CH-UH school district names Talisa Dixon new superintendent

Kim Sergio Inglis

On April 21, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School district announced that the board of education (BOE) had selected Talisa Dixon to become its next superintendent. Dixon is currently deputy superintendent: teaching and learning for the Saginaw (Mich.) Public School District. She will take over the CH-UH superintendent position from Nylajean McDaniel, who will retire on July 31.

At the time of the district’s announcement, terms of Dixon’s contract were being negotiated. The BOE is expected to vote on her contract during its May 6 regular board meeting. According to Angee Shaker, director of communications for the CH-UH district, the board anticipates that there will be a transition period during which Dixon will work with McDaniel, but a start date for Dixon has not yet been determined.

“We were very fortunate to have a selection of extremely qualified candidates, but in the end, Dr. Dixon was the choice,” Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.
OPENING THE OBSERVER

Bob Rosenbaum

The Heights Observer is intended to be community property—produced by the community, on behalf of the community. One of the main reasons for this column each month is to provide transparency about decisions made while trying to do that job.

Yet, while dozens of people contribute to the Observer each month, the handful of us who regularly put in the most time with it make all sorts of decisions that are never likely to be described, explained or even questioned. It’s a small group. While we tend to communicate regularly (mostly by e-mail), we work independently. We often disagree with one another, but we are pretty good at trusting in each other’s competence, making the best decisions, and making the best decisions.

But there is a group of concerned citizens who are, in fact, tasked with keeping an eye on how the Observer is working. These are members of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee. Set up six years ago—when nonprofit FutureHeights began publishing the Observer—this committee was always intended to reflect the community’s diversity and keep the Observer grounded in its mission to serve as a community advocate, be a catalyst for public discourse, keep residents informed, promote citizen involvement and improve the overall quality of life for residents.

The committee itself has had its ups and downs—being more active and more widely representative at some times than others. Right now, we are seeking to bring on some new members. The goal is to broaden community participation and add capacity to implement new ideas.

Members of the advisory committee are chosen by its chairman—who in turn is selected by the FutureHeights board. Right now, the committee has two co-chairmen—me (on a second tour of duty) and Jim Henke, a FutureHeights board member, regular Observer contributor and an internationally known journalist.

The committee isn’t capped at a specific size, and its members may serve for as long as they remain interested and helpful.

There are not a lot of requirements for serving on this committee, but there are a few. Members are expected to attend regular meetings. They are also expected to communicate constructively and with civility, and they are expected to become actively involved in projects that the committee chooses to undertake.

Cleveland Heights resident Bob Rosenbaum is co-chairman of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee and is responsible for the paper’s advertising sales and market development.

DiFranco decision should not discourage citizens from making a public records request

Earlier this year, the City of Cleveland Heights was charged with trying to conceal or withhold from reporters incident reports of violent crimes. The reports were eventually made public, but only after a lawyer was hired to force the city to comply with the Public Records Act.

Average citizens, not just reporters, are entitled to request public records. A citizens’ lawsuit was filed against the city regarding its failure to produce public records on the controversial Taylor Road rehabilitation project.

The outcome of the case was that the city paid thousands of dollars to settle the lawsuit and, if so, how broad or narrow the order would be.

The DiFranco decision gives the public entity to produce the requested records. In the event that a lawsuit is filed, the court does not have the discretion to consider whether to issue an order for discretionary attorney fees. So in DiFranco, the court took advantage of the ambiguity by turning over the requested records as soon as the lawsuit was filed. The court did not have time to consider whether to issue an order, and if, so broad or narrow the order would be.

The DiFranco decision gives citizens and their attorneys the incentive to bring on some new members. Members are expected to attend regular meetings. They are also expected to communicate constructively and with civility, and they are expected to become actively involved in projects that the committee chooses to undertake.

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Thank you all from Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park

To the Editor:

Believe it or not, we had beautiful weather for the Saturday, April 12, work day at the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park. The reward is a playground with equipment that has been repaired, and gardens weeded and mulched. A special thanks to Zoss the Swiss Baker and Phoenix Coffee on Coventry, which provided breakfast to get the volunteers started, and to Tommy’s restaurant, which provided a delicious lunch so they would have energy to finish the work.

I am very impressed with the community service and give a big thank you to all of the volunteers.

Joanne Campbell
Cleveland Heights

CH tax-abatement policy could lead to future problems

To the Editor:

This letter is in response to the article in the April edition of the Heights Observer regarding the Turkey Ridge CRA.

Cleveland Heights City Council, in concert with the City Planning Department, is offering tax abatement as a mechanism to spur development in the city, but I believe the process has serious flaws. First of all, I must state that I fully support the concept as a method to encourage development of housing in the district now taking on an extensive facilities renovation and remodeling project.

I support the concept but believe that the abatement should be awarded only to the first buyer of the property. This will encourage the development, but avoids long term and perhaps undesirable effects that could result. I worry that Cleveland Heights could be kicking a real housing problem down the road with the current form of tax abatement.

We have one of the top, if not the top, property tax rates in the state. While top earners may be able to cope with a sudden 30 to 60 percent increase in their monthly housing costs as the tax abatement expires, I don’t believe the typical resident can easily muddle through. We have a significant number of foreclosures and vacant residences in the city and I believe the current abatement status will only fuel this condition. It’s not too late for the city to amend its actions to benefit the developers and the community.

Todd Anderson
Cleveland Heights

I applaud Coryell’s dissenting voice

To the Editor:

Because I haven’t paid attention to any discussion about development schemes for Cleveland Heights’ Turkey Ridge, I was unaware that on March 3 CH City Council decided 6-1 to establish a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) along Turkey Ridge. I read in the April issue of the Heights Observer City Council Member Jeff Coryell’s explanation for his lone dissenting vote. Coryell’s April letter to the editor proves once more why we people of Cleveland Heights chose him as our new city council member. I strongly agree with the reasoning behind Coryell’s dissenting vote, and I hope ways can yet be found to involve the community at large in this issue before the city embarks on possibly ill-advised economic development plans.

Ursula Korinchook
Cleveland Heights
Loose garbage in Cleveland Heights

To the Editor:

I recently sent the following letter to the CH Public Works Department, and I am sending a copy to the Observer as well, in the hopes that this issue doesn’t get lost.

Dear Cleveland Heights Refuse and Recycling Department,

I really appreciate the service and hard work that you folks do on a daily basis. However, I want to bring it to the city’s attention that the method of refuse collection is perhaps not the most appropriate for taxpayers’ needs. I’ve seen the trucks collect with the mechanical arm, and it’s cool-looking. But because it prevents the use of covered garbage cans—which exposes thin or improperly tied bags to weather, animals and other messy factors—my otherwise gorgeous street is constantly covered in trash. That appearance, in turn, discourages others to take good care of the area. So, for instance, dog waste is just left on the tree lawns; why bother, since there’s so much garbage anyway . . .

I took several (see online) photos within the span of less than three minutes on a walk down Hampshire Road (and I have more). The images were taken on Saturday—just about as far from trash pickup day as possible—which illustrates that left-behind trash after collection is rarely if ever addressed, either by the city or by those (primarily renters) who live on the block.

Cleveland Heights’s property tax is one of the highest in the area, but I’m left feeling as though I could move down the street to much less expensive parts of Cleveland and see more neighborhood pride in appearance. I’ve spoken with others on the street, and many feel the way that I do. We want to use garbage cans, we want a clean environment. Otherwise, what’s the point?

Thank you for your time and attention.

Laura Adiletta
Cleveland Heights

Proposed Cedar Coventry development threatens historic neighborhood character

To the Editor:

The Cedar Coventry neighborhood sits at the intersection of three of the great Cleveland Heights historic districts—Calhoun’s Euclid Heights, Grant Deming’s Forest Hill, and Barton Deming’s Euclid Golf—and is punctuated by the tower of the historic landmark, St. Ann Church. Property on the southwest corner, at one of the most visible and memorable intersections in the city, is in danger of being developed to accommodate a four-unit townhouse building.

The CH Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) granted variances for the project at its meeting on April 23. The variances reach far beyond the character intended through the original deed restrictions established for the surrounding historic districts and properties. Building, drives, and walkways will cover more than 57 percent of the site and accommodate 11 parking spaces.

The developers were granted a density variance of nearly 12 units per acre, where nearby properties are built at 5 units per acre, and where 6.7 units per acre is the maximum permitted by zoning. The BZA also granted an inconsistent variance to the Planned Residential Development (PRD) requirement of a three-acre minimum lot size, permitting the project at one tenth the size (33 ac). A PRD is a conditional use in this Single Family X District.

Nancy Dietrich was the only BZA member to vote no on the granting of these two variances. The BZA denied the third variance, to permit a 27-foot setback, where a 50-foot setback is required.

The developer claims it is not feasible to develop less than four units on this site. This may be true for a private developer, but not for a builder who could construct a single- or a double-unit on this property, as was done on another busy corner at South Overlook and Cedar roads.

The BZA application and letter of intent between the city and the developer anticipates a five-year, 100 percent tax abatement for this project.

Residents who spoke at the BZA meeting were unanimously opposed to the variances and expressed concerns, including increased traffic, congestion, safety, building scale, architectural design, lack of green space, inappropriate location for townhouse development, and precedent.

This important corner of the city deserves a solution consistent with the great architecture and planning of these historic districts. The variances granted are in opposition to the garden city principles with which these districts were designed. On land controlled and owned by the city, the planning department and city council should support a plan that enhances and preserves the unique character of this predominately single-family [home] neighborhood. CH City Council will likely vote to approve or disapprove the variances at its May 5 council meeting.

Kathleen Tark
Cleveland Heights
[Tark is an architect and urban designer with Metropolitan Architecture Studio, and a member of the Congress of the New Urbanism.]

Adler continued from page 1

as a close friend and confidant.”

Social workers, counselors, and psychologists from the district, as well as staff at the Hospice of Western Reserve and IMPACT (an employee-assistance program) have been available to assist students and staff as needed.

Canterbury PTA is collecting written memorials and photos of Smoker, to ensure that her children are aware of all the wonderful ways their mother impacted CH-UH students. E-mail any materials you may want to share to Brenda Gadowski at bgadowski@chuh.org or drop them off at the Canterbury Elementary School office.

Canterbury PTA is also collecting donations for a permanent memorial to be installed on the school grounds. Donations can be made at the Canterbury School office or online at http://youcaring.com/katesmokerfamily. The Smoker family prefers donations in lieu of flowers.

A memorial service was held April 10 at Middletown Heights Community Church.

“The Tiger Nation community is heartbroken over her passing,” said McDaniel. “I’m very proud of how our Tiger Nation has quickly pulled together to help one another in this time of need.”

Angie Shaker is director of communications for Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.
Legal Aid Society hosts free legal advice clinics

As a Cleveland Heights City Council Member and attorney, I believe in the Legal Aid Society’s mission to secure justice for our community’s low-income residents by providing free and high-quality legal services. If you have a noncriminal legal problem, but don’t think you can afford an attorney, the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland can help. This spring, the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland will host two free legal advice clinics near Cleveland Heights and University Heights: On May 10 at the Woodland Branch of the Cleveland Public Library, and on June 7 at the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Health Center in East Cleveland.

Did you know that creditors can’t harass you to collect a debt? That there are special immigration visas that give protections to victims of crime, including domestic violence survivors? That you should not vacate your home just because you receive a foreclosure notice? The Legal Aid Society can help with all of these issues, and more.

All too often the most vulnerable are unaware of, or are unable to exercise, their legal rights. This sad reality can have drastic results for the community at-large. For example, Cleveland Heights has been hit hard by the foreclosure crisis, with more than 2,000 filings since 2005. The problem was made worse, though, by residents leaving their homes—needlessly—in some cases. Overwhelmed and scared by bank foreclosure notices, which in fact do not have the power to kick one out of one’s home, residents simply packed up and moved out. They left behind blighted properties, nuisances and a vacancy problem. Cleveland Heights is still fighting. If these residents had spoken with Legal Aid attorneys, they possibly could have saved their homes, or, at the very least, learned how to stay in their homes for months, if not years, after receiving that first foreclosure notice.

I am a proud supporter of, and volunteer with, the Legal Aid Society because it secures justice and provides high-quality legal services for the most vulnerable members of our community. Legal Aid recently saved one couple’s home when they fell behind on their monthly payments. Although the bank fought against it, Legal Aid was able to negotiate a lower interest rate, from 11.5 percent to 3.8 percent. Thanks to the lower monthly payments and Legal Aid, the couple was able to keep their home.

With 42 staff attorneys and more than 1,600 volunteers, the Legal Aid Society fights domestic violence and consumer fraud, prevents homelessness, protects children, and supports efforts to bring affordable housing, jobs and services to low-income communities.

Legal Aid gets results. It prevented foreclosures in 76 percent of its cases, removed barriers to education in 89 percent, and prevented eviction in 99 percent of cases.

Legal Aid’s clinics provide free legal advice from attorneys and law students on civil (not criminal) legal issues for low-income individuals. Clients will receive advice on a first-come, first-served basis. As a former clinic volunteer, I know firsthand that clients often receive sufficient help just from coming to the clinic. If you need more assistance than the clinic visit alone can provide, Legal Aid will continue to work with you to resolve your problem.

If you or someone you know needs help with a noncriminal legal problem, attend one of Legal Aid’s upcoming free legal advice clinics:

Saturday, May 10, 9:30-11 a.m., at the Woodland Branch of the Cleveland Public Library, 5806 Woodland Ave., Cleveland.
Saturday, June 7, 9:30-11 a.m., at Stephanie Tubbs Jones Health Center, 1994 Euclid Ave., East Cleveland.

For more information, or if you are unable to attend one of the free clinics, call Legal Aid at 216-687-1900 or 888-817-3777, or visit Legal Aid online at www.lasclev.org.

Melissa Yasinow is a member of Cleveland Heights City Council, an associate at the law firm Kobriner Jackson & Krantz, and a volunteer with the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland.

Melissa Yasinow

Judson staff goes the extra mile for my mom. She’s so much happier now!”

—Amy Zipp, daughter of Judson assisted living resident Ruth Rogers

Amy Zipp has peace of mind and more since her mom Ruth Rogers moved to assisted living at Judson. “I know someone’s got her back,” she says.

As they explored myriad options, Judson stood out. “The staff has the utmost respect for the residents,” says Amy. “They went out of their way to get to know my mom personally. This brings her joy and a better quality of life.”

Living in Cleveland Heights, Amy visits her mom frequently for outings in University Circle. “Having all of the cultural attractions at her doorstep makes it easy for my daughters and me to create new memories with mom. We also bring our dog, Maggie to visit and she’s a real hit with everyone!”

Back at Judson, Ruth feels right at home. “Mom’s made a lot of new friends,” smiles Amy. “Her group is the ‘wild’ table at meals—always laughing.”

For more about how Judson’s assisted living program can offer you peace of mind, please call (216) 791-2004 today.

Visit www.judsonsmartliving.org and click Assisted Living
Play is important to learning

Susie Kaeser

When winter finally broke, I round-ed up three neighbor kids and headed for a hike at Shaker Lakes. Decked out in their rubber rain boots, they collected and tossed stones, flirted with the mud, bal-anced on fallen trees, and waded in the rushing water. There is nothing more fun than watching curious children. They were uninhibited kids being kids. They were playing and learning.

Play is a wonderful way to learn. I am concerned that the emphasis on measuring children’s performance in school is not only undermining good education and teacher morale, but also robbing the younger generation of the explora-tion that is important to a healthy childhood. I am no expert in early childhood development, but I am a parent and classroom volunteer. I know fear and failure are not the way to get young minds to let loose and grow.

The pressure to cover more and more information that will be tested permeates life in our class-rooms, damaging a new generation of learners and their teachers. It undercuts the best of what makes schools wonderful places. Children need a daily diet of discovery and imagination, and space for social and emotional growth. Individual-als should be free to master their developmental tasks at their own pace, without consequences for not meeting a set timeline. We are constantly testing our children and using the results to make serious decisions for which the tests were not designed. Next year, federal law will require testing to start in kindergarten. Learning that nurtures the imagination and encourages social development will shrink in a pressure cooker of evalua-tion, data and fixing.

This is putting stress on students and teachers and changing the school day. It undermines the school as a safe and nurturing space, shortchanges age-appropriate learning, and teaches children that learning is only about knowing the right answer. No good purpose is served by adding stress to young minds. Children are born curious and ready to learn. When they connect with what interests them, the sky is the limit. Our job is to give them the opportunity to open themselves to the wonders around them, but neither the legislature nor Congress seems to think keeping curiosity alive is important.

Put too much weight on what students learn by when and you wring the motivation out of them. Many children already face heavy burdens, and school needs to be a safe and comforting space where they can put those loads aside and find the joy of learning, not more hurdles.

I recently interviewed two won-derful teachers who come to school excited to witness their students learn. As hard as they work to shield their students from the demands of the testing and accountability requirements, they can’t. Pressure is a dominant theme—pressure to cover everything, pressure to pass. Students are anxious. Children who start behind and then grow, but not enough to pass, become discour-aged.

“I feel boxed in,” said 35-year kindergarden teacher Belinda Farrow. “I feel like we’ve taken the life out of learning.” One of her hardest deci-sions was taking the housekeeping center out of her classroom. “There is no longer time for this impor-tant kind of play.” Victoria Abdow lamented the pressure to cover so much. “When can kids explore and be kids?” she asked.

Our teachers are doing their best to nurture while balancing test-driven demands, but there isn’t enough time to do it all. Social development is the first thing that gets short shrift, then fun. A strength of our national education tradition is that students are expected to do more than play back information. I worry this is be-ing sacrificed in the name of raising achievement.

Susie Kaeser is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, former director of Reaching Heights, and serves on the na-tional board of Parents for Public Schools.
University Heights plans zoning code overhaul

Vince Reddy

The City of University Heights has embarked on a major overhaul of its zoning code, through which it will address several areas of concern. In a March 25 meeting, planner David Hartt, of CT Consultants, enumerated planned changes and discussed other opportunities brought forth by the overhaul.

Zoning review and approval processes will be clarified, and conflicts that have emerged in the code, due to piecemeal amendments over the years, will be eliminated. Impediments to reasonable investment—lot coverage restrictions, for example—will be evaluated, and the code will be adjusted to reflect changes in state and federal regulations regarding land uses such as group homes and religious facilities.

The zoning code’s consistency with the city’s master plan will also be improved. Hartt said that besides the items that definitely need to be addressed, the overhaul process provides an opportunity for University Heights to consider its environment-related regulations, such as those that apply to rain barrels, solar panels, pervious surfaces and the like.

Mayor Susan Infeld noted that the public will have opportunities to participate in, and comment about, the process, which is expected to conclude in early 2016. “We are very excited at the prospect of updating our zoning and planning code that was established in 1953,” she said. “It’s about time!”

Vince Reddy is a Cleveland Heights resident and occasional contributor to the Heights Observer.

University Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

March 17, 2014

All council members were present.

Public comments

JCU emergency drive: Resident Richard Kenny asked why John Carroll University (JCU) was not on the agenda to present its alternative plans for the new emergency drive by Murphy Hall. Mayor Susan Infeld said if JCU representatives were expected to present on April 7, the next meeting.

RTA: Will be making improvements to signage and re-painting or re-locating signs throughout the region.

Street parking: Beachwood Boulevard will be the first street to be repaved in 2014. The work will start on April 15 and continue throughout the summer.

Salt purchase: Council approved an agreement with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to buy rock salt for the 2014–2015 winter season. The state has added a summer-buying contract to enable cities to refill their salt barns in preparation for next winter. The city must buy all the salt it contracts for in a 10-week bid window. Council approved the purchase of 1,000 tons of salt to be delivered to Cleveland Heights for storage. The resolution allowed for a second bid to buy 2,800 tons of salt during the winter contract. The city is required to buy at least 90 percent of the winter-bid portion. The contract may be returned to the state by April 8. Those contracts authorize the state to find the lowest possible bid price on behalf of all contracting cities, at the final price is yet to be determined.

So for this winter season, the city has used 3,720 tons (of salt). Eight years ago the city reached a maximum of 4,000 tons, but then changed salting methods. In recent years the city’s salt use has averaged 2,200 tons [per year].

Financial advisory committee: Commissioner Susan Pardew announced that the members of the financial advisory committee have been selected and include league of Women Voters member and observer Michelle Weiss. This committee will meet three times in 2014 to review the city’s finances.


APRIL 7, 2014

All council members were present.

Technical assistance grant: The city has received a technical assistance award from NACODA to recreate the intersection of Northfield Road and Webster Road. The project is expected to make it more attractive and pedestrian-friendly. NACODA will conduct a study and make recommendations. The city will pursue additional grants to implement the recommendations.

Memorial Day parade: Plans are underway for the Memorial Day parade. Those wishing to participate, or be on the parade committee, should contact UH City Hall.

JCU access drive: Staff from John Carroll University (JCU) made a presentation to address concerns raised at the March 10 council meeting about converting the temporary construction access drive, at Washington Boulevard, to a permanent emergency access drive. One concern was the possible use of the apron and drive for pizza deliveries, student drop-offs, etc. Dora Prince, JCU director of government and community relations, noted that the grade is rather steep, and anyone attempting to use the drive for such purposes would then have to drive or walk all the way to the front. Carol Diante, JCU’s associate VP for facilities, talked about Grassapave, a process by which grass is planted over and around a sand and gravel base, complemented by a roll-up curb. It would discourage use by vehicles, as it will look like a lawn. The drive would be gated and available only to emergency vehicles and for trash pickup. Council approved the recommendation to convert the access drive to a permanent emergency drive, contingent on the changes noted above.

Yard nuisance abatement: Council approved a contract with North Coast for the 2014 General Yard Nuisance Abatement Program. The company has contracts with three other cities for similar programs. In the past, the county paid the contractor after the tax cycle, and then billed the homeowners on their tax bills. In the new program, the city will pay the contractor up front, and will bill the homeowner. Virtually all the abatements will be for grass violators. There is an “out” in the contract if the work is not done to the city’s satisfaction.

Sidewalk repair and replacement: Council approved a contract for the 2014 Concrete Sidewalk Repair and Replacement Program with Cleveland. This is a new, optional program to benefit residents who wish to replace sidewalks or have been issued violation notices. They can have the sidewalk done at a consistent price through the contractor, or use another of their choice. There is an escape clause for unsatisfactory work.

DWV Observer: Patricia Solomon

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2450 Derbyshire Drive, Cleveland Heights 44106
Cleveland Heights City Council
Meeting highlights

MARCH 17, 2014
All council members were present.

Public comments
Emergency legislation. Resident Diane Holloway criticized council for having so many agenda items slated for action “as an emergency.” Mayor Dennis Wilcox explained that most of the legislation was for a first reading.

Toxics. Resident Joan Sporel, a member of Beyond Petrolecs Ohio, pointed out that the crummy rubber in Dunston Field has toxics. She asked that council have a third party test the grass and crown fill for chemical content, warn families how to reduce exposure to the chemicals, and start a plan for the disposal of these materials if they are found to have unacceptable levels of toxics.

Fair housing audits
Council approved a contract with the Heights Community Congress to conduct for housing audits with $8,500 in Community Development Block Grant funds.

Housing council appointments
Council appointed residents Amanda Schaffer and Ben Hovan to three-year terms on the Community Reinvestment Housing Council, beginning March 29. Mayor Wilcox announced the appointment of Council Members Mary Dunbar and Cheryl Stephens to the housing council for three-year terms ending April 1, 2017.

Nuisance bar
Council declared a bar at 2230 Noble Road a nuisance following more than 78 police depart-

tment visits since January 2012. The owner was

arrested for drug trafficking. As part of the nuisance

declaration, council called for revocation of the business occupancy permit.

Fair Housing Month
Council declared April to be Fair Housing Month, reaffirming Cleveland Heights’ commitment to open housing. This is the 46th year since passage of referral for housing legislation. The resolution recognized the city’s nine-point plan, approved in 1976, to make the city a full service inclusive community.

Capital improvements
The city will undertake nearly $3.3 million in capital improvements with funds raised by issuing bonds later this spring. Eleven pieces of legislation, each identifying a specific band amount for a specific capital expenditure, were presented on first reading. Council action on these will take place at a later meeting (see April 7 notes below).

Bonds for city expenditures
Council approved the issuance and sale of bonds to pay for city capital improvements and improvements throughout the city. The county’s audit of the bonds to be issued are:
- Motor vehicle purchase for the public works department, $950,000.
- Improvements to the Cedar Lee and Cedar Farmount districts, replacing sidewalks, curbs, stormwater management, and sewer system amenities, $955,000.
- Resurfacing city surface parking areas, $55,000.

Plain Dealer and joined a band called the River Rats. The group played Dixieland in various Cleveland venues, including Fagan’s in the Flats. The following year, the group became the Mr. Stress Blues Band, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Last December, as Miller was being interviewed by someone for a radio show, some listeners realized he wasn’t making sense and was slurring his words. One listener called 911, and emergency and paramedic crews went to his apartment, then on Madison Avenue in Lakewood. If someone hadn’t called 911, Miller said, “I probably would have died.” In fact, Miller was having a stroke, and he was taken to Lakewood Hospital, where he remained for about five days, before being trans-

tferred to a nursing home in Lakewood. Meanwhile, it turned out that the owners of his Lakewood apartment had been trying to evict him. Miller had dropped a lit cigarette on the floor of his apartment and burned a hole in the carpet, and the owners wanted him out of the building. They were threatening to empty the apartment and place all of his possessions on the street.

Colin Dussault, who himself fronts a Cleveland blues band and whose family owns a moving company, heard about Miller’s plight through friends, and he came to the older musician’s rescue.

He brought a truck to Miller’s Coventry Road, and Miller moved in on Jan. 14.

Dussault then set up the Bill Miller Relief Fund and started getting the word out that Miller needed help. Do-

nations began coming in, and Dussault then had another idea: he would create a CD to help raise money for his friend. Called “Stress Relief,” the album is a four-disc set of songs by virtually every major Cleveland rock and blues artist, including Michael Stanley, Alex Bevan and Robert Lockwood Jr. (courtesy of his widow, Mary). It features songs by such contemporary artists as Kristine Jackson, Hillbilly Idol, Cats on Holiday, Blue Lunch and many more. The CD is available at www.stressrelief.org. Dussault is also planning a tribute con-

cert sometime in the next few months.

Miller said he is happy to be back on the East Side. He and his first wife lived on Cadwell Avenue off Euclid Heights Boulevard many years ago, and he remembers hanging out on Coven-

try back in the 1960s and ’70s. “I spent so much time over here that I can remember when Tommy Fello, owner of Tommy’s Restaurant on Coventry was working at a drug store,” Miller said. “And I went to his restaurant so much that they named a sandwich after me.” Indeed, Tommy’s menu includes the “Mr. Stress,” a BLT with peanut butter, mayonnaise and American cheese.

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is also the author of several books, including biographies of Tom Morellion, John Lennon and Bob Marley.

Plain Dealer and joined a band called the River Rats. The group played Dixieland in various Cleveland venues, including Fagan’s in the Flats. The following year, the group became the Mr. Stress Blues Band, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Last December, as Miller was being interviewed by someone for a radio show, some listeners realized he wasn’t making sense and was slurring his words. One listener called 911, and emergency and paramedic crews went to his apartment, then on Madison Avenue in Lakewood. If someone hadn’t called 911, Miller said, “I probably would have died.” In fact, Miller was having a stroke, and he was taken to Lakewood Hospital, where he remained for about five days, before being trans-

tferred to a nursing home in Lakewood. Meanwhile, it turned out that the owners of his Lakewood apartment had been trying to evict him. Miller had dropped a lit cigarette on the floor of his apartment and burned a hole in the carpet, and the owners wanted him out of the building. They were threatening to empty the apartment and place all of his possessions on the street.

Colin Dussault, who himself fronts a Cleveland blues band and whose family owns a moving company, heard about Miller’s plight through friends, and he came to the older musician’s rescue.

He brought a truck to Miller’s Coventry Road, and Miller moved in on Jan. 14.

Dussault then set up the Bill Miller Relief Fund and started getting the word out that Miller needed help. Do-

nations began coming in, and Dussault then had another idea: he would create a CD to help raise money for his friend. Called “Stress Relief,” the album is a four-disc set of songs by virtually every major Cleveland rock and blues artist, including Michael Stanley, Alex Bevan and Robert Lockwood Jr. (courtesy of his widow, Mary). It features songs by such contemporary artists as Kristine Jackson, Hillbilly Idol, Cats on Holiday, Blue Lunch and many more. The CD is available at www.stressrelief.org. Dussault is also planning a tribute con-

cert sometime in the next few months.

Miller said he is happy to be back on the East Side. He and his first wife lived on Cadwell Avenue off Euclid Heights Boulevard many years ago, and he remembers hanging out on Coven-

try back in the 1960s and ’70s. “I spent so much time over here that I can remember when Tommy Fello, owner of Tommy’s Restaurant on Coventry was working at a drug store,” Miller said. “And I went to his restaurant so much that they named a sandwich after me.” Indeed, Tommy’s menu includes the “Mr. Stress,” a BLT with peanut butter, mayonnaise and American cheese.

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is also the author of several books, including biographies of Tom Morellion, John Lennon and Bob Marley.
CH resident recognized for her impact on local autism community

Britney Beaman

Cleveland Heights resident Mia Buchwald Gelles was inducted into the 10th class of the Beachwood High School Gallery of Success on April 11 for her transformative contributions to the autism community through Milestones Autism Resources, a nonprofit organization that she co-founded 12 years ago.

“I am thrilled to be honored by my high school for the contributions that Milestones and I have made,” Gelles said.

As operations director, Gelles ensures that everything runs smoothly at Milestones. Her expertise in nonprofit management is a big reason why a small staff of 10 can serve more than 1,500 individuals a year through educating, coaching and connecting family members and professionals throughout Northeast Ohio who are affected by autism.

Gelles’ impact on the autism community started when her son was diagnosed with autism. At the time, in 1998, autism was a relatively new word and there were few resources for parents or professionals who wanted to learn more and help their children.

“Figuring out the interventions that might help was a long, hard and lonely process,” Gelles said. “Each night I would read anything I could to see if it looked promising. As the mom, I felt that unlocking the puzzle of my child’s development was ultimately my responsibility.”

Eventually there was some hope. In 2003, Gelles found help in a speech therapist’s office, where she met Ilana Hoffer Skoff, another mother struggling with similar issues. After extensive research, they both experienced some success with Behavior Applied Analysis (ABA), a system for prioritizing and systematically teaching skills one step at a time.

“My son learned to talk, read and write,” Gelles said. “Eventually there was more than just some hope. In 2003, Gelles found help in a speech therapist’s office, where she met Ilana Hoffer Skoff, another mother struggling with similar issues. After extensive research, they both experienced some success with Behavior Applied Analysis (ABA), a system for prioritizing and systematically teaching skills one step at a time.”

“Throughout the years, there were difficulties with Milestones Autism Resources, then known as Milestones Autism Organization, with a conference in August 2003. An estimated 400 people showed up.”

“Mia’s and I still laugh… we had no idea if anyone would show up,” Gelles said. “The turnout for the conference was a clear indication that a resource like Milestones was a necessity in our area.”

Over the next 12 years, Milestones has remained at the forefront of addressing the needs of families affected by autism. The organization’s annual Autism Spectrum Disorder Conference has continued to be an invaluable resource for family members and professionals. This year, the conference will be held on June 18-19 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Cleveland I X Center. To learn more or to register, visit www.milestones.org.

Milestones focuses on educating and coaching for family members and professionals in evidence-based practical strategies. Its conferences, workshops, professional development, referral calls and online resources connect the autism community with vital information, and one another. Since 2003, more than 8,000 people have been served by Milestones, and its website, provides more than 900 autism resources.

Before Milestones, Mia Buchwald Gelles worked at Environmental Health Watch (EHW), a nonprofit organization that provides information about Northeast Ohio environmental problems and resources. There she did extensive project management, custom database design and website maintenance.

Along the way, Gelles also found time to raise a family including step daughter Ruth (13), son Noam (18) and daughter Shani (16). She has taught a Torah study/learners service for 14 years at Beth El-The Heights synagogue and leads services and plays shofar. Her husband, Joe, calls her a woman of valor and wisdom, adding that success can come to those who aren’t looking for it—successful people just do what is needed.

Britney Beaman is communications coordinator for Milestones Autism Resources.

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Heights historical photo of the month

Summer fun in Cleveland Heights is by no means a new phenomenon. In this photograph from the 1950s, several Cleveland Heights High School students pass during a picnic at Cumberland Pool, which has been a summertime destination for the city’s youth since it first opened in 1927.

This photo was selected by the Cleveland Heights Historical Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the diverse character and traditions of Cleveland Heights. For more information, and to view additional historical images, visit www.chhistory.org or www.facebook.com/clevelandheights.
Coventry Village will be hopping this summer

James Henke

Mark your calendars for Coventry Village Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays this summer.

The first event will take place on Saturday, May 31 with a free bicycle tune up day. From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. residents can bring their bikes to the Coventry Courtyard near the Grog Shop. Mechanics will be on site to inspect the bikes and make needed repairs. The Coventry Village Special Improvement District (CVSID) is partnering with the Heights Bicycle Coalition to provide this service.

Four days later, the first Free Wheelin’ Wednesday will take place. Cyclists can meet in the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park at 6:30 p.m. and they will be taken on guided tours, ranging from historical sites to a pub crawl. The bike rides will take place every Wednesday through Aug. 6. They are sponsored by the two organizations that put together the bike tune-up day. Angela Herrick, executive director of CVSID, said that the organizations are looking into the possibility of showing bike-based films in P.E.A.C.E. Park after the rides are over.

Again this year, CVSID will provide families emergency assistance when life doesn’t go as planned. In 2006, it is one of 14 partnerships to the Heights Family to Family Coalition to provide this service. Arlene Castañeda, family information specialist for the Heights Family to Family Collaborative, has worked for more than 32 years in office administration. In addition to the music, tents will be set up around the sides of the parking lot where the bands will perform. Coventry merchants will be selling their wares, as will several Heights residents with their locally made products, such as clothing, jewelry, honey and jam. Marc’s will sell produce outdoors during the concerts.


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Arlene Castañeda

When life doesn’t go as planned, the Heights Family to Family Collaborative is there to help. Founded in 2006, it is one of 14 partnerships funded by Cuyahoga County to provide families emergency assistance, prevent family disruption, and minimize family involvement with child protective services. The Heights Collaborative, housed at the Centers for Families and Children at 1941 South Taylor Road in Cleveland Heights, mobilizes community-based resources to support families where they live. It works with families who reside in Cleveland Heights, University Heights, Beachwood, Hunting Valley, Moreland Hills, Orange, Pepper Pike, Shaker Heights, Woodmere Village and the University Circle area.

The collaborative’s staff helps people access resources by enrolling them in the Ohio Benefit Bank, and providing information and referrals for emergency food, rent and utility assistance, transportation, child care, parenting support, respite care, job training and education, and mental health services. It advocates for families as they navigate the child welfare system, and provides special programs to connect and encourage foster and adoptive parents. It also assists emancipated minors and young adults who live on their own.

The Heights Collaborative is an established Safe Zone for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Questioning youth and young adults, thanks to training provided by LGBT Community Center of Greater Cleveland.

The collaborative is sponsoring a free public event this month. May is National Foster Care Month, an annual campaign to raise awareness of the year-round needs of American children and youth who spend parts of their childhood away from their birth families. The community is invited to learn more about the reality of foster care and ways to support young people in this system, by spending the evening of May 19, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at the Lee Road Library with LaTasha C. Watts, author of “I’m Not Broken, Just a Little Twisted.”

Watts will read from her newest book “Out of My Mind,” and will discuss her childhood and transition to adulthood after aging out of foster care at 18. By the age of 23, this determined young woman had experienced homelessness, single parenthood and cancer. Her inspiring memoir starkly illustrates the difficulties children face when they lack a permanent family.

To reserve a seat or for more information call the Heights Family to Family Collaborative at 216-310-9520, ext. 2.

Arlene Castañeda, family information resource specialist for the Heights Family to Family Collaborative, has worked for more than 32 years in office administration and planning.

Disciples Christian Church is going green

Ronald Warner

Disciples Christian Church (DCCC) in Cleveland Heights is on its way to becoming a certified Green Chalice congregation, and is taking three needed steps: create a Green Team in the congregation; have the Green Team sign the Alverna Covenant, promising to take care of God’s earth; and make three changes toward the church becoming more green.

For its three changes, DCCC plans to have more types of recycling at the church, use environmentally friendly cleaning products, and use less paper during church services.

DCCC started the certification process in November with its first meeting of the Green Team, led by Debbie Humbert, and expects to receive its certification by this summer.

Ronald Warner is an elder and communications chairperson of Disciples Christian Church.
Know Knottings upset defending champions in Reaching Heights 23rd annual Adult Community Spelling Bee

Andrea C. Turner

The Know Knottings team, representing Heights High PTA, upset the defending champions, the Barratrous Orthographers, to win the 23rd annual Reaching Heights Adult Community Spelling Bee at Wiley Middle School on April 2.

The winning team comprised eight-time participant Anne Kugler and seven-time participants Fran Lissemore and Jim Wright. The Know Knottings are two-time champions, last winning the bee in 2009.

The champions seized victory in the seventh round, correctly spelling the word dieffenbachia, a genus of poisonous tropical American plants named after Ernst Dieffenbach, a 19th-century German horticulturist.

The Know Knottings narrowly defeated three teams that shared second place: Barratrous Orthographers, a team of lawyers representing Squire, Sanders & Dempsey—Bonnie Bealer, Becky Bynum and John Lazzaretti; the Ms. Spellers, a team of parents representing Roxboro Elementary and Middle schools—Malia Lewis, Andrea Lynn and Brenna Lisowski; and the Coventry Word Outlaws, bedecked in cowboy hats, boots and bandannas—Cynthia Larsen, Pogge Laskovich and Joe Mendes.

The FutureHeights B team, which comprised board members Clare Taylor and Greg Bonanno, and alternate Kerri Whitehouse, made a valiant effort, but ultimately fell during the fourth round, on the word plebsicide.

This year’s bee attracted 20 teams of three, with each team donating a minimum of $500 to participate. Most of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights public schools sent a team of parents or teachers, and there were two teams of students in each school. Heights Adult Community Spelling Bee trophy from former executive director Patrick Mullen, in yellow. Pictured (from left) are Jim Wright, Anna Kugler, Patrick Mullen and Fran Lissemore.

Andrea C. Turner owns ACT One Communications, a marketing and communications consulting firm. She is the Heights Observer e-news editor.
An article in the Plain Dealer on March 31 reported that Cleveland public schools are preparing for 4,000 third graders to attend summer school. These children are at risk for not advancing to fourth grade due to lack of progress in reading. One local congregation is working to boost reading skills through a unique summer camp for children in Cleveland, Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights who are at risk for falling behind.

In June, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church begins its fifth summer of an overnight camp program, and is adding a day camp this year. Based on a model established in the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington, Reading Camp Cleveland offers a week-long camp free of charge to children identified by their teachers as needing a reading boost.

During the morning session, certified teachers work on key reading skills with small groups of students. One group may listen to a mystery story up to, but not including, the ending. Students then work in pairs to write and act out a conclusion for the rest of the group. Another session may involve campers writing letters to their counselors describing their camp adventures. Each child receives one-on-one reading time with a volunteer every day with a book of their own choosing—a bit of quiet time during a busy week.

Afternoons are dedicated to traditional camp activities: swimming, hiking, crafts or field trips. In past years, local children’s book authors have come to talk about how they started writing and what it takes to become a writer. Bob Kloss of Beacon Street Ministries presented a program to discourage bullying. Jungle Terry, a local favorite, brought his animals to entertain the campers. These special activities are directed toward boosting the campers’ confidence.

For many children, this camp is the first time they are away from home, and trained counselors are available for late-night talks with a homesick camper. They are also tireless leaders of camp songs, hikes through the woods and pick-up soccer games. Other adults serve as support staff: aiding teachers, reading bedtime stories or helping anxious kids feel comfortable in the swimming pool.

Operating costs for a week of overnight camp is approximately $17,000, which covers housing, meals and supplies at Cedar Hills, a conference center of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio in Painesville. Staff members volunteer their time, many taking time off from their regular jobs to work at the camp.

Fundraising events are held throughout the year to support the summer reading camp and keep it free for campers. Volunteers are asked to contribute to the cost of meals, but the goal is to raise enough money so that staff will not have to pay.

The new day camp program will take place at St. Paul’s in Cleveland Heights, where groups within the church will provide lunches and snacks, and costs are expected to be much lower. The day camp will also provide volunteer opportunities for more people—those who cannot commit to a full week can lead a craft activity or drive children to the pool in the afternoon. Reading Camp provides the opportunity for parents and teenagers to volunteer together, for a few hours or for a full week.

The needs are great, and St. Paul’s is working to make a big difference in the lives of a small group of children. For more information or to make a contribution, contact Reading Camp Cleveland at readingcampcleveland@gmail.com.

The month of May is Screen-Free Week, so bring mom!

2014 Screen-Free Week is May 5–11

Joan Sprew!

What if we turned off our televisions, computers, smart phones, hand-held electronic devices and video games (except for necessary work) for seven straight days? Perhaps the following: better sleep, increased brain activity, live conversations, walks taken, gardens tended, homes repaired, books read, games played, creativity and exploration, and meaningful connections between families and friends.

Participate in Screen-Free Week, May 5–11, and see what happens for you, your family and our community. Since 1995, millions of children and families around the world have been turning off screens and returning on life, pledging to spend seven days without entertainment screen media.

While screens can be helpful in many ways, research shows that there are many costs to excessive screen time. Screen time deprives children of hands-on creative play that is the foundation of learning, creativity and constructive problem solving. Excessive screen time (more than two hours a day) is associated with sleep disturbances, attention span issues, psychological difficulties, hyperactivity, emotional and conduct problems, poor academic achievement, reduced physical activity, higher levels of aggression, delayed language acquisition and childhood obesity.

Children who spend less time with screens in their early years tend to do better in school, have a healthier diet, are more physically active and are better able to engage in schoolwork in later elementary school.

Although the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time at all for children under age 2 and less than two hours per day for children 2 years and older, many American children spend more time in front of a screen than they do in school.

For more information, visit www.screenfree.org. Also, more information and suggested alternative activities will be available on the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school district’s website at www.chuh.org.


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Joan Sprew is a community educator for Beyond Pesticides Ohio, an early childhood consultant, and a proud resident of Cleveland Heights.
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HEIGHTS KIDS

High school senior’s fundraising tool gains national attention

Marty Frazier

Justin Woodbridge, a senior at Montessori High School in University Circle and lifelong Cleveland Heights resident, recently created a Web application for nonprofits to fundraise through raffle ticket sales.

His product is called Raffle Creator (www.rafflecreator.com), and it enables fundraising groups to sell raffle tickets online along with in-person sales. “Raffle Creator lets fundraisers create a webpage, accept payments, and manage all the information they collect,” said Woodbridge, whose website has been operational since 2012.

The young company got its start during Montessori High School’s annual X-term, a two-week, student-led intensive course that encourages students to explore an area of study of their choice. Woodbridge and his peers wanted to study entrepreneurship and technology in San Francisco and Silicon Valley, but they needed to raise money for the trip.

Realizing that simply selling raffle tickets at school might raise only enough for a single plane ticket, Woodbridge developed Raffle Creator to reach a larger pool of potential donors. According to Woodbridge, the product became successful because it “lets you access so many more people, not only when you’re at events but when you’re anywhere. They can buy tickets on their phones or laptops. It lets you sell with a lot more ease.”

Using his innovation, Woodbridge raised $6,000 for his 2013 trip to California. The next year he used it to raise $10,000 for an X-term study of start-up companies in New York City. Woodbridge isn’t the only person benefiting from Raffle Creator, however. Other nonprofit groups have paid a $99 service fee to use the website for their own fundraising efforts. Recently, the Pathfinders for Autism campaign in North Carolina used Raffle Creator to raise $30,000.

Beyond the early financial success, Woodbridge has gained significant recognition from Cleveland’s entrepreneurial community. In March, he represented Montessori High School in a business plan competition sponsored by the Vade Youth Entrepreneurship Forum, and beat out representatives from nine other schools. He plans to use the $1,000 first-place prize to improve the user experience on his website.

Woodbridge, who has walked Montessori schools his whole life, appreciates their unique approach. “It lets me think for myself. It lets me be myself and be independent,” he said.

Woodbridge will continue managing Raffle Creator once he graduates from Montessori High School this spring. He plans to attend either Brown University or The University of Chicago next fall. He said choosing one has been difficult. Needless to say, he won’t be picking it out of a hat.

Marty Frazier is an English teacher at Montessori High School. He earned a B.A. in English from Oberlin College in 2007, and has been living and teaching in Cleveland for the past five years.

Marty Frazier

Ten-year-old Xavier Harris, a member of the Heights Youth Club, has been chosen to participate in the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland “Save our Kids” capital campaign. He is one of three new spokespersons who will appear on billboards and leaflets throughout Cleveland to raise funds for the clubs.

Harris was chosen because of his commitment, participation and dedication to the Heights Youth Club, where he has regularly attended and participated in activities during the past four years. He is a member of the Torch Club, a youth leadership program which encourages volunteering that benefits local residents in Cleveland Heights, such as delivering the Heights Observer. He was captain of the flag football team, played shooting guard on the Boys & Girls Club of Cleveland’s championship basketball team and is a member of the Young Gentleman’s Club at Boulevard Elementary School, which he attends.

“He plays a lot of games, meet new friends and have a lot of fun,” Harris said of his time spent at the club. Roscoe Morgan, club director, described Harris as “a well-mannered young man and a definite future leader in the Heights area.”

Marcus Hilson, assistant director, said that since he has attended the club, Harris has grown into a leader. When Harris was asked to explain how it makes him feel to have been chosen for the campaign, Harris lit up with a big smile, raised his hands and said, “I will feel famous.”

The Heights Youth Club, in partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland, focuses on development in academic success, character, citizenship and healthy lifestyles. The club’s mission is to “provide high quality programming that allows the children of Cleveland Heights to reach their full potential as productive, responsible and caring adults.” It currently has more than 350 youth members and has served more than 1,400 youth since opening in 2007.

There are many ways to support the Heights Youth Club and its mission. If you would like to volunteer, contact Roscoe Morgan at 216-321-2785. If you wish to donate, send gifts to Heights Youth Club, 2065 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, 44118, or visit www.heightsyouthclub.org. If you are interested in advertising space or ticket information for the June 11 Taste of the Heights event, contact hyc-louisehayat@outlook.com.

Louise Khayat is administrator for the Heights Youth Club Board of Directors.

Xavier Harris

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Heights students visit U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

By Mark Sack

On April 3, students from Cleveland Heights High School traveled to Washington, D.C. to visit the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The trip was funded by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) through a program called The Holocaust as a Human Experience.

The students left Heights High at 3:30 a.m. and arrived in Washington, D.C. around 10 a.m. The experience at the museum included a special session with a Holocaust survivor who, as a teenager, was able to survive the notorious Nazi death camp Auschwitz because of his language skills. He was an interpreter for the Nazis and their collaborators and this allowed him to avoid being sent to the gas chambers.

Afterward, the students spent time viewing the exhibits at the museum, and each of them was touched in a unique way. Students said they were most impacted by the Daniel’s Story exhibit, the children’s artwork, and a cattle car that had transported people to the death camps.

The students also visited the memorials of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Abraham Lincoln before boarding the bus to return home. Visits to these monuments established connections to the historical and ongoing battles for human freedom and dignity.

For the students, the experience was a powerful affirmation of the need for each of us to stand up against hate and discrimination. The trip reminded them that it is up to us to stop racism and discrimination in our everyday lives.

After the trip, students gathered to discuss the impact of the museum on their beliefs and thoughts. They shared their views and feelings after visiting the museum. They discussed how they can be more tolerant of people of all backgrounds and how they are committed to being upstanders and not just bystanders when they witness prejudice and discrimination.

Other sponsors of the trip included Giant Eagle Super Markets and Sandy Seiger (‘76). Zelman and Seiger had donated to the Holocaust Education Fund of the Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation, which accepts donations from alumni and others who are interested in supporting Holocaust education for Heights High students. Meals were provided by Corky & Lenny’s, Mistor Biskin and Executive Caterers at Landerhaven.

As part of the ADL program, students were asked to write a brief letter to someone they know, describing their thoughts and feelings after visiting the museum. Here are a few of them (others can be seen online):

Dear Mom: Visiting the Holocaust Museum brought tears to my eyes. Going from floor to floor and seeing everything that people went through broke my heart. My mind filled with hate for Hitler and the Nazis for what they had done to millions of people, but at the same time I learned about the Holocaust survivor I saw that her heart wasn’t filled with hate, just sadness. Why should I hate? I was there I felt sadness overtake my whole being. It was just so sad. Why did this have to happen to our people? Today was a very important experience and I’m glad that I was given the opportunity to go.

Dear Dad: After visiting the Holocaust Museum today I’ve become more aware about the discrimination going on around us. Also I’ve promised myself to always stand up against racism and discrimination. I learned that what I do can make a difference – love, Kortney

Dear Belle: Today I was able to visit the Holocaust Museum in D.C. It was very emotional but at the same time very informative. The Museum gave me an in-depth view of the horrors that the Jews experienced in the concentration camps and ghettos. Before this trip I had no idea how many camps and ghettos the Nazis had actually built and created. It must have been horrifying to have lived in them.

Dear Mom: I knew that this experience at the Holocaust Museum was going to be emotionally tough. What I did not expect, however, was the amount of purely harrowing things we saw. I feel humble and emotionally drained but at the same time very informed.

Dear Mom: I knew that this experience at the Holocaust Museum was going to be emotionally tough. What I did not expect, however, was the amount of purely harrowing things we saw. I feel humble and emotionally drained but at the same time very informed.

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Mark Sack is a social studies teacher at Cleveland Heights High School.
Roxboro Elementary authorized as International Baccalaureate World School

Angee Shaker

CH-UH City School District’s Roxboro Elementary School has been named an International Baccalaureate World School by the International Baccalaureate (IB), a nonprofit educational foundation. IB seeks to make the world a better place through education. The foundation offers learning programs around the globe at World Schools.

“Our son is fortunate to engage in a learning environment that stresses inquiry, discovery and character,” said Anne Marie Hodges, a parent volunteer on Roxboro’s IB Leadership Team. “IB is reflective and able to express his thinking critically. Our experience with Roxboro Elementary is more than what we anticipated. We feel it is very important to support the teachers and emphasize the IB attributes at home.”

“I am immensely proud of what our Roxboro Elementary staff and families have achieved,” said Superintendent Nylajaen R. McDaniel. “To carry out the preparation and planning required to become an International Baccalaureate World School, all while engaging and inspiring students, is truly an accomplishment worth celebrating.”

“If we are a world-class school,” said Michael Jenkins, Roxboro Elementary principal, “It makes me realize what kind of network we are a part of.”

IB World Schools are renowned for an intensive curriculum and skilled staff trained to develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills of students, to enable them to flourish in a global community.

“The Roxboro Elementary staff and students have worked very hard over the last five years to make this happen. All of us appreciate the support we’ve received from our families and central office leadership to help us get here,” said Jenkins.

To become a World School, an institution must have successfully completed a rigorous, internationally consistent application process that enables it to deliver an outstanding IB education.

The application process starts with a year-long submission for candidate status. If approved as a candidate, the school begins a three-year cycle toward authorization. In the final year, an outside team visits the school to verify program quality and make recommendations. The final authorization of Roxboro Elementary validates the hard work the staff has put in for the last three and a half years.

“We are honored to be part of a school with a teaching team who—with support from the CH-UH administration—took on the role of open-minded risk takers to bring a World School to the Heights, knowing that the curriculum and cultural changes realized at Roxboro Elementary would foster the curiosity and inquiry that creates lifelong learners,” said Jen Holland and Rosemary Rackl Pierce, PTA presidents.

“The verification team was blown away by the community involvement they saw at Roxboro,” said Melissa Garcar, IB coordinator for the district. “The parent and community role is huge,” added Jenkins.

Jenkins said that Roxboro will host an official flag raising once it receives its IB World School flag.

While Roxboro Elementary has just become the CH-UH district’s first IB World School, the district anticipates that several of its schools will achieve this status in the coming years. Noble Elementary and Roxboro Middle schools will be ready to apply for authorization next school year.

The authorization of Roxboro Elementary and applications of other district schools demonstrate the CH-UH district’s continued drive for self-improvement and excellence in delivery of a world-class education. Roxboro joins select elementary schools in Shaker Heights, Oberlin, Westlake and Stow in achieving IB World School status.

Angee Shaker is the director of communications for Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. Deanna Bremer Fisher and Andrea Turner contributed to this story.

Roxboro Elementary celebrates its IB World School status. From left: Melissa Garcar, IB program coordinator; Anne Marie Hodges, Roxboro IB Team parent member; Cheryl Stephens, vice mayor of Cleveland Heights; Michael Jenkins, principal of Roxboro Elementary School; Joe Micheller, director of curriculum and instruction for the district; Jan Halstead, PTA co-president; Rosemary Pierce, PTA co-president; Jing Louengco, Roxboro IB Team parent member.

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www.heightsobserver.org
Beaumont School makes progress on STEM classroom expansion

Anne Jarrad

If you drive along North Park Boulevard, you cannot miss the nearly 25,000 square feet of steel shining in the sun on the campus of Beaumont School. In September 2013, Beaumont publically launched its $9.5 million capital campaign and broke ground on a new academic building that will house eight classrooms designed for science, technology, engineering and math—STEM subjects. Despite a hard winter, construction has stayed close to schedule, and the new academic building is planned to open in January 2015.

In addition to STEM classrooms, the new building will house administrative and guidance offices in order to position school leadership directly to support its Advancing Excellence Capital Campaign goal. “As we watch so many other Catholic schools merge and close around the nation, this expansion is a testament to the strength and vitality of Beaumont School,” explained Sister Gretchen Rodenfels, school president. “This expansion will allow us to do what we do best—prepare today’s women for tomorrow’s world. We will be an active member of the Cleveland Heights community well into the future.”

Beaumont School has consistently earned regional and state recognition in science competitions throughout the years, including winning the Regional Robobot Competition last year, and placing third in the national competition this year. It will be sending two teams to the Robobot competitions in May.

Anne Jarrad works with Beaumont School to support its Advancing Excellence Capital Campaign. She lives with her husband and two children in Cleveland Heights.

The new STEM building at Beaumont School.

CH-UH Board of Education
Meeting highlights

MARCH 18, 2014

All board members were present.

Field trip
The board approved a revised Wiley Middle School vocal music group field trip to Cincinnati and Detroit, scheduled for May 8–11.

Alternative calamity day
The board approved a calamity day alternative make-up plan for the 2013–14 school year. Discussion (considered) using certain vacation calendar days instead of extending the school year, and online makeup work.

Representatives for facilities implementation
The board authorized Stephen Shergold, director of business services, or George Parrott, assistant director of business services, to represent the school district for issues related to the facilities master plan implementation.

Bonds
The sale of bonds, issued in entirety, was successful because of the district’s high bond rating. The money must be spent, as the bonds have a spend-down requirement. The board approved payment of purchase orders up to $50,000 without bond approval. Those for higher amounts must come to the board. It also approved accepting the amounts and rates as determined by the budget commission and authorized the necessary tax levies and certificated them to the county fiscal officer.

Facilities plan
Every month, a budget document will be updated on the facilities renovation progress. The hard cost of construction and construction management is 82 percent of the budget. The soft cost, which includes consultants and contingencies, is 15 percent. The high school project included a land survey. Projects that will enable the closing and relocation of the high school are underway. They include:

• The Milliken operations project, which will move grounds and trades to this school temporarily;
• Moving bus parking from the Wiley site;
• A search for a temporary offsite pool;
• A search for a temporary practice gym that will be situated on the Wiley site, which will involve greater soft costs;
• Identifying temporary classroom space and equipment if needed, which will be bought or rented;
• Modifying parking on the Wiley site;
• Moving career courses to the Monticello Middle School, Rosboro Middle School or Dulcie Center sites;
• The stadium project.

Stadium project
The stadium project will begin this summer and is vital to keeping the schools united. The GMF (guaranteed maximum price) agreement between the board and Gilbane/Ozanne construction for phase 1 stadium improvement is $2.7 million. The soft cost for consulting fees would bring the project (cost) to $3 million. The important elements are site preparation, field turf and drainage, track topping, and grandstands. The board is considering (likely) an artificial turf called nonrubber crumb surfacing, or natural grass, which members of the community have encouraged. The nonrubber crumb will cost at least $100,000 or more. To use this environmentally friendly turf and stay within the GMF, the grandstand seating could be reduced to 1,000 seats, down from the 1,700 that exist now. There would be no visitors’ seats. The board discussed this and would rather increase the existing seating and include visitor stands with alternative moves. No definite decisions were made. The board would like the public to be satisfied with the stadium.

LWV Observer: Lillian House.

APRIL 1, 2014

Board member Eric Cable was absent.

Eddie Babcox
Eddie Babcox, Heights High hockey coach, was honored as the winner of the Ohio High School Athletic Association Annual Sportsmanship, Ethics and Integrity Award.

Caren Golenberg
Toni Hell from the Ohio School Boards Association presented a certificate to Caren Golenberg recognizing her as one of four finalists for Ohio Teacher of the Year.

Field trip
The board approved a field trip for Rosboro Middle School students to Penfield, Ohio.

Principles that Unite Us
The board approved a resolution supporting the Principles that Unite Us. The American Federation of Teachers started this list of principles. Superintendent Nyet Lysen McDaniel indicated this was “a statement of what we do.”

Race to the Top
Joseph Micheller, director of curriculum and instruction, reported that the district is at the end of the fourth year in Race to the Top. He talked about using assessment to guide instruction.

Lease agreement
The board authorized lease agreements with Reaching Heights and Futures Heights for space at the former Coventry School building.

Donations
The board accepted donations to seven school funds.

LWV Observer: Adale Cohn.

Look for earlier and often expanded versions of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 7.
Legacy School projects contribute to the community

Joy Henderson

The project- and problem-based learning model in Heights High's Legacy New Tech School teaches students a systematic and collaborative approach to solving problems.

Small groups of students work on projects that begin with an entry event in the form of a video, letter, presentation or current event that introduces the problem. In follow-up discussions, students complete a chart to record what they know, what they need to know and the next steps. The chart is a working document that guides each group's work.

This year, Legacy School projects included New Deal-type programs for Cleveland Heights and University Heights. University Hospital's Seidman Cancer Center asked the bio-lit class to create educational posters for a cancer prevention evening, and a local refugee resettlement agency asked students to create information packets. Community partners help the teachers create the entry document that defines the problem and usually requests a product to help solve a problem. Experts from the community organizations review the student work and make suggestions for final products.

“The project-based learning method connects students to the community, provides a community service component to courses and engages students in work that is relevant to their world,” said Crystal Machin, Legacy principal.

A recent project in Megan Lutz’s freshman English class began with an entry document from US Together, a refugee resettlement organization with a Cleveland Heights office. The staff at US Together asked the students to create welcome packets for high school-age refugees at Heights High. They requested that the product include school procedures, information about lockers, and cafeteria protocol, as well as material about everyday life for teenagers in the United States.

“After the students read the entry document, they realized that they did not know enough about refugee issues, and so more research was the next step,” said Lutz. The initial part of the research portion was to read A Long Way Gone, a nonfiction book about an unwilling boy soldier during the civil war in Sierra Leone, Africa, who eventually left his country.

Other research included interviewing refugee students and the English language learner teachers at Heights High, and conducting an evacuation simulation, in which students took on the role of someone forced to leave his or her country.

The students created brochures, posters and slide shows with details about the school day schedule, how to check out a library book, U.S. holidays, typical weekend teen activities and a cookbook. US Together will use the materials to inform refugee students about Heights High.

“Before this project,” said Legacy student Rayeil Manning, “I really had no idea how hard it can be for families who are forced to leave their countries.”

Student Danny Lawson said, “The author’s message in A Long Way Gone was that the people hurt the most in many wars are the people caught in the middle of the fighting.”

A third student, William Aiken, was pleased that the materials they created went directly to students at the school. “I was glad,” he said, “that our knowledge and experience could make a difference in someone else’s life.”

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

Creativity in bloom: new programs at St. Paul’s Cooperative Preschool

Katrina Heinzen

The students at St. Paul’s Cooperative Preschool are hopping to a new beat and singing in a new language that includes new programs added to the curriculum this year. There are not many formats in which young children can engage in a musical ensemble, but drumming fills the bill, and the new hands-on music class—a drum circle—is a huge success. Add to this the new Spanish class, the long-standing yoga program and last month’s art show and concert, and little minds are blossoming this spring.

The benefits of learning multiple languages are widely known, but the benefits of music instruction are less so. There is much going on in young brains while they are beating drums and playing other percussion instruments.

It is a way to blend motor and cognitive skills, as well as listening skills, so important to physical development and success in school. These skills are activated in full as students listen to instructions, to the music they are creating together, and to the teacher’s examples that they then repeat. These activities increase pattern recognition and stretch the capacity of the auditory cortex—good brain exercise and impulse control.

The 3- to 5-year-olds show a huge amount of control, setting aside the natural urge to test an instrument to its limits. “How loud can this thing go?” asks one child, but after just a few strikes he settles down to play with the group.

Adam Kukuk, music instructor and drum circle leader, hosts drum circles for all ages. (See upcoming events at www.deepgrooves.org.) As he said, “Drums allow an easy entry into music-making compared to other instruments, so all ranges of ability can participate. It is easy to make improvised music together, community music, even with 5-year-olds.” Kukuk added, “Because” drumming is a whole-body, integrated activity, it increases immune response and decreases stress indicators. It creates community play. People are able to let their ‘inner rock star’ come out and jam. The kids get it every time because every preschooler is already a rock star.”

The children at St. Paul’s Cooperative Preschool may not know about the new synapses forming in their brains, but they are having fun getting in touch with their inner spark of creativity through drumming, yoga, art and singing (now also in Spanish).

The teachers at St. Paul’s celebrate the individuality of each child and guide their students to express themselves with confidence. Go to www.stpaulscooppreschool.com or call 216-932-0002 for more information or to arrange for a tour of the preschool.

Katrina Heinzen is a Cleveland Heights resident and parent of a St. Paul’s Cooperative Preschool student.
On view through June 7 at Heights Arts Gallery, 2173 Lee Road, is Morganites: Fiber in Flux, a special exhibition curated by Tom Balbo, artist and artistic director of Cleveland’s Morgan Papermaking Conservatory. “We see it as an important service to our community to introduce and highlight the arts resources in our area that set our region apart,” said Rachel Bernstein, Heights Arts executive director.

“To that end, we are showcasing the Morgan Paper Conservation and artists who have helped grow a local and thriving paper arts community.”

Guest curator Balbo elaborated, “The Morgan Conservatory is a place for discovery of hand-papermaking for both the professional and nonprofessional artist and craftsperson. The exhibition highlights many Morgan Conservation artists of all levels and backgrounds that embrace the organization’s ethos of setting aside the ego for the sake of a collaborative effort of papermaking and the transference of craft, technique and ideas. Paper is so fundamental to our daily rituals despite the rise of e-technologies. The Morgan Papermaking Conservatory invites everyone to share in the preservation of the art of hand papermaking for its own sake and for the sake of its application to other fine art forms.”

Step back into the 1920s at the 2014 RoxArts Auction & Benefit on Saturday, May 17, 6:30–10 p.m., at the B-Side Lounge, 2785 Euclid Heights Blvd.

The event will evoke a speakeasy, circa Prohibition, where participants can indulge in phenomenal food catered by The Katz Club and Bodega, as well as complimentary beer and wine, and enjoy music and dancing—perhaps the Charleston or Shimmy—popular dances of the era. Silent and live auctions will feature getaway packages, art and jewelry by local artists, sports and arts venue tickets, summer camp packages and more.

This annual benefit is the primary fundraiser supporting RoxArts, a nonprofit organization of parents and community members working to bring enhanced arts education to students at Roxboro Elementary and Middle schools. Now in its fourth decade, RoxArts has sponsored programs in schools. Now in its fourth decade, RoxArts has sponsored programs in performing and visual arts for thousands of Heights students. RoxArts funds artists-in-residence, dance and music performances, and capital projects, and has provided students with opportunities to learn about diverse art forms, such as Japanese poetry, quilt making, hip hop dance and puppet theater. Last year, elementary school students worked with local artist Debbie Apple Presser to create art from recycled materials, to beautify the fence in front of the school, and middle school students created an indoor mural. The organization has funded new equipment for the schools, including theatrical lighting, a state-of-the-art sound system, a ceramic-firing kiln and African drums.

Period attire is encouraged for this outrageously fun—but entirely legal—Prohibition-era event. Purchase tickets online at www.oxarts.org. Claim a free raffle ticket when whispering the speakeasy word ronarts to the bouncer upon entering. Tickets for staff are $20 each in advance, or $25 at the door; tickets for all others are $35 in advance, or $40 at the door. This year, ticket buyers can begin online bidding for specific items prior to the event. Check out the Facebook page for updates.

To donate auction items or purchase sponsorship ads on the RoxArts website, contact one of the event co-chairs: Erin Gisel (ernegisel30@aol.com, 216-509-4020), Jennifer Young (young@elevationgroup.com, 216-407-3922) or Rosie Ford (rosieford@yahoo.com, 440-476-1770).

Andrea Joki is an artist and staff member of Heights Arts.
Ben De Rubertis’ passage to India

Ben De Rubertis’ interests are archaic, obscure and utterly relevant. His work ranges from sitting at a drawing board hand-lettering calligraphy in Cleveland Heights, to portraying an 18th-century French-Canadian fur trapper as a historical interpreter at Hinckley Lake, to collaborating with local artists in collective projects in India.

His unusual vocation as a calligrapher began when he graduated from the University of Dayton with a degree in accounting in 1980. His father, Ben Sr., was in business as a calligrapher and had recently lost his assistant. Ben filled in, and for the first year drew pencil lines for his father’s work then moved on to the full range of calligraphic work. Today the two Bens both work at the Calligraphy Studio on Lee Road, one of the last of its kind, where they hand-letter testimonials and tributes for companies and professional associations, and occasionally wedding invitations.

Despite the wide accessibility of desktop publishing, there is still a market for the work they create with skilled hands using steel-nibbed dip pens, paint brushes and gouache. De Rubertis appreciates that he doesn’t have to wear a suit and can work flexible hours, and especially that “It’s been a blessing working with my dad all these years.”

De Rubertis has volunteered as a historical interpreter for the Metroparks at Hinckley Lake since 1993, piloting an 18-seat replica Voyager canoe as trapper Jean Pettite (complete with a faux French-Canadian accent). Trappers such as Pettite, De Rubertis explained, “functioned ‘like semi-truck drivers delivering goods, but on the Great Lakes.’”

Another world opened up to him via Knitscape, a temporary community public art project under the creative oversight of artist Carol Hummel, in residence at Heights Arts Gallery in 2009. The project, which encased trees and parking meters in colorful crochet sheathes, demonstrated that trees and parking meters in colorful residence at Heights Arts Gallery in oversight of artist Carol Hummel, in via Knitscape, a temporary communal public art project of collective imagination in Cleveland Heights, to portraying an 18th-century French-Canadian fur trapper.

Working with Hummel on community public art projects eventually led him to the Raghurajpur International Art/Craft Exchange, where artists from throughout the world exchange ideas and skills with the traditional craftspeople of Orissa, India. Although De Rubertis says “I just make letters,” he found that in the village of Raghurajpur calligraphy was a spectator sport that intrigued the residents. This village of 450 is a nationally designated Heritage Art Village known for stone carvings, cow dung animals, palm leaf carvings, and detailed paintings done on paper made from recycled cotton and silk saris. The arts are passed down from generation to generation, and created on reed mats in the open air or in living spaces.

De Rubertis has visited the village for three years and intends to return this fall. The first year, he conceptualized a collective project based on patra chitra, a paper made from cotton saris. He created the traditional intricate decorative border with ritualized imagery and in the center he wrote Tume Bahat Sundara, meaning “you are beautiful.” Armed with half a coconut filled with mud, he invited villagers to contribute a thumbprint. The following year he created his own patra chitra, visiting the sarat collector and taking a day and a half to make the 2-by-4-foot paper himself. He invited artists to paint portions of the intricate border, but asked them to deviate from ritualized imagery with nontraditional ideas. Using pigments ground from stone, tree bark and berries, artists young and old asked for God’s blessing before painting. Then, going door-to-door, De Rubertis collected thumbprints in seven colors from villagers who brought babies to the door or woke up a napping grandmother to participate. This collective piece (above) is in Ireland in a Raghurajpur exhibition that has sold all 70 pieces on display.

De Rubertis’ latest collective project was the creation of a bamboo raft. He strung 1 1/2-inch-square paintings by 450 people to the raft and launched it down the river. Unfortunately the river was low, the raft got stuck on a mud flat, and then later disappeared, stripped by villagers who scavenged all useful materials. Nonetheless, De Rubertis felt that the raft “metaphorically made it down the river.” He values the collective process of its creation, and the appropriateness of it being recycled.

The arts are an economic generator for the village of Raghurajpur. The villagers view the international visiting artists as consumers and transmitters of their local art to the world. By going back year after year and working with them as collaborators, De Rubertis has become not just a visiting artist, but a seasonal resident artist with deep relationships in the village. “We don’t speak the same language,” he said, “but we understand each other.”

Peggy Spaeth was the founding director of Heights Arts. Currently she is imagining and exploring new projects.
Music director Anne Wilson’s 25th anniversary celebration

Peg Weissbrod

On Friday, May 9, the public is invited to celebrate Cleveland Heights composer/musician Anne Wilson’s 25th anniversary as music director and organist at Forest Hill Church. A concert entirely of Wilson’s own music, featuring four of the church choirs she directs, will begin at 7:30 p.m., followed by a reception in her honor. Guest instrumentalists will include Derek Snyder, cellist; Paul Ferguson and a trombone quartet from Case Western Reserve University; and Tom Trenney, organist.

Wilson has been a fixture not only in Cleveland Heights but also in the wider music community. A graduate of the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and holder of the American Guild of Organists’ prestigious fellowship and choirmaster certificates, her musical influence stretches far beyond Forest Hill Church. She has served for almost 15 years as rehearsal pianist for Apollo’s Fire, and also serves as staff accompanist at Case Western Reserve University. She is an occasional organist for the Cleveland Orchestra and toured with the group on its 2012 West Coast and Carnegie Hall tours. She also is a docent at the Cleveland Museum of Art and particularly enjoys giving tours which include recorded music related to the art.

Also important for Wilson and the Heights is the role she has played as pianist and chorus coach for the Cleveland Heights High School vocal music department. Working closely with music director Craig McGaughy, Wilson has mentored many young musicians and began a choral scholars program at Forest Hill Church for high school musicians planning a professional career in music. These students participate in church musical ensembles and have opportunities to conduct, sing solos, receive free piano lessons and play in the handbell and steel drum groups.

Wilson has placed first or second in seven national and international organ competitions, and has presented many recitals and workshops at conventions of the American Guild of Organists, the Organ Historical Society and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians. She has been featured on National Public Radio’s “Pipedreams” program and WCLV’s “Not the Dead, White, Male Composers Hour.” She also enjoys playing jazz piano at places such as the Tavern Company in Cleveland Heights, Raintree in Chagrin Falls and Hospice of the Western Reserve in Cleveland.

Wilson is a well-respected composer whose music has been performed at such venues as the Aspen Music Festival, the Juilliard School, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Amsterdam Cello Biennale and the Cincinnati Classical Guitar Workshop.

In 2002, Wilson founded and served as president of the Greater Cleveland Classical Guitar Society. Her love of travel and art finds her traveling the world as often as her schedule allows.

Because of the significance of, and widespread community interest in, this event, the concert and reception will be free and open to the public. Forest Hill Church member Barb Hansen, chair of the celebration, predicts, “It will be a night to be remembered, sure to delight everyone.”

The concert will be professionally recorded and filmed, with copies of a commemorative CD, DVD and photography package available for $25. All proceeds will help keep Wilson’s music playing through the Friends of Forest Hill Music fund.

Peg Weissbrod is a freelance writer and content manager for Forest Hill Church in Cleveland Heights.

Chamber concert to benefit Parkinson’s research

Marc Jaffe

Marc Jaffe is a longtime Heights resident, humor writer, comedian, father of three girls, and president of Shaking With Laughter, a nonprofit that raises funds for Parkinson’s research through events that have an element of humor.

“Prelude to a Cure,” a chamber concert featuring 20 members of the Cleveland Orchestra, will take place at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Cleveland Heights on Friday, May 30.

The concert will benefit Shaking With Laughter, a Cleveland Heights-based nonprofit organization that raises money for Parkinson’s disease research. Since its inception in 2011, Shaking With Laughter has raised more than $460,000 through concerts and performances that often include humor.

Robert Walters, an English horn player in the Cleveland Orchestra, created the event after attending another Shaking With Laughter performance.

He teamed up with St. Paul’s music director Karel Paukert and recruited 19 additional orchestra members to participate.

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church is located at 2547 Fairmount Blvd., and tickets are available at www.shakingwithlaugther.org. General admission is $55 and balcony seats are $40. VIP tickets are $100 and include preferred seating and a light dinner and dessert before the performance.
Heights Arts launches new local artist programs

Mary Ryan

Heights Arts introduces a new membership program specifically designed for working artists, made possible with generous support from the George Gund Foundation. Through this program, working artist members join at a special rate of $50 and gain opportunities to showcase and sell their work, while Heights Arts is able to further its mission of supporting local artists.

“This is a big step forward for Heights Arts in that we can now have a collaborative and mutually supportive relationship with our artists,” said Rachel Bernstein, executive director. “In addition, this program enables us to own editioned pieces of original art for the first time in our history. We look forward to showcasing these exceptional artists while offering the community a unique opportunity to own and own an original work of art created just for us.”

Beginning in May and for each month that follows, Heights Arts will select an artist of the month from among its working artist members. That artist will then create a special work of art, and people who visit the gallery (2175 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights) during the month can enter a drawing for a chance to win that month’s artist-of-the-month piece.

The first artist of the month is Bonnie Dolin, whose beautiful giclée print will be on display for the month of May. Dolin has work in many Cleveland collections, including the Progressive Collection, the Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals and the Cleveland Museum of Art. She received an individual artist award from the Ohio Arts Council and a fellowship from the OAC to spend three months at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, Mass.

In addition, Heights Arts will select three different working artist members throughout the year for commission of new works to be produced by the artists in editions of 25 pieces each. Historically, Heights Arts has sold art on commission without actually owning the artists’ work, so this represents a milestone in the organization’s history. These pieces will then be for sale in the gallery, providing patrons an opportunity to own a limited-edition piece of original art.

The first artist commissioned to create a limited edition will be Sue Berry, a glass artist from Cleveland Heights. Her pieces debut in the gallery this June.

Mary Ryan is a member of the Heights Arts staff and a 25-year Heights resident.

The annual Roxboro Family Arts Festival tradition continues May 31

Andrea Turner

The annual Roxboro Family Arts Festival, now in its 30th year, will take place Saturday, May 31, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Roxboro Elementary School. A true community event, the festival features child-centered and family activities, planned in collaboration with these local organizations: Heights Arts, MOCA, Cleveland Botanical Garden, Center for Arts-Inspired Learning, Cleveland Sculpture Center and Cleveland Clinic Children’s Be Well Kids Clinic.

Admission to the event is free. Roxboro students are participating in an art contest to design wearable buttons for the event visually answering the question: “What does your town or neighborhood mean to you and how does it inspire your artwork?”

The Euclid Beach Rocket Car will provide rides ($1 per ride or $3 for unlimited rides), and musicians will perform. The festival will feature food for sale from Krav food truck, Mister Brisket, Sun Luck Garden, Sweetie Fry, Brisket, Sun Luck Garden, Sweetie Fry, and more. The festival is sponsored by Roxboro Elementary School PTA.

The Euclid Beach Rocket Car will provide rides ($1 per ride or $3 for unlimited rides), and musicians will perform. The festival will feature food for sale from Krav food truck, Mister Brisket, Sun Luck Garden, Sweetie Fry, and more. The festival is sponsored by Roxboro Elementary School PTA.

Andrea C. Turner owns ACT One Communications, a marketing and communications consulting firm. She is the Heights Observer e-news editor.
Underwater enchantment at Communion of Saints

Cast members rehearse for May performances of “The Little Mermaid Jr.”

Amy Fischer

“I’ll tell you a tale of the bottomless blue,” begins Disney’s “The Little Mermaid Jr.,” this year’s Communion of Saints School drama production. This show is sure to delight, as Ariel and Flounder join in a stunning visual display of underwater creatures, and the classic tale of boy meets girl unfolds.

Adapted from the 2008 Broadway musical production, this classic is set in an underwater kingdom. Ariel longs to be “part of your world,” but she has to defy her father, King Triton, to do so. Going against her father leads Ariel to daring and exciting adventures. All of the favorite characters are portrayed by the grade-school actors as they sing and dance their way under the sea.

The school’s drama program is one of the enrichment programs available to students in kindergarten through eighth grade, and this is the school’s fifth production, involving more than 60 children.

The play is under the stage direction of Lydia Chanenka and the musical direction of Maria Botri-Lodovico. Chanenka also provides many of the set designs and costumes.

Power Hall gym will become an underwater paradise on Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10. Performances begin at 7 p.m. both nights. Admission is $3 for ages 13 and older; 12 and under are free; and families are $10. Baked goods and water will be available for purchase before the show and during intermission.

Communion of Saints School, 2160 Stillman Road (at Cedar Road), was established in 1916. The school was formerly known as Saint Ann School, and was established in 1916.

Amy Fischer is a member of the school advisory committee at Communion of Saints School. For more information call 216-932-4177 or visit www.communionofsaintsschool.org.

Insight Clinical Trials

1801 Chestnut Hills Drive in Cleveland Heights. The gallery is open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, visit www.judsonmarteliving.com.

Rob Lucarelli is director of communications for Judson Services Inc.

Exhibit by Cleveland Heights artist is ‘Close to Home’

Rob Lucarelli

The Howson Gallery at Judson Park presents “Close to Home,” an exhibition of oil paintings by Cleveland Heights artist Jeremy Tugeau. The show runs through June 8.

Tugeau is a children’s book illustrator and professional artist, whose work appears in galleries in Cleveland and Nantucket, Mass. He is the drawing and painting instructor at Lake Ridge Academy in North Ridgeville, and a graduate student at Case Western Reserve University, where he is working toward a master’s degree in art education.

The Howson Gallery is located at Judson Park retirement community, 1801 Chestnut Hills Drive in Cleveland Heights. The gallery is open daily from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, visit www.judsonmarteliving.com.

Dobama closes its season with ‘Kin’

Jewel Moulthrop

Dobama Theatre announces the regional premiere of “Kin” by Bartholomew Doran, directed by Shannon Sindelar.

The play spans great distances and many years in the lives of its nine characters, telling the unconventional love story between Anna, an Ivy League poetry scholar, and Sean, an Irish personal trainer—a seemingly unlikely match, yet somehow a perfect one.

If this sounds like you, consider EXPEDITION 3 – a clinical research study looking at an investigational drug for mild Alzheimer’s disease. Study-related treatments and procedures will be free of charge.

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If this sounds like you, consider EXPEDITION 3 – a clinical research study looking at an investigational drug for mild Alzheimer’s disease. Study-related treatments and procedures will be free of charge.

Jewel Moulthrop is a Cleveland Heights resident and member of the Heights Observer’s Editorial Advisory Committee.
Money management classes for older adults start May 13

Keesha Allen

Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) helps senior prepare for the lifestyle transitions that come with age. Moving from work to retirement, or from one’s home to an apartment or assisted living facility, are among the changes that can pose physical, emotional and financial adjustments to seniors and their families. To help seniors prepare for such transitions, HRRC will offer a series of free, one-hour classes this spring and summer, focusing on financial issues affecting seniors:

Tuesday, May 13: Managing Your Money as You Age will cover the importance of budgeting and credit management, especially when adjusting to a fixed income; maintaining good credit and low debt; and how to protect oneself from fraud and scams.

Tuesday, June 10: Should You Stay, or Should You Go? will help seniors decide if staying in their home is the best option—economically, physically and mentally. The class will cover financial options, such as refinancing, home equity lines of credit, and reverse mortgages; the pros and cons of community or assisted living; and how to get the most out of one’s home, by planning early.

Tuesday, July 8: Asset Building & Estate Planning will help seniors plan what will happen to their estate and finances. The class will cover managing cash and investments to protect assets, avoid the risk of running out of money, and eliminate unnecessary stress and problems.

The classes will begin at 11 a.m. at the Cleveland Heights Senior Center, 7 Monticello Blvd., and light refreshments will be provided. Residents of all communities are welcome, and reservations are not necessary. For more information, call 216-398-6100, ext. 13 or e-mail talen@hrrc-ch.org.

Keesha Allen is the financial and homeownership counselor for HRRC. She teaches new homebuyer classes, facilitates the city’s down payment assistance program, and provides financial counseling.

Senior Citizen Happenings

Senior Citizen Happenings, sponsored by the City of University Heights, are open to all senior citizens. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. at the University Heights Library. For information, and to suggest program topics, contact the UH Office for Senior Services at 216-397-0336 or info@universityheights.com.

May 6: David Fleischer, Case Western Reserve University associate provost, describes how international students have transformed the campus into an oasis of multiculturalism. The school’s largest international class enrolled last September, enriching both the academic environment and the local community.

May 9: Chuck Mosberger of Design Wyse Interiors, shares tales of his travels around the world in search of antiques. He’ll recount his experiences and finds, which include a 4,000-year-old alabaster bust of an Egyptian queen, tapestries from Thailand and a cabinet from Windsor Castle.

May 15: Huda Lufti, associate professor of history at the American University in Cairo, and a scholar in the Cleveland Foundation’s Creative Fusion program, discusses Egypt’s complex artistic and cultural traditions.

May 22: Lynn Zimmerman, head of the English department at Notre Dame College, celebrates the 450th anniversary of William Shakespeare.

May 29: William Kavanagh, Hyland Software Company’s director of sales, will describe how a smart-phone app designed by Hyland engineers is helping a South African clinic win the battle against childhood AIDS.

Tips for aging gracefully

Judith Eugene

We have all heard of “aging gracefully,” but how do we actually do that? Aging gracefully involves taking an active approach to the aging process. Rather than waiting for aging to take its effect on us, we can make lifestyle choices that postpone or eliminate some of those effects. By taking a proactive role in our own well-being we can age as gracefully as possible.

Keeping our brains healthy is critical to healthy aging. According to Cleveland Clinic, normal cognitive decline starts around age 60, and the most common change is a decrease in the speed of processing information. The Clinic contends that keeping your body healthy is essential to keeping your brain healthy, and it recommends following a Mediterranean-style diet, getting regular exercise, and keeping cholesterol and blood pressure at healthy levels.

Maintaining heart health is also essential to healthy aging. Aging naturally increases our risk for heart disease from the buildup of plaque and loss of elasticity. The 2010 Mayo Clinic Heartoren study found that 30% of heart attacks occur in people under age 65. By the age of 85, one in four Americans will have heart disease. Maintaining a healthy body weight and eating fruits and vegetables helps maintain good heart health.

Aging also causes hearing loss as the inner ear cells degrade, making it difficult to hear high frequencies or to hear clearly in crowded rooms. Mayo Clinic recommends wearing sunglasses and using earplugs around loud noises to reduce hearing loss.

The reason that most of these recommendations mention maintaining a healthy body weight is because our bodies lose muscle, eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight becomes harder as we age. Muscle mass naturally decreases and is replaced by body fat, which burns fewer calories than muscle and leads to weight gain. To counteract this, Mayo Clinic recommends regular exercise to maintain muscle, eating a healthy diet and watching portion sizes.

With some extra effort and advance planning, we can control the aging process and minimize its effects. The key to aging gracefully is a healthy lifestyle. Our bodies are very resilient and it is never too late to take control.

Judith Eugene is a native of Cleveland Heights who provides life-enrichment classes and activities for senior adults and those with physical and mental challenges through www.livingandhandgroup.com. She can be reached at 440-557-0648 or judithl@livingandhandgroup.com.
Friends Spring Mega Book Sale is May 1–4
Louise Oliver

Volunteers have been sorting and boxing donated books for months, and the Friends of Heights Libraries store-room is bursting at the seams—all in preparation for the group’s semiannual Mega Book Sale, May 1–4, at the Lee Road Library.

On Thursday, May 1, 5:30 p.m., Friends members are invited to a special preview sale. Memberships are available at the door for $50, and members receive a discount on all purchases. The Mega Sale continues May 2–4 during regular library hours, and is more and more adapted to our mini-verse variety of edible nutritious plants.

Today, however, the practice of seed saving has become a somewhat lost art. Most people with gardens buy annual seeds every year. Buying seeds from a seed company is buying a name-brand commodity, not a locally made unique product. “By saving the ‘best and brightest’ we are selecting plants with traits that, with each generation, are more and more adapted to our mi-
croclimate,” said Sam Lapides, special projects coordinator for Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

The seed library works like this: Visitors with or without a library card can pick up a seed packet to take home, with no due date or fines. Borrowers plant and grow their seeds, eat the fruits of their labor, and save the seeds from the healthiest, tastiest, or easiest-growing plants, to bring back to the library.

To help new seed growers and sav-

ers, the library will host workshops on how to practice seed starting and saving. The dates and times of the workshops will be announced in the spring and summer.

For more information about the seed library and seed-saving program, contact a librarian at Coventry Village Library at 216-331-3400.

Julia Murphy is the marketing assistant for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.
Second annual RoxEl Run is May 31

Andrea C. Turner

Realizing that healthy habits start at a young age, Roxboro Elementary School parents organized an event to encourage children and their families to incorporate a regular fitness routine into their activities.

Now in its second year, this community running event includes a 4-mile, 2-mile, and a Kid Fun run. This year’s RoxEl Run takes place on Saturday, May 31, at 9 a.m., and begins at the Roxboro Middle School track. All proceeds benefit Roxboro Elementary School’s playground fund.

Last year’s event drew close to 200 runners and raised $3,000—a portion of which is being used to build a new water fountain on the playground, to enable students to stay hydrated while playing outside.

For full event details, including registration and course information for each of the three races, visit www.runsignup.com. If you have questions, contact Kate Pophal, race director, at kpophal@perfectpacetraining.com.

Following the race, runners can relax on their own chairs or picnic blankets and enjoy refreshments. Fresh-made donuts will be offered courtesy of Tom Speel, Cleveland Orchestra musician, Heights High parent, and host of neighborhood donut parties.

Roxboro students in grades three through five prepared for the race as members of the Run Club, training twice a week during their lunch hour. Jennifer Kubic, a Roxboro parent and marathon runner, along with other volunteers, coached 30 students this year, an increase over last year’s 20 students. “Some are first-time runners and some are seasoned athletes,” reported Kubic. “Everyone has a goal.”

The event is made possible through the support of The Galloping Inn; Cleveland Clinic Children’s Be Well Kids Clinics; Cleveland Indians, Justin Horton; Chestnut Hills Realty; The Zuik Company Inc.; Nancy and Richard Dietrich; and Kirk, Sarah, Van and Hill Dietrich.

Andrea C. Turner owns ACT One Communications, a marketing and communications consulting firm. She is the Heights Observer e-news editor.
University Heights resident Doug Bahniuk is about to embark on a challenging bike ride—almost 500 miles across the Rocky Mountains, climbing six mountain passes with a total elevation of 28,265 vertical feet. Adding to the challenge is the fact that Bahniuk has Parkinson's disease.

In an odd twist of the disease, many Parkinson's patients have a hard time walking, but can often easily ride a bicycle. Despite about 15,000 new cases per year, Parkinson's disease remains a medical mystery.

The cause of the symptoms is known to be a deficiency of a neurotransmitter called dopamine, but no one knows why there is a loss of the brain cells that produce dopamine in the first place. This inadequate amount of dopamine causes a Parkinson's patient to lose the ability to control his or her body's movements.

Bahniuk is no stranger to long-distance bicycle rides. Three years ago he rode solo for more than 900 miles from Prudhoe Bay to Anchorage, Alaska. This year, June 8–13, he will join more than 2,000 others in a charitable ride called Ride the Rockies (RTR). Sponsored by The Denver Post, RTR raises money for various charitable organizations, including one specifically for Parkinson's.

According to Bahniuk, two organizations are most actively involved in fighting the disease: “There is the Michael J. Fox Foundation, which funds research to cure Parkinson's, and there is also the Davis Phinney Foundation, whose mission is to help those with Parkinson's disease live well today. Davis Phinney is a world-class American cyclist during the 1980s and '90s who himself is now living with Parkinson's. These are all things that help, and everyone can benefit from them now.”

When asked about the difficulty of the upcoming RTR event, Bahniuk commented, “It's a pretty tough ride, even for me. Pedaling over Loveland Pass at 11,990 feet and Berthoud Pass at 11,057 feet will be daunting tasks. During RTR two years ago, I was nearly defeated by the high altitude in combination with my Parkinson's when riding up Independence Pass, which stands at 11,994 feet. Dizzy, unsteady and exhausted, I walked with my bike for a mile before reaching the summit.”

Bahniuk said, “Bicycle riding has been shown to lessen multiple symptoms of Parkinson's. It helps improve writing, coordination and balance. My neurosurgeon says that I'm an outlier. I guess I'm just lucky that I chose bicycle riding as my primary form of exercise.”

The public is invited to meet Bahniuk and his neurosurgeon, Andre Machado, on Sunday, May 8 at a benefit dinner at the Sherwin-Gilmour Party Center, 5947 Mayfield Road in Mayfield Heights. Tickets, $45 per person, include dinner, a silent auction, a raffle, and a talk by Machado about deep brain stimulation, a treatment for Parkinson's.

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New tech company sets up shop in Cleveland Heights

James Henke

DragonID, a technology company that focuses on medical devices and other healthcare-related projects, recently moved its headquarters from the Launch House in Shaker Heights to the Heights Rockefeller Building in Cleveland Heights. Last year, the company was named one of the top 25 tech companies in Northeast Ohio and the “coolest tech startup company” by Inside Business magazine.

Founder and CEO Eugene Malinsky, 28, grew up in Kiev and moved to the U.S. with his parents when he was in his teens. He graduated from Mayfield High School and earned undergraduate degrees in chemistry and biochemistry from John Carroll University. He attended graduate school at the University of Copenhagen and Cleveland State University and has graduate degrees in biomedicine and engineering.

“I started the company when I saw a particular medical need,” he said. “Patients were getting strokes during cardiac procedures, and I thought I knew a way to prevent that from happening.” He developed a way to capture and remove blood clots from the body during surgery in a minimally invasive way. “We now work with doctors, hospitals, and medical organizations to help them develop their ideas and bring them to the market,” Malinsky said. “We do a lot of research and development and have a great engineering team.”

He added that Cleveland is the perfect place for his company’s headquarters, because it is one of the country’s top medical centers. DragonID currently employs about 20 people, but Malinsky said he hopes to soon double that. It was the company’s growth, in fact, that necessitated its move from the Launch House.

“The company’s other projects include a program that enables people to match themselves to doctors based on compatibility, a project DragonID is working on with another local company, CompassMD,” Malinsky said. “Africa actually has more medical needs. It is primarily aimed at under-developed countries, and it came about after the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation came up with the idea.”

DragonID has also been developing a health and vaccination chart called Songbird, which enables families to have a better sense of their children’s medical needs. It is primarily aimed at under-developed countries, and it came about after the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation came up with the idea of offering a grant to someone who could develop it. DragonID did not receive the grant but is still pursuing the project. “While we were designing the project, we came up with the idea of digitizing it, so it could be plugged in with a touchscreen interface,” Malinsky said.

“Africa actually has more cellphones per capita than the U.S., so we digitized it and put a team together to pursue it as a nonprofit spinoff.”

Though Malinsky lives in Mayfield Heights, he loves Cleveland Heights. He said he and his team work “24-hour days” and are often working through the night. They do get out, however, and take advantage of the many restaurants and coffee shops near their new office.

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is also the author of several books, including biographies of Tom Morrison, John Lennon and Bob Marley.

Eugene Malinsky, DragonID founder and CEO.

Heights Business Opening News

Matthew Adkins has opened an Edible Arrangements store in Cleveland Heights. Edible Arrangements, an international franchise, offers fresh fruit arrangements. This is the sixth Greater Cleveland Edible Arrangements location owned by Adkins, and it opened on April 28.

Adkins, a resident of Avon, said of his decision to open a shop in the Cedar Taylor district: “I really like what the district has to offer. I like the vision and growth I see coming. It has a lot of interesting qualities that I look for when developing a store—its mix of old charm with a vibrant community of people who are both diverse and eclectic. It complements our product and the atmosphere I like to provide for my customers.”

Heights Observer May 1, 2014
After nearly two years of planning, Kim and Scott Curtis have opened their new yoga studio, Yoga Roots, in Cleveland Heights’s Fairmount Taylor Business District.

A fellow yogi encouraged them to “practice patience” during this journey, and the Curtises now know why. “We have had so many ups and downs during our search for the perfect location for Yoga Roots,” said Kim. “At times it was difficult to understand why certain plans would just stall or never get off the ground.”

Now, said Scott, “Our new studio just fits our personality perfectly. It feels grounded, earthy, and yet truly open to growth. We wanted a place that was authentic to our name, Yoga Roots, which holds special meaning to us. We could not have picked a more ideal location or better studio.”

Yoga Roots officially opened its doors on April 5 at 3459 Fairmount Blvd., in the space formerly occupied by Start to Finish Fitness. Their new studio is in a neighborhood that the Curtises, residents of Shaker Heights, have always enjoyed.

“We are foodies, and enjoy our sticky bun from On The Rise, or an appetizer at Gigi’s. We have become close with nearly all of the business owners on the block. It was just natural to locate here and become neighbors. It’s the walkability and mix of people and establishments that makes it so special,” said Kim.

In a studio space that can accommodate up to 70 practitioners, Yoga Roots offers classes for all levels of users. Kim appreciates first-hand that people come from different experiences and for different reasons to “find their mat.” Dubbed “the tin man doing yoga” by her sister at her first yoga class, Kim was a professional athlete who found yoga while attempting to recover from a major injury. “I had no flexibility,” recalled Kim. “I had to laugh at myself because it was not natural to me out of the gate, but I also experienced for the first time a workout that gave me the same level of satisfaction I had when I was running or playing soccer.”

Her husband, Scott, a relatively new yogi, has spent the past 20 years sitting behind a desk practicing law. For him, yoga is a place for release. “The physical part is obvious, but it’s the opportunity to stay centered and find my breath that is most beneficial to me,” stated Scott. “It’s that balance of benefit that Yoga Roots hopes to provide.

The Curtises say it is because they have been so touched, both personally and as a couple, by their experiences in yoga that they hope to provide this opportunity to others. “We want our studio to be a place for people of all levels, experiences and ages to come and experience yoga,” explained Kim.

For information visit www.yogarootscleveland.com.

Ashley Garcia is a Cleveland Heights resident and teacher at Yoga Roots.
Buffalo Wild Wings opens at Cedar Fairmount

Kaye Lowe

Buffalo Wild Wings, also known as B-dubs, opened in the Cedar Fairmount Business District on April 21. This family-friendly sports restaurant occupies approximately 6,000 square feet of the former Myxos location at 12459 Cedar Road.

Richard Andrews, owner of the franchise, has spent several months renovating the space. The project completely gutted the interior and replaced all electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems, as well as windows and doors. The build-out includes a new kitchen, bathrooms, floors, walls, and the addition of two patios at the rear of the building, one of which is enclosed.

The restaurant seats 280 patrons in multiple dining areas, and has more than 60 televisions, including four 119-inch large-screen projection TV.

Andrews described B-dubs as a family restaurant offering kid-friendly food, made of fresh ingredients—no frozen chicken wings here. Entrées include salads, sandwiches, flatbreads, burgers and, of course, wings. Everything is made-to-order.

Buffalo Wild Wings offers 30 beers on tap and more than 40 bottled beers along with a full bar. Its beer selection includes a great variety of national and local craft brews.

Tyler Swegar, director of business operations and marketing, stressed that the new restaurant plans to be involved in the Heights community.

“Buffalo Wild Wings will be the ultimate place for local groups to hold their meetings, free of charge,” he said. “For instance, at pre-arranged times, junior high and high school sports teams can review their game films using our audio-visual system while enjoying complimentary non-alcoholic beverages. We’ll also regularly host fundraising events, referred to as Eat Wings Raise Funds, where we donate a portion of the sales generated by the event back to the organizers.”

Buffalo Wild Wings has a national partnership with Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA). In 2013, the company donated 30 cents for every bottle sold of its award-winning wing sauces to BGCA—an amount totaling more than $600,000.

The Cedar Road location is the fourth B-dubs restaurant for Richard Andrews, who hails from Australia but has lived in Hudson for more than 30 years.

Hiring for servers, cashiers, bartenders, and kitchen staff began in March at the Cedar Road restaurant site. The restaurant is, according to Andrews, “looking for motivated, fun-loving individuals who work well in team environments.”

Kaye Lowe is executive director of the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District.
Cleveland Rocks and Beads brings the exotic to Heights Rockefeller Building

Mary Krogness

“I always make community wherever I go,” said Jennifer Gerard, owner of the newly opened Cleveland Rocks and Beads shop in the Heights Rockefeller Building at 2499 Lee Blvd, in the space formerly occupied by Isle of Beads. This fair trade importer, whose wares include exotic beads, cabochons, crystals, gemstones and hand-carved wooden windows from Nepal, has been in the business for 20 years, though not at that location. Experienced beadiers eagerly await the shop’s opening on May 2, as do beginners who can buy and learn at the same time.

Gerard has treasures for every pocketbook—from geodes for $5 and a repose metal pendant for $12, to an elegant hand-carved sterling silver necklace for $400. Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim artisans, who learn their craft from their elders, create many of the one-of-a-kind necklaces, bracelets, earrings and beads, which Gerard displays on slab boards and tables throughout the store, a place where, Gerard hopes, people will gather and create together.

“When Gerard talks, it’s clear she has a vast knowledge of the art, culture, religion, history and the people of Nepal, where much of her stock comes from. In addition to visiting Nepal many times over two decades, she lived in Japan for three years and explored Asia—Thailand, South Korea, Indonesia and China, all sources of her merchandise.

She also has rare Swarovski crystals in shades of blue and green from the Czech Republic. Chains of gemstones—austrite, amethysts, peridots, garnets, citrine, carnelian and topaz hang in the store and dazzle the eye. The list goes on. It may seem like a woman’s world, but Gerard has much to engage men and boys, such as rock quartz, shark teeth and other fossils.

Gerard plans to offer classes in the shop—from stringing beads to making metal-clay jewelry, wire wrapping, bead embroidery and more. A round worktable in the shop is equipped with tools, threads, dyed ribbon and leather for beginning and experienced beadiers. A kiln for creating dichroic glass (melting layers of glass with metal) is ready and waiting to be used.

Cleveland Rocks and Beads is an ideal setting for fundraising events and birthday parties. For more information, “Like” Cleveland Rocks and Beads on Facebook.

Mary Krogness, writer and longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, now resides in Cleveland.

Heights grad and KSU student to learn business through College Works internship

Bob Rosenbaum

Rachael Evans, who lives in Cleveland Heights, graduated from Heights High in 2012 and is a sophomore at Kent State University, has been selected as an intern in the College Works Painting program. She is learning how to effectively run her own business and, by the end of the spring, will start managing and supervising her own hand-picked team of painters.

“One thing that I learned from the training process for this internship is to see my college diploma differently: not as a golden ticket to success, but more like a driver’s license,” said Evans, who is majoring in business management. “Most of the people I will be competing with in the business world also have college degrees. What will set me apart... is the experience I’ll gain from managing my own company in this internship.”

College Works Painting has been providing internship opportunities like this to college students for more than 20 years.

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

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Eddy’s Barbershop opens on Coventry

James Henke

Eddy Maddox, the owner of Eddy’s on Coventry salon, has taken over the space down the street that previously was occupied by the Laura Lee Salon. In its place, he has opened Eddy’s Barbershop, specializing in men’s haircuts.

“There was a niche to be filled over here,” Maddox said. “Not every guy wants to go to a unisex hair salon. So for the guy who doesn’t want to go to one of those places, we’re here.”

Chuck Falk, the new barbershop’s master barber and manager, said, “Overall, the average guy is more concerned about style in general these days. With that come haircuts. The barbershop is the more traditional route to men’s grooming. Men can come here to get a shave and a haircut in a more traditional setting.”

In keeping with that traditional theme, Maddox and Falk have outfitted the shop, which opened on March 27, with vintage barbershop chairs, two of which date back to the 1930s and one that is from the 40s. “We searched the Internet and found a guy outside of Philadelphia whose hobby is restoring vintage chairs,” Falk said. “So we went there and picked these up.” They also installed a traditional red, white and blue barber pole in the front window.

Falk grew up in Medina and majored in fashion and merchandising at Kent State University. He graduated in 2008 and then moved to New York City, and it was there that he realized something was missing in Cleveland. “New York had a lot of barbershops, and I wondered why we didn’t have many here,” Falk said. “This kind of barbershop is really a modern take on a classic style.” Maddox added, “In the old days, you’d go to a barbershop, and basically all you could get was a buzz cut. But now, with these new barbershops, you can get a very stylish, contemporary cut.”

Falk returned to the Cleveland area and took classes at the Akron Barber College. In March 2013, Maddox, who also had realized that Cleveland was lacking salons that focused on men’s hair, hired Falk to fill that gap at his Coventry salon. After Laura Lee closed its Coventry location, the two jumped at the opportunity to open a barbershop there.

“It brings old school and new school together,” Maddox said. “Men can get a straight-razor shave, they can get their beards trimmed, and they can get their hair cut and washed.”

The new Eddy’s also offers hair and shaving products geared toward men, including Lay Rite pomade and Baxter of California products, as well as razors, brushes, shaving cream and after-shave lotions.

Falk said that the shop is looking into collaborating with some clothing stores, so it can sell men’s clothing accessories. “We want to be the place where a man can come to get any kind of accessory, from clothing to hair,” he said.

At press time, Falk was the shop’s only barber, but Maddox said he hoped to hire two more barbers “very soon.”

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is also the author of several books, including biographies of Jim Morrison, John Lennon and Bob Marley.

Eddy’s Barbershop
216-795-5185
1797 Coventry Road, Cleveland Heights
Tuesday through Friday, noon to 8 p.m.
Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Closed Sunday and Monday

chuck falk and eddy maddox at the new eddy’s barbershop.

Do you think you’ve got what it takes to represent the Heights? Can you sing, dance, juggle or just do something awesome? Motorcars in Cleveland Heights is looking for the most talented people in the Heights and we want to feature your talents. Visit our facebook page and submit your audition tape today. Even if it’s something you’ve never done in public before, if you think you’ve got what it takes we want to see it.

FACEBOOK.COM/MOTORCARS