Inside

2
The Heights Observer celebrates its fifth anniversary

6
Cedar Fairmount’s Teddy Wilson is Ohio’s longest-serving active letter carrier

17
Diamond Reese is HYC’s Youth of the Year

More young adults drawn to the Heights

Greg Donley

Over a decade during which Northeast Ohio did not gain in population and Cleveland lost 27 percent of its population, certain neighborhoods saw significant increases in population among 25 to 34-year-olds. According to a recently published report, among the top 15 places showing growth was Cleveland Heights, which, according to the 2010 U.S. Census, had added 724 residents to the number who had been between the ages of 15 and 24 ten years earlier.

Urban researcher Ritchey Piiparinne of Case Western Reserve University’s Center for Urban Poverty and Community Development parses the data further by race. The influx into Cleveland Heights consisted of 969 white, 557 Asian, and 61 Hispanic residents, but half of that gain of 1,583 was offset by a loss of 818 black residents in the cohort aged 25 to 34 in 2010. As in every other Great Lakes city, black out-migration from Cleveland has increased startlingly, as African Americans have moved either to previously unattainable suburbs or out of the region altogether, often to the South. Countywide patterns showed a dramatic increase in vacancies, while others have remained the same or decreased slightly. Coventry Village, Fairmount Taylor, and Cedar Fairmount have the lowest vacancy rate, while Noble Monticello has the highest.

Study shows increase in storefront vacancies, differences among districts

Kendra Dean

The number of vacant storefronts in Cleveland Heights has increased by about 6 percentage points since 2009, from 11.01 percent to 17.59 percent. Some commercial districts have seen a dramatic increase in vacancies, while others have remained the same or decreased slightly. Coventry Village, Fairmount Taylor, and Cedar Fairmount have the lowest vacancy rate, while Noble Monticello has the highest. While the vacancy rate for Severance has remained relatively constant, that is expected to change once Walmart leaves for Oakwood Commons in South Euclid.

The study, conducted by nonprofit FutureHeights, sought to measure the health of the city’s commercial districts and the effects of the recession by counting vacancies. FutureHeights conducted a similar study in 2009 by walking through each commercial district and counting the number of vacant and occupied storefronts. Cleveland Heights has 12 commercial districts. The mix of businesses in each has changed since they first developed in the early 20th century. While the districts originally served their immediate neighborhoods, providing groceries and other household items, restaurants and other service businesses now make up a larger portion of each district’s tenants. Many districts

A summer evening on Lee Road: can’t have this in the outer suburbs.

Joe Quandt, former Heights student, remembered by friends in community

Simone Quaintell

Friends of Joe Quandt, 20, a Cornell University sophomore who grew up in Cleveland Heights, were shocked when they heard about his sudden death from a cardiac embolism on Feb. 27.

“Joe was the total package—so smart, so funny, so talented, such a great writer . . . Eagle Scout, Phi Beta Kappa,” said Peggy Hull, who taught English to Quandt’s sophomore year at Cleveland Heights High School. “I was heartbroken when he left Heights; now, I’m even more so.”

Quandt was born in Cleveland Heights and attended Coventry Elementary, Roxboro Middle School and Heights High before his family moved to the city following his sophomore year. He continued to stay in close contact with his Heights friends.

He was attending Cornell on a full academic scholarship, majoring in urban development.

Search for Cleveland Heights city manager continues

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The City of Cleveland Heights announced on March 17 that its search for a city manager continues, after an offer extended to candidate Andrew White, was declined. Council interviewed four finalists selected by Novak Consulting Group. Council will not extend an offer to any of the remaining three candidates.

“After careful thought and spirited discussion, city officials offered the position of city manager to Andrew White of Huron, Ohio,” said Mayor Ed Kelley in a press release. “Mr. White consulted with his family and friends and decided not to accept the position for personal and professional reasons.”

Kelley said that although “all four candidates were great,” there was no second choice. “We’ve interviewed and vetted the other candidates and don’t feel that any of them will be our next city manager. We’re going to get our first choice,” said the mayor in a phone interview.

Kelley said that he and the rest of council are discussing what the next steps will be in the search for a city manager. “If someone wants to apply for the position who didn’t apply before, we encourage that. We are hoping we’ll have a rash of new applications in the next couple of weeks.”

“We feel fortunate to have Susanna Niermann O’Neil as acting city manager. We continue to be proud of all our employees who are providing excellent city services for our residents during this transition period,” said Kelley.

Free parking at CH meters April 26, 27 and 28.

Free parking at CH meters April 26, 27 and 28.

Continued on page 3
Highlights from Observer blogs
Read the whole story at blogs.heightsobserver.org

Do Heights residents have the right to an opinion about the Cuyahoga Public Library?

Based on tax dollars—yes.

As you can see from the attached documents, anyone who pays state taxes has a right to an opinion about the Cuyahoga County Public Library system.

The Library Board decided unilaterally to sell Tellington Mansion, the current home of the South Euclid-Lyndhurst library. It is on the market.

The Tellington Mansion is on the National Register of Historic Places and is an Ohio Landmark; but it has no legal protection because no federal funds were ever spent on it.

Do you think our community should lose this public space?

—Fran Mentch

Two Weeks to Go

The Cleveland International Film Festival is back, and so, happily, am I. Last year’s festival—the 36th and another record-breaking year—welcomed its one-millionth attendee. . .

The festival folks announced a few changes for this year. CIFF is giving up mugs instead of T-shirts—big disappointment. One can have too many mugs, but there’s no such thing as too many T-shirts. With the casino traffic downtown, and opening day at the ballpark on April 8, parking will be hard to find. Take the Rapid.

—Jewel Moulthrop

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

Dear Reader,

I hope you are well. . .

Late last year, FutureHeights began developing a strategic plan that revolves around our mission and the future of our newsletter. For the past two months, we have worked with consultant Gina Cheverine to carefully consider how we can continue to serve our readers and engage our community.

As we began this process, we were deeply influenced by the feedback we received from you, our readers. Understanding your needs and the future of the Heights Observer was essential, and we thank you for sharing your thoughts with us.

In an effort to honor the many years of hard work and dedication by our board members and volunteers, we will begin this process with some important information.

The Heights Observer is a citizen-based news source that has been a fixture in Cleveland Heights for over 30 years. It is a trusted source of information and a catalyst for positive change in the Heights.

Our mission is to provide a forum for meaningful dialogue on issues of planning and design, and to ensure that our community has a voice in its future. We believe that this is a critical role for any community-based news source.

We are committed to creating a new strategic plan that will help us evolve in a better direction than it would have had we not published it. This new strategic plan will help us to work more closely with our readers, volunteers, and the broader community.

We are excited to share this plan with you, our readers, in the coming months. We welcome your input and feedback as we move forward.

Thank you for your continued support of the Heights Observer.

Sincerely,

Deanna Bremer Fisher
Executive Director
FutureHeights
Distinct looks to tackle new athletic field

Angie Shaker

Cleveland Heights High School athletic teams have had great and growing success in recent years, with undefeated seasons, LEI championships, and state playoffs becoming the norm in several sports. More importantly, in a district as economically and racially diverse as ours, scholastic sports are a common denominator that brings everyone together. Heights High athletics play a critical role in our efforts to educate well-rounded students with character, and we need the right facilities to continue that education and source of community pride. That’s why the district is moving ahead with plans to secure funding for a new field, among other renovations to Hosford Field at Crawford Stadium.

“Even in good weather, grass fields need a lot of rest and care, but right now our stadium field can’t handle more than five or six games a year—and those are accounted for by the home football schedule,” said Kristin Hughes, CH-UH athletic director of athletics. “None of our teams can use the field, and yet for this limited usage, we have to pay a substantial sum to maintain the field even to its current condition. Our field doesn’t serve our students well, and its annual costs don’t serve our taxpayers well. We are committed to finding funding to renovate our own field, a way that will allow for much more use by the students and the community, at a smaller cost. A synthetic grass or turf field is the clear choice.”

The current cost to maintain our natural grass field ranges from $25,000 to $50,000 per year. The annual main-tenance costs for a synthetic grass field have been estimated to be about $2,000 per year. Resurfacing the field with synthetic turf will immediately expand potential uses. With synthetic turf, the field will immediately be available for use by other sports, such as lacrosse, soccer, field hockey, and other community teams and activities, such as cheerleading competitions, football camps, youth lacrosse clinics, and youth soccer camps and clinics to be held during the summer.

The current estimated cost of the project is $570,000. The CHHS Athletic Department is seeking a $200,000 grant from the NFL. Additional funding will be raised by booster and alumni groups. “Cleveland Heights Mayor Ed Kelley has even agreed to help us with our fundraising efforts,” stated Hughes. “Fundraising is never easy, especially right now, but we have to do something.”

Plans for Hosford Field are not limited to the field but also include the ticket booths, stands and休息rooms, with the goal being to give the Tigers fans the opportunity to par with the success they have shown on the field. Current thoughts also include moving the home stands to where the visitor stands are, with support spaces located under them, along with turning the west parking lot into a plaza, ideal for tailgate parties.

The district has carefully studied health, safety, and environmental factors before recommending a synthetic turf field be installed. There is little evidence that current turf technology allows for more injuries than natural grass, but just to be certain, we’ve opted for a higher grade of turf that provides more cushioning. There is some anecdotal information circulating online connecting turf and germs, but from the current literature, this seems to be no more a concern with turf than with grass.

Additionally, as part of this project, the district has committed to installing either a rain garden or a comprehen-sive system for filtering and containing stormwater to limit runoff. We have also opted for a sand-based infill rather than the more typical “crumb” rubber mate-rial because some concerns have been raised about the chemicals contained in crumb rubber. “We are in phase one of a grassroots effort to generate some support for this project. Without community support, we will have to continue to find other fields, off district property, to play on,” stated Hughes.

[Editor’s Note: To read another opinion about artificial turf fields, see Joan Spoerl’s February opinion piece at www.heightsobserver.org]

Angie Shaker is director of communications for Cleveland Heights/University Heights City School District.
It may seem doubtful in the midst of “pothole season,” but Cleveland Heights’ streets are improving. In 2009, the city completed repairs on just 11 of its more than 270 streets. In 2010, work was done on all or part of some 38 streets; on 31 streets in 2011; on 51 streets in 2012; with 33 more streets slated for work in 2013. By the end of 2015, the city expects to have dealt with virtually every street.

Alex Mannarino, public works director, gets credit for having instituted a systematic plan for road maintenance three years ago. Street repairs are prioritized based on road evaluations, complaints received about potholes, core samples and available funds, which have remained stable at about $2 million over this time frame. Each road receives a score and is rated very good, good, fair, poor, or very poor. The city aims to maintain very good and good roads. Roads in fair condition are treated to chip sealing. This involves replacing distressed sections of pavement, followed by applications of liquid asphalt, rock chips, and a final coat. Chip sealing has improved in recent years and can extend the life of the street by about eight to ten years. Streets in poor or very poor condition are patched. Later, the road surface is ground off, and the road base is replaced and strengthened as needed. A final coat of at least two inches of hot-mix asphalt should keep the roadway structurally sound for at least 12 years.

Almost all road repair work is contracted out through a competitive process. The city rigorously inspects contractors’ work to ensure quality. Other aspects of road maintenance are repainting road markings, snow removal and salting, pothole repairs, and street sweeping to keep drains open and to remove curbside obstacles for bicyclists. Public works employees, cross-trained to perform different jobs, do much of this work. The city’s planning, public service and police departments collaborate for improvements in road markings and signage.

Though charming, Cleveland Heights’ few remaining brick roads can be cost prohibitive to maintain. Covering them with asphalt improves driving safety and makes repair affordable. Cleveland Heights must maintain not only residential streets but also its major thoroughfares. Since 2010, Cleveland Heights has resurfaced Monticello Boulevard from Mayfield to Noble roads, and Taylor Road from Euclid Heights Boulevard to East Cleveland. Work is expected on Mayfield Road in 2013, on much of Cedar Road in 2016, on Noble Road in 2018 and Lee Road in 2020.

How are road repairs paid for? The tax on gasoline sales and vehicle registration are important to funding road repairs. Some gas-tax funds are used to improve the national highway system and mass transit, but some return locally. Agencies such as the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) play a role in allocating funds for road resurfacing. Ohio apportions its share of gas-tax road repair funds to municipalities, counties and townships based on vehicle registrations and Ohio law. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) from the Department of Housing and Urban Development may be used in low-income areas. Major regional thoroughfares may qualify for federal funding for maintenance, with a local match. The city has to apply to a variety of agencies to pay for repairs to major thoroughfares, and in some cases has to take out a loan, then await reimbursement.

Road renovation projects will start soon and typically end in November. You can report potholes by calling 216-691-7300.

Maintaining streets is a complex and major civic responsibility. The job never ends, but Cleveland Heights employers have us moving in the right direction.

Mary Dunbar, member of Cleveland Heights City Council and president of the Heights Bicycle Coalition, prefers to ride her bicycle around our streets, weather permitting.
Teachers on the picket line?

Alastair Pearson

Since March 3, the Strongsville teachers’ strike has been the subject of gossip statewide. Even the San Francisco Chronicle reported on this local story that has implications for the most divisive issue facing public education today. The right of teachers to unionize affects every school district during this era of budgetary cutbacks and mass layoffs, and it is particularly important to Cleveland Heights and University Heights as the local teacher’s union prepares to negotiate a new contract this spring.

As a high school student, I feel the right of workers to unionize cannot be impeded for the sake of efficiency. Although feelings run high during strikes, this is ultimately the process whereby workers and management agree to compromise that both sides believe is fair.

We sacrifice the quality of our schools and lower the incentive for qualified people to teach if we restrict collective bargaining. For the future, it would be wise for the Heights to stand firm on the legitimacy of an educators’ union. The Heights teachers contract expires this June, and Ari Klein, Cleveland Heights Teachers Union (CHTU) president since last April, will lead negotiations. Just before his election, the union fought Senate Bill 5, Gov. Kasich’s move to restrict public sector unions, and was vindicated by the repeal of the bill during a referendum by Ohio voters in November 2011. Last February, a CHTU online bulletin warned that “attacks are not going to stop the repeal of SB 5,” and that “[every teacher who believes that [this is] the time to be complacent needs to be woken up quickly.”

There is an extensive list of grievances on the CHTU website, which includes a “bargaining poll” completed by many of the membership. As June approaches, it is likely CHTU will ramp up its press releases. Union leadership has made strong political stands before, and even asked members to approve a petition calling for a state constitutional “high-stakes” testing, which they claim is responsible for harming children.

With a 41-year CHTU streak of raising salaries, it seems unlikely that district teachers would willingly face a wage freeze if the administration refuses to increase pay. So the question then becomes whether the teachers have the right to strike in that event, and whether we can restrict collective bargaining should teachers “abuse” this power.

At this point in American history, the discussion is no longer whether unions can exist. They can, and they also have the right to bargain, and to strike should negotiations be unfavorable. Striking is the backbone of unions. Without it, they are powerless associations of like-minded professionals to sue the will of their superiors. Because of striking, unions can find compromises with the best possible pay for workers and the least possible expansion for management. This means that unionized workforces are happier, more productive, and ultimately more profitable.

While teaching isn’t geared toward profitability, teachers still need to be competent, and educators in unions are better instructors. It’s futile to debate restricting collective bargaining on legal grounds, because a clear precedent exists, and it’s illogical, because unions create parity and efficiency. When we question if we can remove the right to strike, we cannot. Without it, unions lose the tool by which their members receive fair treatment. For CHT-UH, and for the nation as a whole, we shouldn’t think of ways to reduce the rights of unions. Union members work in our factories, our offices, and our classrooms, and to suspend their rights is an assault on us all.

Alastair Pearson is a Cleveland Heights resident, and a student at St. Ignatius. He is editor of the opinion page for the school newspaper, and is involved in the school’s literary magazine.

CH move to Amend needs signatures and volunteers to put initiative on November ballot

Carlo Rautenberg

Cleveland Heights Move to Amend is organizing an event that will ramp up the group’s petition drive to put a citizens’ initiative on the Cleveland Heights ballot in November. The group is calling on Congress to amend the U.S. Constitution to establish that corporations are not people and money is not speech.

We invite all area citizens to join us on Saturday, April 27, 9-11 a.m., at the Esquire Theatre (2433 Washington Blvd.) to pick up petitions and walk lists, receive a brief tutorial on signature-gathering, and disburse across the city in pairs, going door-to-door to collect signatures of registered voters. The afternoon will conclude with refreshments, sharing experiences, and a tally of the signatures collected that day.

Anyone registered to vote in Ohio may circulate a petition, so we encourage our friends from neighboring suburbs to join this entirely nonpartisan effort.

Since the Citizens United case in 2010, corporate entities—including for-profit companies, nonprofits, political action committees (PACs), super-PACs, 527 organizations and labor unions—and wealthy individuals have been able to contribute huge sums of money to political campaigns in secret. We believe that when money is legally considered speech, those with the most money have the most speech, contradicting the principle of “one person, one vote.” Furthermore, secret undisclosed contributions leave us with the unacceptable prospect of silent speech that drowns out the voices of legitimate voters.

Our rights as citizens to initiative and referendum, granted by the Ohio Constitution more than 100 years ago, are under attack in Columbus following the success of Issue 3. Any major changes to initiative and referendum procedures will be challenged in the Ohio Supreme Court and are unlikely to affect our Cleveland Heights ballot initiative. So, let’s get it on the ballot now, while we still can.

Some have questioned whether the Move to Amend is really a local issue. If we believe that local communities should have the right to prevent or regulate oil and gas drilling within their borders; if we want to have input about the location of cell towers in our towns; if we strive to protect local businesses from the incursion of big box stores, we must reserve for human beings the “personhood rights” that corporations have won in court over the last 140 years. Full text of the Cleveland Heights initiative is at www.movetoamend.org/cleveland-heights.

Join the Cleveland Heights Move to Amend event on April 20. (rain date Sunday, April 21).

If you cannot join us on April 20, you can still circulate a petition. Contact Sally Hanley at ypsalal@cooper.net to request a petition—5,000 signatures are needed to get this critical issue on the ballot. Brecksville and Newburgh Heights citizens have already voted for and passed the Move to Amend, as have many other cities.

Carlo Rautenberg is a Cleveland Heights resident and member of Move To Amend.

Congratulations to:
Bay High School
Beaumont School
Brecksville-Broadview Heights Middle School
Brush High School
Cleveland Heights School of the Arts
Gilmour Academy
Hawken School
Lakewood High School
Laurel School
Orange High School
Shaker Heights High School
Solon High School
St. Ignatius High School
St. Joseph Academy University School
Westlake High School

As host of the Scholastic Art + Writing Competition for 34 years, we couldn’t be prouder of the 19 national winners from Northeast Ohio.

See the winning work at cia.edu/2013scholastic

Congratulations to: Bay High School
Beaumont School
Brecksville-Broadview Heights Middle School
Brush High School
Cleveland Heights School of the Arts
Gilmour Academy
Hawken School
Lakewood High School
Laurel School
Orange High School
Shaker Heights High School
Solon High School
St. Ignatius High School
St. Joseph Academy University School
Westlake High School

CIA Congratulations Scholastic Art+Writing Competition Winners! Work on your creative skills—take a class. cia.edu/continued
Cedar Fairmount businesses appreciate work of area postman

Kaye Lowe

The Cedar Fairmount business district is fortunate to have A.T. “Teddy” Wilson delivering mail in the neighborhood. At age 76, Wilson is the longest-serving active letter carrier in the state of Ohio. Cedar Fairmount business owners say that Wilson’s tireless efforts, attention to detail—no one gets the wrong mail—and his cheerfulness brighten their days. He has delivered mail in Cleveland Heights since 1980.

After graduating from high school at the age of 18, his father advised him to get a job working as a postal worker. “Teddy,” he said, “The U.S. Postal Service pays well, there will not be layoffs, you will be doing a service, and there is decent retirement.” Wilson says his respect for his father inspired him to pursue a career that has spanned 58 years.

Wilson started out as a “cub,” working inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier. He has worked inside sorting mail, then was a clerk, and finally a postal carrier.

Teddy Wilson has been delivering the mail for 58 years.

Wilson says the best part of his job is the respect he gets.” Wilson is active in the National Association of Letter Carriers, and is passionate about protecting letter carriers and their contract. In March he went to Washington as a union representative to lobby against ending Saturday delivery and modifications to the carrier’s retirement plan.

Wilson and his wife, Arleila, have two daughters, Paula and Angela, and a grandson who attends Kent State University. “I’m blessed to have daughters,” he said, “Girls always love daddy.”

Cedar Fairmount and Cleveland Heights are fortunate to have Teddy Wilson as our mail carrier and in our lives. At 76, he definitely is an extraordinary letter carrier, with no immediate plans to retire.

Kaye Lowe is the executive director of the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District.

Plans underway for 12th annual Discover Cedar Fairmount Festival on Aug. 11

Kaye Lowe

Save the date for Cedar Fairmount’s 12th annual festival. This year’s event will take place Sunday, Aug. 11, from noon to 5 p.m. The hours have been extended at the request of patrons and vendors. The festival is located along Cedar Road and Fairmount Boulevard in the Cedar Fairmount Business District in Cleveland Heights.

In 2012, many families with small children enjoyed perfect weather and free, family-friendly activities. This year’s festival will include many familiar activities from years past, with additional entertainment and music.

The 2013 festival has received a grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture. Matching funds are being sought from Cedar Fairmount merchants, professionals and residents of the surrounding neighborhood.

Activities and entertainment are still being considered. An enlarged arts-and-crafts exhibit, showcasing local Heights and regional artists, is planned for four locations. Entertainment will include the return of the Euclid Beach Rocket Car, Pony Tales, Bouncer and two clowns. Music groups the Karma Kings and Old Boy will perform.

For more information about participating in the festival, call 216-791-3573 or visit www.cedarfairmount.org.

Kaye Lowe is the executive director of the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District.
also draw customers from the region, not just from the immediate neighborhood.

Storefront vacancies improved 

dificult to measure. First, the number of storefronts is difficult to determine because existing buildings can be split up into multiple storefronts, and a database of ground-level commercial addresses and storefronts is not available. Storefront vacancies also fluctuate seasonally. More businesses open during the spring and summer months, while many close during the cold Northeast Ohio winters when shoppers spend less.

For the 2013 study, FutureHeights worked with the city to develop a database of street addresses and created a storefront vacancy scale. Using this scale, the quality of characteristics that are deemed important for visibility, safety and attractiveness, and of a consistent evaluation of three storefront components: the façade, windows, and signage.

Each storefront was rated on a scale from 1 to 4. The rating was reduced by one point for each characteristic the storefront lacked. Each district was assigned a quality rating based on the average rating of its storefronts. A rating was not determinable for the Severance business district because most of the stores follow a standardized model dictated by their company headquarters.

One of the models FutureHeights used in developing its quality rating is that of Vibrant Streets, a Washington, D.C.-based organization that has determined eight characteristics that contribute to making a retail district vibrant. These eight characteristics include Managed, Retail-appropriate, Mixed, Safe, Championed, Anchored, Walkable and Unified. The group conducts seminars and has created a tool box for retailers, community groups, government agencies, businesses, merchant associations, and others who seek to improve the vibrancy of their commercial districts.

Not surprisingly, those Heights districts that fulfill the first essential characteristic identified by Vibrant Streets—managed—those that are organized by a special improvement district (SID) or merchant association—have the lowest vacancy rates.

Steve Presser, marketing director of Coventry Village SID, said, “Coventry has a long history of low vacancy. When people are looking, their first impression is important. We invest our money into the streetscape by maintaining and beautifying our district. Through our SID website and Facebook, we are able to market ourselves to potential business owners and consumers. By doing these things, we attract a great clientele.”

“Championed” is the Vibrant Streets characteristic that encompasses marketing activities. Those districts that are managed are able to combine resources to create a lively champion and market their district to potential business tenants. While individual landlords may post signs advertising vacant properties, and prospective tenants may contact the city for help in finding a location, no comprehensive, user-friendly information source for Heights-based commercial properties exists.

Private and public investments in streetscapes and public art help make potential business owners more comfortable in investing their own resources into a district. Coventry Village undertook a massive streetscape improvement project a decade ago. Cedar Fairmount and Cedar Lee are poised to do the same.

The City of Cleveland Heights offers many programs that can help small business owners invest in their properties, such as a commercial loan program, a storefront renovation program and open communication with the SIDs and merchant associations.

The city’s planning department conducted a strategic planning process in 2011 that outlined several key strategies for local improvement, such as helping to develop SIDs in each neighborhood, tracking vacancy rates in each district, and addressing walkability and parking needs.

For more information, visit www.vibrantstreets.org or contact FutureHeights at info@futureheights.org or 216-320-1423.

Kendra Dean is a graduate student at the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences and is currently an intern at FutureHeights.
If you are 55+ and want to live more simply, yet still independently and vibrantly, in a supportive atmosphere in the Heights, here are 3 good reasons to live here:

#1 LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION! With restaurants, banks, a grocery store, bakeries, RTA bus stops, a beauty salon, a gas station, and more within an easy stroll, you won’t have to drive in bad weather, or, at all! 

#2 VERY FLEXIBLE MONTHLY LEASES! 

#3 NO UPFRONT BUY-IN COSTS! 

Please call for information and your personal tour! (216) 321-5400 • www.thealcazar.com

Located in Cleveland Heights’ charming Cedar Fairmount neighborhood at 2450 Derbyshire Road, 44106

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

We’re So Nice to Come Home to!

Senior Citizen Happenings

Senior Citizen Happenings are sponsored by the City of University Heights, and are open to all. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. at the University Heights Library. For information, and to suggest topics for future programs, contact the UH Office for Seniors Services at 897-9336. 

April 4: Stephen Hotchkiss, world traveler and assistant professor of international business at Notre Dame College, draws on his experience to explore the question “Do China and the US Share a Common Future?” 

April 11: Natalie Ronayne, executive director of Cleveland Botanical Garden, reports on how the CBJ’s strategic plan has increased membership, attendance, and internal and external marketing, and enhanced the experience for garden visitors. 

April 18: Barbara Boyd, our 9th District House Representative in the Ohio State Assembly, reflects on her sometimes challenging—but always satisfying—experience of service in government. 

April 30: Joyce Kesler, professor of literature at the Cleveland Institute of Art, will discuss the beginnings of the American through the prisms of literature and social history.

Heights Observer April 1, 2013
Second Heights Holistic Fair adds activities, sponsors and a local cause

Bob Rosenbaum

Building on the success of the first Heights Holistic Fair held in February, a second, expanded fair will be held on April 13 and 14. The fair will take place in the heart of the Coventry neighborhood, and will offer a wider range of information and activities for all ages. It will also serve as a platform to generate donations to Friends of Heights Libraries.

According to event organizer Judith Eugene of Cleveland Heights, products, services and information on holistic health and sustainable living will be offered. Experts will be on hand both days to provide information on a variety of topics.

For the April fair, Eugene and her planning partner, Pat Uhr, have reached out to community organizations and a wider variety of vendors for support and participation. “We are picturing these as fun community events,” Eugene said. “We would love for them to become gatherings that the whole community looks forward to and benefits from.”

As an example, Family Connections will lead a children’s craft project to make musical instruments, which children can then use to participate in a family-friendly drum circle.

Other sponsors of the fair include:
- FutureHeights—the Observer’s non-profit publisher—and Tommy’s Restaurant, which has donated food for the fair.
- Friends of Coventry Village is lending promotional support. All proceeds from food sales at the Heights Holistic Fair will be donated to the Friends of Heights Libraries for unrestricted use.
- Activities at the fair will include drum circles, musical performances, healing treatments, yoga classes and a craft project for children. Personal readings from psychic mediums will also be available.

The fair will be held at the Open Office Community Space in the former Coventry School at 2843 Washington Blvd. in Cleveland Heights. Hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. both days. Admission is $5 each day and includes access to all of the activities and speakers. Admission is free for 12 and under.

The Holistic Fair is presented jointly by Eugene’s Cleveland Heights-based Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki, and Uhr’s Harmonic Journeys.

For a schedule of activities and speakers, visit www.lovinghandsyoga.com or call Judith Eugene at 216-408-5578.

Cleveland Heights resident Bob Rosenbaum is a longtime Observer volunteer and is responsible for its advertising sales and market development.


dallas schuBert

At Cedar & Fairmount in
www.madgreekcleveland.com

what’s your favorite treasure? we’ll help you show it off.

Happy Hour!
Mon thru Sat 4–9 p.m.
55 Appetizers $2.50 Domestic Beers
55 Wines $1.50 Imports
55 Cocktails

Buy 1 appetizer, get 1 free with this ad.

Join us—April 11, 6–8 p.m.
We are super excited to have Robert Foley join us in-store for a tasting of his wines. Please RSVP to info@thewinespotonline.com
thewinespotonline.com
your spot for retail wine & craft beer
2171 Lee Road Cleveland Heights 216-342-3025

The Wine Spot
HCC announces new project, contract and location

Sue Nigro
Heights Community Congress (HCC) enters its 41st year in serving the Heights community, and is excited to announce several recent developments that will positively impact Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

HCC has enlisted the expertise of researcher Ralph Day, who has joined its fair-housing team. Day is analyzing information from past testing audits to determine whether racial housing discrimination still exists in the suburban housing market, and whether the face of discrimination has changed since 1972. That was the year the St. Ann Audit found that racial steering was rampant in Cleveland Heights and neighboring communities.

Using HCC audit data compiled from many years, the research will look at perceptions in the community relative to differential treatment of home seekers.

HCC recently entered into an agreement with the City of Cleveland Heights to conduct a fair housing monitoring program for 2013. The testing will occur throughout the year, and will verify real estate trends in the city’s housing market.

HCC’s office is now located at Hope Lutheran Church, 2222 North Taylor Road. Office hours are 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. For more information, stop in or call. The phone number remains the same: 216-331-6775.

Suzanne Nigro is a member of the Heights Community Congress Board of Directors.

Howson Gallery exhibits paintings by Heights artist Jeremy Tugeau

Rob Lucarelli
Jeremy Tugeau, a Cleveland Heights resident, is an artist and children’s book illustrator. March 22 through May 19, the Howson Gallery at Judson Park, 1801 Chestnut Hills Drive, Cleveland Heights, presents “Peaceful Places,” an exhibit of Tugeau’s oil paintings.

Tugeau has illustrated 23 picture books and published hundreds of illustrations for the educational publishing market. His fine art appears in galleries in Cleveland and Nantucket, Mass.

Tugeau works at the Cleveland Museum of Art as an instructor of weekend studio classes in painting and drawing.

He has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Syracuse University and is currently working toward a Bachelor of Arts degree in visual arts education from Cleveland State University.

Rob Lucarelli is director of communications for Judson Services Inc.
Support local independent merchants.

Futons

With our large selection, you are sure to find the perfect futon for any room in your home.

OVER 70 COMBINATIONS
Affordably priced from $199

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Price</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 room</td>
<td>from $199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 room</td>
<td>from $299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IN STORE PAYMENT PLAN

(NO CREDIT NEEDED)

*See Store For Details*

BRING THIS AD AND RECEIVE DISCOUNT!

Discount NOT valid on specials!

WWW.SHORECARPET2.COM

---

Heights Observer April 1, 2013

www.heightsobserver.org
**Community News**

**Make this your bicycling summer**

**LIFE CYCLE**

The Heights Bicycle Coalition

This could be the summer that you use your bicycle to get around town for errands, commuting to work, and for fun. To enjoy cycling, however, you need to be confident in your skills, informed about rules of the road, and about basic bicycle equipment safety. Become a confident rider in a class taught by a League of American Bicyclists certified instructor. The Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) is offering a more confident cyclist, you will want to take an exam to become certified for safe, fun riding.

When you know what it takes to be a more confident cyclist, you will want to ride more, and that can save money and time and increase your fitness, health and happiness. Best of all, you'll be ready to take part in HBC's Free Wheelin' Wednesday group rides. (Watch for an article listing Free Wheelin' Wednesday rides in the June Heights Observer.)

The Smart Cycling instructor will be League Certified Instructor Wendy Souce, a local cyclist who has volunteered with the Ohio City Bicycle Co-op, rides with the Western Reserve Wheelers and paddles a kayak or bikes when not on two wheels. Register for the class by May 1 at http://smartcycling.eventbrite.com, or contact Joy Henderson for more info at lammerson@sbcglobal.net.

The Heights Bicycle Coalition was formed in the spring of 2010 and works to encourage citizens to ride their bicycle for fun, fitness and transportation.

**Church of the Saviour hosts community recycling event**

Loretta Dahlstrom

Church of the Saviour in Cleveland Heights, in partnership with ENVIRO Recyclers, will host a communitywide recycling event on Saturday, April 13 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the church's north parking lot.

This is a great opportunity for Heights residents to clean out base- ments, attics or garages, and recycle unused consumer electronics and scrap metals. ENVIRO Recyclers provides certificates of hard-drive sanitizing or destruction on request. They use DOD protocols for data destruction and meet all NIST, HIPPA, PCI-DSS and GLBA guidelines. ENVIRO recycling is a totally green recycler; nothing is burned, nothing goes into a landfill. The recycling company will make a donation to the church, based on what is dropped off for recycling that day. Proceeds will benefit the church's general fund.

Church of the Saviour's north parking lot is located at the corner of Lee and Bradford roads, on the north side of Bradford.

For more information, call 216-321-8880 or visit the church website, www.chsaviour.org.

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

**Your Future Starts Now**

Now registering for Graduate and Undergraduate degrees

The University of Akron Lakewood offers a variety of courses and programs that are convenient for busy students of all ages:

- Saturday MBA
- Bachelor's of Organizational Supervision (BOS)
- Bachelor's and Master's of Social Work (BSW, MSW)
- RN-BSN completion degree
- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
- College Credit for High School Students (PSEOP)

Register Now!

New courses and programs added weekly, so visit lakewood.uakron.edu for a complete listing.

Call 216-221-1141 to schedule an appointment with an advisor.

Offering a quality education and convenient location, at The University of Akron in downtown Lakewood.

---

**Ahhhhh….. SUMMER!!**

Join us at Forest Hill Swim Club…

a casual summer club for fun, sun, families, and friends.

Full Family Membership - $700/year
Couple/Singles Membership - $400/year

Club amenities include pool, picnic grounds, large play area for kids, swim lessons, swim team, and more. Floaties, toys, and fun ARE permitted in our pool.

Join during April and save $100.

---

**Klezmer Guy at Nighttown April 23**

Bert Stratton

Bert Stratton, the leader of the klezmer band Yiddishcup, performs “Klezmer Guy,” an original prose-and-music show, at Nighttown in Cleveland Heights, on Tuesday, April 23, at 7 p.m.

Expect an evening of social commentary, plumbing tips and song—as if Garrison Keillor were raised on pastrami! Tickets are $10. For information, visit www.nighttowncleveland.com or call 216-797-0550.

Bert Stratton is a Cleveland Heights resident. In addition to blogging at www.klezmerguy.com, he writes frequently for The New York Times, Plain Dealer and CLEleveland.com.
The Lay Facilities Committee (LFC) is awaiting cost estimates for two versions of scenario 2B, one of six scenarios the committee had been evaluating. District consultants Fanning/Howey Associates and Regency Construction are expected to present costs to the committee at its next meeting on April 10, 7 p.m., at Wiley Middle School.

On March 6, the LFC voted to eliminate the other scenarios. The two variations of scenario 2B would have two middle schools—located at Roxboro and Monticello—and five elementary schools—located at Oxford, Boulevard, Canterbury and Roxboro in Cleveland Heights, and either Gearies or Wiley in University Heights (UH). The scenario retains an elementary school for University Heights, but leaves the site to be determined. One variation would renovate Gearies Elementary School. The other would renovate and repurpose the Wiley Middle School building.

The LFC asked the consultants to provide a benchmark estimate for the cost of retaining all seven of the district’s current elementary school buildings.

In March, the community subcommittee conducted a community survey and three meetings to encourage comments on the plans and the process. Approximately 80 people attended those meetings, and 829 complete the survey. Feedback indicated a strong preference for neighborhood elementary schools within walking or cycling distance of children’s homes. To a lesser extent, residents felt the same about middle schools.

The LFC has met approximately every three weeks since October 2012. The Board of Education (BOE) created the LFC on the model of its lay finance committee, after an 18-month planning process that ended in the board voting against placing an issue on last November’s ballot to finance a school facilities master plan, known as Plan C.

“All comprehensive plan we recommend will require a bond issue, which is difficult on the heels of the recession,” said Patrick Mullen, LFC chair. “The good news is that, due to the recession, construction costs are as low as they’ll ever be.”

Some residents questioned the wisdom of pursuing the learning communities concept in Plan C without adequate time to evaluate its effectiveness,” said Eric Silverman, LFC member. “Learning communities would have required major reconfiguration of interior spaces, which really added to the project’s cost.

Another major concern was grade configuration. Many people thought fourth graders were too young to be in a middle school with eighth graders.”

“Decisions the district made about grade configuration in Plan C to a large extent determined possible facilities options. That’s one reason the LFC spent several meetings hearing from district administration and considering the issue,” said Mullen.

At its Oct. 24 meeting, the LFC established three subcommittees—buildings, community and money—to examine specific issues before presenting findings to the entire committee. The public was invited to join subcommittees and become involved. Sam Bell, LFC member, formed the sustainability working group to examine energy use, recycling and other sustainability issues.

The LFC voted on March 6 to maintain the current configuration of grades K-5 in elementary schools and 6-8 in middle schools. The LFC also opted to separate the learning communities concept from the facilities plan, voting specifically to recommend “spaces that are flexible enough to accommodate current and future learning models of education.”

“The state was telling us that we had excess capacity, but we weren’t seeing that at the elementary school level,” said Silverman. “Where we were seeing it was at the middle school level. Reducing the number of middle schools from three to two enabled us to create scenarios that were more cost-effective—because middle schools have more specialized spaces, such as athletic fields, that are more expensive to build and maintain. Keeping the current grade configuration and reducing the cost of the project will enable us to retain more of the elementary schools, which we know from the survey and meetings is what the community wants.”

The LFC stopped short of voting on a specific recommendation that any plan adopted by the BOE include an elementary school in UH. “Every scenario we’ve considered has an elementary in University Heights. It’s a given so I don’t see a need to vote on it,” said Mullen.

“To do so would be like voting to keep the high school where it is.”

“We had said we were going to send no more than three scenarios to be costed, but we chose only one because the others were either not feasible or not preferred,” said Mullen. “Depending on how the costs come back, we may still have some work to do in figuring out what we will recommend to the board.”

“We were looking at one middle school at the site of Boulevard Elementary,” said Mullen. “It’s a great site because it is centrally located, but unfortunately it can’t hold more than 600 students and have room for on site athletic fields. None of the sites the district currently owns could house enough students for one middle school.”

The LFC maintains a website, www.chuhfacilities.org, on which meeting minutes, committee member contact information and relevant documents are posted, and hosts a discussion forum on www.theciviccommons.com.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of The Music Settlement and brother Jack is a current board member. "My brother David is in good measure the man he is today because of The Music Settlement and the devoted music therapists who have taught and nurtured him.”

-Jack Waldeck

David Waldeck is a long-time client of The Music Settlement and brother Jack is a current board member. President of the Board, Geri Presti, was David’s first music therapist from 1979 to 1984. Lori Lundeen Smith has been David’s music therapist since 1985. The Music Settlement truly is a family and often touches and affects multiple generations through the power of music.
CH-UH middle school teams compete in Regional Science Olympiad

Angee Shaker

On Feb. 23, Wiley, Monticello and Roxboro middle schools fielded teams in the Science Olympiad Regional Tournament at Case Western Reserve University. Each school team benefited from participation, and a Roxboro team placed high enough to move to the state tournament in Columbus on April 27.

The Science Olympiad Regional Tournament put the district’s middle school teams up against 20 of the best teams in the region. Over the course of 23 events, Roxboro’s Team A finished in 5th place and Team B finished in 10th place. Roxboro Middle School took 7th place overall, enabling it to send Team A to the State Science Olympiad at The Ohio State University, where 40 middle school and 40 high school teams will compete. The winner in each division will move on to the National Science Olympiad Tournament, to be held at Wright State University in Dayton on May 17–18.

Members of Team A were Katie Baron, Emily Benson, Owen Brink-Walters, Sylvia Crowell, Melanie Graham, Jessa Lammert, Danny Lawson, Dorrie Pharis, Rosalie Phillips, Cody Radivoyevitch, Mary Jane Reinhardt, Delia Robinson, William van den Bogert, Nina Yao and Claudia Zhu, with Emma Quill as alternate. Roxboro’s Team A won a total of 8 awards during the competition:

• 4th place, Anatomy – Rosalie Phillips
• 3rd place, Reach for the Stars – Cody Radivoyevitch and William van den Bogert
• 3rd place, Shock Value – Cody Radivoyevitch and William van den Bogert
• 3rd place, For the Stars – Cody Radivoyevitch and William van den Bogert
• 3rd place, Disease Detectives – Rosalie Phillips and Delia Robinson

The Ohio Science Olympiad provides students with the opportunity to participate in one of the premier science competitions in the nation, providing rigorous, standards-based challenges.

The competition tests team members’ knowledge of science skills, processes, and applications in a wide range of science disciplines including biology, chemistry, physics, technology, earth science and mathematics.

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

Expanding the math equation at Heights

Joy Henderson

Starting with the 2013-14 school year, Ohio students will be required to take four—not three—years of math to graduate. For Joyce Bukovac, Heights High math teacher and department liaison, this created both an opportunity and a challenge. “It is important for students to have strong problem-solving and analytical skills,” she said. She also knew it would be important to create courses that would appeal to all students.

Last summer, Bukovac convened the math teachers to develop a plan. The result of their work is four semester-long classes aligned with the Society and Discovery pathways, and plans for next year to develop two more courses aligned with the Creativity pathway.

These courses are open to juniors and seniors who have passed Algebra II. The math sequence begins with Algebra I, followed by Geometry and Algebra II. After completion of Algebra II, students are qualified to enroll in pre-calculus followed by AP Calculus AB/BC and AP Statistics.

“Our goal is to connect math to students’ lives. That makes it easier for them to see the role and importance of math,” said Bukovac.

“The courses at Heights have helped me discover my passion for mathematics and inspired my interest in engineering,” said senior Kyle Finnegan, who plans to study aerospace engineering in college. “I feel very well prepared for the coursework at any school.”

Joy Henderson is the liaison for parents and community at Heights High.

EXCESSIVE SUGAR: NO-HAT DOG MEETS HAT DOG.
The Swim Cadets continue 70-year-old tradition

Simone Quartell

The 70-year-old Swim Cadets synchronized swim club at Cleveland Heights High School presented its annual show Feb. 28, March 1 and 2.

The sixteen-girl team includes nine new members this year. They began practicing in October, and began brainstorming ideas for the show after that.

This year’s theme was “Swim Cadets Kick It Old School.” The opening number was set to “Like A Prayer” by Madonna.

Most of the routines were choreographed by seniors Maggie Berusch, Isabel Collins, Jenna Goldthwait, Mariah Steiger and junior Phoebe Lammert.

Bel Collins, Jenna Goldthwait, Mariah Berusch, whose sister Elana was a swim cadet, said that many members have had sisters, cousins, mother, aunts and grandmothers on the team. Junior Emma Bartz, new to the team this year, said her mom was a cadet.

The senior members hope to continue synchronized swimming in college. "The club has a lot of fun traditions, and it’s really fun to produce a show together," said Steiger, the sergeant at arms.

Simon Quartell, a Heights High graduate, is a student at Cleveland State University and is assisting Bendix in advising the team.

"We could not be more proud of our Beaumont scientists," said Gretchen Santo, chair of Beaumont’s science department. "They displayed mastery of all academic disciplines in this competition."

Established in 1953, NEOSEF is a nonprofit, all-volunteer organization, whose goal is to interest students in science and engineering. Beaumont students Megan Jones, Grace Gamble, Erika Klek, Marija Rowane, Francesca Fabes and Julia Parker received awards in this competition.

Twelve Beaumont School students, competing in the Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSEF) last month at John Carroll University, received awards.

Anna Grushetsky and Christina Kerner, coming in first, received gold medals. Second-place winners Yennmay Chia, Erika Klek, Anna Libertin and Julia Parker received silver medals. Emily Boes, Grace Gamble, Megan Jones, Marija Rowane, Elizabeth Staniwicz and Ana Maria Vargas came home with bronze medals.

"We could not be more proud of our Beaumont scientists," said Gretchen Santo, chair of Beaumont’s science department. "They displayed mastery of all academic disciplines in this competition."

The BEST Medicine Engineering Fair was also held in March, at the National Inventors Hall of Fame in Akron. This fair is for students in grades 6–12 who create exceptional science projects relating to biomedical science and engineering. Beaumont students Megan Jones, Grace Gamble, Erika Klek, Marija Rowane, Francesca Fabes and Julia Parker received awards in this competition.

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

MARCH 5, 2013
All board members were present.

Public address: artificial turf
Three residents spoke about the board’s decision to seek bids to build artificial turf for the football field. They all stated that artificial turf, a petroleum-based product, requires pesticides and multiple chemicals to clean and maintain. They asked the board to provide good quality outdoor space for the students and do their homework on the dangers of artificial turf.

Field trips approved
The board approved two field trips: the 11th and 12th grade marketing students trip to the state DECA Competition in Columbus, March 15–17; and the Canterbury Elementary fifth grade scholars men trip to Columbus, April 2.

Tiger Nation policies
Feedback from both students and teachers has been positive concerning the Tiger Nation policies. Positive behavioral responses have been seen since institution of the Tiger Nation policies. Positive behavioral responses has been positive concerning the Tiger Nation policies. Feedback from both students and teachers

Safety and security update
Practice lockdown drills occur in all the schools, and security monitors at Canterbury and Robrose Elementary schools were installed because individuals can access classrooms before reaching the offices in these two schools. The K–12 administrative teams are studying “entry-exit” procedures. “Safe places,” door security, and the public address and phone systems are being reviewed and updated. In April, administrators will be updated on responses to “active shooter” circumstances. ALICE, which is an acronym for alert, lockdown, inform, counter and evacuate, is a modified approach to responding to such a situation. The goal is to discuss these policies at the next board of education meeting and train all staff prior to the new school year. Parents will receive notices about the hotline for security information.

Announcements
• The annual Reaching Heights spelling bee is April 17.
• The board may change the dates for the April 17 board meetings because of spring break. The public will be notified of any change in meeting time or place.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board

Why I lose sleep at night

Susie Kaeser

Recently I interviewed nominees for the board of Parents for Public Schools, a national education organization. The final interview question was “What makes you lose sleep at night?” My own answer to this seemingly odd question is this: I lose sleep worrying about the future of our public schools! The growing influence on state and federal education policy—and on the overall education narrative—of the advocates of testing, privatization, union-busting and budget-cutting scares me to death. The ascendance of this perspective worries me because its underlying principle is disinvestment in the common good. It promotes consumerism over democracy. Do we really want to abandon public education—and its embrace of our shared responsibility to one another—as an organizing element of our democracy? As I watch this carefully orchestrated effort gain momentum and infect our thinking, I feel overwhelmed. How do you slow it down and turn it toward more inclusive ends? How do we acknowledge the need for change without creating a narrative of a failed system? I consider myself a school reformer. Schools fall short of their potential and of what I want them to do. I became a public education activist because I wanted to transform this remarkable democratic institution, through which a community guarantees an education for all of its children, into an institution that serves all children well. Equity is at the core of my reform agenda, but in the 20th century the norm for public schools was to educate everyone while only providing “higher-level learning” to about 20 percent of students.

My goals: Sustaining a supported and respected institution, producing more ambitious results, and making those outcomes more equitable across communities and populations, now seem farther out of reach. They are at odds with the intentions of today’s reformers, who promote choice at the expense of funding, accountability over capacity building, and disdain instead of engagement.

My goals require changes that are not being addressed in the standard reform rhetoric. We need to provide adequate funding for public schools and address the persistent inequality among districts. We need to give all children access to a demanding curriculum that challenges them to be critical, creative and independent thinkers, and we need to attract talented teachers and give them the opportunity to construct learning experiences that help every child succeed.

We must engage struggling children rather than exclude them or judge them as losers, and attract leaders who can create a culture of success. Educators should be evaluated and provided with opportunities to improve. Parents and communities must be mobilized to further the goals of their schools. This work is complex and requires persistence. It is rarely achieved through the blunt instrument of public policy.

Tragically, the heavy-handed solutions now being advanced disregard and undermine the most profound and valuable part of our public education tradition, our commitment to the common good.

Schools can be resistant to change, which is sometimes a problem. In this case it is their salvation, because teachers still get up every day to do their important work, even if they feel isolated and under fire. Most have the will to carry on despite the blaming and shaming and constantly changing set of demands that surround them. They focus on the task at hand—the children who look to them for a hug, help with tying their shoes, guidance on navigating the world, praise for their efforts and, of course, the development of their minds and talents.

Teachers are motivated by their students, but there is a limit to how much we can depend on intrinsic rewards when the public narrative and ill-conceived education policies undermine teachers’ efforts and perceived value. I lose sleep because we are running out of time! There is an urgent need to push back before we make the work of teaching so unbearable that our talented educators won’t want to come to work.

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.

Spring Flea Market
all proceeds benefit mission work

Friday, April 12, 10 - 5
$10 admission 10-11, free thereafter

Saturday, April 13, 10 - 2
Clothing, Toys, Kitchen Goods, Household Items, Tools, Jewelry, Sporting Goods
Homemade Soup & Hot Dog Lunch

Community Recycling Event
(April 13 ONLY) Bring your electronics to the north parking lot for recycling - if it has a power cord or runs on batteries, regardless of condition or working order, we will accept it!

Geraci’s
2266 Warrensville Center Rd., University Heights, OH 44118
Monday, April 22nd starting at 5:00 pm.

* Present this Flyer to your Bartender or Server and a 15% portion of food proceeds benefits FutureHeights

FutureHeights
Back by Popular Demand

Support FutureHeights
as you enjoy an evening of food and drinks at

FutureHeights Tour 2013

Restaurant Tour

Church of the Saviour
2537 Lee Road Cleveland Heights
(216) 321-8880 www.chsaviour.org
Cleveland Heights teen named HYC’s Youth of the Year

Lauren Foley

Diamond Reese has been recognized as Heights Youth Club’s (HYC) Youth of the Year, the highest honor a club member can receive. Reese was nominated because of her leadership and involvement in the community.

Reese, a senior at Horizon Science Academy, plans to attend Cleveland State University in the fall. Her journey to college wasn’t easy. In first grade, Reese was tested for dyslexia after struggling with reading. This proved to be a turning point in her life, she recalled. “Teachers didn’t want me in their classrooms. Kids called me names and bullied me,” Reese said. “My mother transferred me to a different school every year, trying desperately to get me the help I needed.”

Reese credits HYC with bringing out her personality and reducing her shyness. “I found comfort, support and acceptance,” she said. “It’s like my home away from home.”

The club encouraged her to speak out, even in front of large groups of people, and to take on leadership roles. Today, Reese is vice president of the club’s Keystone/Young Moguls group, and is also a representative for UPS Road Code, a safe driving program for teens. Reese is an environmentalist, Bible Club’s Keystone/Young Moguls group, and is also a representative for UPS Road Code, a safe driving program for teens. Reese is an environmentalist, Bible study teacher and JROTC member. In 2011 Reese went door-to-door, collecting signatures and registering individuals to vote. Her community volunteer hours total more than 220 in the past year. Cleveland Heights Mayor Ed Kelley said, “Diamond Reese is an intelligent, trustworthy, responsible and hardworking young woman of high moral character.”

The Heights Youth Club is one of five freestanding clubs and six school-based clubs that belong to the Boys & Girls Club of Cleveland, the local chapter of the national Boys & Girls Clubs of America. HYC has almost 600 members. Each of the Cleveland member clubs names its own Youth of the Year, and these become nominees for the Cleveland Clubs’ Youth of the Year honor. Reese placed second in that competition and won a $5,500 scholarship.

Lauren Foley is the community relations manager for the Heights Youth Club.

Roxboro 8th-grader is a finalist in Maltz Museum essay contest

Jewel Moulthrop

To encourage middle and high school students to focus attention on the corrosive effects of hatred, discrimination and intolerance, while developing critical thinking and communication skills, the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage created an annual essay contest in 2008.

This year, more than 1,600 students from seven Northeast Ohio counties submitted essays to the fifth annual Maltz Museum’s Stop the Hate: Youth Speak Out! contest. The students’ essays address a variety of issues, including cyber-bullying, racism, anti-Semitism and Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) issues, and offer heartfelt and innovative solutions.

Soli Collins, who lives in Cleveland Heights and attends Roxboro Middle School, is one of three 8th-grade finalists. In her essay, Soli shares her feelings about being a victim of cyber-bullying. She tells how it destroyed an important friendship and how it affected her self-esteem. While the bullying has stopped and the friendship has been somewhat repaired, the effects of the experience still linger.

Jill Rembrant, the museum’s director of education and public programs, said she was “overwhelmed not only by the passion of our teenagers who share their stories of discrimination and their action plans with us, but by the hundreds of volunteer readers and judges who take the time to read and score each essay. Truly, we know that it is this generation of young people who will someday change the world.”

Students compete for a total of $200,000 in scholarships and prizes. As a finalist, Soli Collins is eligible to receive a cash prize. Congratulations, Soli! 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.

Get your yard and garden a makeover this spring!

Lawn Lad

Let us show you how a few clever changes today will enhance the way you enjoy your yard and garden tomorrow.

Not yet ready for a total yard and garden makeover? Our landscape maintenance services give you the gradual upgrades you want without breaking the bank. Let us show you how a few clever changes today will enhance the way you enjoy your yard and garden tomorrow.

Call now to schedule your complimentary design consultation.

www.lawnlad.com | (216) 371-1935

Anatolia Cafe

The colors, tastes & textures of the Eastern Mediterranean

Daily Specials & Happy Hour
Deli Bar / Outdoor Dining / Fireplace
Free Valet Parking on Weekends
Lunch & Dinner
Wed. Ladies Night
Turkish beer, wine & liquor
2270 Lee Road
Cleveland Heights
(216) 321-4400

Heights Observer April 1, 2013
17
www.heightsobserver.org
Container gardens are a great alternative for those who love gardens but find them hard to keep up.

Containers can be elevated on plant stands, tables, window sills or deck railings to make them easier to plant. Avoid strain on your back by buying lightweight containers. Place the containers where you want them before filling them, and locate them so that watering, weeding, deadheading and harvesting are easy for you to do. You might also want to buy smaller bags of soil, which are easier to carry than larger ones.

Start small with your container garden. It’s easy to become overzealous at the garden center and buy more plants than you can handle. Even if buying a whole flat is less expensive, try to buy only as many as you can plant at one time. If your budget is tight, focus on seeds, cuttings and native plants rather than mature or imported plants.

Choose containers with good drainage holes in the bottom. Put a half-inch layer of small pebbles, broken pottery or wood chips in the bottom of the container. Next, fill it with a mixture of two-thirds good quality soil and one-third peat moss. Peat moss adds lightness, nutrients, and helps retain moisture. Fill your containers to one inch below the rim.

An easy way to create an interesting and visually pleasing container arrangement is to follow the “thriller, filler and spiller” method of planting. The thriller is the focal piece that grabs your attention—usually the tallest and showiest plant in the container. Fillers are medium-height plants that fill the space around the thriller. Spillers are trailers that cascade out of the pot and grow toward the ground, acting as a visual anchor for the arrangement. You can have more than one kind of filler and spiller in a container, but they shouldn’t compete with the thriller for attention.

Proper design and care of your container garden will provide you with a relaxing hobby that will continue to produce pleasing results, year after year. Enjoy!
Bremec on the Heights prepares for spring season

Simone Quartell

As temperatures rise and the snow disappears, Bremec on the Heights is getting ready to reopen its doors to gardeners in the Heights.

According to Jessica Mitchell, marketing director, some “spring favorites” with Bremec’s customers are pansies, fruit trees, and annual and perennial plants. Bremec also offers organic lawn care items, such as fertilizer, soil, pest and disease control products, as well as garden décor items, such as fountains, statuary and pottery.

This year, Bremec is marketing custom gift baskets with the slogan “Your Vision is Our Creation.” Bremec has also begun selling Tokyo Milk beauty products and recently finished remodeling its shop at 13410 Cedar Road. The remodeling was completed in late winter and the building now has a “more open boutique feel,” said Mitchell. “It has much more light, and easier access to

The event combines successful features delicacies made by local chefs from the invasive, but edible, garlic. This annual cocktail-style reception will be held on Friday, April 12 from 6–9 p.m. at the Lakes’ most unique event, Pestival, the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.

Lisa Frederickson is the media and event chairwoman and longtime Nature Center volunteer. “Pestival is one of our most popular events.”

Once introduced, garlic mustard aggressively monopolizes light, moisture, and Umami. It replaces many native plants by aggressively out-competes native plants by aggressively crowding them. It is a weevil that is now being controlled by a parasitic wasp. This invasive species poses to native plants and animals.

A fundraiser for the Home and Repair Resource Center (HRRC) is planned for April 22–May 5. For every purchase made with an HRRC voucher, 15 percent of the proceeds will go to HRRC. Vouchers will be available at the store, throughout the Heights, and at HRRC’s office at 2350 Noble Road.

This fundraiser has become an annual event in recent years, and Mitchell said that Bremec holds fundraisers for many nonprofit organizations throughout the year.

During the winter, when garden sales decrease, Bremec staff plan and prepare for the spring and summer planting and growing seasons. During April, Bremec will be open from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays.

Newly remodeled Bremec on the Heights opens its doors to local gardeners.

Nature Center at Shaker Lakes hosts 8th annual Pestival on April 12

Lisa Frederickson

Pestival, the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes’ most unique event, will be held on Friday, April 12 from 6–9 p.m. at the Nature Center, 2600 South Park Blvd. This annual cocktail-style reception features delicacies made by local chefs from the invasive, but edible, garlic mustard pulled from the Nature Center grounds.

The event combines successful land management with creative cuisine, and will feature food prepared by chefs from local restaurants, including Coquette Patisserie, fire food and drink, The Greenhouse Tavern, J. Pistone Market and Gathering Place, Mackenzie Creamery, Radius Restaurant, SASA and Umami.

Pestival begins with a limited-availability VIP hour from 6–7 p.m. General admission is from 7–9 p.m. “We are thrilled to have many wonderful chefs return this year, as well as the opportunity to welcome a few new chefs to this fun evening at the Nature Center,” said Denise Dixon, Pestival chairwoman and longtime Nature Center volunteer. “Pestival is one of our most popular events.”

Once introduced, garlic mustard out-competes native plants by aggressively monopolizing light, moisture, nutrients, soil and space. Pestival helps educate the community about the threat this invasive species poses to native plants and animals.

VIP reservations are $85; general admission is $60. Reservations are required and should be made early for this always-sold-out event by calling the Nature Center at 216-331-9935 or visiting www.shakerlakes.org.

Lisa Frederickson is the media and event manager for the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.
Make a literary love connection at the library

Sheryl Banks

Matchmakers, Matchmakers,
Make me a match,
Find me a book,
or a movie perhaps,
Matchmakers, Matchmakers
Look through your books (and DVDs and CDs and books on tape),
And make me a perfect match.

—With apologies to Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick, composer and lyricist of “Fiddler on the Roof.”

Is there anything more satisfying than finding that new book, movie or piece of music that speaks to your soul? The one you find yourself begging friends and family to read, to watch, to listen to?

Heights Libraries wants to help you find your next great literary, musical or cinematic love at “Speed Dating with the Matchmakers” at the Lee Road Library on Wednesday, April 17, at 7 p.m.

The Matchmakers is a group of librarians whose mission is to help customers find materials that reflect their interests and passions. Modeled after speed dating, this fast, fun program will pair customers with the Matchmakers and with other customers for short, four-minute chats, during which beloved titles will be shared. Customers should come prepared with their own recommendations for fellow participants.

While the focus is on the love of books, movies and music, participants shouldn’t rule out the possibility of connecting with other customers who have similar interests. Who knows what may blossom?

The event is free, and light refreshments will be provided. Register at www.heightslibrary.org. The Lee Road branch is located at 2345 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights.

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

Free tax assistance from AARP

Tax day is Monday, April 15, but don’t panic—we’re offering help! Through April 13, AARP volunteers will help prepare your 2012 taxes. Call 216-932-3600 to make an appointment (required) during the following sessions:

Lee Road Library:
Tuesdays, April 2 and 9
Thursdays, April 4 and 11
Fridays, April 5 and 12
Saturdays, April 6 & 13

University Heights Library:
Thursdays, April 4 and 11

Coventry Village Library
1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400
Monday, April 15, 4 p.m.
From Seed to Stem.
Celebrate spring!
Learn how plants and flowers grow, paint a flower pot, and plant a seed to grow at home. Grades 2–5. Registration begins April 1.

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

No problem! I will take care of it...

SCOTT HAIGH
www.ScottHaigh.com
Scott@ScottHaigh.com
Direct: 216-272-6889
1163 Plainfield Rd, South Euclid
Cute 3 Bedroom Colonial!

Experience the Atma Center difference!
2319 Lee Road 216-371-9760 atmacenter.com

ATMA CENTER
YOGA FOR EVERY BODY
30 DAYS
UNLIMITED
YOGA - $39
UNRESISTIBLE!
(MREC STUDENTS ONLY)

Observer advertising is good for your business and good for your community.

BE THE APPLAUSE
APRIL 3–14, 2013
TOWER CITY CINEMAS clevelandfilm.org

CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
PRESENTED BY DOLLAR BANK

RIDE RTA TO TOWER CITY

Observer advertising is good for your business and good for your community.

HEIGTHS LIBRARIES

Heights Observer April 1, 2013
20
www.heightobserver.org
Heights Observer April 1, 2013

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board

Meeting highlights

FEBRUARY 18, 2013
Board Member Jeffrey Emmar was absent.

Question about violent video games
A Noble neighborhood resident expressed a concern about violent video games at the Noble Neighborhood Library. Recently, in the children’s room, two children were playing video games that featured shooting and killing. The resident, who accompanied the children, felt that this was not what he wanted his children exposed to, and he discussed the matter with Constance Dickerson, branch librarian, who explained that the computers in the children’s section blocked violent content but allowed for other violent elements. He felt that given that libraries evaluate the print material that they obtain, he would like to see similar attention given to video games that include violence and shooting.

James Roos, board president, assured him that the board would discuss the matter.

Dobama annual report
Charlotte Enflo, managing director, and No- than Motta, artistic director, addressed the board regarding Dobama’s accomplishments in 2012. Even with ticket prices up slightly, there has been a 20 percent increase in attendance. However, programming expenses have increased 21 percent. Contributed income was down 3 percent, but the number of individual donors was up 17 percent. A grant from the Cleveland Foundation covers the salary of Julie Friedman, associate managing director, as well as the cost of a ticketing database. Plans are in the works for the second Dobama fundraiser on June 14, featuring local playwright Eric Cable.

Library fund-Cleveland Foundation partnership
The board of directors of the Fund for the Future of Heights Libraries voted to partner with the Cleveland Foundation. Donors to the library endowment can contact the Cleveland Foundation directly.

Public Service Report highlights for January:
• Coventry Village Library hosted three em- ployment series classes: resume writing in Word, search for jobs online, and online job applications.
• Jenny Greene facilitated the Third Tuesday Book Club’s meeting at the Botthaus Brewing Company. The unusual partnership was a success and more book discussions will be held there.
• Kathywampus Press featured three area poets for a reading at Coventry Village Library.

Chernin performed, and skulele intervals were featured.

• University Heights Library partnered with Cleveland Foodbank to provide three ses- sions of the Kids Café snack program.
• Rap Art facilitator Freda Saleem now has two Girls’ Circle groups at the University Heights Library. One group is for girls ages 11 and 12, and the other is for girls ages 13 and over.
• The 13th Annual Poetry Slam, a collabora- tion with Lake Erie Ink, received food and prize donations from Dewey’s, Winking Lizard, Wendy’s, Sweetie Fry, and Five Guys. A crowd of about 60 enjoyed the program, alternating between absolute silence and uproarious applause.

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

See disclaimer on page 7.

Ongoing sales at Harvey and Friends bookshop

Louisa Oliver

On the second floor of the Lee Road Library, tucked away next to the bridge, is a used bookshop full of novels, all categories of nonfiction, children’s books, reference books, audio books, tapes, and CDs.

The store is known for its low prices and it is open whenever the library is open. If no attendant is there, the store operates on the honor system. Patrons make their choices and pay at the circula- tion desk downstairs.

Called Harvey and Friends, the store’s name is a shout-out to Harvey Pokar, who was a stalwart customer of the Friends of the Heights Libraries book sales. The Friends organization has promoted interest in, and appreciation of, the award-winning Heights Libraries for 50 years, mostly by sell- ing used books. The current bookshop opened in 2011 to supplement the tradi- tional book sales.

On the first Friday of every month there is a special sale in the bookshop, with a different theme each month. This month, fiction books will sell for $2 a bag.

The Friends’ annual Mega Book Sale will run from Thursday, May 2 through Sunday, May 5. Typically held in the downstairs meeting rooms, the sale will expand beyond the walls of the upstairs bookshop. Everything in the store will be for sale. Thursday night is an ex- clusive preview for Friends members, 7–8:30 p.m. The sale will be open to the general public on Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. On Sunday, from 12–5 p.m., book lovers can fill a whole bag with books for $4.

Friends of the Heights Libraries sells donated books, and the Heights community is very generous. Now’s the time to think about spring cleaning or downsizing, and donate good quality books, tapes, CDs and audio books to the Heights Libraries for the sale. Small donations are accepted at the Lee Road Library customer service desk. Larger donations may be dropped off at the loading dock (north of the main entrance off the parking lot on Lee Road) during business hours. Friends also sells library books that have been taken out of circulation.

Become a Friends member for an annual fee of $10. To become a member or to renew your membership, visit www.friendsofheightslib.org.

A patron checks out the selection at the first Friday sale in April.

Brennan’s Colony

2299 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights

Happy Hour Weekdays
Party Room Weekends
Voted Best of Heights

www.jacbusiness.com

Mail Service • Database Management • Office Administration
Our responsive customer service and competitive pricing will keep you on
track and on budget.
Contact Ann at 216-865-5508 Fax: 216-865-0550
www.jacbusiness.com

New postal regulations got you down? Let us mail it for you!

J.A.C. Business Communications, Inc.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS’ Heights Observer April 1, 2013

www.heightsobserver.org

Heights Observer April 1, 2013

21
Heights High Symphony rated ‘superior’ in state orchestra competition

Joy Henderson

The Heights High Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of Daniel Heim, attended the Ohio Music Education Association’s (OMEA) State Orchestra Adjudicated Event for the Northwest Region at Bowling Green High School on Saturday, March 2.

The 51-member ensemble performed a 30-minute program of prepared music at the highest level of difficulty (Class A), followed by a round of Class A sight-read music. The orchestra was awarded a “Superior” rating—the top rating given in the OMEA system. Sixteen high school string and symphonic orchestras performed in OMEA classes A, B and C.

“Participation in the event offers students the opportunity to perform high-level music for judges who can give honest, detailed, expert feedback,” said Heim. “It’s one thing to play concerts as the home team in your own auditorium, but it’s quite different to deliver for an audience not connected to you through family or community.”

Senior and principal oboist Shoshana Klein said, “It was a good experience to play for other people, especially receiving feedback from unbiased judges.”

This is the first time since 2004 that the Heights High Symphony Orchestra has attended the OMEA State Orchestra event.

“Our students not only performed well under pressure, but they got up very early to travel across the state,” said Heim, who is also artistic director of the Heights Summer Music Camp sponsored by Reaching Heights. “The students worked very hard and I’m extremely proud of them.”

Joy Henderson is the Heights High liaison for parents and community.

Alumni produce documentary about Heights High

Jewel Moulthrop

Picture a sea of black and gold T-shirts with “Forever a Tiger” emblazoned across the front. That’s what you’ll see in the stands at any given Cleveland Heights High School sporting event. That “Tiger Pride” is something that lasts forever, according to Mai Moore and Traci Easley-Williams, both Heights High alumnae and co-producers of a new documentary called “The Heights Movie.” Jeff Johnson (’91) is co-executive producer.

The two women have set out to create a documentary about growing up at Heights High, which they describe as “one of the city’s most assorted boxes of cultures, all in one educational dwelling.”

“There is a story to be told. I’ve lived around the nation and internationally and there is nowhere like the Heights,” said Moore, executive producer of the film.

The story explores the uniqueness of the school as told through the eyes of Heights High graduates from 1955 to 2012. The film focuses heavily on diversity—not only racial but also social and economic—and other qualities that made and make the high school such a melting pot, poured into a three-story, H-shaped building occupying an entire city block.

The film features some notable Heights High alumni, including Mike Belkin, basketball phenom of the 1990s; Damon “Mr. Basketball” Stringer; and Jeff Johnson, TV journalist.

ROXARTS benefit at the B-Side is May 4

Andrea C. Turner

Get ready to have a “nearly and radical” time as ROXARTS hosts its annual benefit and auction, Saturday, May 4, 6:30-10 p.m., at Coventry’s B-Side Lounge, 2758 Euclid Heights Blvd. This year’s event, “Rox ‘N’ Roll: Breakin’ It Down at the B-Side,” will take you back to the ’80s, be sure to wear your parachute pants, leg warmers and big hair.

Get a taste of Asian-inspired food catered by Umami Moto; enjoy complimentary beer and wine, music and dancing, and participate in the silent and live auctions.

One of the benefits is the primary fundraiser supporting ROXARTS, a not-for-profit organization of parents and community members who share a common goal: to bring enhanced arts education to students at Roxboro Elementary and Middle Schools. For more than 30 years, ROXARTS has sponsored educational programs in the performing and visual arts—participation in which is proven to improve academic achievement and help develop well-rounded children.

ROXARTS funds artists-in-residence, school performances and capital projects. Most recently, it has sponsored programs in Japanese poetry, Daleczno, silk painting, quilt making, hip hop dance, comic-book making and puppet theater.

The school community has enjoyed performances and workshops with Verb Ballads, CSU Jazz Ensemble, Morrison Dance and the Roberto Ocasio Foundation. Capital projects have included new theatrical lighting, a state-of-the-art sound system, and a set of African drums—all benefiting students and performers.

The community is invited. Tickets to the event are available online at www.ROXARTS.org. Tickets for teachers and staff are $20 in advance or $25 at the door; tickets for all others are $30 in advance or $35 at the door. Be creative and get your tickets now for a “totally awesome” event. Check us out on Facebook for updates on exciting auction items.

To donate auction items or purchase ads in our auction catalog, contact co-chairs Rosie Ford (440-756-1757 or rosieford@yahoo.com), or Erin Gisel (216-509-4010 or ermgisel@aol.com).

Andrea C. Turner works at ACT One Communications, a marketing and communications consulting firm. She is PR chair for the 2013 ROXARTS benefit and a proud parent of two Roxboro Elementary School students.
Heights Arts exhibits art by ‘Our Kids on Lee’

Peggy Spaeth

Change can bring challenges—and opportunities. People in the Heights are particularly creative in adapting to challenging changes, turning lemons into lemonade. A case in point is the Heights Youth Club: a vacant church repurposed into a vibrant after-school program by a visionary group of residents.

Heights Arts created a special opportunity for the club by applying to the Ohio Arts Council to sponsor a five-week artist residency with Cuban-born Cleveland artist Augusto Bordelois. The result is an exterior mosaic mural that creates a window into the current life of the former church.

Heights Arts will display the mural before installation at a show called “Our Kids on Lee,” with an opening reception Friday, April 19, 6-9 p.m. Also featured are paintings by Bordelois, and artwork selected from the art classes of Lee Road public schools: Fairfax Elementary, Jessica Friedland, art teacher; Boulevard Elementary, Hilary Nemecek, art teacher; and Heights High, Susan Hood, art teacher. The show runs through May 11, after which the mural will be installed on the Heights Youth Club pediment.

During the residency, Bordelois first worked with a core group of students to design the mural. The design was approved by the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission and Architectural Board of Review, then fabricated after school by the students and Bordelois, with the assistance of Heights Arts staff members Andrea Joki and Courtney Young.

The students selected the theme of Tiger Nation, as the tiger is a longtime Heights High mascot. In the mural, the tiger, powerful and protective, looks out over identifiable Cleveland Heights landmarks including Cain Park, the Heights Youth Club, Heights High, the Cedar Lee Theatre, and typical Heights homes, all illuminated by rays from a rising sun.

The mosaic project enriched students’ after-school experience this year—and will enliven the Lee Road streetscape for decades to come with a lasting piece of public art, reflecting Heights Arts’s vision of art as part of everyday life.

This $11,350 Heights Arts public art and education project was possible through the generosity of the following: Ohio Arts Council, Christopher Brandt/Beth Sersig Fund, Cyrus Eaton Foundation, Jack and Blanche Valancy Dominon Foundation, US Bank Foundation, Elizabeth Gevelber, Cedar Lee Special Improvement District and, of course, Heights Arts.

Peggy Spaeth is executive director of Heights Arts.
Heights Observer April 1, 2013

Amy Fischer

“How do you get to Wonderland? Over the hill or underland or just behind the tree?” No, silly, you will find Wonderland at Communion of Saints. That’s how the question goes in the musical production of Disney’s “Alice in Wonderland Jr.”, this year’s selection for the Communion of Saints School drama program.

The show follows Alice in her mad-cap adventures as she meets the White Rabbit, Dodo Bird, Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum, the Cheshire Cat, the Mad Hatter, the tyrannical Queen of Hearts and the fabulous ladies of the golden afternoon. This fast-paced stage adaptation of Alice in Wonderland features new arrangements of such classic Disney songs as “I’m Late” and “The Unbirthday Song,” along with costumes and set design that promise to delight audiences.

Students, who have been working on the production since January, will transform the Powers Hall gymnasium stage into the magical setting for “Alice in Wonderland Jr.” on Friday, April 19, and Saturday, April 20, at 7 p.m. The play is under the stage direction of Lydia Chanenka and the musical direction of Maria Botti-Lodovico. The school’s drama program is one of the enrichment programs available to students in grades K-8. The program, now in its fourth year, has seen its shows’ casts grow from 25 to 60 students. Previous productions include “Annie, Jr.,” “Baba Yaga” (a production written by the program’s director) and “Willy Wonka, Jr.”

General admission is $2 at the door, and free for those 15 and under. Baked goods and water will be available for purchase before the show and during intermission.

Communion of Saints, 1260 Stillman Road (at Cedar Road), was established in 2010 with the merger of four parishes in the Diocese of Cleveland. The school was formerly known as Saint Ann School, established in 1916.

Amy Fischer is a member of Communion of Saints School advisory committee and past co-president of the PTO.

‘The Lyons’ is season finale at Dobama

Jewel Moulthrop

As the end of Dobama Theatre’s 2012–13 season approaches, the company is preparing for “The Lyons” by Nicky Silver as the final show of its 53rd consecutive season. This production marks the regional premiere of Silver’s play. “The Lyons,” which will run from April 19 to May 19, is directed by Dobama’s artistic director Nathan Motta.

“The Lyons” is a dark comedy, in which the characters are allowed to speak their private thoughts aloud, and in doing so, Rita, the indomitable matriarch of this dysfunctional family, is both ferocious and surprisingly touching as she anticipates the lonely life she sees as her future. Her husband is dying from cancer, her son is in a dubious relationship, her daughter is struggling to stay sober . . . and on top of it all, Rita can’t settle on a new design for the living room.

A review in the Village Voice, when the play opened off-Broadway in 2011, noted that although “The Lyons family seems to be the standard-issue dysfunctional middle-class Jewish-suburban family,” in Nicky Silver’s hands “expected things happen here, but happen quite differently.”

Silver has written more than a dozen plays, including “Pterodactyls” and “Free Will and Wanton Lust,” both of which won awards. “The Lyons” is his firstplay to be produced on Broadway (2012).

Nathan Motta, recently named artistic director of Dobama and the producer of Dobama’s Young Playwrights programs, is a professional freelance director, conductor and composer, who has worked with the Cleveland Play House, Opera Cleveland, Ohio Light Opera, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Mercury Opera Rochester (NY) and Civic Light Opera (Pittsburgh). He is the founding artistic director of Dobama’s Emerging Actors program, where he teaches acting and has directed productions of “Antigone,” “The Tempest” and “Blood Wedding.” He directed “A Bright New Boise” at Dobama last year.

Performances of “The Lyons” are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings; performances of “Ask Me Another” on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings; performances of “The Taming of the Shrew” on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings; and on top of it all, Rita can’t settle on a new design for the living room.

Performances of “The Lyons” are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings; performances of “Ask Me Another” on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings; performances of “The Taming of the Shrew” on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings; and on top of it all, Rita can’t settle on a new design for the living room.

To purchase tickets for “The Lyons” or any other Dobama production, call the Dobama Theatre box office at 216-932-3396. Ask about reduced prices for RUSH tickets, the preview performance on Thursday, Apr. 18, and the “pay-as-you-can” performance on Sunday, Apr. 21.

Jewel Moulthrop is a Cleveland Heights resident, a member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.
Pinwheel Kids to open in former Sunbeam space

Kathy Gross

There is a quaint little cluster of shops in Cleveland Heights on Fairmount Boulevard, between South Taylor and Queenston roads. One of them, Sunbeam—A Shop for Children, has been offering clothes and gifts for children in the Heights at this location for nearly 17 years, and in the community since 1915.

Earlier this year, Vocational Guidance Services (VGS) Sunbeam Board, the nonprofit organization that ran the shop, decided it was no longer within its mission to run a retail shop and announced it was closing Sunbeam. The board is redirecting its awareness-building and fundraising efforts to special events and activities, such as Fiesta on 59th and its holiday boutique. Members of the Sunbeam’s board of directors will continue to provide support to VGS, but without the shop.

Fortunately, longtime manager Janet Nelson decided to purchase the store and carry on its tradition. “It was a bit scary,” she said, “but I have 30 years of experience and many loyal customers.”

Nelson will reopen the store in April with a new name, Pinwheel Kids, and said she couldn’t be more excited about her new endeavor. “This place is my home away from home,” she said. “I love it here in the Heights.”

The Sunbeam board originally opened the store to sell clothing made by those enrolled in its programs—people with mental or physical disabilities, economic disadvantages and people who have been incarcerated—to the public. By the 1980s, the shop’s merchandise no longer focused on items sourced from VGS programs. It had evolved into a contemporary collection of high-quality baby and children’s clothing, and toys with a bright, old-fashioned feel. One could browse through racks of frilly dresses and handmade sweaters, porcelain tea sets, beguiling stuffed animals and wooden toys that had the look and feel of something timeless that could be passed down through generations.

Nelson is renovating the storefront and fixtures and rejuvenating the merchandise in preparation for an April 1 opening. She will start with an assortment of baby gifts and will add apparel and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Fortunately, longtime manager Janet Nelson decided to purchase the store and carry on its tradition. “It was a bit scary,” she said, “but I have 30 years of experience and many loyal customers.”

Nelson will reopen the store in April with a new name, Pinwheel Kids, and said she couldn’t be more excited about her new endeavor. “This place is my home away from home,” she said. “I love it here in the Heights.”

The Sunbeam board originally opened the store to sell clothing made by those enrolled in its programs—people with mental or physical disabilities, economic disadvantages and people who have been incarcerated—to the public. By the 1980s, the shop’s merchandise no longer focused on items sourced from VGS programs. It had evolved into a contemporary collection of high-quality baby and children’s clothing, and toys with a bright, old-fashioned feel. One could browse through racks of frilly dresses and handmade sweaters, porcelain tea sets, beguiling stuffed animals and wooden toys that had the look and feel of something timeless that could be passed down through generations.

Nelson is renovating the storefront and fixtures and rejuvenating the merchandise in preparation for an April 1 opening. She will start with an assortment of baby gifts and will add apparel and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront.

Other changes are afoot for the Fairmount Taylor district. A couple of doors down, Paul Hamlin Interiors will reduce its footprint to a single storefront. Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, and toys in the following weeks. The new store will take up a little less space so that Jubilee! Gifts in the Heights, which had subleased a portion of the Sunbeam space and is owned by Heights resident Carolyn Batcheller, can expand into an entire storefront. 
Jon Forman’s theatrical journey

James Henke

Back in 1977, Jon Forman, a recent graduate of Case Western Reserve University, purchased the Cedar Lee Theatre in Cleveland Heights. Forman, then 24 years old, had majored in speech communications at Case and had taken classes in journalism, radio and film. Louis Giannetti, author of a textbook called Understanding Movies, had been one of his teachers. It was what Forman had learned in Giannetti’s classes that inspired him to enter the theater business and organize the first Cleveland International Film Festival, which was held at the Cedar Lee in the festival’s early years.

Forman had a specific idea in mind when he took over the Cedar Lee. “I wanted to make it a home for specialized films, which were called art films back then,” he said. One of the first movies he presented at the Cedar Lee was Madame Rosa,” a French film that was an adaptation of the novel The Life Before Us. The film won the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. As it turned out, Forman’s plan succeeded, and, as he said, “It instantly put the Cedar Lee back on the map.”

Since then, Forman’s company, Cleveland Cinemas, has expanded to become the region’s largest independent theater chain. It now operates seven theaters: Cedar Lee, Shaker Square Cinemas, Tower City Cinemas, Chagrin Cinemas, Capitol Theatre on Cleveland’s west side, Apollo Theatre in Oberlin and the Southside Works Cinema in Pittsburgh.

The Cedar Lee, which originally opened on Christmas Day in 1925, remains one of the chain’s most successful venues. Back when Forman bought it, the theater had one screen. In 1983, he expanded the space to two screens, and in 1993, it grew again. It now boasts six screens. “You don’t see single-screen theaters anywhere in this country anymore,” Forman said. “With multiplexing, if half of the screens have films people want to see, you can carry the business.”

Like many other arts-related businesses, movie theaters are going through tough times as a result of technological advances, such as VCRs, DVD players, and the like. “People can now stream movies to their computers or their TVs,” Forman said. “And then there’s Netflix. Movies to their computers or their TV’s,” Forman said. “And then there’s Netflix. Quite simply, people don’t go to theaters as often as they used to go.”

To fight that trend, Forman has brought a lot of specialized programming to the Cedar Lee. One change was to create late-night screenings. “That’s one way we can attract the 20-something demographic,” he said. “The younger demographic just doesn’t go to movies the way their parents did.” For the past 25 years, the Cedar Lee has been presenting midnight screenings of “The Rocky Horror Picture Show,” which take place on the first Saturday of the month. The theater also shows other films at midnight on Saturdays.

In addition to the midnight screenings, Forman has presented other types of specialty films. Every month the Cedar Lee shows specially filmed ballet performances. The films are recordings of live ballet performances from around the globe, usually presented in high definition, and not shown in many other theaters. For example, on April 21 and 24, the theater is showing “Bodas de Sangre/Suite Flamenco,” a Spanish ballet based on a play by Federico Garcia Lorca. Also in April, the theater is presenting a special series of films called Laff Riot, eight movies that were featured on the American Film Institute’s list of the 100 Funniest American Films. They include such classics as “Annie Hall,” “Some Like It Hot,” “Tootsie” and “Fargo.” Admissions are only five dollars for these films.

Forman has also been presenting music films. Recent presentations have included “Peter Gabriel: New Blood Live in London,” in 3D and “Led Zeppelin’s Celebration Day.” The Gabriel movie was filmed at a March 2011 concert; the Zeppelin movie was filmed at the band’s appearance at the Ahmet Ergen tribute concert in London in December 2007. The larger theater chains are not showing these films, or movies like them.

Although the Cleveland International Film Festival no longer takes place at the Cedar Lee—it has moved to Forman’s Tower City Cinemas—the theater still presents one of the festival’s movies each year. This year it will be showing “Good Ol’ Freda,” a film about Freda Kelly, who the woman who worked as a secretary for the Beatles during the band’s 11-year career.

Overall, Forman’s primary goal is to keep people coming to movie theaters. “There is something different about seeing a movie on a big screen with an audience,” he said. “Quite simply, it’s a different experience.”

James Henke, resident of Cleveland Heights, was a writer and editor for Rolling Stone magazine for many years and author of several books.
Mac’s Backs thriving on Coventry

James Henke

In this era when bookstores, like record stores before them, seem to be a dying breed, Mac’s Backs is bucking the trend. According to co-owner Suzanne DeGaetano, business at the Coventry Road shop is “just fine.”

DeGaetano said that the closing of the Borders chain and other large stores in the area has helped “We have definitely had a spike in our business.” Despite the pressure from Amazon.com and other online sources, “people still want to browse. They want to be able to stay in a store for 10 minutes and look at the books. It’s a cultural experience.”

Mac’s Backs does a variety of things to keep business strong, including building a larger online presence with its website, www.macsbacks.com. It is also selling more e-books and doing more off-site special events. On June 1, the store will sell books at the Cleveland Veg Fest at the Cleveland State University Student Center and at Case Western Reserve University’s (CWRU) writers conference.

Mac’s Backs dates to 1978, when Jim McSherry bought a used-book store in Chagrin Falls. When he started studying at Kent State University, he moved the store to Kent, then he moved it back to Chagrin Falls a year later. In 1981, McSherry decided he wanted to open another store, and his friend DeGaetano volunteered to open one in Cleveland Heights, where she lived. The original location was above the Dobama Theatre on Coventry Road. In 1984, it moved to the north end of Coventry, then moved again in 1993 to its current location at 1820 Coventry, next to Tommy’s restaurant. The store in Chagrin Falls is no more, but McSherry, now a lawyer, is still DeGaetano’s business partner.

Mac’s Backs first opened as a used-book store and book exchange. Eventually, DeGaetano began bringing in new books, starting with some of her favorites, by Beat authors Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg. She added more science fiction books, which remain a customer favorite. In fact, the entire upper balcony of the store is devoted to science fiction. “The store reflects the community,” she explained.

More recently, DeGaetano has focused on bringing in current best-sellers and more books by local writers. “Part of our job is to promote the work of our neighbors,” she said. The store frequently presents readings and signings by local authors, and features regular events, including a story swap on the first Tuesday of every month. Mac’s has had a book club for more than 15 years. The adult club meets at the store on the third Wednesday of every month. On the second Saturday of each month, a book club on fiction, fantasy and adventure is offered for middle-school-aged girls. There’s also a Nature Writers’ Workshop on the second Friday of each month, and, on the second Wednesday of the month, a poetry reading. The poetry sessions have been going on for almost 30 years, making it the longest-running reading series in the country.

This month, Mac’s Backs is offering several events: On April 3, at 7 p.m., Samuel Thomas, the author of Midnight’s Tale, discusses the mystery genre with CWRU professor Mary Grimm at the Coventry Village Library (a collaboration between Mac’s Backs, Appletree Books and the library). The following night, Robert Diemer, author of Midnight’s Son, will appear at the store. Then, on April 10, at 7 p.m., Lee Chilcote and Brad Ricca offer a poetry reading. On April 13, at 9 p.m., there will be a blues-guitar songwriting workshop for children, in association with Roots of American Music. On April 27, at 7 p.m., the store will host a reading by writers from the Small Victorian literary journal.

Next door to Mac’s Backs, at Tommy’s restaurant, on April 24, 9:30-10:30 a.m., there will be a book launch for Cleveland Heights author Tricia Springstubb’s new picture book, Phoebe and Digger. The event (with bagels and coffee donated by Tommy’s) is also a fundraiser for Family Connections.

“Events are a big part of our identity,” DeGaetano said. “It’s what we love to do, and it’s a way to be part of the community.”

James Henke lives in Cleveland Heights. He was a writer and editor for Rolling Stone magazine for about 15 years, and is the author of numerous books, including biographies of John Lennon, Bob Marley and Jim Morrison.