low-sodium and suitable for people with diabetes. Clients choose how many meals they wish to receive per week.

Coordinated through the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging, this program is available to anyone temporarily or permanently unable to shop and cook for him- or herself due to age, illness, disability, or accident.

MOW volunteers check on clients when they make deliveries, and alert the family if they suspect a problem. Some-



Meals on Wheels client Joan Atkinson (left) receives a delivery from volunteer Barbara Hartford.

times the volunteer is the only person the client sees throughout the week.

Volunteers provide a critical safety net for their clients. On more than one occasion, a volunteer arrived for a delivery and discovered that the client had fallen or was in need of medical assistance.

MOW receives no government subsidies and relies on volunteers to keep the program going. Unfortunately, in recent months, the number of volunteers has declined. To avoid cutting back meal delivery from five days to three, additional volunteers are needed.

If you are able to volunteer your time to this critical program, even for just a couple of hours a week, contact Hazel Haffner at 216-382-5697.

Anyone wishing to receive meal assistance should call the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging at 216-691-7377.

Judith Eugene is a native of Cleveland Heights who provides life-enrichment classes and activities for senior adults and those with physical and mental challenges through www.LovingHands-Group.com. She may be reached at 216-408-5578 or Judith@LovingHandsGroup.com

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Heights Community Gardens Network to meet March 13

Jeff Coryell

Heights residents are abuzz with excitement about plans to support existing community gardens and grow new ones in our neighborhoods.

The Sustainable Heights Network (SHN) hosted a meeting to discuss community gardening on Jan. 24, and the response was overwhelming. More than 50 residents packed the meeting room to hear experienced community garden leaders explain how their gardens operate, and give residents an opportunity to describe their hopes and plans for new gardens. Six local experts discussed resources available for community gardens.

Participants at the meeting networked with one another and organized into small groups to discuss plans for new community gardens in several neighborhoods. Nicole Wright, program coordinator for the OSU Extension Service Urban Agriculture Program, promoted community garden classes. Susanna Niermann O'Neil, assistant city manager for Cleveland Heights, presented a new plan to sell vacant lots to adjoining landowners for prices as low as \$100 plus costs. Local churches, including Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian; NewSong Church; and Imani Temple Ministries are sponsoring existing or planned gardens for hunger relief. Local pro-

gardening groups, including Food Not Lawns, Cleveland, informed participants of ongoing activities in their organizations.

A major goal of this initiative is to provide a mechanism for people interested in community gardening to connect with one another and access resources that support new gardens. To that end, SHN has named the initiative the Heights Community Gardens Network, and has decided to create a Web presence in the form of a stand-alone website at www.heightscommunitygardens.net, supported by a Facebook page. The website, now under development, will feature a directory of area community gardens, a calendar of events, classified listings of available garden space, lawn-sharing opportunities, sharing of tools and equipment, volunteer opportunities, and links to community garden resources.

A second public meeting for the new Heights Community Gardens Network will be held on Tuesday, March 13, at 7 p.m. at the Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road, Room A. Everyone interested in seeing community gardening thrive in the Heights is encouraged to attend.

Jeff Coryell is a visual artist, writer, and community activist. He is a member of the boards of FutureHeights and Reaching Heights and on the steering committee of the Sustainable Heights Network.

Disciples Christian Church at the Homeless Stand Down

Ronald Werman

For the fifth straight year, Disciples Christian Church provided lunch as part of the Homeless Stand Down at Cleveland's Masonic Auditorium. Organized by HandsOn Northeast Ohio, the Homeless Stand Down provides boots, coats, mini checkups, podiatry services, haircuts and professional-quality portraits to the needy of Greater Cleveland.

On Sunday, Jan. 22, approximately 50 members of Disciples Christian Church traveled to the Masonic Auditorium to prepare and serve lunch to the estimated 800 people in attendance. Church members served lasagna and salad, provided by the Cleveland Foodbank, and cookies and brownies made by congregants. Bonnie Goldner, outreach cochair, organized the volunteers and food delivery for the event.

Because the event coincided with Sunday services, Reverend Kristine Eggert blessed the participating congregants at the contemporary service at 9 a.m., after which people carpooled downtown to help serve the lunch. Members who usually attend the 11 a.m. traditional service also participated.

This is just one of the many ministries of Disciples Christian Church. For more information about the church, call 216-382-5344 or visit the church's



Kathy Smith, Young Disciples director, and Devin Campbell serve drinks.

website, www.discipleschristian.org.

Ron Werman is an elder of Disciples Christian Church.

Be a part of Family Wellness Walks

Sabrina Humphries

According to the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, childhood obesity has tripled in the past 30 years. In 2008, about 19.6 percent of children between the ages of 6 and 19 were obese.

To combat that trend, the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) awarded ten grants to PTAs across the nation—including the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Council of PTAs—to implement wellness initiatives.

The CH-UH wellness initiative intends to address childhood obesity, and increase health and wellness awareness in the community by providing engaging activities that encourage consistent family fitness.

The wellness initiative kicked off with a community-wide Wellness Challenge in November. The CH-UH PTA continues the initiative, in collaboration with the American Heart Association, Leading Ladies, Inc., Richmond Towne Centre, and State Farm Insurance, with a monthly Saturday-morning Family Well-

ness Walk series, which began Feb. 25.

All families and children in the Heights community are invited to join in the Family Wellness Walks. No registration is required. Details of three upcoming events are as follows:

Saturday, March 24, 10 a.m. at Richmond Towne Centre.

Family Walk with raffle and giveaways.

Saturday, April 28, 10 a.m. (location to be announced).

Family Walk with raffle and giveaways.

Saturday, May 12, 10 a.m. at Cleveland Heights High School cafeteria.

Mother's Day Walk. Participants are encouraged to wear red in support of combating childhood obesity. Donations accepted to benefit the American Heart Association.

Sabrina Humphries is a long-time teacher, CH-UH PTA council copresident, founder and executive director of Leading Ladies, Inc., gardener, wife and mother of four.

Sustainable zoning invites community input

Sarah Wean

For the past year, the City of Cleveland Heights Planning Department has been working on new zoning amendments that will make certain sustainable practices easier to implement without seeking special approvals. The proposed amendments include rain barrel placement, chicken coops, community gardens and urban agriculture, porous paving, commercial and residential construction, and lighting, among others.

The draft is ready for public input and final approval. There will be a series of three meetings that will enable residents to weigh in on the code changes, beginning with a planning commission meeting on Wednesday, March 14 at 7 p.m. in council chambers. A second public meeting will be held on March 26 at the community center at 7 p.m. The final opportunity to participate in this process will be the planning commission meeting on April 11. Council is expected to vote on the commission's recommendations on April 16.

The opportunity to turn ideas into action is now. The Sustainable Heights Network encourages all interested resi-

dents to participate in this process.

To see the proposed amendments go to www.clevelandheights.com. Visit www.sustainableheightsnetwork.net for more information.

Sarah Wean is a member of the steering committee of Sustainable Heights Network—citizens promoting sustainability in Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

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Science-inspired essay is a winner

Joy Henderson

Japera Benson, a junior at Heights High, received a Red Ribbon award from the Cleveland Clinic eXpressions Art Program for her short story, "An Elephant Never Forgets." The story was inspired by Cleveland Clinic intern Michael Ciulla's research on Alzheimer's disease, and by Benson's grandmother.

"I know my grandmother really well, and this was a chance to honor her by writing about her life," said Benson. "It is hard to see her go from knowing so much to not recognizing me at times." Her goal in writing the story was to incorporate science and the emotional toll that the disease takes on a patient and her family.

Benson wrote the story in the voice of her grandmother, and captured some of the changes that she observed as the disease progressed. She is one of 13 Heights students who entered the contest at the suggestion of Bridget Lambricht, Honors English teacher.

The Cleveland Clinic made a video showcasing several of the high school students and their research-driven work. Benson and her mother, Shawanna Rice, were featured in the video. "The directors were very impressed with Japera's writing



Japera Benson (R) received a Red Ribbon award for her essay. Her English teacher Bridget Lambricht (L) received the Innovative Educator award.

and video presentation," said Lambricht.

Benson's story was published in the book *Expressions: Where Research and Creativity Meet*, and will be on display at the Great Lakes Science Center through April 10. The video will be a part of the 2012 Cleveland Clinic eXpressions Art Program website.

More than 1,000 students nationwide entered the contest. The eXpressions Art Program is an interdisciplinary program that uses art to engage high school students in scientific research.

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

Gearity students get to be 'Mayor for a Day'

Scott Heasley

Hopefully, the power didn't go to their heads.

Two Gearity Professional Development School students recently got to be "Mayor for a Day."

Third graders Maple Buescher and Mackenzie Hollis had the privilege of shadowing University Heights Mayor Susan Infeld for an afternoon. The girls earned the honor by being the top fundraisers in Gearity PTA's Walk-a-Thon last fall.

Buescher said she enjoyed touring the University Heights firehouse, police station and city hall. "I never knew the inside of city hall was so big," she said. "It looks smaller from the outside. I think being mayor would be a fun, but difficult, job."

Hollis had prepared a list of questions for the mayor, including, "Why does Westwood Road get so much water?"

Infeld's answer: "There have been several breaks in the waterline on Westwood Road in recent years, causing water to flow freely down the street. I'm happy to report that the Cleveland Water Department will replace the waterline this year."

Hollis said she enjoyed spending time at city hall. "It was very cool and I liked ruling the city."

According to Infeld, the two "mayors" each pounded the gavel on the desk in council chambers to hear how loud a sound it made.

"We really enjoyed having Maple and Mackenzie visit us and hope they



Mayor Infeld with (L-R) Mackenzie Hollis and Maple Buescher.

learned more about how the city works," said Infeld.

Two other students also learned what it's like to be a high-profile leader. Laurel Buescher, Maple's younger sister, and Ryann Fishel, who are both kindergartners, earned the second prize in the Walk-a-Thon. They were "Principal for a Day," and shadowed Gearity Principal Sherry Miller.

"Overall, we raised \$1,500 to help fund such things as transportation for field trips and after-school enrichment programs," said Dori Nelson-Hollis, Gearity PTA president. "Mackenzie and Maple were so close in fundraising that we decided to reward two winners."

Nelson-Hollis said Fiona Conner Kuntz, Gearity physical education teacher, organized the fundraiser as another way to incorporate physical activity into the students' day.

Scott Heasley is a Gearity PTA member whose daughter and son attend the school.

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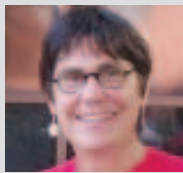
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What a surprise!



THE COMMON
GOOD

Susie Kaeser

A familiar argument in the teacher blame game goes like this: Public schools have bad teachers because of unions. The implication of this statement is that unions don't care about teacher quality, and school districts lack the tools and authority to effectively evaluate teachers and dismiss those who fall short.

A familiar complaint from teachers goes like this: Evaluation is superficial at best, and subjective or vindictive at worst.

Where is the truth? This question drove me to learn more about how the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District approaches teacher evaluation—something that is really important if you care about teacher quality. I am grateful that educators will talk with me about critical issues like this one, because researching this story blew apart my perceptions of teacher evaluation.

I learned that school district leaders, working in partnership with the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, have taken an old, punitive tool and made it into a valuable resource for developing a shared understanding of effective teaching, building professional respect among teachers and principals, and motivating teachers to continue to refine their professional expertise. These changes to the evaluation process have increased teacher quality by promoting growth among all teachers rather than narrowly focusing on weeding out a few bad apples.

This is a far cry from the starting assumptions of my research. When I interviewed Dr. Nylajeon McDaniel, director of human resources for the district, I thought of evaluation as a police function. The task: find those who are not doing their jobs and gather evidence to fire them. I was pleased to discover a totally different picture.

Everything changed in 2004, when the district adopted a set of standards that clearly define teacher quality—the essential competencies that make a difference to student learning. The district also recognized that expertise is developed over time, with experience and coaching. A team of teachers and administrators worked together to re-

design the district's teacher evaluation tools to connect with the standards and to focus more on the development of expertise.

Fairness is built into the Heights system. In addition to clearly defined procedures and timelines, the system uses a rubric that everyone has access to, which guides the way a teacher is rated on 23 components of effective practice. It is interactive, collaborative and evidence based. The final report goes beyond "yes, you can stay" or "no, you are fired." This approach encourages principals and teachers to discuss their shared work—teaching and learning.

The evaluation process isn't perfect. It depends on principals having real expertise in teaching, and using the process to be both supportive and critical. It depends on teachers welcoming feedback from their supervisors, and wanting to grow. But it attempts to bring people together, rather than put them at odds, doing work that is important to both parties. This collaborative spirit is just what we need to meet the high expectations we have set for our schools.

Here are my conclusions:

- School districts have all the authority they need to dismiss teachers. In fact, teacher evaluation is mandated by law.
- Expecting the system to be fair is not the same as resisting evaluation or protecting bad teachers.
- Teachers want to be effective. Why else would they do this work?

A meaningful evaluation experience should help people become better at what they do. When evaluation focuses on the narrow goal of finding a few slackers to fire, it sets up a "we/they" defensive situation—a dynamic that spurs division and resentment among people who need to be as collaborative and supportive of one another as possible.

The Heights method shows that the evaluation process can be an opportunity for teachers and principals to focus together on something that is the priority for both of them: quality teaching. This constructive approach has a lot more promise for creating effective schools than the punitive strategies of anti-teacher policymakers.

Related Story: Learn about teacher evaluation at Roxboro School online at www.heightsobserver.org.

Susie Kaeser is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights. She is the former director of Reaching Heights and current board member of the Home Repair Resource Center.

Heights MSAN students visit Kent State



COURTESY CH-UH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Sixty-seven CH-UH students who belong to the Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) made their annual visit to Kent State University for its Martin Luther King Jr. celebration on Jan. 26.

MSAN is a national coalition of multiracial, suburban-urban school districts that have come together to study achievement gaps that exist in their districts. MSAN provides minority CH-UH students enrolled in gifted and accelerated programs with cultural enrichment and opportunities to strengthen their critical thinking skills.

CH-UH MSAN students are shown here with Dr. Marc Lamont Hill, professor at Teachers College of Columbia University and keynote speaker at the KSU MLK celebration.

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Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board

Meeting highlights

JANUARY 17, 2012

All board members were present.

State report card

The district is currently ranked in the Continuous Improvement category. Three steps needed to attain an Effective ranking include:

- Ensuring that all students take the test because an untaken test scores as a zero. Last year 49 students did not take the test;
- Offer enrichment opportunities to students who were close to proficient;
- Encourage students to take the test seriously.

Efforts to improve learning

Jeffrey Johnston, student services director, and staff members Kelly Stukus, Kevin Jarrell, Jane Simeri, and Allison Byrd, coordinators of educational services, were present to report details on efforts to improve student learning. They covered issues of the learning environment; language arts, math, and science instruction; gifted student programs; and challenges to improvement efforts. Assessments of new programs have indicated effectiveness with programs such as progressive discipline and Tiger Proud and Bully Free. Other programs, such as Educational Opportunities for Success (EOS), Freshman Experience, and changes in gifted programs, have presented some challenges. [The information in these presentations was much too extensive for this space and a complete description is published in the online version of this observer report at www.heightsobserver.org.]

Race to the Top

Superintendent Heuer stated that four areas are supported by Race to the Top funds: teacher training in the use of the common core curriculum; teacher

training in the use of student test data to inform instruction; training of teacher leaders; and development of a principal and teacher evaluation system tied to student growth, which was delayed by the state's failure to define student growth. The program must be in place by 2014.

Cultural Competence Training

All 52 new certified staff members have had six hours of Cultural Competence Training. The goal is to expand such training to all staff.

LWV observer: Nancy Dietrich.

FEBRUARY 7, 2012

All board members were present.

Millikin building

Six residents urged the board to allow Mosdos Ohr Hatorah, an Orthodox Jewish school located on the corner of South Taylor Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard, to buy the Millikin building. They cited the Jewish school's attraction to families, improved value to the neighborhood near Millikin, the nearly unanimous support for the purchase among residents of Wood and Crest roads, and the possible transportation savings to the school district. They also expressed concern about the empty Millikin building and the proposed call center, maintaining that this use would be bad for a residential neighborhood.

Field trips

The board approved two field trips: the Wiley Middle School and Heights High sixth, eighth, and

ninth grade students to a robotics competition in Cedarville, Ohio on Feb. 3-4; and the Heights High Girls' Lacrosse trip to various New York cities on April 9-14.

Race to the Top

A committee has been formed and divided into two subcommittees to develop evaluation methods for teachers and administrators. One task of the teacher-evaluation subcommittee is to devise an evaluation method for teachers in subjects that are not tested. The administrative evaluation subcommittee has a state model to follow, which requires that principal evaluators be state trained, and that such evaluations include student and parent comments.

School buses

The board authorized bidding on four school buses, to be done cooperatively through a money-saving consortium.

Donations

The board accepted four donations: \$7,500 to Gearity Professional Development Center, \$4,500 for healthy dinners for the Heights High basketball team, \$100 to the Betty Levy Scholarship Fund, and \$100 to the educational program at Heights High.

Scholarships

Board member Nancy Peppler reported that the City of Cleveland Heights has scholarships available for young people to participate in spring and summer recreation programs.

Urban School Advisory Network

Board member Kal Zucker reported that the Urban School Advisory Network, representing 21 urban Ohio districts, will reconvene.

Alumni Foundation

Fifteen scholarships will be awarded in the spring,

and the annual pancake breakfast will take place on April 22 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Heights High.

Reaching Heights spelling bee

Reaching Heights will hold its annual spelling bee on March 28 and has requested a team from the school board.

Cavaliers game

Heights High cheerleaders will perform at the Cavaliers game on April 25.

Heights/Shaker basketball game

Elected officials have been invited to the Heights High-Shaker Heights High basketball game. The Heights men's vocal group, the Barbershoppers, will perform at the game after singing the national anthem on national television at the Cleveland State University men's basketball game, at the Wolstein Center, to be televised on ESPN.

Nighttown

Heights High vocal musicians will perform at Nighttown at 7 p.m. on Feb. 20.

Meeting on school facilities

The next public meeting on school facilities will be on Feb. 22 at 6:30 p.m. at Heights High. Child-care will be available and will feature food and Legos.

LWV observer: Nancy Dietrich.

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

See disclaimer on page 4

CHHS athletes sign Letters of Intent

Angee Shaker

Feb. 1 was a monumental day for nine Heights High athletes. It was National Signing Day, when elite high school athletes sign binding Letters of Intent to their chosen colleges and universities.

Surrounded by television, radio and print media, Kyle Dodson, a nationally ranked offensive lineman, summoned his teammates to join him in front of reporters in the Heights High auditorium. He wanted their company as he announced that he would be suiting up as a member of The Ohio State University Buckeyes this fall. His teammates and the entire audience burst into loud, sustained cheers.

Several Division One schools recruited Dodson, Heights High team captain. He chose OSU in part so that he could remain near his grandparents.

While Dodson's announcement received the most attention, Heights High had more celebrating to do. Seven other football players and one lacrosse player also signed Letters of Intent on Feb. 1. The students, and their chosen colleges, include: Meg Lentz, lacrosse, Stanford University; Bryce Jones, football, Boston College; Phillip Moreland, football, Seton Hill University; Markus Hawkins, football, Ohio Dominican University. Rick Wilcox, Dionte Saffo,



Back row (left to right): Dionte Saffo, Denzel Pillars, Meg Lentz, Bryce Jones, Kyle Dodson. Front row (left to right): Rick Wilcox, Terrence Bailey, Phillip Moreland, Markus Hawkins.

Denzel Pillars and Terrence Bailey all signed Letters of Intent to play football at Marian University.

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

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What's going on at your library?

Spring is almost here, and the library is offering fun, fresh programs for March. Visit www.heightslibrary.org for the complete calendar.

Coventry Village Library

1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400
Saturdays, March 3 & 17, 11 a.m.

American Sign Language for Kids. Children ages 6-10 can learn signs for numbers, colors, the alphabet, simple phrases and more. Register for this program at www.heightslibrary.org.

Tuesdays, March 6-27, 3:30 p.m.

Movie Scriptwriting Challenge. Scenarios USA challenges teens in Cleveland and three other cities to write movie scripts. The winning script in each city will be filmed and shown both nationally and locally. Join the challenge and learn how to write for the movies.

Lee Road Library

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600
Monday-Friday, March 5-9, all day.

Geek Out at Your Library. Celebrate Teen Tech Week with geeky programs, prizes and fun. For details, call 216-932-3600. Thursday, March 15, 7 p.m.

Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss! Dr. Seuss turns 108 in March. He gave us a Cat and a Horton who hatched, and a Grinch and a Lorax, so let's pay him back. We'll have a big party! Bang gongs and whungtroosies. Bring all your friends. It'll be quite a doozy. (You can leave the party if you get tired, but before you come registration's required.)

Noble Neighborhood Library

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665
Mondays, March 5-26, 3:30 p.m.

Library Afterschool Fun at Noble. Join us for crafts, games, Wii, or art projects—something different each week. Visit the library for a detailed schedule. Tuesday, March 27, 7 p.m.

Tuesday Evening Jazz: The Art of Jazz featuring Debaneise. Celebrate the women of jazz. Debaneise is a Royce Records recording artist with the hit single, "Eyes Don't Lies." Registration required at www.heightslibrary.org.

University Heights Library

13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700
Wednesday, March 14, 12:30 p.m.

Senior Spot: Book Discussion Group at Cedar Center Whole Foods Market. *Murphy's Law* (a Molly Murphy mystery), by Rhys Bowen.

Monday, March 26, 7 p.m.

In Like a Lion. Have a roaring good time while celebrating spring. For grades K-5.

Candy is king at Heights Libraries

Sheryl Banks

Where is King Kandy? On Thursday, Feb. 16, more than 150 brave gingerbread boys and girls traveled through the Peppermint Forest. They visited Gramma Nutt, Jolly Gum Drop, and Mr. Mint, and helped Queen Frostine thwart the evil Lord Licorice on their way to find Candy Castle in the library's live action Candy Land event at the Lee Road Library.

"Our staff really pulled out all the stops with this program," said Susan Black, manager of youth services. "The decorations and costumes made for a fun and truly magical evening for the kids."

Library staff transformed meeting rooms at Lee Road into a life-sized Candy Land game board, complete with a colorful path, candy cane forest, gingerbread house, chocolate swamp, and characters who guided them through the game with clues and tasty treats. Once the kids found Candy Castle, they were treated to a visit with King Kandy himself, hot chocolate, and crafts. In ad-



Candy Land cast members at the Lee Road Library event.

dition, there were candy-related books on hand for families to check out as they left the castle.

"Candy Land is such a popular game with kids—they know and love all the characters," said Shannon Horrocks, youth services librarian, who organized the program. "We were amazed by

the number of families that came out for the event, and the kids' reactions were priceless. I've never seen so many smiles."

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

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

JANUARY 23, 2012

All board members were present.

Organizational redesign update

Susan Pyles of Employers Resource Council (ERC) presented an update on the nine-month study of the library's performance management system. Pyles discussed merit pay, defined as basing salary on performance over a predetermined period and according to predetermined criteria. A change from across-the-board increases to merit pay can be phased in over two years by first giving an across-the-board increase with individual adjustments.

Director Levin named the committees that will finalize the forms and process. A trial year, using the process without "counting," will begin in 2013, and full application of the redesign will begin Jan. 1, 2014.

Personnel statistics

Year-end statistics showed that seven employees had perfect attendance, the absentee rate was 2.9 percent, and the average number of sick days was 5.71 percent; both percentages deemed excellent. A high turnover rate of 29 percent occurred this year, enabling the promotion of 11 staff members, either to a higher-level position or to full-time from part-time positions.

Cuyahoga County library directors meet quarterly

All board members were invited to attend the 2012 quarterly meetings of the directors of the nine Cuyahoga County library systems. At these meetings the directors will prepare for the negotiations that will begin in February 2013 for an agreement on the library fund distribution from the state budget. Demographic changes will drive some variation in distributions.

State legislation for Ohio libraries

The Ohio Library Council [OLC] supports an omnibus bill to be submitted to the Legislative Service Commission by Jan. 28 for introduction to the Ohio General Assembly. OLC believes that this bill will address a number of concerns of Ohio libraries, including library boundaries and board appointments.

December public service report highlights

- Bruce Biddle, Cleveland Public Library librarian, brought his caricature drawing program to children at both the Noble Neighborhood and Lee Road libraries. He drew caricatures of the children and encouraged them to try drawing caricatures themselves.
- Ben Gulyas, Coventry librarian, received a \$3,000 grant from the Friends of the Society for the Deaf

to continue the American Sign Language classes offered at the library.

- An original pen-and-watercolor rendering of the 1937 Noble Neighborhood Library building, by Walker and Weeks, was found and is now hung in the fiction room.
- University Heights Library has a foreign film series, which has received good publicity.

Recognitions

At the December board meeting, for which there were no League observer notes, two resolutions were passed honoring the following:

Darla Arnold, a graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Art, who was hired in 1987 as the library's graphic designer and became known as the "graphics goddess," is retiring. She designed the Lee Road Library's Children's Story Room murals, as well as the library's brand and bridge logo.

Audrey Cole has completed her term on the board of trustees. She helped craft strategic plans reflecting the needs of the community and understood the value of an independent public library system for the Cleveland Heights, University Heights communities. She will continue her commitment to public libraries by serving on the Ohio Library Council's Board of Trustees.

LWV observer: Anne S. McFarland.

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

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Six Pavilion Skating Club skaters medal in national competitions

Beth Hellerstein

“What is going on with Cleveland Heights and ice dancing?”

That was the buzz in San Jose, Calif. in January, when two Cleveland Heights ice dance teams medaled in Novice Dance at the 2012 U.S. Figure Skating Championships.

“The moment we found out we won, we were thrilled. We’ve been skating together for seven years, and seeing all of our hard work pay off was the best feeling in the world. We’ve been working toward this goal every day, and that feeling of accomplishment was such a great feeling,” said Holly Moore, 16, after she and her partner, Daniel Klaber, 17, became the 2012 National Champions in Novice Ice Dance. This was their second trip to the U.S. Figure Skating Championships. In 2011, they placed eighth in Novice Dance.

Hannah Rosinski, 16, and Jacob Jaffe, 18, won the bronze medal in the same event. Rosinski said, “We’re really excited. We put it all out there and skated our best free dance ever. Jacob



Holly Moore and Daniel Klaber are the 2012 National Champions in Novice Ice Dance.

and I have been together for just one season and there’s a lot of room for improvement.”

In December, Kimmie Berkovich and Micah Jaffe (Jacob’s brother) were the Pewter Medalists in Intermediate Ice Dance at the 2012 U.S. Junior Figure Skating Championships. Of the experience, Jaffe said, “Junior Championships was quite fun, even more than last year [when he and Berkovich placed fifth in their first year competing]. Kimmie and I have matured individually and as a team on the ice.”

All three teams train at the Pavilion Skating Club of Cleveland Heights, and are coached by Jackie Miles and Chip Rossbach. The accomplishments of these three teams place them among the top ice dancers in the United States.

Noting that the teams compete and train together, Rosinski said, “Daniel and Holly are fun to train with because they push us and motivate us. I think we do the same for them.”

Beth Hellerstein is a parent of a Pavilion Skating Club member.

Fine arts at the Heights Youth Club

Kimberly Morgan

This year the Heights Youth Club (HYC) entered the 2012 National

Fine Arts Exhibit competition sponsored by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. Four age groups, between 6 and 18, competed in 10 art categories.

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Nia Primm’s chicken sculpture.



Anastasia Williams’s portrait.

These included monochromatic (pencil, charcoal, pen and ink), multicolored drawings, watercolor, pastel, oil/acrylic, mixed media, collage, print making, and sculpture and group projects.

Two HYC members, Anastasia Williams, 17, and Nia Primm, 9, placed at the regional finals, where their art remains on exhibit. Their next stop will be the national level competition, and the good wishes of the community go with them.

Supported by Boys and Girls Clubs of America, HYC offers year-round arts exploration. Programs provide opportunities to develop creativity, cultural awareness, and knowledge and appreciation for visual arts, crafts, performing arts, and creative writing.

Club members are encouraged to develop artistic expression through

classes, events, and special projects, sponsored by Cleveland Heights residents who volunteer countless hours of instruction and donate valuable resource materials.

The arts program staff skillfully integrates reading, math, and science into every experience. Students are given free rein to design arts and crafts activities.

Some young people engaged in entrepreneurial activities, such as marketing handmade jewelry, belts and scarves. They even developed a business plan that included production, distribution, pricing and marketing strategies, to be implemented at HYC’s annual spring fundraiser, Taste of the Heights.

Kimberly Morgan is the board administrator for the Heights Youth Club.

Dream comes true for local entrepreneur

Richard Stewart

It all happened the day before Thanksgiving 2009. That was the day that, for Chris Armington, owner of The Tavern Company, a longtime dream was finally realized. After more than a dozen years working as a server, bartender and, eventually, a manager at Brennan's Colony, he finally had a spot to call his own.

"I always wanted to own my own restaurant, but didn't know if it was realistic or feasible," said Armington.

Now that roughly two and a half years have elapsed since its grand re-opening, things at the Lee Road restaurant are going fairly well—no small feat, given the restaurant's popularity under its previous ownership. Customers have commented that the food has improved and the nightly specials have become popular among patrons.

The Tuesday night trivia games are a consistent draw for the post-dinner crowd.

Once Armington took over the establishment from former proprietor John McMahon, making it all work, from a financial standpoint, wasn't easy. Armington ended up finding a family friend to walk him through the business side of small business ownership.

"I thought I could attract investors based on longstanding relationships, but I found out it wasn't that easy," he



Owner/operator Chris Armington behind the bar at The Tavern Company, 2260 Lee Road.

said. "I found out the value of having a business plan as a tool to attract investors. Banks don't easily lend money to restaurants, because of their failure rate, so I took the friends-and-family approach."

Once the papers had been signed,

Armington shut down the restaurant for weeks to perform repairs to the building and clean it from top to bottom. When it reopened, he and Chef Jamie Wynbrandt set about the business of putting their personal signatures on the restaurant's offerings, which they characterize as all-American culinary creations with a twist.

"I wanted to improve the food quality and take it to the next level," said Armington, "Jamie and I, being good friends and working together for 10 years, it was really cool to collaborate with him. We wanted good quality bar food, but it goes way beyond that. Nobody was going to say no to either of us, so it gave us the freedom to be creative and to come up with a cool bar menu."

Armington subscribes to the buy-local ethos when purchasing food, and says that everything served at Tavern Company is fresh, never frozen. The menu features unique flatbreads, a pulled short rib sandwich, a variety of hearty soups, a delicious hangar steak entree, burgers, salads and more.

Tavco's success is aided, in no small part, by the efforts of Armington's girlfriend and manager, Sarah Brewer. She's the perky blonde with the perpetual smile who is always on the move. She regularly puts in four nights a week, not only providing enthusiastic customer service, but also handling all the mar-

keting and community relations, which include the many local charitable events that ask for support.

Brewer also maintains the toy chest at the front of the dining room, a Christmas gift from Armington's mom, and popular among the restaurant's youngest patrons. It features a variety of pre-wrapped gifts for young people, ten for boys and ten for girls. The chest is fully stocked on a nightly basis.

"The kids have become quite familiar," said Brewer, adding, "they just love it. Kids make a beeline to the front of the dining room every night."

Armington remains humble about his entrepreneurial venture and credits the local community for whatever success he enjoys.

"The fact is that the loyal patronage of Cleveland Heights and University Heights residents has helped mitigate the stress of ownership in terms of maintaining a consistent customer base. Without them, I'm not sure where we'd be. People who remember me from the Colony still walk in and ask, 'what are you doing here?' It's a rewarding feeling when they tell me how much they enjoyed the experience."

Richard Stewart is president of Digizoom Media, a Cleveland Heights-based video production company, and a FutureHeights board member.

Ladies choice at Motorcars in Cleveland Heights where women love to work and buy their cars

Sean Balewski

In the male-dominated automotive industry, Motorcars in Cleveland Heights stands out as female-friendly place to work, and to buy a car. Boasting 45 female employees, Motorcars has women in every position at the dealership: sales, service technician, clean-up, detailing, service writer, valet, and controller.

"There are 17 different job categories at this dealership," said Trevor Gile, general manager of Motorcars Honda. "Fourteen out of the 17 positions have women in them, including 8 product specialists, the chief financial officer, and a service advisor who has been with us for more than two decades."

This 20-year-old family business is run by women, including Gile's wife and sister-in-law. "I see more women in key positions here than at any other place in the country," said Debbie Householder, Motorcars CFO.

For women buyers, the Motorcars approach helps them to feel at ease. There are significantly more men selling cars than women, and the traditional car-buying process can at times be very intimidating. A female sales associate can be more comforting, and seem less aggressive to a female customer. Jennifer Ross, a Motorcars sales specialist, noted, "Women from all walks of life are employed here. That's why I chose to work here, and why so many women shop with us."

In the U.S., women influence 80 percent of all automotive purchases, and a recent survey by J.D. Power and Friedman-Swift showed that 68 percent

of the buying public dread the car-buying process—the time it takes to get to the bottom line, the hassles and pressure, and the inflated prices.

Sales specialists at Motorcars are product specialists. Their income is based not on gross-sale price, but rather on customer service and volume. Motorcars has embraced a "straightforward-price" approach, which enables buyers to get the best and fairest price upfront. Motorcars prices its cars, not its customers, and constantly researches the sale prices of vehicles throughout the region to make sure that its low prices are competitive. These prices are then posted for everyone to see, including competing car dealers.

A recent article, titled "What Women Want," on www.vroomgirls.com, listed the top 10 vehicles chosen by women in 2011. Hondas appear in three of the four top spots. *VroomGirls* and *The Plain Dealer* recently recognized Motorcars as a dealership that successfully caters to women customers.

"I found the Motorcars staff to be straightforward and friendly," said customer Andrea Jenkins. "No one was pushy, and I felt comfortable and relaxed during the buying process. I'm very satisfied with how I was treated."

It's this reaction from customers that Motorcars hopes to keep receiving as it continues to support and expand its female-friendly dealership.

Sean Balewski works in the Internet sales department at Motorcars Honda. He graduated from the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University.

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Artist Doug Berky presents 'Kairos' at Church of the Saviour

Loretta Dahlstrom

Acclaimed mask and movement artist Doug Berky will appear on Sunday, March 11, at 2 p.m. at Church of the Saviour in Cleveland Heights. The free performance, titled "Kairos" (*ki' ros*, meaning "the hour"), is an impressionist portrayal of the life of Jesus Christ told through stylized masks, movement and story.

Berky uses nearly two decades of experience to astound audiences worldwide with performances that transcend age, race and culture. A master of mime and improvisation, clowning and suspense, Berky sweeps his audience along with fanciful portrayals of personalities and familiar emotions.

In "Kairos," Berky takes his audi-



Doug Berky and masks.

ence on a journey to the first century, when a baby was born into a hostile world that was seeking a messiah. The child became one of the most remarkable people in history. The production uses symbolic images to help the audience understand the Gospel story, its context, and popular cultural assumptions. This event is sponsored by Arts in the Cathedral and is open to all. A free-will offering will be accepted.

Church of the Saviour is located at 2537 Lee Road, one block north of Fairmount Boulevard. The church has plenty of free parking and is handicapped-accessible.

Loretta Dahlstrom is the administrative assistant at Church of the Saviour.



Dobama presents small-town drama 'Middletown'

Jewel Moulthrop

The fourth major production of Dobama Theatre's 52nd season is the Cleveland premiere of a new play, "Middletown," written by Will Eno and directed by Joel Hammer, Dobama's artistic director.

"Middletown," which runs through March 18, explores the universe of a small-town America. Mary Swanson has just moved into town, eager to start a family and enjoy the neighborly bonds that a small town promises. But when she befriends a local resident, John Dodge, she quickly discovers that below Middletown's unflinchingly honest exterior lies something much more complex.

The play is a wry, human portrait of a town with two personalities—one that is ordinary and visible, the other dark and mysterious.

Eno was a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize in 2005 and is a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship and an Edward F. Albee Foundation Fellowship. In 2004, he was awarded the first-ever Marian Seldes/Garson Kanin Fellowship by the Theater Hall of Fame.

The production features an ensemble cast, including Dianne Boduszek, Emily Demko, Maryann Elder, Carly Germany, Robert Hawkes, Jason Markouc, Mark Mayo, Fabio Polanco, Laura Starnik and Tom Woodward. Many will be performing more than one role in a script that lists 21 characters.

This is Dobama's third season in its new location at 2340 Lee Road, part of the Lee Road Library complex. Performances of "Middletown" take place on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings, and Sunday afternoons. For a complete schedule, ticket prices, and reservations, call the box office at 216-932-3396. Ask about reduced prices for RUSH tickets.

Jewel Moulthrop is a resident of Cleveland Heights, a member of editorial advisory committee for the Heights Observer, and an occasional contributor to the newspaper.

RoxArts benefit at the B-Side is March 24

Andrea C. Turner

Escape the wireless age of texts and tweets and travel back to the 1970s where you can groove all night at the annual RoxArts benefit. Whether you were into glam rock, disco, punk or R&B, you're invited to boogie the night away at "Rox-N-Roll, Groovin' at the B-Side." The event takes place Saturday, March 24, from 6:30 to 10 p.m. at the B-Side Lounge, 2785 Euclid Heights Blvd., in Coventry Village.

The annual event is the primary fundraiser supporting RoxArts, a non-profit organization of parents and community residents who share the goal of bringing enhanced arts education to students at Roxboro Elementary and Middle schools.

Rox-N-Roll is an opportunity to enjoy local fare, wine and beer, music and dancing, as well as silent and live auctions. Kathy Blackman, owner of the B-Side and a Roxboro parent, is donating the venue for the event.

For more than 30 years, RoxArts has sponsored educational programs in the performing and visual arts at the Roxboro schools. RoxArts, formerly known as REAP, for Roxboro Enrichment Arts Program, funds artists-in-residence, school performances, capital projects and equipment. Both the elementary and middle schools receive funding annually from the organization.

RoxArts artist residencies have included dance (Verb Ballets), visual arts (Wendy Mahon), acting (Jonathan Graham), music (Dalcroze), and creative writing (Bob Henry Baber). Resident artists work directly with the students, in up to three sessions, incorporating a range of media.



Cuban artist Augusto Bordelois installs the lotus flower stone mosaic at Roxboro Elementary.

Last year, Roxboro Elementary students created a stone mosaic of lotus flowers with guidance from Cuban painter Augusto Bordelois. "It was inspired by all of the stone mosaic paths we saw when we went to China," explained Sheri Fried, art specialist at Roxboro, referring to the teachers and district staff who traveled to China under a Foreign Language Assistance Program grant.

Tickets to Rox-N-Roll can be purchased online at www.roxarts.org. Tickets for teachers and staff are \$20 in advance, or \$25 at the door. All other tickets are \$30 in advance, or \$35 at the door. Don your favorite 1970s fashion staples—platform shoes and leisure suits, miniskirts and leotards—then groove all night.

To donate auction items, contact Rosie Ford at 440-476-0717 or rosieford@yahoo.com, or Erin Gisel at 216-509-4020 or emgisel@aol.com.

Andrea C. Turner is cochair for the RoxArts benefit.

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Photo show at Heights Arts travels the landscape

Peggy Spaeth

“Tophography” is a group exhibition of recent photography by five local artists whose work offers personal experiences of landscape. Organized by and showing at Heights Arts, 1275 Lee Road, the show runs March 2 to April 14. Each of the five artists brings a distinctive approach.

Philip Brutz offers stereoscope images made at Raven Rocks in south-central Ohio. Installed in a special viewer that enables visitors to scroll through the photographs, the series explores with 3-D intensity the quiet details of the site. Brutz’s photography has appeared in exhibitions at MOCA Cleveland and at the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the museum has acquired a number of his photographs for its collection.

G. M. Donley is designer and editor of the Cleveland Museum of Art’s magazine, and a founding member of Heights Arts. His strongly horizontal photographs here combine dozens of overlapping transparent images to create dense collages of 360-degree panoramas, or excursions such as mountain hikes and bicycle rides.

Matthew Fehrmann, an adjunct professor at the Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA), where he is responsible for fine art digital photography and printing courses, is a maker of fine art prints for major photographers. Last year, he and two friends rode motorcycles from Alaska to Mexico, and here he shows images made during that journey. His work has recently been on view at 78th



Michael Weil’s photograph “3001 9A.”

Street Studios in Cleveland.

Nancy McEntee, professor of photography at CIA, is a 2009 recipient of a Creative Workforce Fellowship from the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture. Her photographs are exhibited nationally in many public and private collections. She was awarded a residency at the Burren College of Art in County Clare, Ireland, for summer 2010, and the photographs she presents here portray

her daughter—the subject of her ongoing body of work—in the striking Irish landscape.

Michael Weil inspired this exhibition with his series of photographs looking down from a commercial flight. Juxtaposing images of runway tarmac, ex-urban developments, arid mountain ranges, and massive-scale agriculture, the series finds poetic visual rhymes through texture and abstraction. A photohistorian by profession, Weil earned

a Ph.D. from Case Western Reserve University, and is currently an adjunct professor at CIA.

“Tophography” opens Friday, March 2, 6–9 p.m. The gallery is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Thursday, Friday, 10 a.m.–9:30 p.m.; Saturday 1:30–9:30 p.m., and by appointment. Call 216-371-3457 for information.

Peggy Spaeth is the executive director of Heights Arts, a nonprofit community arts organization.

Apollo's Fire to perform 'Mediterranean Nights'

Sarah Blue

Apollo’s Fire will perform “Mediterranean Nights, Sultry Songs & Passionate Dances from Italy and Spain.” The concert takes place at 8 p.m. on Saturday, March 10 at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. in Cleveland Heights.

After Apollo’s Fire’s successful 2009 tour, “Mediterranean Nights” is back for a 2012 reprise. This program of early 17th-century music was chosen as one of the Top 10 Concerts of 2009 by the Pittsburgh *Tribune-Review* and hailed as “a [jam] session that might have been heard 300 years ago on an Italian beach” by the *Columbus Dispatch*. *The Plain Dealer* described the program as an “exhilarating Baroque beach party . . . performed with spontaneous sonic combustion.”

The program features soprano Nell Snaidas, who brings the audience into her world of 17th-century ballads. Historic Spanish dancer and guitarist Steve Player captivates audiences with his improvisations. Sonatas by Merula, Uccellini and Castello will set the stage for the finale—Jeannette Sorrell’s arrangement of Boccherini’s “Fandango Quintet.” Led by Sorrell, the program features violin, cello, theorbo, harpsichord, and a variety of exotic percussion instruments.

Coinciding with the group’s lo-

cal concerts, Apollo’s Fire will release “Mediterranean Nights,” the third CD in its 20th anniversary live recording series. This series of recordings from some of the most memorable concerts of the past 20 years will be available in a limited edition only, for purchase at Apollo’s Fire concerts.

Tickets start at \$20; student, senior, young adult and group discounts are available. For tickets, call 800-314-2535 or visit www.apollosfire.org.

Sarah Blue is the marketing manager for Apollo’s Fire.



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FutureHeights sponsors ‘Lucky’ at CIFF

Jewel Moulthrop

Just a few weeks before the start of the 36th Cleveland International Film Festival (CIFF), the excitement has begun to build. Once again, the festival promises to be inspiring, thought-provoking, and emotionally satisfying. One aspect, however, will be different. This year, FutureHeights and the *Heights Observer* are partnering with CIFF to sponsor a film.

This festival entry from South Africa is called “Lucky.” It’s also the name of the film’s protagonist, but there’s little that is lucky about him. Lucky is a 10-year-old orphan from a small village near Durban (although the film was shot in Johannesburg). As the movie opens, the boy is walking to the center of the village, peering into a truck, looking into store windows, then sitting on a curb to wait. He waits all day. Night comes, and with it, pouring rain. Lucky continues



After a shaky start, an unlikely friendship develops between Lucky and Padma.

to sit there until a storekeeper finally chases him away with the words, “No one’s coming.”

The filmmakers waste no time in setting up the story. A coffin containing the boy’s mother arrives in the village. Packing his meager belongings into a tote bag, Lucky plans to find his uncle in the city. Before leaving, he cries over his mother’s grave, promising to go to school and to make something of himself.

The idea for the film came to director Avie Luthra while he was living

in rural Natal, where the prevalence of HIV/AIDS was close to 40 percent. Driving around on weekends, Luthra saw coffins loaded onto trucks for funerals, which occurred with alarming frequency throughout the province. At one of those funerals, Luthra spotted a 10-year-old boy weeping into the grave of his mother. Contemplating the boy’s future, he wondered how the situation of this boy linked into the stories of all the homeless kids one sees in South African cities.

The film also examines the tensions between Africans and Indians in post-apartheid South Africa, after decades of legal and economic segregation. Lucky befriends Padma, an elderly Indian woman, who lives in the same apartment complex as the boy’s ne’er-do-well uncle. Although she is suspicious of the boy at first, Padma and Lucky form a tenuous bond.

The film was shot in only 26 days.

During that time the director often strayed from the script, encouraging his actors to improvise as much as possible, hoping to make scenes feel energized and real. The camera—sometimes hand-held—sets up a sense of chaos and uncertainty, as well.

The score, written exclusively for African instruments, provides an added authenticity. Although a remix of an earlier short version—short-listed for an Oscar in 2007—this film is bigger, more energetic, more painful, and ultimately a satisfying film experience.

CIFF will screen “Lucky” on Friday, March 30 at 11:20 a.m.; Saturday, March 31 at 3:20 p.m.; and Sunday, April 1 at 2:30 p.m. For more information, go to www.clevelandfilm.org.

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

Heights Youth Theatre presents ‘The King and I’

Mary Patton

Dream a dream of a time past. It is the 1860s, and you are in the exotic kingdom of Siam (now Thailand). Imagine that you are the ruler of this kingdom filled with golden palaces, elephants in the streets and children everywhere. You have been safe and happy in your own little corner of the world, yet the world begins to creep in on you. What wonders will you discover? Based on a true story, “The King and I” tells the story of the king of Siam, who recognizes that the world outside of his realm is changing, and hires a teacher from England who will tutor his family about the world.

Now, imagine that you are that teacher, a young mother from England. You and your son are entering an exotic place. The king has 37 wives and more than 400 children! Do you speak your mind or only say what is expected of you? Has the king met his match in the spirited, Englishwoman, or the reverse? Should he keep his customs or adopt new ones that would throw his world out of balance? How much power should a woman have? How about a man? What are you willing to do for love if it is forbidden? It’s “a puzzlement!”

You can experience the vibrant colors, dazzling dance, star-crossed lovers,

political puppetry and the “et cetera, et cetera, et cetera” of Heights Youth Theatre’s “The King and I,” directed by Treva Offutt. The cast includes 90 talented local students in grades 1 through 12—many from University Heights and Cleveland Heights—and five professional musicians playing the memorable score. Cast members include Matthew McAllister (King), Eliza Sindelar (Anna), Ryan Vincent (Louis), Katie Wilkinson (Lady Tiang), Alexis Martinez (Tuptim), Sean Kelley (Lun Tha), John Berner (Kralahome), Lia Coyle (Prince Chulalongkorn), Yume Ndhlovu (Princess Ying Yaowalak), Alexis Marinelli (Captain Orton), Brycen Hunt (Sir Edward Ramsey) and Corey Grubar (Interpreter).

“The King and I” runs Fridays, March 2, 9 and 16 at 7 p.m.; Saturdays, March 3, 10 and 17 at 2 p.m.; and Sunday, March 11 at 2 p.m., at Wiley Middle School auditorium, 2181 Miramar Blvd., University Heights. Tickets are \$9 general admission, \$8 seniors and children under six. Cash or checks only. The box office opens 45 minutes prior to performances. For details, visit www.heightsyouththeatre.org.

Mary Patton of University Heights is a PR consultant and Heights Youth Theatre Advisory Board member.



Cast members of Heights Youth Theatre’s “The King and I” rehearse for their March performances.



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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.

