Growing a demonstration garden, and a community, on a church lawn

Sarah Wean

It was a brisk and overcast morning, but the enthusiastic volunteers were undeterred. Cleveland Heights’ newest community garden took its first action steps on Nov. 3, on the front lawn of Grace Lutheran Church on Cedar Road.

Volunteers from Food Not Lawns Cleveland joined forces with Grace Lutheran congregants and, with support from Asian Services in Action, prepared a 20 x 20 plot that will become a demonstration sheet mulch garden, to be farmed by local Bhutanese refugee families and other interested residents in the spring.

“The Bhutanese will be the primary farmers,” said David Ernat, pastor of the church, “but it’s actually available to anyone in the community.”

Using gardening and community sustainability principles advocated by Food Not Lawns—a movement that calls for the conversion of the nation’s 45 million acres of existing lawns into edible gardens—the garden’s planting continued on page 8.

City of Cleveland Heights blasts FirstEnergy’s handling of power outage

Deanna Bremer Fisher

“I give FirstEnergy a D- for the way they handled the situation—administratively and in communications,” said Cleveland Heights Mayor Ed Kelley at the Nov. 7 meeting of Cleveland Heights City Council. “The only reason I don’t give them an F is because I don’t like F’s for anybody, otherwise I’d give them an F.”

Kelley made the comment after Council Member Jason Stein read a letter that he had written to Anthony J. Alexander, president and CEO of FirstEnergy Corp., expressing his frustration continued on page 2.

Facilities committee considers grade configuration options

Deanna Bremer Fisher

At its first couple of meetings, the Lay Facilities Committee (LFC) has wrestled with the issue of grade configuration—which grades should be housed in each building. On Oct. 24, Jeffery Talbot, district assistant superintendent, presented the school district’s view and the rationale behind the grade configuration of Plan C. On Nov. 14, both Talbert and Doug Heuer, district superintendent, spoke about the issue.

“I felt that grade configuration was a logical element to tackle first, for a few reasons,” said Patrick Mullen, LFC chair. “If the committee could make a recommendation, or at least prioritize a couple of options, that reduces the universe of options of how many of each level building make sense. Also, I thought it important to shine a light on the fact that the committee is going to have to make some hard choices, and that we don’t have unlimited time to make them.”

The LFC is charged with recommending to the CH-UH Board of Education (BOE) a master school facilities plan capable of winning voter support in November 2013. Plan C, which the BOE accepted last year, is open for revision.

On Oct. 24, Talbert explained that the district had originally preferred three K-8 buildings (Plan A) because it minimized transitions, which are difficult for many students. Based on community concerns about large campuses and many building closures, however, the district presented Plan C, a compromise plan, which proposed continued on page 14.
Open Online forum goes live

Jewel Moutrebop

The title of this column—Opening the Observer—has always had two meanings for the first. The first has to do with transparency, as in opening the newspaper to the scrutiny of its readers. We tell you how we operate (primarily through the work of dedicated volunteers). We state our editorial policy (no political or other endorsements, just the facts). We provide information that affects our community and a place to air your concerns.

The second meaning concerns the contents if each issue—what you can expect to see when you open an issue of the Heights Observer. We specialize in hyper-local news: school happenings, library events, and meeting highlights from the Cleveland Heights and University Heights city councils, the CH-UH school board, and the library board.

We include articles about new businesses, cultural and religious events, and human-interest stories. We have several regular columnists and a few once-in-a-while writers.

The Heights Observer would not exist without you. We encourage your participation in several ways: register to receive the weekly e-newsletter, post your thoughts on the Observer blog site, write a news story about something happening in your neighborhood, or express your opinion in a letter to the editor.

We had an online forum a few years ago, but had to close it down for several reasons: incoherency, lack of interest, and it wasn’t that easy to use. We’re changing that.

We recently formed a partnership with the Civic Commons to piggyback on their excellent online forum. We created a FutureHeights profile on the Civic Commons website (http://civiccommons.com/user/futureheights).

Many of you already know the Civic Commons for the success that organization has had in “turning talk into action.” For example, through conversations with residents, the Civic Commons helped the City of Cleveland create a representative board to map the future of the Flats.

Currently, there’s a petition on the Civic Commons website aimed at stopping the construction of a skyscraper between the casino and the garage across the street.

Last month we started a conversation on the future of the school facilities in Cleveland Heights and University Heights. To ensure that our community gets the schools we need to sustain and grow our neighborhoods, we invite your input. (Thanks to those of you who have already responded.) Joining the conversation is easy. Go to the Civic Commons home page (http://civiccommons.com). Register for an account by clicking the link in the upper right-hand corner and following the prompts. Once you’re registered, log in, find the FutureHeights page and jump right in—into the water’s fine! We look forward to meeting you on the Commons.

Jewel Moutrebop is a Cleveland Heights resident, a member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors, and chair of the Heights Observer’s Editorial Advisory Committee.

Highlights from Observer blogs

Read the whole story at blogs.heightsobserver.org

Why is the Library for sale? South Euclid officials have been salivating over this land since 2008. We have a logical theory that an answer that question. The city of South Euclid, the South Euclid-Lyndhurst Mission Library is for sale, they usually ask, “Why?”

We have a logical theory that answers that question. The city of South Euclid wants the library and the surrounding land to be developed into mixed-use and residential buildings.

How can we support this statement? With two public documents.

—Fran Mutschler

Fantastic seasonal wines on a rainy night

Last night I ventured out to my first wine and beer tasting at The Wine Spot. Rain and all, it was a perfect night to meet new people and discover brilliant wines. I actually went for the beer but everyone was more interested in the wine and I too love a great glass of red wine. Adam and Susan Fleischer featured Halloween-inspired “seasonal” wines for the evening as well as a local Cleveland beer (Buckeye Cleveland, Pumpkin Head).

There was some discussion as to what order the wines should be presented in with all the offerings and pouring happening. The conversation drifted from which occasion each wine might best be presented to why Detroit is the hub of house music. Detroit, Rogers watches religious programs, and continues to read God’s Word.

Her warm caring spirit is cherished by her family and all who know her. It is on this great occasion that, together with those loved ones and her church family, Rogers celebrates the many moments of laughter and joy that she has experienced throughout her life, and looks forward to more of these moments in the future.

Vivian Rogers’ life has been one of serving, caring, giving, sharing, helping, encouraging, listening and sacrifice as she has traveled the long road of her 106 years.

Central Bible Baptist Church was founded by Pastor Emeritus Robert L. Ferguson in 1992 at Boulevard Elementary School. Now located at 1285 Noble Road, the church’s membership exceeds 500. The current pastor, Rev. Harry Cairn Jr., presides over two Sunday worship services: 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m. Bible studies are on Mondays (for women) and Wednesdays (for all).

Marilyn Murphy, a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, has been a member of Central Bible Baptist Church for more than 16 years. She teaches an adult Sunday School class and serves as administrator for the church.

WHY REPLACE?
When we can Replace Your Windows at a fraction of the cost!

ITS THE GREEN ALTERNATIVE!
Our expert technicians can restore your window to “like-new” condition at a typical price of $100.

call for a free estimate
(216) 321-7729
MJM Window Restoration

Voted Cleveland’s Best Toy Store
We Buy Old Toys for Cash

Traditional Toys for Traditional Holidays!

Collectibles  Cards  Nintendo  Cleveland Gear  Pop Culture  Ghoulish T-Shirts  Baby Stuff  Classic Candy  Great Books (most at least 1/2 off) Stocking Stuffers  Buttons and Magnets  Unique Toys  Great Gag Gifts

1814 Coventry Road  Cleve. Hts 216-371-4FUN • www.bigfunbigfun.com

Thanks for supporting local businesses!
Resident urges against spending estimated $200 million on new school facilities

A message from the publisher:
We are publishing the letter below in a shortened version. The original was more than 1,000 words long—far longer than we believe space for. To read the letter in its entirety, visit www.heightsobserver.org.

I believe it is important to respond to the letter, and clarify some points. The "Opening the Observer" column is not a space for editorial opinion, but rather it is a space to share information and encourage community dialogue. In this month's column (see p. 2), Jewell McDonald explains the role of "Opening the Observer" and also announces that the Observer, in partnership with the Civic Commons, has established a new forum for community discussion and dialogue on select topics that are important to Heights residents.

The first topic is School Facilities.

The Observer has no writing staff. As a nonprofit, community paper, it relies on members of the community to write and submit articles, letters and opinion pieces about life in the Heights. It features the work of Cleveland Heights—not out of town, or the neighborhood bookstore and record store, which face the toughest battles of us "in-dies," to the locally owned music clubs that struggle to keep afloat. It's been five years since I wrote my first letter—dated Holiday Season 2007. I believe that there is finally light at the end of the tunnel. Business is picking up! Most retailers are finally saying goodbye to the trend of decreased annual sales. Maybe it's the economy or maybe it's the community coming together to support local businesses. The bottom line is that it feels good, and we all say THANKS!

So in the spirit of my annual independent business holiday letter, here we go again:

I hope this message finds you and your family in good health. We cannot avoid the constant barrage of negative news about the economy. It's in the newspapers and magazines... Continued on Page 12

A HOLIDAY SOLUTION

THE PROBLEM: I forgot to get them a present!

INSPIRATION: Send them Funny Times and keep them laughing all year long.

...WORRIES OVER

YES! Solve all my problems:

FROM:

ADDRESS

STATE

ZIP

1 For Mother: 1 Year $26 2 Years $44 3 Years $60

2 For Brother: 1 Year $26 2 Years $44 3 Years $60

3 For Nature Lover: 1 Year $26 2 Years $44 3 Years $60

Send check or money order to:
FUNNY TIMES SUBSCRIPTIONS
P.O. Box 18530 Dept. No. Cleveland Hts., OH 44118

$26 for 1 year

$44 for 2 years

$60 for 3 years

CARD

$26 for 1 year

$44 for 2 years

$60 for 3 years

[In case we need to contact you regarding your order]
Youth volunteer group, Project Build, ready for exciting second year

Ariel Travis

For years, I had wanted to volunteer. For both myself and for those around me, I wanted to do something meaningful, and have a positive effect on the community. But each and every time I vocalized an organization to see if I could help, I was told the same thing. “You can’t volunteer, you’re too young.” I got frustrated and discouraged, feeling that I was too young to make a difference.

Years passed. Finally, as a high school senior, one year ago, I came up with a simple but powerful idea: recruit a few teachers to act as adult supervisors and create a youth volunteer group. I got a few teachers to act as adult supervisors and some of my friends excited, enlisted the help of Cleveland Heights High School teacher Chris Sutton, and went to work.

Project Build was born. Within only months, Project Build became the largest and most active club at Cleveland Heights High School. Since its inception one year ago, the group has organized 23 volunteer days for community-service projects ranging from building houses to repairing playgrounds, planting community gardens, constructing greenhouses, and more. Hands-on construction work is our main focus, and volunteers are sure to pick up a few construction skills on the job. More than 150 Heights High students have participated in our events, in addition to many adult volunteers and volunteers from other schools. And those numbers are always growing.

On Nov. 14, by a unanimous decision from our leadership team, we elected our second- ever president, Grace Goodluck. Mrs. Sutton told me she is very proud of us and that we are working hard to make our cause successful. Our members are eager to help. I am so proud of them and the team’s leadership.

Project Build’s next volunteer day is at Community Greenhouse Partners on Dec. 2, where we will be helping a Heights High graduate build greenhouses, and expanding Project Build into a nonprofit organization to see if I could help, I was told the same thing. “You can’t volunteer, you’re under 18. Unless you have adult supervision, you’re too young.” I got frustrated and discouraged, feeling that I was too young to make a difference.

Now enrolling for Fall 2013

Hanna Perkins School

PRESCHOOL • KINDERGARTEN • TODDLER PROGRAMS

A FOCUS ON:

• Lifelong academic learning
• Building relationships
• Curiosity and creativity
• Mastery of feelings/self-control
• Problem solving
• Self advocacy

FEATUREING:

• Daily fresh, local, natural lunch
• Outdoor playgrounds • Indoor gym
• Community garden
• Bright, spacious classrooms
• Convenient location
• Abundant parking

Schedule a visit to learn about our individualized curriculum and unique team approach. Call Educational Director Barbara Streeter at (216) 929-0194.

19910 Malvern Road, Shaker Heights, OH 44122
(216) 991-4472 • www.hannaperkins.org

Heights Observer December 1, 2012

OPINION/LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The right start lasts a lifetime

Hanna Perkins School

NOW ENROLLING FOR FALL 2013

A FOCUS ON:

• Lifelong academic learning
• Building relationships
• Curiosity and creativity
• Mastery of feelings/self-control
• Problem solving
• Self advocacy

FEATUREING:

• Daily fresh, local, natural lunch
• Outdoor playgrounds • Indoor gym
• Community garden
• Bright, spacious classrooms
• Convenient location
• Abundant parking

Schedule a visit to learn about our individualized curriculum and unique team approach. Call Educational Director Barbara Streeter at (216) 929-0194.

19910 Malvern Road, Shaker Heights, OH 44122
(216) 991-4472 • www.hannaperkins.org

Height performance of ‘Phantom’ was spectacular

To the Editor:

As a former resident of Cleveland Heights, I was delighted to be asked to attend the Saturday performance of “Phantom of the Opera” at Heights High. Having seen “Phantom” three times on professional stages and once at the movies, I was somewhat doubtful, in advance, of the quality of a high school performance. This is one of the most difficult of all Broadway shows—voically and musically.

There were no doubts, however, once the curtain went up and the overture began. I was so amazed and thrilled that I must admit I cried, unashamedly, throughout the play. The young singers, dancers and orchestra players were close to perfect in their renditions of the difficult vocal and instrumental scores, the sets and costumes were magnificent, and the inclusion of middle school and elementary school students was pure genius. I would urge all community members to attend future musicals at Heights High whenever they are presented.

A young woman sitting in front of me told me, at intermission, that her daughter was one of the elementary school children who was performing. At the end, I tapped her on the shoulder and remarked, “You CERTAINLY have something to look forward to.” Her response? “THIS is why we stayed in Cleveland Heights!”

BRavo to the cast, orchestra members, crew, staff and parents who made “Phantom” such a success, and Kudos to Craig McGaughey, producer and Heights High vocal music director, and Daniel Heim, Heights High Symphony director. Thank you for a spectacular evening!

Joyce W. Hoffer

Lyndhurst

Buy local. Your merchants are your neighbors too.

CAPTURE YOUR MEMORIES

Truly unique gifts.

For a gift that will never be forgotten: Choose from our selection of fine art and prints, or frame a favorite memory for year-round enjoyment.

www.shorecarpet2.com

CAPTUR YOUR MEMORIES

Truly unique gifts.

For a gift that will never be forgotten: Choose from our selection of fine art and prints, or frame a favorite memory for year-round enjoyment.

www.shorecarpet2.com

CAPTURE YOUR MEMORIES

Truly unique gifts.

For a gift that will never be forgotten: Choose from our selection of fine art and prints, or frame a favorite memory for year-round enjoyment.

www.shorecarpet2.com

CAPTURE YOUR MEMORIES

Truly unique gifts.

For a gift that will never be forgotten: Choose from our selection of fine art and prints, or frame a favorite memory for year-round enjoyment.

www.shorecarpet2.com

CAPTURE YOUR MEMORIES

Truly unique gifts.

For a gift that will never be forgotten: Choose from our selection of fine art and prints, or frame a favorite memory for year-round enjoyment.

www.shorecarpet2.com
Appreciating hyper-local holiday shopping

Bob Rosenbaum

When did holiday shopping become a contact sport? If I'm to believe what I see in the media, people map out their shopping routes like a football team plans its play. It's like a high-stakes game in which they win when they own a portion of the mall and lose when they're stuck in line. And who wins? The stores.

I appreciate the thoughtful selection of items aesthetically presented in a small space. I appreciate the artisans from here and around the world who help fill our independent stores with creative, handmade items—some of use, some of beauty, some of both—at prices that are often surprisingly low.

I appreciate the friends and neighbors who invest their lives in creating shops specifically to serve the needs of people who live in the Heights, and I take special pleasure in the act of spending my hard-earned money with them.

As I shop for the many people in my life who are fortunate to have all that they really need, I appreciate the chance to buy gifts that have layers of meaning: style, utility, individuality, humanity and locality. I appreciate that all of this will probably cost less than agonizing over the size and color of sameness at the mall or “lifestyle center.”

It’s growing harder to find a community where you can celebrate a hyper-local holiday season. I appreciate that I happen to live in one of them. Perhaps you’ll join me by doing some of your shopping with our creative and varied local merchants.

Bob Rosenbaum is a lifetime resident of Cleveland Heights. He operates a small consulting practice and manages advertising and market development for the Heights Observer.

Education in the age of the iPad: How can we adapt?

Alastair Pearson

Heights residents agree that the thefts that forced the district to overhaul its technology policy were contemptible, and represent a moral failure on the part of those who allegedly robbed middle schoolers of the iPads they were given to improve their computer proficiency.

Our community will not tolerate wrongdoing, and in many respects it has been cheering to see how quickly local government, law enforcement and citizens have reacted to protect schoolchildren and ensure no more thefts take place.

However, it has become clear that—given the cost of the devices, and the high value many place on access to the kind of technology used by Heights students—the conditions that led to the thefts are not likely to change in the near future.

To make an informed decision about the future of digital devices in our schools, we must take an objective look at the role computers should play in education and how to adapt that to Cleveland Heights.

As a veteran of the Heights public school system until eighth grade, I remember the beginning of our district’s campaign to make technology a part of education. It began with MacBooks; small, expensive, and fragile laptops that were nonetheless a boon to teachers whose students may not have had access to computers at home. Although the laptops had great transformative potential, it was clear that students were benefiting by becoming more proficient in using tools that would help them become better prepared for an increasingly digital way of life.

As financial realities have arisen and the district’s methodology has changed, Heights schools have adopted a variety of devices depending on the age and location of the students involved. Although individual students and teachers may have experienced difficulties in implementing technology into their daily routine, anyone involved in our school system would likely tell you that computers belong in our classrooms.

For those students who are unable to afford technology on their own, school technology provides a helping hand into an unfamiliar world. For those students who don’t understand how to productively use technology, classroom instruction provides useful advice. In an age when the national economy is based on information, and computer literacy is a must-have skill, it is clear that our schools must graduate students who are fluent in the digital world. The only question is how to make that goal a reality.

To integrate technology into Cleveland Heights education, our foremost priority should be ensuring the safety of students. Students cannot be tasked with transporting technology that could potentially put them into danger in their own neighborhoods. The district must ensure that the interaction between students and expensive technology does not put those students at risk. With a responsible plan of action that coordinates the location of the students involved. Alastair Pearson

The 2th Annual Alumni Hockey Game

Wednesday, December 26, 2012

Cleveland Heights Ice Rink

Game #1
5:00 pm
1973-1995

Game #2
6:45 pm
1996-2012

Free and open to the community!

For more information visit www.bardenbenner.org

Barden Benner Carter Memorial Fund
12th Annual Alumni Hockey Game

Barle Soup & Sandwich

Homemade Soup | Artisan Sandwiches | Gourmet Salads | Fresh Baked Goods

Our beautiful Garden Oasis was recently featured on the Heights Heritage Home & Garden Tour.

Our heritage, Garden Oasis was recently featured on the Heights Heritage Home and Garden Tour.

Free and open to the community!

For more information visit www.bardenbenner.org

Barden Benner Carter Memorial Fund, 1073 Woodview Rd, Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44121
Alex Quintana becomes U.S. citizen

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Alex Quintana, co-owner of Quintana’s Barber & Dream Spa and Cleveland Heights resident, became a citizen of the United States last month. On Nov 16, surrounded by family and friends, Quintana took the oath of citizenship at the United States District Court in downtown Cleveland as one of a long journey.

Quintana came to the United States when he was four years old. “My mom Aurora, dad Pedro, and I came in February of 1976,” said Quintana. “We were political refugees. My dad had just spent the last three and a half years in a Chilean concentration camp. My dad and all his brothers were unionists, which is what landed them all there with the coup and Pinochet’s regime.”

Quintana said that it was luck that landed them in the United States. “Amnesty International had asked several countries if they would offer asylum,” he said. “No one got to choose what country they went to; it was a lottery. Two of my uncles went to Germany. Our family and my uncle David and his family came to Cleveland, Ohio.”

Local churches sponsored the families and helped them transition to a new life. “My uncle David’s family was sponsored by the Greater Lutheran Church of Cleveland,” said Quintana. “My parents and I were sponsored by Shaker Heights Christian Church. The church helped us with housing, English classes and jobs. It also surrounded us with wonderful people who helped us assimilate to this country.”

Quintana grew up in Cleveland Heights. He attended Noble Elementary and Monticello Middle schools, and graduated from Cleveland Heights High School in 1991. Quintana met his future wife, Dawn Mongelluzzi, at a tennis court. “But it wasn’t until years later that we started dating,” he said. “The couple married on Nov 15, 2002. Both had started their own businesses; Quintana a barber shop and Mongelluzzi a day spa. “We bought the building on South Taylor Road in April 2003,” said Quintana. “We remedied the space and opened on Nov 15 of that same year, on our one-year anniversary.”

The couple combined business, Quintana’s Barber & Dream Spa, is an anchor of the Cedar Taylor neighborhood, and both Quintanas are leaders in the business community and active supporters of local causes.

Quintana said he became a citizen too late to vote in this year’s election, but that he is looking forward to the next one. “I didn’t think that I would feel any different becoming a citizen, but I was wrong,” he said. “What I realized is that no matter how politically refugees. My dad had just spent the last three and a half years in a Chilean concentration camp. My dad and all his brothers were unionists, which is what landed them all there with the coup and Pinochet’s regime.”

Quintana said that it was luck that landed them in the United States. “Amnesty International had asked several countries if they would offer asylum,” he said. “No one got to choose what country they went to; it was a lottery. Two of my uncles went to Germany. Our family and my uncle David and his family came to Cleveland, Ohio.”

Local churches sponsored the families and helped them transition to a new life. “My uncle David’s family was sponsored by the Greater Lutheran Church of Cleveland,” said Quintana. “My parents and I were sponsored by Shaker Heights Christian Church. The church helped us with housing, English classes and jobs. It also surrounded us with wonderful people who helped us assimilate to this country.”

Quintana grew up in Cleveland Heights. He attended Noble Elementary and Monticello Middle schools, and graduated from Cleveland Heights High School in 1991. Quintana met his future wife, Dawn Mongelluzzi, at a tennis court. “But it wasn’t until years later that we started dating,” he said. “The couple married on Nov 15, 2002. Both had started their own businesses; Quintana a barber shop and Mongelluzzi a day spa. “We bought the building on South Taylor Road in April 2003,” said Quintana. “We remedied the space and opened on Nov 15 of that same year, on our one-year anniversary.”

The couple combined business, Quintana’s Barber & Dream Spa, is an anchor of the Cedar Taylor neighborhood, and both Quintanas are leaders in the business community and active supporters of local causes.

Quintana said he became a citizen too late to vote in this year’s election, but that he is looking forward to the next one. “I didn’t think that I would feel any different becoming a citizen, but I was wrong,” he said. “What I realized is that no matter how
University Heights City Council
Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 15, 2012 Special meeting
All council members were present.

Proposal to merge fire departments
Phil Kouwe of Emergency Services Consult-
ing International presented his company’s proposal to merge the fire departments of University Heights and Shaker Heights. The study was paid for with a $25,000 deposit from the Cleveland Foundation, $8,000 from Uni-
versity Heights, and $17,000 from Shaker Heights. The remaining $15,000 from the Cleveland Foundation grant is to be used for implementa-
tion costs.

The company evaluated the current levels of service and need in each city and considered financial and logistical factors and public infor-
mation from each community.

Both departments are structurally and operationally similar, and share a joint dispatch center with Cleveland Heights. Shaker Heights has four and a half administrative staff and 51 oper-
ational staff in two fire stations. The city owns two engines, three ambulances, and one ladder truck. University Heights has one ad-
ministrative staff (the chief) and 26 operational staff in one fire station. University Heights owns one engine, two ambulances, and one ladder truck.

The current two fire chiefs should be reduced to one with the possibility of adding a training position. Using a four-minute response time. University Heights currently has two engines and one ladder truck. University Heights owns one engine, two ambulances, and one ladder truck.

The company recommended that University Heights and Shaker Heights, the two fire departments, merge to create one fire department.

The council agreed to proceed with the merge and will work on the details in the future.

Marijuana possession
Council reduced the penalty for possession of marijuana drug paraphernalia from a fourth de-
gree to a minor misdemeanor, bringing local laws into alignment with legislation passed by the Ohio legislature. The penalty in the most extreme case could cause a violator to lose his driver’s license. The penalty is at the discretion of the judge.

Anthony J. Coyne
Council appointed Anthony J. Coyne as law di-
rector effective Nov. 1. His pay will be $45,000 per year plus $175 per hour for extra litigation services authorized by council.

Technology Advisory Commission
Councilwoman Susan Pardee, chair of the Civic Information Committee, announced that the com-
mittee is looking for community members to join the newly formed Technology Advisory Commis-
sion. Those interested should send a letter to the clerk of council.

It happens every year
At this time –
you end up having dinner with those neighbors
you can’t stand.
your brother-in-law
invites you for drinks,
and he’s a jerk.
your daughter needs
your credit card,
and your wife
has inspired madness.
so there –
happy holidays.

love craig
Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 15, 2012
Mayor Edward Kelley was excused.

Salt storage facility
Council authorized an amended agreement with CT Consultants Inc. for the architectural and engineering services for a new salt storage facility, with expenses not to exceed $18,000, and also an agreement with Legacy Building Solutions for the materials and installation services, expenses not to exceed $270,000. The salt storage facility at the old dairy on Warrensville Center Road is in disrepair and is unsafe for occupancy. It must be demolished and rebuilt before winter. At least 15 companies were contacted, and the steel-formed tension-fabric structure from Legacy was the best and most economical. A different contractor will construct the concrete foundation. Vice Mayor Dennis Wilcox noted that the facility is shared with University Heights and the school board—an excellent example of regionalism.

Leaf pick up
Leaf pick up from tree lawns will begin Oct. 29 and continue for five weeks. Each street will have two or three collections. Before and after these dates, leaves must be bagged in town and leaf bags.

Home investment funding
Council authorized an agreement with the Cuyahoga County Executive for receipt of Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) funding for homeowner rehabilitation ($179,701).

November 7, 2012
All council members were present.

Nighttown patio expansion
Council authorized an agreement with Nighttown Inc. for an easement of approximately six feet onto the city parking lot to allow an extension of the dining patio. The area affected is a currently mostly landscaped. While this will not affect the number of parking spaces available, the spaces will be smaller, and for compact cars.

New owner for diners
Council authorized an agreement with The Katz Club, LLC, for a loan under the Economic Development Loan Fund Program for assistance with a catering facility and restaurant, Katz’ Kitchen and Catering, to be located at 1975 Lee Road on the site of the currently closed diners. The loan will be $200,000 at an interest rate of three percent, with a seven-year repayment schedule after one year’s deferral. Up to $50,000 may be forgiven based on the city income taxes generated by the business during 2014–18.

The new owner, Douglass Katz of East Overlook Road, is an established restaurateur and owner of Fire Food and Drink in Shaker Square. Katz, who was present, said he intends to restore the 1940–50’s look of the diners and the landscaping. He described his restaurant business experience and his desire to work in the community where he lives. The plan is to have the restaurant open and running by March 2013.

In an e-mail on Nov. 1, Terry Killeen, manager of external affairs for FirstEnergy Service Company, reported to Mayor Kelley that Cleveland Heights had 3,953 customers without power, down from 13,501 at the height of the storm. Killeen stated that power was restored to the Lee Road Library—which is a back-up emergency shelter—the previous evening, and that crews were working to restore power to the Cleveland Heights Community Center, which is also an emergency shelter.

“Crews made significant headway clearing hazard (wire down) calls yesterday and overnight,” wrote Killeen. “At times, crews were able to close a fuse after clearing a hazard, which provided restoration to a group of customers. Unfortunately, some customers in the same area remained off. Total restored to all these customers was not possible as line crews needed to get to other hazard calls in order to preserve life.”

Mayor Kelley reported that residents were concerned about seeing multiple crews visiting the same location, and Killeen said that FirstEnergy had called in crews from Illinois, Missouri, Utah, Michigan, Indiana, Colorado, Dayton and Toledo to assist with restoration efforts.

On the morning of Friday, Nov. 2, Killeen reported to Mayor Kelley that there were still 2,609 customers in Cleveland Heights without power. “Crews continue to respond to wire down calls. This continues to be the priority,” Killeen said.

Council Member Stein said that he believed power had been restored to all Cleveland Heights residents by Sunday evening, Nov. 4.

“Most of my information came from the news,” said Stein. “First Energy did not communicate well with residents or the city.” Mayor Kelley and Councilman Stein plan to meet with John Skory, president of First Energy, on Dec. 3 to discuss the city’s concerns, as well as needed upgrades to the electrical grid to prevent recurrent power outages in the city.

Deanna Bomar Fisher is executive direc-
tor of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

Join us on

Christmas Eve
4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Candlelight Service and Live Nativity
11:00 p.m.
Candlelight Service, Chancel Choir, Bell Choir and String Quartet

Dr. Charles D. Yoost
Senior Pastor
“Something New For Christmas!”

2537 Lee Road
Cleveland Heights
(216) 321-8880
www.chsaviour.org

CHURCH of the SAVIOUR

www.heightsobserver.org
CH couple remembered by their pastor

Simone Quartell

Gregory and Elise Lindsay were remembered by their church pastor, Charles Yoost, of Church of the Saviour in Cleveland Heights, as very loving, caring and giving people, who everyone thought well of and liked.”

The couple were found dead in their home on East Monmouth Road in Cleveland Heights on Nov. 8. The cause of the death was ruled accidental carbon monoxide poisoning.

A funeral service was held Friday, Nov. 16 at Church of the Savior.

The couple’s son Dan lives in Shaker Heights with his wife, Courtney, and their children, Ben and Megan. The Lindsay’s daughter Gillian lives in Chicago with her husband, John, and their youngest daughter, Dana, lives in San Francisco.

“I was hoping it wasn’t true when I got the news. I couldn’t believe it,” said Yoost. “They were only 62, so young to die so suddenly”

Yoost said he has known the family since 1998, when he took over as pastor at the church. The Linsdays were active in the church, and attended services regularly. He recalled that the family would snowblow the sidewalk from their house to the church in the winter. Their children Dan and Gillian were both married at the church.

Greg and Elise Lindsay were high school sweethearts. All three of their children attended Cleveland Heights-University High public schools. Elise was director of international student services at Case Western Reserve University, and Greg had retired from LTV Steel.

Simone Quartell, a Heights High graduate, is a student at Cleveland State University and a Heights Observer intern.

International Human Rights Day at Saint Alban’s

Megan Brenner

The United Nation’s General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the first global proclamation of its kind, on Dec. 10, 1948. Each year, people around the world gather to celebrate International Human Rights Day (IHRD), and this year the people at Saint Alban Episcopal Church have decided to host two events in its honor.

St. Alban’s invites the public to take part in a simple community meal on Dec. 9 at 6 p.m. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian options will be available and the dinner is free. This is an opportunity to meet others who are interested in human rights and social justice issues. Gather with others on Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. for a candlelight vigil to remember the people at the public. The Saint Alban’s community extends the use of its space to act as an open place for learning and discussion in the hope that IHRD will be a catalyst for more gatherings, events and opportunities to advocate for human rights in the Cleveland area. Saint Alban’s was inspired to host an event by the Blue Scarf movement, which was started by a group of women in Kandahar, Afghanistan, who wore blue scarfs and publicly prayed for peace. They chose the color blue to represent the sky we all share. The movement has grown to become a global phenomenon.

Saint Alban Episcopal Church has functioned as a neighborhood church for human rights and social justice issues. Gather with others on Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. for a candlelight vigil to remember those who have been affected by human rights violations and honor the activists from the past and present who strive for equality. Those who are interested in attending one or both of these events can register at http://stalbans-ibrd.romebric.com.

Both events will be held at Saint Alban Episcopal Church, 2555 Euclid Heights Blvd., and are free and open to the public.

New signs mark Euclid Golf and Shaker Farm National Register historic districts

In November, the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission installed historic district signs at key entrance points to two of the city’s 11 National Register historic districts: Euclid Golf, which was listed in 2002, and Shaker Farm, which was listed in 2012. New signs for the Shaker Farm district were installed at Fairmount Boulevard and Sheakespeare Road, West St. James Parkway at the Roxboro schools, and Lee and Fairmead roads. The Shaker Farm district was added to the Fairmount Boulevard Historic District signs at Coventry Road and Fairmount Boulevard and at Wellington Road and Fairmount. New signs for Euclid Golf were erected at Ardleigh Drive and Fairmount Boulevard, Scarborough Road and Demington Drive, Coventry and Clarkson roads, and Demington Drive and Cedar Road. Euclid Golf was added to the existing Fairmount Boulevard Historic District signs at Coventry Road and Fairmount. The base of the sign at Fairmount Boulevard and Cedar Road was found to have rusted through, causing the sign to fall over. The city plans to replace the sign in the spring when it installs signs for the soon-to-be-listed Euclid Heights Historic District.
Fun holiday activities for seniors and their families

The Senior Section

Ronald Werman

December brings many fun social and cultural activities for Heights seniors and their families. Many are listed here. Call ahead to check if reservations are required, and to confirm handicapped accessibility if needed. Events are free, unless otherwise noted.

A Market Bazaar will be held at McGregor on Dec. 7 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Holiday gifts, keepsakes and baked goods will be for sale. McGregor will also host Holiday Storytelling with Zeta Phi Beta on Dec. 8 at 3:30 p.m. (14900 Private Drive, Cleveland, 216-371-8200.)

Church of the Saviour will host a Festival of Lessons and Carols on Dec. 9 starting at 10:15 a.m. The program features organist Robert Day, a brass quintet and more than 75 singers. (2537 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-321-8880.)

The First Baptist Church will hold a Lesson and Carols program on Dec. 9 from 4–6 p.m. (6350 Fairmount Blvd., Shaker Heights, 216-932-7480.)

At 7 p.m. on Dec. 9, the Western Reserve Chorale performs its 21st annual holiday concert at Grace Lutheran Church (150-201 Cedar Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-321-2780.)

The Homewood Residence at Rockefeller Gardens will hold a Holiday Karaoke Party on Dec. 10 at 2 p.m. (3171 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-321-6511.)

The annual Shabbos Chanukah Lunchcheon will take place at the Heights Jewish Center Synagogue on Dec. 15. Davening begins at 9 a.m., and the luncheon follows at 11:30 a.m. $12 for adults, $8 for children ages 5–12, and free for children under 5. (14270 Cedar Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-323-1958.)

McGregor will hold a Resident’s Holiday Concert on Dec. 16 at 2:30 p.m. and a holiday performance by the Hillcrest Concert Band on Dec. 18 at 7 p.m.

The Homewood Residence will host a performance by the Chessed Fairmount Temple Singers on Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. It will also host Halle’s on the Road, a historic look at the Halle Brothers store, on Dec. 10 at 2 p.m., and a winter concert by the Canterbury Glee Club on Dec. 21 at 9:30 a.m.

A Winter Centerpiece Workshop will be held at the Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center on Dec. 21 at 11 a.m. Fresh greens will be provided, and decorations are suitable for any holiday. $5 (1 Monticello Blvd., Cleveland Heights, 216-691-7377.)

The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes has planned a Christmas Bird Count for Dec. 22 at 8 a.m. The program includes a bird walk to identify resident winter birds. ($600 South Park Blvd., Shaker Heights, 216-321-9353.)

Saint-Saens “Christmas Oratorio” will be performed at Fairmount Presbyterian Church on Dec. 23 at 11 a.m. The church will also host a Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship on Dec. 24 at 7:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. (5757 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights, 216-321-8800.)

On Dec. 25, the Maltez Museum of Jewish Heritage will host its Chinese Food and Movie Day from 1–4 p.m. Films are from Israel. $12 for adults, $10 for seniors, $5 for children ages 5–11, free for children under 5. (5939 Richmond Road, Beachwood, 216-931-9575.)

The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center is throwing a New Year’s Eve party on Dec. 27 from noon to 3 p.m. Lunch and entertainment will be provided. $12.

There will be a Rwazanaa program and storytelling event at the Homewood Residence on Dec. 29 at 2 p.m. Happy holidays to all of our readers, and best wishes for a wonderful new year!

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

Journey to Bethlehem at Disciples Christian Church

Ronald Werman

To help get into the Christmas spirit, immerse yourself in the marketplace of Bethlehem at the time of Jesus’ birth. Enjoy the holiday season with a Journey to Bethlehem on Sunday, Dec. 9, from 2 to 5 p.m. at Disciples Christian Church.

Journey to Bethlehem is a free walk-through drama that recreates the sights and sounds of Bethlehem’s marketplace—without cell phones, text messages, Facebook or Twitter. GPS may get you to Disciples Christian Church, but you will not need it to get to Bethlehem.

Participants will have an audience with King Herod and be counted in the census. They will be approached by guards. Basketmakers, woodworkers, bakers and weavers will display their wares. Animals will walk beside you as the procession moves toward the stable and the discovery of the newborn baby.

While waiting to enter Bethlehem, participants will be entertained by No Strings Attached puppets and members of the music ministry. Disciples Christian Church is located at 3663 Mayfield Road (at Yellowstone Road, across from Severance Town Center) in Cleveland Heights. For more information, call 216-321-5344 or visit, www.dccchristian.org.

Ronald Werman is an elder of Disciples Christian Church.

THE SENIOR SECTION

Dec. 1, 2012

While waiting to enter Bethlehem, baby Jesus will be discovered as the procession moves toward the stable. Animals will walk beside you, bakers and weavers will display their wares. Basketmakers, woodworkers, and more than 75 singers. (2537 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-321-8880.)

The First Baptist Church will hold a Lesson and Carols program on Dec. 9 from 4–6 p.m. (6350 Fairmount Blvd., Shaker Heights, 216-932-7480.)

At 7 p.m. on Dec. 9, the Western Reserve Chorale performs its 21st annual holiday concert at Grace Lutheran Church (150-201 Cedar Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-321-2780.)

The Homewood Residence at Rockefeller Gardens will hold a Holiday Karaoke Party on Dec. 10 at 2 p.m. (3171 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-321-6511.)

The annual Shabbos Chanukah Luncheon will take place at the Heights Jewish Center Synagogue on Dec. 15. Davening begins at 9 a.m., and the luncheon follows at 11:30 a.m. $12 for adults, $8 for children ages 5–12, and free for children under 5. (14270 Cedar Road, Cleveland Heights, 216-323-1958.)

McGregor will hold a Resident’s Holiday Concert on Dec. 16 at 2:30 p.m. and a holiday performance by the Hillcrest Concert Band on Dec. 18 at 7 p.m.

The Homewood Residence will host a performance by the Chessed Fairmount Temple Singers on Dec. 16 at 2 p.m. It will also host Halle’s on the Road, a historic look at the Halle Brothers store, on Dec. 10 at 2 p.m., and a winter concert by the Canterbury Glee Club on Dec. 21 at 9:30 a.m.

A Winter Centerpiece Workshop will be held at the Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center on Dec. 21 at 11 a.m. Fresh greens will be provided, and decorations are suitable for any holiday. $5 (1 Monticello Blvd., Cleveland Heights, 216-691-7377.)

The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes has planned a Christmas Bird Count for Dec. 22 at 8 a.m. The program includes a bird walk to identify resident winter birds. ($600 South Park Blvd., Shaker Heights, 216-321-9353.)

Saint-Saens “Christmas Oratorio” will be performed at Fairmount Presbyterian Church on Dec. 23 at 11 a.m. The church will also host a Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship on Dec. 24 at 7:30 p.m. and 11 p.m. (5757 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights, 216-321-8800.)

On Dec. 25, the Maltez Museum of Jewish Heritage will host its Chinese Food and Movie Day from 1–4 p.m. Films are from Israel. $12 for adults, $10 for seniors, $5 for children ages 5–11, free for children under 5. (5939 Richmond Road, Beachwood, 216-931-9575.)

The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center is throwing a New Year’s Eve party on Dec. 27 from noon to 3 p.m. Lunch and entertainment will be provided. $12.

There will be a Rwazanaa program and storytelling event at the Homewood Residence on Dec. 29 at 2 p.m. Happy holidays to all of our readers, and best wishes for a wonderful new year!

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

Spice sellers at Journey to Bethlehem.

Do what you love

the winespotonline.com 2271 Lee Road-Cleveland Heights p 216.342.3623

• wine & beer for holiday parties—call us
• gift baskets for the holidays
• unique gifts for wine & beer lovers
• we now have groupons—fill one up!

Fun holiday activities for seniors and their families

Ronald Werman

To help get into the Christmas spirit, immerse yourself in the marketplace of Bethlehem at the time of Jesus’ birth. Enjoy the holiday season with a Journey to Bethlehem on Sunday, Dec. 9, from 2 to 5 p.m. at Disciples Christian Church.

Journey to Bethlehem is a free walk-through drama that recreates the sights and sounds of Bethlehem’s marketplace—without cell phones, text messages, Facebook or Twitter. GPS may get you to Disciples Christian Church, but you will not need it to get to Bethlehem.

Participants will have an audience with King Herod and be counted in the census. They will be approached by guards. Basketmakers, woodworkers, bakers and weavers will display their wares. Animals will walk beside you as the procession moves toward the stable and the discovery of the newborn baby.

While waiting to enter Bethlehem, participants will be entertained by No Strings Attached puppets and members of the music ministry. Disciples Christian Church is located at 3663 Mayfield Road (at Yellowstone Road, across from Severance Town Center) in Cleveland Heights. For more information, call 216-321-5344 or visit, www.dccchristian.org.

Ronald Werman is an elder of Disciples Christian Church.

www.heightsobserver.org
First Baptist Youth Christmas tree lot brings community together

Heights Observer Contributor

At the First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland, the annual Christmas tree sale provides an opportunity to reach out to the neighborhood. “We’re not just selling trees—we’re building relationships,” said Jae Williams, director of youth ministries.

The tradition of selling Christmas trees began in 2006, when the late Bill Cumming, a well-known physician and First Baptist member, planted a grove of trees at Camp Koinonia, a children’s summer camp in Geneva County. The idea was to bring a crop of trees each year to sell at the church.

From Bill Cumming and John Wilder, another church member who had his own Christmas tree farm, Williams said he learned three important things:

• Every customer is a potential relationship, another church member who had his own Christmas tree farm, Williams said he learned three important things:
• Every customer is a potential relationship.
• Keep the lot clean and attractive; make it a place for people to hang out and soak in the Christmas Spirit.
• There is no such thing as a bad tree; each can be shortened or trimmed into a nice Christmas tree for someone.

Williams sees the Christmas tree sale as an opportunity to both build relationships in the neighborhood and raise money for First Baptist’s youth scholarship fund. More importantly, said Williams, it involves young people in the life of the community. Open Doors Cleveland Heights is providing 25 young people to help unload and sell trees, and an additional 25 are from FBC Next Generation Open Gym Basketball.

The tree lot provides Christmas jobs for some of the youths. Those who have volunteered at least nine hours at the lot can apply for a handful of jobs that pay $9 an hour.

Williams recalled one elderly couple that came to buy a tree: “Some of the young people delivered the tree to their home, set it up and decorated it. The couple then brought friends to the lot who needed, and received, the same kind of help.”

Another time, a young couple came to the lot who had just been married at the courthouse. “They had five dollars,” said Williams, “and wondered if we had a ‘Charlie Brown Christmas tree’ they could buy. We gave them the best tree we had as a wedding gift.”

The lot, at 3630 Fairmount Blvd. in Shaker Heights, is open Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1–9 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tree prices range from $20–55.

The money raised supports First Baptist’s youth scholarship fund. More importantly, said Williams, it involves young people in the life of the community. Open Doors Cleveland Heights is providing 25 young people to help unload and sell trees, and an additional 25 are from FBC Next Generation Open Gym Basketball.

The tree lot provides Christmas jobs for some of the youths. Those who have volunteered at least nine hours at the lot can apply for a handful of jobs that pay $9 an hour.

Williams recalled one elderly couple that came to buy a tree: “Some of the young people delivered the tree to their home, set it up and decorated it. The couple then brought friends to the lot who needed, and received, the same kind of help.”

Another time, a young couple came to the lot who had just been married at the courthouse. “They had five dollars,” said Williams, “and wondered if we had a ‘Charlie Brown Christmas tree’ they could buy. We gave them the best tree we had as a wedding gift.”

The lot, at 3630 Fairmount Blvd. in Shaker Heights, is open Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1–9 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tree prices range from $20–55.

The money raised supports First Baptist’s youth scholarship fund. More importantly, said Williams, it involves young people in the life of the community. Open Doors Cleveland Heights is providing 25 young people to help unload and sell trees, and an additional 25 are from FBC Next Generation Open Gym Basketball.

The tree lot provides Christmas jobs for some of the youths. Those who have volunteered at least nine hours at the lot can apply for a handful of jobs that pay $9 an hour.

Williams recalled one elderly couple that came to buy a tree: “Some of the young people delivered the tree to their home, set it up and decorated it. The couple then brought friends to the lot who needed, and received, the same kind of help.”

Another time, a young couple came to the lot who had just been married at the courthouse. “They had five dollars,” said Williams, “and wondered if we had a ‘Charlie Brown Christmas tree’ they could buy. We gave them the best tree we had as a wedding gift.”

The lot, at 3630 Fairmount Blvd. in Shaker Heights, is open Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1–9 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tree prices range from $20–55.

The money raised supports First Baptist’s youth scholarship fund. More importantly, said Williams, it involves young people in the life of the community. Open Doors Cleveland Heights is providing 25 young people to help unload and sell trees, and an additional 25 are from FBC Next Generation Open Gym Basketball.

The tree lot provides Christmas jobs for some of the youths. Those who have volunteered at least nine hours at the lot can apply for a handful of jobs that pay $9 an hour.

Williams recalled one elderly couple that came to buy a tree: “Some of the young people delivered the tree to their home, set it up and decorated it. The couple then brought friends to the lot who needed, and received, the same kind of help.”

Another time, a young couple came to the lot who had just been married at the courthouse. “They had five dollars,” said Williams, “and wondered if we had a ‘Charlie Brown Christmas tree’ they could buy. We gave them the best tree we had as a wedding gift.”

The lot, at 3630 Fairmount Blvd. in Shaker Heights, is open Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1–9 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tree prices range from $20–55.

The money raised supports First Baptist’s youth scholarship fund. More importantly, said Williams, it involves young people in the life of the community. Open Doors Cleveland Heights is providing 25 young people to help unload and sell trees, and an additional 25 are from FBC Next Generation Open Gym Basketball.

The tree lot provides Christmas jobs for some of the youths. Those who have volunteered at least nine hours at the lot can apply for a handful of jobs that pay $9 an hour.

Williams recalled one elderly couple that came to buy a tree: “Some of the young people delivered the tree to their home, set it up and decorated it. The couple then brought friends to the lot who needed, and received, the same kind of help.”

Another time, a young couple came to the lot who had just been married at the courthouse. “They had five dollars,” said Williams, “and wondered if we had a ‘Charlie Brown Christmas tree’ they could buy. We gave them the best tree we had as a wedding gift.”

The lot, at 3630 Fairmount Blvd. in Shaker Heights, is open Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 1–9 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tree prices range from $20–55.

The money raised supports First Baptist’s youth scholarship fund. More importantly, said Williams, it involves young people in the life of the community. Open Doors Cleveland Heights is providing 25 young people to help unload and sell trees, and an additional 25 are from FBC Next Generation Open Gym Basketball.

The tree lot provides Christmas jobs for some of the youths. Those who have volunteered at least nine hours at the lot can apply for a handful of jobs that pay $9 an hour.

Williams recalled one elderly couple that came to buy a tree: “Some of the young people delivered the tree to their home, set it up and decorated it. The couple then brought friends to the lot who needed, and received, the same kind of help.”

Another time, a young couple came to the lot who had just been married at the courthouse. “They had five dollars,” said Williams, “and wondered if we had a ‘Charlie Brown Christmas tree’ they could buy. We gave them the best tree we had as a wedding gift.”
Leader of Middle East nonviolent resistance movement visits Cleveland

Mary Ann Kerr

Iyad Burnat, head of the nonviolent Popular Committee of the West Bank Palestinian village of Bil'in, will speak at River’s Edge on Sunday, Dec. 2 at 3 p.m. (3450 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland) and at Cleveland State University (CSU) on Monday, Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. (Student Center at 21st and Euclid, Room 313). The presentations, accompanied by photos and videos, are free and open to the public.

As members of Interfaith Peace Builders (IFPB) delegations, Cleveland Heights residents Jacquie Talbott, Douglas and Mary Ann Kerr and other Northeast Ohioans have traveled to Bil’in to meet with Bernat and other peacemakers on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Burnat is the leader of Bil’in’s popular resistance movement, which since 2005 has held weekly demonstrations against the building of the Israeli separation wall that has taken 60 percent of the village farming lands for Israeli settlements. The demonstrators are joined by Israeli and international peace activists, and have maintained a commitment to nonviolence.

Burnat’s trip to Cleveland is co-sponsored by IFPB, Cleveland Peace Action, CSU’s departments of history, modern languages and political science, and the Middle Eastern studies program, as well as the Cleveland Justice Team of the congregation of St. Joseph. For more information about IFPB peace delegations to the Middle East, go to www.interfaithpeacebuilders.org.

Mary Ann Kerr, longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and retired social worker, is a peace activist particularly interested in Middle East issues.

100% Natural Latex

Your Support for Our Local Businesses

Help your business AND do a good deed.

We talk about where we live and why we came here, and you don’t have to be a rocket scientist to figure out the negative consequences. So why am I writing this letter? It is more than a gentle, subliminal reminder. It’s a plea! SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT RETAILER THIS HOLIDAY SEASON. I fear that many of them will not survive the winter. We talk about where we live and why we choose to live in certain neighborhoods. We talk about what we value, but sometimes we don’t put a price on what it means to us. What about customer service? What about product knowledge? I could go on.

Remember that many of your local independent merchants donate to or sponsor events for organizations that are important to you. Studies show that a larger percentage of dollars stays in a community when you buy local versus when you purchase an item online or in a big box store. Sadly, if a local store closes, it not only becomes an empty storefront (for this economy, people are not lining up to rent spaces), but the trickle-down from this loss affects many people—the local accountant, lawyer, insurance broker and printer, to name a few. You likely know many people who would be affected by the closing of a mom and pop store.

During this holiday season, try to spread the “Good Gospel,” support your local bookstore, record shop, boutique, hardware store, coffee shop and toy store. Shop at the galleries, and support local artists. Support the small music clubs that hire local musicians. Eat at independent restaurants. Buy multiple gift certificates in small amounts to give away this holiday season.

Put the word out on the street. Pass this message on. Tell your neighbors, friends and coworkers. Teach your kids about the importance of supporting local businesses. It’s all about education and awareness.

Steve Presser
Owner of Big Fun Toy Store in Coventry Village and Cleveland Heights resident.

Advertise in the Observer: Help your business AND do a good deed.
Montford Community Garden Association prepares for first season

Jeff Coryell

As winter weather sets in, members of the Montford Community Garden Association are busy preparing to open their new garden on a vacant lot at the corner of Montford and Windsor roads.

"Now is the time to get everything in order," said Pat Byrne, association president and resident of nearby Englewood Road. "When the weather warms up we need to be ready to hit the ground running."

The Montford group formed last spring, following the demolition of a rundown house on the property by the Cuyahoga County Land Reutilization Corporation, commonly known as the Cuyahoga Land Bank.

About 30 residents showed up for the first meeting and were enthusiastic about creating an attractive new community garden close to home. The group selected officers and assigned members to work on club rules, sources for supplies, fundraising strategies, and communication with the city. The group created a website, www.montfordcommunitygarden.org, and arranged for the Ohio State University (OSU) Extension to collect soil samples for testing.

"There are no negatives in a project like this," said group member Cindy Bartels, who lives on Englewood Road. "Participating in a community garden gets you out in the sun and air, gives you healthier meals, gets you involved in the community, and even makes you happy when it rains." She noted that the garden is another step toward building a stronger community, commenting, "Shy places bring people together and a shared local space will bring a neighborhood together."

Mary Weems, a homeowner on Northampton Road, agrees. "What I hope will be accomplished is coming together as a community," she said. "I've been enjoying getting to know people who live around here." Weems is enthusiastic about making fresh food more available to the neighborhood. "A lot of what you buy in the stores comes from a long way away," she said. "It's much better to grow your own food, and a community garden is a wonderful way to bring more fresh produce into the area."

In addition to providing gardening space to participating members, the group expects to benefit neighbors in other ways. "We hope to section off part of the space as a community garden that anyone can use," said Bartels. "So you can do a little gardening and pick a tomato without committing your summer to it. Even nongardeners can stop by and smell the flowers."

The group plans to donate excess produce to local foodbanks. Community gardens are now permitted in residential zones in Cleveland Heights pursuant to amendments to the city zoning ordinance approved last May. After discussions with the city, title to the lot at Montford and Windsor roads was transferred from the Cuyahoga Land Bank to the city so that the Montford group could apply to the city for permission to operate a community garden there. The Montford group is the first to work with the city on a new community garden pursuant to the amended ordinance.

Fundraising is essential to establishing a new community garden. Start-up expenses include fencing, raised beds, soil, tools and other supplies. Garden participants will be expected to pay a fee to cover some of these costs, as well as water, which the city will provide through a metered tap to be installed at the site. The group is applying for start-up grants from the Fiskars Orange Thumb Project and the OSU Extension Suburban Community Garden Program. It also hopes to obtain donations from merchants and contributions from civic-minded residents who support the community garden movement.

To facilitate fundraising for the Montford garden, the nonprofit organization FutureHeights recently agreed to act as fiscal agent for the association, an arrangement that will allow contributors to take a tax deduction. FutureHeights has been pleased to serve as fiscal agent on several occasions to support nonprofit groups whose activities further our mission of community development and citizen engagement," said Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director. "As an organization we seek to promote productive uses of vacant lots, and we support community gardens as a tremendous community resource that helps strengthen our neighborhoods."

For more information about the Montford Community Garden, contact Pat Byrne, president, at pbyrne@kent.edu or 330-612-5821.

Jeff Coryell, a former lawyer, is an artist, community volunteer, and member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.

Happy Hour!
Mon thru Sat 4-9 p.m.
$5 Appetizers $2.50 Domestic Beers
$5 Wines $3.50 Imports
$5 Cocktails

Buy 1 entree or appetizer, get 1 for this ad.
Good at Cedar-Fairmount and Beachwood Place food court.

Call for free quote Mention this ad for 20% off
440-463-7379
www.ripleytreeservice.com
www.facebook.com/ripleyenterprises

RIPLEY ENTERPRISES TREE SERVICE
Careful, reliable and respectful of your yard
440-632-5256
www.ripleytreeservice.com
www.facebook.com/ripleyenterprises

FLOWERVILLE
Custom floral design for over 60 years!
www.flowerville.net
24 hr. secure online ordering
flowerville.net

Forest Hill Church
Forest Hill Church...come and see
3031 Monticello Blvd at Lee
216-911-7660
www.fhcopres.org

Cleveland Heights football coach Jeff Rotsky and co-captains Marcus McShephard, Noah Scalish, and Devonaker Sill presented Tom Mack (center) with a Cleveland Heights High School football jersey.

Mike Day courtesy ch-uh city school district
four PK-3 and three 4-8 buildings. The state currently licenses teachers either for kindergarten through third grade, when students are learning to read, or for fourth through eighth grade, where students use their mastery of reading to learn.

Talbert elaborated on the district’s position at the Nov. 14 meeting. “Our current configuration, with five or smaller elementary buildings, makes it difficult and cost prohibitive to offer the same high quality program in every building,” he said, “specifically specialty programs, such as gifted and special education.”

Heuer explained that Ohio is one of 22 states that recently adopted a comprehensive core curriculum, which will significantly change the way education is delivered and the way students, teachers and schools are evaluated. “The general consensus,” he said, “is that the model that will enable students to master the core curriculum is to put teachers in teams with work cohorts of students and with larger blocks of time.” He added that other districts look to the CH-UH district as a model for struggling urban schools.

“The research on teaming,” said Talbert, “tells us that effective teams are usually made up of five to seven teachers.” He added that other districts that the model that will enable students will have a team decision-making process. The committee’s goal would be to facilitate communication. It would have no decision-making power apart from the LFC as a whole.

After the meeting, committee members continued the discussion on the group’s blog site, www.chuhfacilities.org, which is open to the public. Krisy Gallagher, committee member, said online, “I do not think that we can vote on grade configuration recommendations at the next meeting. In fact, I don’t think we should vote on any of the considerations in isolation from the others. We cannot realistically select a grade configuration without looking at it in the context of the buildings we already have and their current condition, the space needed moving forward, costs, impact on neighborhoods, etc.”

In an e-mail, Mullen said, “I am not wedded to the need to decide grade configuration on Dec. 5. More important, I believe, is for the full committee to decide what our decision making structure will be.” He said he is looking forward to meeting with the newly formed executive committee to discuss the agenda for Dec. 5.

The LFC’s subcommittees—Buildings, Money and Community—meet in between meetings of the entire committee. The next LFC meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on Dec. 7 at Fairfax Elementary School. The committee meets again on Jan. 9, 2013. All meetings are open to the public.

For more information about the LFC and to listen to recordings of its meetings, visit www.chuhfacilities.org. To participate in a subcommittee, contact one of the leaders via e-mail.

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

Dec. 7 is deadline for Reaching Heights project grants

Audrey Wynne

As teachers throughout the Cleveland Heights-University Heights schools strive to implement new standards, update teaching methods and deliver high quality instruction, Reaching Heights supports their efforts through a competitive grant program. The 2012-13 Innovation in Education grants are designed to fund up to 12 projects that help redefine what innovation and excellence look like in CH-UH schools.

Reaching Heights will award up to $1,000 in grant funds. The grants may be used to cover equipment, materials, and costs associated with activities outside the school building, inter-school collaboration and conference presentations. Proposals may request the full $1,000, or may request smaller increments, thus allowing more than one proposal to be funded in this grant cycle.

Proposals are due by midnight on Dec. 7 and will be reviewed by the Reaching Heights Grants Committee. Funding decisions will be announced at the Reaching Heights Annual Meeting on Dec. 7.

“This is the next chapter in the long story of Reaching Heights supporting the work of teachers in our district,” said Patrick Mullen, executive director. “Since 1990, we’ve funded nearly 300 projects through School Team grants totaling more than $820,000.”

The Innovation in Education Grant Program provides funding for projects that:

• Implement an innovative means of teaching and learning
• Have a direct impact on increasing student achievement
• Collect and monitor data to show increased student achievement
• Engage CH-UH community resources as collaborative partners
• Make a positive impact on the CH-UH community

“Most of our earlier grant programs, while varied, had some focus on innovation,” said Bob Swaggard, a CH-UH program specialist and Reaching Heights board member who heads its grants committee. “The new Innovation Grant Program takes us back to our core principles, encouraging ingenuity and creativity.”

The online grant application can be found at www.reachingheights.org/programs/grants/.

Audrey Wynne is a member of the Reaching Heights Board of Directors.

Eat for Art!

13th annual Tommy's New Year's Day Pancake Breakfast Tuesday, January 1, 2013, 10 am–2 pm $10 adults/$5 children 12 & under all you can eat all proceeds benefit Heights Arts! Tip lavishly!

Tommy's 1824 Coventry in Cleveland Heights

Heights Observer December 1, 2012
Should we just say no?

Susie Kaeser

It is report card season for Ohio’s public schools—not its children, but its schools. If Ohio Department of Education personnel can clear up faulty attendance reports from some school districts, public school parents will soon receive the official state report card for their school.

Last month, I reported on the pre-liminary report card for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights schools. As I wrote the sidebar explaining the four measurements that are combined to create a school district’s rating—a shorthand way to judge their effectiveness—I was struck by how convoluted the system really is. It looks thoughtful, but it is mathematical magic.

Sadly, the system is designed to boil down the complexity of education into a one- or two-word rating. What good is that anyway? Furthermore, to do so, districts earn points toward their rating from four different measurement systems: State Indicators, Performance Index, Value Added and Annual Yearly Progress.

The odd thing is that all four measurements largely use the same evidence: student performance on the tests administered that year. Each statistic manipulates results in different ways to try to capture various aspects of student performance and what the school had to do with it.

This system looks scientific, complex, official. Yet testing experts say the tests are not appropriate for making high-stakes decisions. Recycling the same flawed test data in different valid ways doesn’t make the system more valid. In addition, we make huge decisions and formulate faulty perceptions based on the data.

Accountability in Ohio is based on the false assumption that standardized tests give accurate information about the quality of schools and the competence of the teachers in their classrooms. I agree that focusing on results is valuable. But learning is hard to measure.

Furthermore, standardized tests can’t tell us what part of students’ performance (even if it accurately measured what they know) is a result of their school experience. This has relevance because the ranking systems are there to judge school and educator quality.

As my friend Jan Resseger, a public school advocate who works throughout the nation for the United Church of Christ, reminds me, “Decades of research demonstrates that the one variable most closely associated with a child’s test score is the family’s income. Standardized test scores are, more than anything, a wealth indicator. This does not mean that poor children are unable to learn or that poverty is some kind of learning disability. It simply means that outside-of-school things, like hunger and economic stress and untreated dental pain, affect children’s learning at school just as private lessons and home computers and travel affect children’s learning at school.”

I want our elected officials to use their power to make educational success attainable for all of our children. I want them to focus less on measuring and blaming schools, and more on guaranteeing that every student attends a school that has the conditions for success. This means adequate resources for manageable class size, a broad and rich curriculum; up-to-date facilities and educational resources; outreach and inclusion of families; student supports; and time for teachers to engage in professional development, collaboration and planning. But it can’t stop there. They have to address the economic disparity that is resulting in an ever-growing number of children in poverty.

Parents in some communities are resorting to civil disobedience—keeping their kids home on testing days—to stop the damage to their children, schools, communities and confidence in public education itself caused by a flawed accountability system.

Is it time to join them and just say no to the test?

Susie Kaeser is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, former director of Reaching Heights, and serves on the national board of Parents for Public Schools.
Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 16, 2012
All board members were present.

Oxford pilot facility
Before the meeting, Joe Nicklos, principal of Oxford Elementary School, and his first-grade staff held an open house and gave a tour of the pilot facility at Oxford.

Transportation policies
Stephen Shergalis, director of business services, discussed the current transportation system. Statistics included:
- Cost per year for all transportation needs, discussed the current transportation system.

All board members were present.

OCTOBER 16, 2012

Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board

Exception to present policies:
Current district policies provide student transportation based on students' grades and the distance lived from schools. For kindergarten through grade five, it's one mile; for grades six through eight, it's two miles. No transportation is provided for grades nine through twelve. Route times are very specific.

Expectations must be written as NEOLA policy, and legal language must be written on these exceptions. A recommendation to appoint an appeals committee to review exceptions to transportation policy was discussed since none currently exists. A time frame for appeals must be established.

Social media policies
The board addressed needed changes to the NEOLA rules regarding social media. The board must determine the correct language for student and staff safety on social media such as Facebook. Personal text messages to students from teachers and coaches, etc., are discouraged. Teachers should communicate with students only on district teacher accounts, and no personal accounts can be used for instruction. The district legal department will review these recommendations.

The district legal department will review these recommendations.

The board addressed needed changes to the NEOLA rules regarding social media. The board must determine the correct language for student and staff safety on social media such as Facebook. Personal text messages to students from teachers and coaches, etc., are discouraged. Teachers should communicate with students only on district teacher accounts, and no personal accounts can be used for instruction. The district legal department will review these recommendations.

National Merit and Achievement Scholarships
Nine students, winners of the National Merit and Achievement Scholarships, were recognized.

Meadowbrook-Lee development
During the public participation period of the meeting, community members gave their views on the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) proposal for the Meadowbrook-Lee property. Later in the meeting, representatives from Cleveland Heights City Council, the developer, and the school district explained the compensation agreement. The board approved the TIF proposal, which includes an 80-percent tax reduction for 11 years. The schools will receive seven out of every ten dollars of the increase in collected taxes.

D.C. Field trip
The board approved the Wiley Middle School eighth-grade field trip to Washington, D.C. scheduled for May 15 - 17, 2013.

Updates/policy review
Joseph Micheller, director of special programs and compliance, gave an update for the Race for the Top and presented the second review of the transportation policy revisions.

Coventry building
The board approved a service management agreement with Open Office to manage the Coventry School building, and an amended lease agreement with Lake Erie ink, an academic-support nonprofit which is providing services to the school district and renting space at Coventry. Responding to board queries, Micheller said that about 50 percent of the former elementary school building is currently leased.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 7.
Beaumont Blue Streaks sign letters of intent

Rita Kueber

Beaumont School volleyball players Lauren Youngblood and Katie Siefert each signed a national letter of intent in November. The Beaumont seniors, members of the 2012 Division II State Champions team, have both received scholarships. Youngblood plans to attend Loyola University Maryland (Division I) and Siefert will attend Ashland University (Division II). Both athletes will graduate from Beaumont School in May 2013.

Beaumont School is a Catholic all-girls college prep high school in the Ursuline tradition that educates women for life, leadership and service.

Rita Kueber is the public relations and marketing manager for Beaumont School.

Ruffing Montessori awarded grant for marsh restoration project

Julie Huffke

Ruffing Montessori School has been awarded a $5,000 grant by the Ohio EPA’s Environmental Education Fund. The grant will facilitate a marsh restoration project in which Ruffing students in grades 4, 5 and 6 will work in collaboration with the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership.

The marsh to be restored is located in the Doan Brook Watershed. Planned restoration work includes the evaluation of the marsh habitat, identification of native species, removal of exotic species, and cultivation of seeds from native marsh plants for cold stratification and planting.

Mary Beth McCormack, Ruffing science teacher, and the students make the trek to the Nature Center each week, working for two to three hours at a time. Commenting on the award, McCormack remarked, “I am thrilled to have funding for this project because our students will be able to use new technologies to create a photo survey as well as digital maps of the habitat. Our students are not only learning about science, but also real-world applications of science to conservation efforts.”

Of 22 mini-grant applications considered, Ruffing’s was one of 12 selected for funding, and was awarded at the highest level. The Environmental Education Fund was created in 1990 to enhance awareness of environmental issues and to recognize stewardship activities. Grant funding is derived from civil penalties collected from violations of Ohio’s air and water pollution control regulations.

Ruffing Montessori School is an independent day school for children ages 18 months through eighth grade, and is located at 3180 Fairmount Blvd. in Cleveland Heights.

Julie Huffke is the director of institutional advancement for Ruffing Montessori School.
Integration is an integral component of all education, helping students make connections among disciplines so as to reinforce learning and critical thinking skills. Research shows that students involved in arts integration—defined as the teaching and learning through a creative process that connects an art form to another subject area—perform better in school and develop greater social, emotional and cognitive skills.

For these reasons, Ruffing Montessori School has undertaken an arts-integration focus for the current academic year. According to Gordon Maas, head of school, focusing on the arts was a natural fit for Ruffing.

“Ruffing’s Montessori curriculum is inherently an integrative and interdisciplinary approach. Infusing the arts within the classrooms, thereby inspiring writing, research and learning opportunities, is a natural extension of how children learn best. This, in collaboration with the remarkable arts community in Cleveland, gives our students a tremendous opportunity,” remarked Maas.

In early October, acclaimed spoken-word poets Sarah Kay and Phil Kaye of Project V.O.I.C.E. gave a rousing evening public performance, then spent the next day working with Ruffing elementary and middle school students. Ruffing continues its arts integration focus with a special collaboration with the Cavani Quartet and its award-winning Collage (Music and Poetry with Mwatabu Okantah) and M.A.P. Programs (Music, Art & Poetry). The Cavani Quartet is a professional quartet based in Cleveland. Two of its members, Annie Fullard and Kirsten Doctor, make regular appearances in the halls of Ruffing as parents.

The quartet members balance their professional tour schedule—including performances at Carnegie Hall and in major series and festivals throughout North America and Europe—with their passion for music education, appearing and teaching in schools across the country.

In early November, members of the Cavani Quartet spent time with Ruffing students, performing music and introducing them to the world of composers, instruments, imagination, creativity and theory. With humor, they reached both young toddlers and savvy pre-adolescent middle school students, while gaining respect for their performances. Over the next two months, Ruffing students will be listening to various musical pieces selected by Cavani members and creating written work, poetry and artistic pieces. This creative endeavor will culminate with a schoolwide performance with the Cavani Quartet in February.

For more information about the Cavani Quartet and its Collage and M.A.P. Programs, visit www.cavani.org.

Julie Haffke is the director of institutional advancement for Ruffing Montessori School.

Joy Henderson

Thirty-seven years ago, Heights High teacher Mark Sack was a student enrolled in a class about the literature of the Holocaust. This year, he became the fourth teacher in the school’s history to teach a class on the Holocaust.

“When I took the class here, it had a big impact on me,” he said. “I wanted to teach Lessons of the Holocaust because the Holocaust is an important part of human history where we can also explore issues important today—bullying, hate crimes and political polarization.”

He said he finds the class a natural environment for students to look beyond themselves and question their roles in creating a better world.

Including stories of Holocaust survivors has always been a part of the course. But this year there came a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, when the World Federation of Child Survivors of the Holocaust and Descendants Conference came to Cleveland in late October. The students were the only non-Holocaust survivors or descendants invited to the conference, among more than 400 attendees.

“It is one thing to read books about the Holocaust, it is quite another to hear the firsthand stories of survivors and their children and grandchildren,” said Sack.

At the conference, students attended a panel discussion, lunch conversations, a Jewish Family Service Association session, and a debriefing activity.

The panel discussion ended on an upbeat note when Heights High student Rayshawn Jackson assured the audience that because survivors and their descendants continue to share their stories, the lessons of the Holocaust will live on.

Students also met with author Philip Bialowitz, a survivor of the Sobibor death camp, where more than 250,000 men, women and children were murdered by the Nazis. He proudly told the students about his role in overpowered Nazi guards and freeing 200 slave laborers.

He has spent the last 25 years honoring revolting hero Aleksander Pechersky’s plea. “If anyone survives, bear witness to what happened here. Tell the world about this place.”

“The students were very moved by the stories they heard and the people they met,” said Sack. “We will continue to reflect on the experiences.”

Adrienne Yelsky, who taught Lessons of the Holocaust before her retirement, also accompanied the students.

Conference panelists included retired Heights teachers Sol Factor and Leatrice Rabinsky, both former Holocaust course teachers at Heights.

Student participation in the conference was made possible with a grant from the Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation.

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

For more information about the Cavani Quartet and its Collage and M.A.P. Programs, visit www.cavani.org.

Julie Haffke is the director of institutional advancement for Ruffing Montessori School.

Cavani Quartet performs and teaches at Ruffing Montessori School

Integration is an integral component of all education, helping students make connections among disciplines so as to reinforce learning and critical thinking skills. Research shows that students involved in arts integration—defined as the teaching and learning through a creative process that connects an art form to another subject area—perform better in school and develop greater social, emotional and cognitive skills.

For these reasons, Ruffing Montessori School has undertaken an arts-integration focus for the current academic year. According to Gordon Maas, head of school, focusing on the arts was a natural fit for Ruffing.

“Ruffing’s Montessori curriculum is inherently an integrative and interdisciplinary approach. Infusing the arts within the classrooms, thereby inspiring writing, research and learning opportunities, is a natural extension of how children learn best. This, in collaboration with the remarkable arts community in Cleveland, gives our students a tremendous opportunity,” remarked Maas.

In early October, acclaimed spoken-word poets Sarah Kay and Phil Kaye of Project V.O.I.C.E. gave a rousing evening public performance, then spent the next day working with Ruffing elementary and middle school students. Ruffing continues its arts integration focus with a special collaboration with the Cavani Quartet and its award-winning Collage (Music and Poetry with Mwatabu Okantah) and M.A.P. Programs (Music, Art & Poetry). The Cavani Quartet is a professional quartet based in Cleveland. Two of its members, Annie Fullard and Kirsten Doctor, make regular appearances in the halls of Ruffing as parents.

The quartet members balance their professional tour schedule—including performances at Carnegie Hall and in major series and festivals throughout North America and Europe—with their passion for music education, appearing and teaching in schools across the country.

In early November, members of the Cavani Quartet spent time with Ruffing students, performing music and introducing them to the world of composers, instruments, imagination, creativity and theory. With humor, they reached both young toddlers and savvy pre-adolescent middle school students, while gaining respect for their performances. Over the next two months, Ruffing students will be listening to various musical pieces selected by Cavani members and creating written work, poetry and artistic pieces. This creative endeavor will culminate with a schoolwide performance with the Cavani Quartet in February.

For more information about the Cavani Quartet and its Collage and M.A.P. Programs, visit www.cavani.org.

Julie Haffke is the director of institutional advancement for Ruffing Montessori School.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.

Cavani Quartet performs at Ruffing Montessori School in November.
Heights Libraries will turn former YMCA gym into new innovation center

Sheryl Banks

Fulfilling a promise made to the community in 2005 to fully renovate the old YMCA building on Lee Road, Heights Libraries will turn the former YMCA gymnasium space into the Heights Knowledge and Innovation Center (HKIC), a flexible 4,000-square-foot space designed to support the technological and workspace needs of local businesses, nonprofits and individuals. The gymnasium space is the last part of the YMCA building, now known as the West Wing, to be renovated. The building currently houses Dobama Theatre, Family Connections Little Heights Literacy Playroom and Heights Libraries’ computer lab and computer classroom. The gymnasium is directly above Dobama Theatre. Architects from Studio Techno designed the new space and Sterling Professional Group was chosen as the contractor. Construction started in November and is to be completed in April 2013 for a total cost of $485,000 from Heights Libraries’ Building and Repair Fund.

“The workspace and technological needs of our customers have increased enormously since our Lee Road branch was renovated in 2005,” said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director. “In 2009, we asked community stakeholders how they wanted us to use the gym space, and the response was overwhelmingly in favor of expanded work and technology space.”

Highlights of the new center include:

- An improved computer lab with 26 roofy work stations and computers featuring Microsoft Office software
- Expanded wireless access in the HKIC lounge area
- An additional small study room
- iPad rental (iPads must remain at HKIC)
- A special collection of business and technology-related books and magazines
- A production work area with office supplies, such as a copier, printer, scanner, fax machine, binding machine and laminating machine
- A video, sound and digital media lab

“People can come to HKIC to work on a résumé, apply for a job, relax and do some creative writing, try out an iPad, meet with their colleagues, put together a presentation, just about anything,” said Levin. “Studio Techno designed the space to be very flexible, allowing it to change and grow as technologies change and our customers’ needs change.”

In addition to the new HKIC space, the current computer lab will be renovated with a new ceiling, lighting and carpeting, and will become the new home of Family Connections Little Heights Literacy Playroom, which is currently on the second floor of the West Wing. Dobama Theatre will not be affected by the renovation.

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

Local author series at Coventry Village Library

Sheryl Banks

Join fellow book lovers this winter for Heights Libraries’ local author series, featuring Laura Taxel, newcomer Nivi Engineer, and Lauren Pacini.

The authors will read from their most recent works, take questions from the audience, and sign books.

All events take place on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. at the Coventry branch of Heights Libraries, located at 1925 Coventry Road in Cleveland Heights. The events are free and open to the public, but registration is required at www.heightslibrary.org or 216-321-3400.

Dec. 4: Laura Taxel, author of Cleveland’s West Side Market: 100 Years and Still Cooking

Taxel will read from her new book, co-authored by Marilou Suszko, and will talk about the two-year process of digging into historical records, interviewing hundreds of people, and collecting the memories and stories that enliven every page. Cleveland’s West Side Market chronicles the history of one of the oldest municipally owned and operated retail food markers in America. The book takes readers on a tour of the building and into the lives of vendors and shoppers. Readers will discover a whole world of foods, traditions, and rituals that are part of the Market culture.

Taxel has been writing about food and the people who prepare it for 25 years. Her articles appear in local, regional, and national publications. Taxel is a member of the International Association of Culinary Professionals and

Dec. 11: Nivi Engineer, author of The Indian Girl’s Definitive Guide to Staying Single

Engineer will read from her entertaining new book, a send-up of dating self-help guides with a unique cultural twist. Nivi Engineer holds a bachelor’s degree in English, focusing on creative writing, from Case Western Reserve University, and a master’s in computer science from Washington University in St. Louis. She lives in Cleveland Heights with her husband, three children and a puppy.

Jan. 22: Lauren Pacini, author of Shattered Dreams Revisited

Pacini’s book is a collection of black-and-white photographs examining the death and rebirth of Cleveland, accompanied by the author’s narrative, and prose and poetry by Cleveland-area students. It was published in cooperation with the Western Reserve Historical Society.

Pacini is a photographer and author whose primary focus is the urban landscape. Born in 1943, Pacini moved to Cleveland in 1950. As a photographer, Pacini strives to understand the story behind the subject matter to which he is drawn, and to convey that story through his art.

Sheryl Banks is the marketing and community relations manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.
Heights Libraries has earned five Journal's 2012 Index of Public Library received the highest rating in Heights Public Library has again re - terminal use.
its, program attendance and Internet entertainment with books and DVDs, more than ever, for everything from free soon. Our community depends on us...ourselves, started as bicycle outreach, which...Dobama board vice president, said, however, that other sources of revenue have been a problem and funds do not exist to increase the rent beyond an additional $400 per year. Dobama has offered to pay the additional $400 retroactively for the three years that it has occupied space in the library. After discussion, a unanimous board passed a resolution not to renegotiate the lease this time.

Another unresolved issue between the library and Dobama is the amount of liabil - for the library's insurance carrier...liability, $1 million, carried by Dobama...home, and Dobama's current fiscal year sales call...manager later said that there is no intention of renegotiating the lease at this time. Dobama...library, primarily because funds are not avai...planning for the library. For example, if a donor chose to gift the library with stock, the library would have to sell it. The foundation, however, would be able to hold stock.

Contractor chosen for Heights Knowledge - to Internet access and free computer...space will be changed. The art gallery space in the atrium will not be changed. The library would have to sell it. The foundation, however, would be able to hold stock.

September Public Service report highlights:
• Bill Rubin, librarian, gave the introductory session in a series of programs on genealog - research. Advanced programs will be scheduled:
  - Claire McMillan, author of Ohio's Lake Erie Win - eners, spoke about Ohio's wine history. Kara...content. Tonight's selection: A Noble Mystery Readers...orvil and Wilbur W right. Following the program there was a...Smaug the Dragon! The quest begins at 6:30 p.m. Registration required at www.heightslibrary.org. The Indian Girl's Definitive...the Shire to the Lonely Mountain. You can even fight Smaug the Dragon! The quest begins at 6:30 p.m. Registration required at www.heightslibrary.org.

Noble Neighborhood Library 2800 Noble Road, 216-321-4700


University Heights Library 13866 Cedar Road, 216-321-3711

Monday, Dec. 17, 7 p.m. Take Flight! Wright Brothers Day. Learn about Orville and Wilbur W right, then...results. Tonight's selection: Henry Drak, librarian, began Planet Storytime, focusing on exploring nature through stories, songs and hands-on examples.

What's going on at your library?

What could be better on a cold winter day than a cozy visit to the library? Visit www.heightslibrary.org to see programs for all ages. Or just stop in and borrow some books, DVDs and CDs, and hole up at home.

Coventry Village Library 1925 Coventry Road, 216-312-3400

Tuesday, Dec. 11, 7 p.m. Local Author Book Reading and Signing. Nivi Engineer reads from her entertain - new book The Indian Girl's Definitive Guide to Staying Single, a send up of dat - ing self-help guides with a cultural twist.

Lee Road Library 2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

Friday, Dec. 7, 6:30 p.m. The Hobbit Quest. Come see the library transformed into Middle Earth and retrace Bilbo's exciting journey through life-sized scenes from the Shire to the Lonely Mountain. You can even fight Smaug the Dragon! The quest begins at 6:30 p.m. Registration required at www.heightslibrary.org.
Christmas concert for kids from 2 to 92 at Church of the Saviour

Loretta Dahlstrom
Church of the Saviour will host singer-songwriter Chip Richter for a Christmas concert on Sunday, Dec. 16, at 7 p.m. in Calvary Hall. The performance will include stories, songs and laughter, for all ages to enjoy.

Richter tours nationally as a solo artist and with his band, The Munks. His gentle spirit and winsome style are particularly well-known to families who vacation at Lakeside in the summer. There, Richter and his family lead the popular God Squad program of stories, songs and Bible lessons for kids.

Enjoy an evening of Christmas cheer with Chip Richter and Church of the Saviour. This 45-minute free concert includes stories, songs and laughter, for kids from 2 to 92 at Church of the Saviour. This 45-minute free concert

In their pajamas for extra cozy fun. For home for bedtime—in fact, bring them the Saviour. This 45-minute free concert

This 45-minute free concert on Sunday, Dec. 16, at 7 p.m.

Cleveland Heights resident

Pamela Price

Cleveland Heights resident Eric J. Price has published his first book, On Broken Wings, a candid account of his growing up in foster homes, his adoption at the age of nine, and his struggle with alcohol. He shares his battles and victories with raw humor, vulnerability and conviction.

A Heights High graduate, Price has always had a desire to help others. He is a life coach and personal trainer at All About U Fitness in Cleveland Heights. Price started Soaring Higher, a nonprofit geared toward personal empowerment. He hopes his book will help others overcome the obstacles that life puts in front of them. He said that he believes God challenged him and gave him the tools, education and understanding to help others mend their own broken wings.

“I have always believed that my contract with God is about being of service and helping to empower individuals spiritually, mentally and physically,” Price said. “The events that I have endured have been like on the job training for the work God ultimately had in store for me. My hope is that this book will help empower and enlighten the spirit of the individual presently vacant of hope or faith.”

On Broken Wings can touch the heart and soul of anyone who has been dealt difficult life circumstances. Price’s story will make you smile, laugh and cry.

You won’t want to put the book down because you will want to know what happens to this little boy.

Price’s hope is to be able to help others realize that when they reveal their true fears, there isn’t anything they can’t overcome and accomplish. “It’s your life, get to livin’!” he said.

On Broken Wings is available at Mac’s Backs Books on Coventry and online.

Pamela Price, a Cleveland Heights resident, is the wife of Eric Price.
Local artists at Heights Arts Holiday Store

Peggy Spaeth

Heights Arts is again shining a light on superb artists who call Northeast Ohio home with its 11th annual Holiday Store. This group show—featuring more than 85 artists this year—originated in 2002 as a pop-up holiday gallery in the historic Cedar Lee building. People so loved the opportunity to shop for high-quality art by local artists that Heights Arts established a nonprofit storefront gallery that is open year-round.

Our region has a particularly strong glass community, and currently the gallery windows are sparkling with pieces by internationally known local glass artist Brent Kee Young, as well as Creative Workforce Fellows Mark Suduth and Michaud Mikula. New for 2012 is work by Young’s studio-mate Robert Coby, whose classic shapes have intricate textured surfaces. Other blown glass items include unique hanging lamps by Chadd Lacy; ornaments, rumbler, birds and hearts by Sue Berry (each only $20); colorful functional bowls by newcomer Steve Hagan; bowls by Earl James; and vases and small bowls by Todd Anderson; and vases and paperweights by Shanya Roth Pentecost. Glass objects range in price from $20 to $6,000.

Ceramics also have a prominent presence at the gallery, which showcases work by well-known artists William Brouillard, Kristen Cliffel, Megan Dull, Susan Gallagher, Linda Goldstone, Bonnie Gordon, Yumioko Goto, Sharon Grossman, Elaine Lamb, Andrea LeBlond, Lynne Lofton, Carol Spahr and Mark Yasenchack.

The Holiday Store presents CDs by Apollo’s Fire, Shanua, Blue Lunch, and individual musicians, as well as handmade cards, prints, paintings, silk scarves, photographs, jewelry, pillows, stained glass, and even furniture made from repurposed metal lockers by Doug Meyer of Rustbelt Rebirth.

Every artist whose work is in the store volunteers time to help staff the gallery during the duration of the show, which runs through Dec. 30. A complete list of participating artists is at www.heightsarts.org.

Stop in and be inspired at Heights Arts. When you take home works by talented local artists, you support them as well as the local nonprofit arts organization that brings their great art to you. When you live in Northeast Ohio, there’s no place like home to encounter the best of the arts.

Peggy Spaeth, executive director at Heights Arts, always buys local art for gifts.

The Holiday Store at Heights Arts
2175 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights
216-371-3457
www.heightsarts.org
Open through Dec. 30:
Mon., Thurs., Fri., Sat. 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Tues., Wed. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sun. 1–5 p.m.
(Dec. 24: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.)

Steve Hagan bowls are some of the unique items by local artists at the Holiday Store.
Apollo’s Fire presents ‘Happiness Two Ways’

Margi Gribbling-Haigh

The Year of the Dragon is one of the most revered of the Chinese calendar, and those born under this sign are regarded as having many wonderful traits. They are innovative, colorful, confident, and passionate. These are the very qualities for which Cleveland Heights resident Jeannette Sorrell (a dragon-year baby) and her ensemble, Apollo’s Fire, are known.

Imagine that you are in a Chinese restaurant and the day’s special is Happiness Two Ways. Given a choice between that and only one kind of happiness, why would you not opt for the special? Given the choice between Handel’s “Messiah” and “Sacrament Mysterium: A Celtic Christmas,” why would you not choose to hear both? Sorrell and Apollo’s Fire are offering a two-week holiday extravaganza featuring these two programs for Heights audiences.

Sorrell was struck by the idea of a Celtic program after meeting Silvain Bergeron and hearing his ensemble, La Nel, during a visit to Montreal in 2009. Impressed by the group’s renderings of Scottish-Gaelic music, she created the collaboration that delighted audiences last year.

Along with the 13th-century “Vesper of St. Kertigern,” one of the few remaining sacred Scottish works written before the 1700s, the repertoire for “Sacrament Mysterium” includes the carols “Nowell Sing We,” “Lully Lullay,” “O Come Emmanuel,” “Noel Novelet,” as well as traditional Irish and Scottish fiddle tunes. A festive ensemble of lute, hammered dulcimer, Celtic harp, and bagpipes promise to enliven the performances.

Audiences have come to expect Handel’s “Messiah” at this time of the year, and the theatrical story-telling version performed by Apollo’s Fire is perhaps one of the most intimate and personal presentations of this work.

The concerts will feature Meredith Hall, soprano, who has performed with both Apollo’s Fire and La Nel for several years; Karim Sulayman, tenor, new to the Apollo’s Fire this season; and Jeffrey Strauss, baritone, whose dramatic presence has made him a favorite with “Messiah” audiences.

A new CD recording and bonus DVD of “Sacrament Mysterium” has just been released and will be available for purchase at concerts and at the Heights Arts Holiday Store, as well as at Loganberry Books on Larchmere Blvd. A 2-CD set and DVD of the “Messiah,” released last year, will also be available.

Tickets for the concerts start at $26. For a complete schedule of performances and pre-concert talks, and to purchase tickets, call Apollo’s Fire box office at 216-320-0001 or 800-354-2535.

Margi Gribbling-Haigh, a resident of Cleveland Heights, is a freelance composer, oboist, music copyist, editor and artist.

CityMusic Cleveland presents holiday program

Eugenia Strauss

CityMusic Cleveland Chamber Orchestra announces its annual Holiday Concert program. The free, opening concert is scheduled for Dec. 12, 7:30 p.m. at Fairmount Presbyterian Church, 2737 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights. The orchestra will be led by Stefan Willich, a German conductor making his American debut.

Rebecca Schweigert Mayhew, oboist and one of CityMusic’s founding musicians, will perform Mozart’s “Oboe Concerto in C.” To welcome the holiday season, Mt. Zion Choir and CityMusic Cleveland (CMC) will present a medley of holiday favorites written or arranged by African-American composers.

Stefan Willich is both a renowned conductor and world-renowned cardiologist-epidemiologist. As founder and conductor of the World Doctor’s Orchestra, he has led an orchestra of 135 physician-musicians from more than 20 nations in medical-aid benefit concerts throughout the world. Willich was appointed president of the Berlin Academy of Music in 2011.

Rebecca Schweigert Mayhew is the principal oboist with CityMusic Cleveland (CMC), and is on the faculty of both Cleveland Institute of Music and Cleveland State University.

The Mt. Zion Congregational Church United Church of Christ is one of the oldest African American Congregations in Cleveland. Fulfilling the vision of excellence of Rev. Paul Hobson Sadler Sr., pastor of Mt. Zion, and under the direction of Mrs. “AP” Crump Madison and Mr. Dreene Ivey, the Mt. Zion Church Choir has garnered an excellent musical reputation, and has performed at Playhouse Square with the Duffy Liturgical Dance Company and at Severance Hall with the Cleveland Orchestra.

The holiday program includes: Mozart’s “Overture to The Marriage of Figaro” and “Oboe Concerto in C,” Krauss’ “Symphony No. 4 (Italian),” and Mt. Zion Choir Spirituals.

Now in its ninth season, CMC is a professional chamber orchestra that seeks to develop audiences by presenting free concerts in neighborhood venues. CMC draws in a diverse group that includes new concertgoers, committed arts supporters, the mildy curious and even the reluctant. CMC presents four sets of concerts for a total of 20-25 concerts per year; annual attendance is 14,000–16,000.

CityMusic Cleveland will perform its holiday concert at other venues in Greater Cleveland, Dec. 13-16. For information, visit www.citymusicleveland.org. No tickets are required, and early arrival is recommended. There is no charge for the concert, but a free-will offering is appreciated.

Eugenia Strauss is executive director of CityMusic Cleveland.

Eugenia Strauss

Give Thanks & Spread Holiday Cheer
Simply Charming
Sun., Dec. 16
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SimplyCharmingInc.com

CityMusic Cleveland
Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
Fairmount Presbyterian Church, 2757 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
www.heightsobserver.org

Give Thanks & Spread Holiday Cheer
Simply Charming
Sun., Dec. 16
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SimplyCharmingInc.com

CityMusic Cleveland
Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
Fairmount Presbyterian Church, 2757 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
www.heightsobserver.org

Give Thanks & Spread Holiday Cheer
Simply Charming
Sun., Dec. 16
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SimplyCharmingInc.com

CityMusic Cleveland
Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
Fairmount Presbyterian Church, 2757 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
www.heightsobserver.org

Give Thanks & Spread Holiday Cheer
Simply Charming
Sun., Dec. 16
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
SimplyCharmingInc.com

CityMusic Cleveland
Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
Fairmount Presbyterian Church, 2757 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights.
Heights Observer December 1, 2012

Two stages, no waiting for holiday drama

Jewel Moulthrop

For those of us in the Heights who enjoy live theater, we are fortunate, indeed. We have not one, but two fine theater companies: Ensemble Theatre, in the former Coventry School at 2843 Washington Blvd., and Dobama, at 2340 Lee Road, both in Cleveland Heights. As you begin to fill your calendar with holiday events, be sure to leave some time for two new theatrical productions.

While Ensemble generally performs classic American plays, the company has begun a weekly workshop that provides local playwrights with a supportive atmosphere in which to read, discuss and develop new plays. “Miracle and Wonder,” which runs through Dec. 2, is the first full-length main stage production to come out of the Ensemble Stage-Wrights Workshop.

“Miracle and Wonder,” by Jonathan Wilhelm, is set three days before Christmas, when an obsessive-compulsive kindergarten teacher is busy wrapping gifts. Some jarring news received from a stranger sets off a series of events involving missing relatives, an inebriated drag queen, broken hearts, Bette Davis movies, mistaken identities, Midrashic parables and why Jesus is having a really bad day. It may seem like everything you would not expect from a heart-warming holiday story, but it’s billed as “must-see holiday comedy.”

For a complete schedule of performances and to order tickets, call Ensemble’s box office at 216-321-2930 or go online to www.ensemble-theatre.com.

Meanwhile, on the other side of town, Dobama Theatre is presenting “4000 Miles,” by Amy Herzog. Leo, the play’s protagonist, has suffered a major loss while on a cross-country bicycling trip. He seeks solace from his feisty 91-year-old grandmother Vera (played by the matchless Dorothy Silver) in her West Village apartment.

Leo has some growing up to do under Vera’s watchful and unsentimental eye. Over the course of a month, these unlikely roommates infuriate, bewilder, and ultimately touch each other. “4000 Miles” runs from Dec. 7 through Jan. 6. For more information and to order tickets, call the box office at 216-932-3396 or go to www.dobama.org.

Jewel Moulthrop is a Cleveland Heights resident, a member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors, and chair of the Heights Observer’s Editorial Advisory Committee.

CIA Art Spot painting demo at the Wine Spot

Corey Herynk created art with his painting machine at the Wine Spot on Nov. 17. Herynk, a painting major who will graduate from the Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA) in December, installed the painting as part of the “Hardware” exhibition at the Art Spot at the Wine Spot. The exhibit, featuring the work of CIA students, is on view through January 2013.
Handmade gift ideas guaranteed to please

Heights Observer Contributor

What could be better at this busy time of year than checking off items on your gift list while reducing your stress level at the same time? Handmade gifts can do just that. Small repetitive motions, such as those required for knitting or needlepointing, actually have meditative qualities that may reduce heart rate.

Fortunately, folks in the Heights have three nearby independent boutiques that are bursting with ideas for handmade gift giving—Wool and Willow, Fine Points and Bolt & Spool can help you hand craft a gift that is sure to please the recipient or even become a treasured heirloom.

While it may be too late to start knitting a sweater, there are smaller items available at each shop that are ideal for last minute creation.

Ann Forquer, owner of Wool and Willow Needlepoint at Fairmount Taylor, assures wary crafters that “this is not your grandmother’s needlepoint.” The walls drip with luxuriously colored skeins of threads and yarns and hundreds of painted canvases ready to be worked.

Key fobs, dog collars, tree ornaments, wallets and luggage tags are ideal for the last-minute crafter. Moreover, all items available at each shop that are handmade gift ideas guaranteed to please the recipient or even become a treasured heirloom.

Not sure how to get started? The staff will be happy to show you the basics when you purchase a canvas from them. They also offer kits, classes and gift certificates if you’d like to help someone else get started with needlepoint.

Fine Points, a knitting shop in the Larchmere antiques district, is also luscious with color. Wool, cotton, cashmere and angora yarns, crammed into tidy little cubbies, beg to be touched. The shop is replete with samples of trendy threads and yarns and hundreds of patterns from France, Japan and Spain. In addition, Bolt & Spool also has the Clever Charlotte line of designer children’s patterns and beautifully stitched samples created by two extraordinary Cleveland Heights sewers.

While it’s still possible to sew a quick dress or skirt for a holiday party, there are plenty of items at Bolt & Spool perfect for gift giving. “Aprons make lovely hostess gifts and they’re easy to make,” said Nan Webb, the shop’s owner. She also suggests other quick sewn gifts, such as pillow covers and wristlet purses. Perennial favorites include Wool Pets felting kits, which can be made by someone as young as 10.

One of the best gifts you can give is the gift of time spent together by giving gift certificates if you’d like to help someone else get started with needlepoint.

One of the best gifts you can give is the gift of time spent together by giving a gift certificate for a needlepoint, knitting or sewing class for you and a friend or family member.
Pipe’n Hot Grill celebrates two years

Simone Quartell

Angela Coleman was a successful cosmetologist for 12 years. During her time as a master stylist at Maxelle’s International Salon and Spa in Cleveland, the salon was rated as one of the best in the United States. Even though she worked in the beauty industry for more than a decade, Coleman always knew she wanted to open a restaurant.

Coleman, who lives in Cleveland with her husband, Jimmy, and their nine-year-old daughter Stesia, has always loved cooking and working with people. She wanted to open a restaurant serving what she knew best—seafood. On Dec. 18, 2010, she opened Pipe’n Hot Grill on Noble Road.

The restaurant’s signature items include seafood, a foot-long Polish boy and a potato stuffed with grilled steak and grilled chicken. Coleman is frequently told by patrons that her restaurant has the best seafood in the area, and customers travel from many different cities and towns to eat it.

Though she loves running the restaurant, there have been times when she wanted to quit. One of the biggest challenges she faced was when a car crashed through the building, which led to the restaurant being boarded up for five months.

Coleman admits that running a small business can be difficult. “You have to give yourself to the business and there is no immediate gratification,” she said. She is the only full-time employee, but her husband and daughter often help.

Coleman, who attended Cleveland Heights High School, has always loved Cleveland Heights. “It’s my favorite of the Cleveland suburbs. I always feel safe here,” said Coleman. “All the businesses here have high-quality products and warm, courteous, professional employees.”

Simone Quartell, a Heights High graduate, is a student at Cleveland State University and a Heights Observer intern.

Pipe’n Hot Grill
2847 Noble Road, Cleveland Heights
216-382-3998

Tues., Wed., Thurs. noon to 8 p.m.
Fri. noon to 9 p.m.
Sat. 1-8 p.m.
Family tradition and cuisine at the Mad Greek

Richard Stewart

You could call Chris Chopra, owner of the Mad Greek Restaurant on Fairmount Boulevard, an improbable restaurateur. The former golf pro assumed ownership of the restaurant, essentially by default, following the death of his father, Loki, in 2002.

"It wasn't something I chose to do. When my dad became ill, it was kind of a no-brainer," said Chopra. "I didn't have a whole lot of choice in the matter. It was either that or the restaurant was probably going to shut down."

Chopra hadn't been involved in the business previously, other than working there during junior high and high school, and again for a short time after he graduated from college.

Chopra's mother, Nicki, and father had opened the restaurant on Coventry in 1977, only to see it destroyed, along with three other family-owned businesses, during the Coventry Yard fire that same year.

Undaunted, the Chopra family soon reopened the Mad Greek in its current location on Fairmount Boulevard, taking over the location formerly occupied by a Brown Derby. What began as a Greek restaurant now offers a rare mix of Greek and Indian cuisine—a combination Chopra says you'd be hard-pressed to find anywhere else.

"Preparing those two cuisines un-pressed to find anywhere else. It's just been part of the family heritage. Dad was from India, my mom's family was from Greece. We have a niche market, I guess you'd say, with Greek and Indian cuisine. There may be one other restaurant in the world that offers those two cuisines. It's not something you see."

Chopra noted that the two styles of cuisine are equally popular with his customers.

"When Chopra took over the restaurant, he overhauled the menu and made crucial staffing changes that helped put the business on a solid footing."

Undaunted, the Chopra family soon reopened the Mad Greek in its current location on Fairmount Boulevard, taking over the location formerly occupied by a Brown Derby. What began as a Greek restaurant now offers a rare mix of Greek and Indian cuisine—a combination Chopra says you'd be hard-pressed to find anywhere else.

"Preparing those two cuisines un-pressed to find anywhere else. It's just been part of the family heritage. Dad was from India, my mom's family was from Greece. We have a niche market, I guess you'd say, with Greek and Indian cuisine. There may be one other restaurant in the world that offers those two cuisines. It's not something you see."

Chopra noted that the two styles of cuisine are equally popular with his customers.

"When Chopra took over the restaurant, he overhauled the menu and made crucial staffing changes that helped put the business on a solid footing."

"It isn't the easiest thing to do in the world, but it's pretty rewarding I think," said Chopra. "You kind of learn to love the business, and you kind of get hooked on it after a while."

"When we added the outdoor patio in 2007, that was really the biggest thing we did," said Chopra. "That brought a 20 percent increase in business, I would say. That was a big addition."

Chopra credits his restaurant's location and loyal customers as keys to his continued success.

"The location is unique. Cedar Fairmount has always been a special area," said Chopra. "There are other places in Cleveland Heights that are great. Coventry is phenomenal. Lee Road does really well, but Cedar Fairmount has been just an awesome area for us."

"Our clientele has always come from the local neighborhood. We also get a lot of customers from Cleveland Clinic, Case Western Reserve University, University Hospitals and John Carroll. We have customers who now live in Chicago and New York," said Chopra, "and whenever they're in town they come back to the Mad Greek. It's one of the places that they always come back to, and I hear these stories every day."

Richard Stewart is the owner of Digizoom Media and a member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.

The Mad Greek
2466 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights
216-421-3333
www.madgreekcleveland.com
Sun. 4–9 p.m.
Mon., Tues., Wed. 11:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., 4–10 p.m.
Thurs. 11:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., 4–10:30 p.m.
Fri., Sat. 11:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m., 4–11 p.m.
Sun. 4–9 p.m.

The patio at the Mad Greek is a popular gathering place during the warmer months. Owner Chris Chopra (inset photo).