Heights Observer July 1, 2014
www.heightsobserver.org

FREE
TAKE ONE

VOTE for
the Best of the Heights
Ballot on p. 11

HEIGHTS OBSERVER
READ LOCAL. SHOP LOCAL.
Published by FutureHeights
Written by volunteers for Cleveland Heights and University Heights • Read more at www.heightsobserver.org

INSIDE

5 New neighborhood association cleans up Noble Road

11 Heights Independents Week starts July 1

19 Two Heights grads receive 2014 Jason West scholarships

25 Linda Miller retires after 28 years at The Music Settlement

CH launches mobile app to facilitate communication
Alistair Pearson

On June 16, the City of Cleveland Heights launched a mobile app called Access Cleveland Heights for the Android and Apple smartphone platforms. The app is part of a broader technology initiative that has made budget, spending and police reports instantly available online.

The app, which was the brainchild of Tanisha Briley, city manager, is a $9,800 investment intended to facilitate communication between residents and the city through an extensive array of reporting services.

"Using Access Cleveland Heights, residents can inform the city about a range of problems, including city park and property conditions, broken parking meters, trash collection issues, graffiti, potholes, private property conditions, tall grass and weeds, traffic signs, tree issues, vacant properties and water leaks. We’re always looking for new ways to engage our residents and allow for two-way communication," said Briley.

"We can’t see everything, and we can’t be everywhere, and we do depend on our residents to be our eyes and ears so that we can fix these issues that may be going overlooked.”

The app also features the city’s youth.

The office of Teen Poet Laureate was the brainchild of Cerveny, Erie Ink (LEI), a nonprofit that offers writing opportunities for young people, to create and oversee the position in order to elevate the art form of creative writing among the city’s youth.

Remembering Rebecca Alison Meyer
Amy Rosenbluth

On Father’s Day 2013, Eric Meyer enjoyed breakfast in bed prepared by his three children, before a day of “just hanging out” and celebrating being home in Cleveland Heights after an overseas business trip. On Father’s Day 2014, he and his family were sitting shiva, a Jewish tradition of mourning the dead, for his daughter Rebecca.

Rebecca Alison Meyer died at her home on her sixth birthday, after a 10-month struggle with brain cancer. At her death, as in her life, she was surrounded by her family—father Eric, her mother Kat, her 10-year-old sister Carolyn and her 3-year-old brother Joshua—along with numerous friends. Known as Becca to many, she had told her parents that at 6-years-old she was a big girl and deserve big-girl names, and she made it to 6, so Rebecca it is.

Last August, Rebecca was diagnosed with grade 3 anaplastic astrocytoma, a rare and aggressive pediatric brain tumor, while the family was vacationing at the Jersey Shore. Severe headaches followed by a seizure landed her in a hospital, followed by surgery. During surgery, Rebecca embarked on seven weeks of proton beam radiation, available only at CHOP, while the family shuttled back and forth between Cleveland Heights and Philadelphia, juggling the ordinary care of their healthy children with the extraordinary care of Rebecca.

By November, the family of five was reunited again at home, with Carolyn a fourth-grader at Roxboro Elementary School and Rebecca attending kindergarten at Fairfax Elementary School, whenever she was able. Her teacher, Michael Heffern, said the other children would scream with delight, "Rebecca is here!" on the days she came to school, and that she lit up the room with her mischievous grin and joyful ways.

Rebecca continued outpatient treatment at the Cleveland Clinic, receiving IV and oral chemotherapy, and remaining remarkably healthy: she danced and laughed and played, she continued on page 2.

Moonisa Halim is first CH Teen Poet Laureate
Deanna Bremer Fisher

At 17 years old, recent Heights High graduate Moonisa “Nia” Halim is the first Teen Poet Laureate for the City of Cleveland Heights.

Her selection was announced at the Cleveland Heights Poets Laureate Reunion, held June 19 at Dobama Theatre, which honored the six poets laureate who have served the city since the program was created in 2006:

Lois Weiss, Mary Weems, Meredith Holmes, Gail Bellamy, Cavana Faithwalker and Kathleen Cerveny.

The office of Teen Poet Laureate was the brainchild of Cerveny, the reigning Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate. She convinced members of Cleveland Heights City Council and Amy Rosenbluth, director of Lake Park and Property Conditions, to approve the bond issue’s final language.

Approximately 50 University Heights residents, along with the city’s mayor and seven council members, came together for a June 17 town meeting on a proposed $1.8 million bond issue to fund a new public park on the former site of the Fuchs Mizrachi school.

Opinions at the meeting ranged from skeptical to supportive. The large, free-form dialogue between council members and residents covered a range of topics, including the amount of the bond issue, the city’s ability to appeal to young families, and a looming Aug. 6 deadline—the date by which council must send the bond issue to the board of elections for it to be placed on this November’s ballot.

The night before the town meeting, council tabled the bond issue vote, which was to have had its second reading at the June 16 meeting—the last of council’s regularly scheduled meetings until after Labor Day. Thomas Coyne, UH law director, stated that council would need to hold two special meetings if the resolution was not voted on that night—one to pass the resolution, and one to approve the bond issue’s final language.

At the June 2 UH City Council meeting, Mayor Susan Infeld had presented on first reading a resolution for the bond issue, to pay for construction of the park. The issue initially was presented on emergency, in order to send it quickly to the board of elections, but several council members said they felt continued on page 5.

Eric Ink (LEI), a nonprofit that offers writing opportunities for young people, to create and oversee the position in order to elevate the art form of creative writing among the city’s youth.

UH weighs bond issue to fund new park
Alistair Pearson

Publish Date

Page 7 continued

...
About the Heights Observer

The Heights Observer is a nonprofit community publication written by community members, and focused on the cities of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

The Observer has no writing staff. The articles the Observer publishes are written by volunteer writers who submit stories about the Heights news, personalities, events and issues that interest them.

The Observer’s only reporters are those in the Heights community who take the time to write about some aspect of the Heights, and share it with others via the Heights Observer. Some Observer writers are regular contributors; others may submit an article once a year, or just once.

Is there an article about the Heights that you would like to see in the Heights Observer? If so, please consider writing it, or work with friends, neighbors or colleagues to submit an article.

If you’re writing a news article, be clear and factual, and keep your opinion out of it. If you want to express an opinion, submit a letter to the editor or an opinion piece. Make sure whatever you submit has a hyper-local Heights focus.

To submit a story, go to www.heightsobserver.org and click on the e-newsletter. If you haven’t submitted previously, click on Become an Observer, also part of the left-side menu, and read the Style Guide, where you will find guidelines regarding article length and options for type of article (news, opinion or letter to the editor). If you have questions, call the FutureHeights office at 216-320-1423 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

The next print issue deadline, for articles to be considered for the August issue, is July 14.
Lake Erie Ink connects people
Lydia Munnell

Visit Lake Erie Ink’s website right now, and you’ll find a simple mission statement: Lake Erie Ink (LEI) provides creative expression opportunities and academic support to youth in the Greater Cleveland community. And so far as the Coventry-based nonprofit has served more than 2,500 youths in its on- and off-site programs this past year, that’s true. Essential to what LEI does, but absent from its mission statement, is the inevitable byproduct of what happens when youth feel supported and heard—Lake Erie Ink connects people.

When I came to Northeast Ohio to attend college, I was little more than a tourist here. While I had a sense that I wanted to know both Cleveland Heights and Greater Cleveland better, my understanding was peripheral. Outside the bounds of campus, I had no community. When I graduated in 2012 and was hired as an Americorps member at LEI, I got my first glimpse at the kind of community LEI offered—one facilitated by the conviction that young people not only have something to say, but also want to be heard. In the two years I’ve spent at LEI, I’ve been able to witness all kinds of connections. I’ve seen a full-time writer connect with a fourth-grade boy who devours books, but is convinced he hates to write. They bonded over stories and sometimes found a way to write together. I’ve watched a Case Western Reserve University freshman ride the bus to our space twice a week to be bombarded with questions about college by a group of sixth-grade girls. And I’ve seen a grandmother with a passion for paper arts talk tattoos with a Western Reserve University freshman who devours books, but is convinced he hates to write. They bonded over stories and sometimes found a way to write together. I’ve watched a Case Western Reserve University freshman ride the bus to our space twice a week to be bombarded with questions about college by a group of sixth-grade girls. And I’ve seen a grandmother with a passion for paper arts talk tattoos with a fourth-grader, designed to introduce them to our corner of Greater Cleveland and help them identify assets in their own communities. Youth will connect in Writing Outside the Box, a camp that uses storytelling and visual arts to explore public space and the way we connect to others through the world around us. Throughout this summer and the coming year, LEI will provide students with a place to write, draw, perform, and most importantly, to hear one another.

Hasan, a fourth-grader, recognized the importance of connection when he wrote the following poem:

I’m in a different world, it is a world where everybody is nice... or digital edition through the Amazon Store or iTunes.

Get back in the groove. Subscribe now.
24 pages of humor, politics and fun. $26 for 12 monthly issues. Call 216.371.8600 X909 or go to www.funnytimes.com

...or digital edition through the AMazon STORE or ITunes.
Leadership is looming big in my thinking these days as the Cleveland Heights-University Heights school district welcomes a new superintendent and as three other organizations near and dear to my heart change their executive directors. Leadership is hard to get right.

In education, where so many individuals play a role in the success of our children, it is crucial for our leaders to be able to motivate and engage the team that is needed to achieve our developmental goals for them. School leaders need to be visionary and decisive, but they also need to be inclusive, respectful, engaged, patient and trusting. They need to be collaborative! The typical hierarchical style of big bureaucracies just doesn’t work when your job is to motivate.

For the last several months I’ve been part of a team convened by retiring Superintendent Nyla Jean McDaniel to work on parent and community engagement as a meaningful part of our district’s approach to education. This surprising experience has been a tutorial in collaborative leadership.

After lobbying the superintendent about the need for district leadership to promote parent engagement in our schools, I was invited to a brainstorming meeting with her and staff members Laurie Chapman and Jen Bennett, former classroom teachers who now oversee a lot of professional development in the district. I expected we would develop a plan for convincing the staff that parent engagement was important and then leave it to the staff to make it happen. McDaniel’s vision was quite different: Hold a parent-engagement summit and get the full range of players involved in our schools in a room to talk about what they would like to see. The direction for the next steps would flow from the summit and be guided by participants who wanted to help shape them. We brainstormed all the community partners and school personnel who would have a stake in the topic and who should be included in this launch activity and invited them.

Our schools are the location—the best possible environment—the best possible setting—the best possible space where the opportunity for positive engagement converges. It’s an awkward challenge is how to do it together.

I admire the superintendent for having the courage to give up control and trust the process.

Our schools are the location where a diverse group of adults and children converge. It’s an awkward space where the opportunity for mistrust abounds but the need for trust is essential. The challenge is how to find effective ways to pull together the diverse players, needs, expectations, experiences, skills and aspirations so that something coherent—the best possible environment for learning—emerges.

Despite my impatient temperament, I am thrilled to be part of a developmental process being built slowly and surely, using techniques designed to build a team and to build sensitivity to diverse perspectives and assumptions. In the end I hope we will have something that is solid and as magnificent as people—regardless of their roles in the school community—said they wanted trust and respect, collaboration and communication. More than 40 of the 85 participants signed up to form a steering committee. Another round of planning meetings, to prepare for a July 1 follow-up to the summit, is underway.

It strikes me that starting a problem-solving activity by structuring a meaningful engagement process is the way to share power and responsibility and produce meaningful solutions. Welcoming all voices is an effective way to establish respect for differences and build a team. Exploring the meaning of something that appears obvious is an important prerequisite to framing a problem, defining the solution or establishing an action plan.

There is no denying that the superintendent has authority and power, but she has used it to create the space for others to bring their skills, commitment, resources and voices to the discussion. Oversight of education in our school district is her responsibility, but we all share responsibility for its success. The challenge is how to do it together.

I admire the superintendent for having the courage to give up control and trust the process.

Our schools are the location where a diverse group of adults and children converge. It’s an awkward space where the opportunity for mistrust abounds but the need for trust is essential. The challenge is how to find effective ways to pull together the diverse players, needs, expectations, experiences, skills and aspirations so that something coherent—the best possible environment for learning—emerges.

Despite my impatient temperament, I am thrilled to be part of a developmental process being built slowly and surely, using techniques designed to build a team and to build sensitivity to diverse perspectives and assumptions. In the end I hope we will have something that is solid and as magnificent as people—regardless of their roles in the school community—said they wanted trust and respect, collaboration and communication. More than 40 of the 85 participants signed up to form a steering committee. Another round of planning meetings, to prepare for a July 1 follow-up to the summit, is underway.

It strikes me that starting a problem-solving activity by structuring a meaningful engagement process is the way to share power and responsibility and produce meaningful solutions. Welcoming all voices is an effective way to establish respect for differences and build a team. Exploring the meaning of something that appears obvious is an important prerequisite to framing a problem, defining the solution or establishing an action plan.

There is no denying that the superintendent has authority and power, but she has used it to create the space for others to bring their skills, commitment, resources and voices to the discussion. Oversight of education in our school district is her responsibility, but we all share responsibility for its success. The challenge is how to do it together.

I admire the superintendent for having the courage to give up control and trust the process.

Our schools are the location where a diverse group of adults and children converge. It’s an awkward space where the opportunity for mistrust abounds but the need for trust is essential. The challenge is how to find effective ways to pull together the diverse players, needs, expectations, experiences, skills and aspirations so that something coherent—the best possible environment for learning—emerges.

Despite my impatient temperament, I am thrilled to be part of a developmental process being built slowly and surely, using techniques designed to build a team and to build sensitivity to diverse perspectives and assumptions. In the end I hope we will have something that is solid and as magnificent as people—regardless of their roles in the school community—said they wanted trust and respect, collaboration and communication. More than 40 of the 85 participants signed up to form a steering committee. Another round of planning meetings, to prepare for a July 1 follow-up to the summit, is underway.

It strikes me that starting a problem-solving activity by structuring a meaningful engagement process is the way to share power and responsibility and produce meaningful solutions. Welcoming all voices is an effective way to establish respect for differences and build a team. Exploring the meaning of something that appears obvious is an important prerequisite to framing a problem, defining the solution or establishing an action plan.

There is no denying that the superintendent has authority and power, but she has used it to create the space for others to bring their skills, commitment, resources and voices to the discussion. Oversight of education in our school district is her responsibility, but we all share responsibility for its success. The challenge is how to do it together.

I admire the superintendent for having the courage to give up control and trust the process.

Our schools are the location where a diverse group of adults and children converge. It’s an awkward space where the opportunity for mistrust abounds but the need for trust is essential. The challenge is how to find effective ways to pull together the diverse players, needs, expectations, experiences, skills and aspirations so that something coherent—the best possible environment for learning—emerges.

Despite my impatient temperament, I am thrilled to be part of a developmental process being built slowly and surely, using techniques designed to build a team and to build sensitivity to diverse perspectives and assumptions. In the end I hope we will have something that is solid and as magnificent as people—regardless of their roles in the school community—said they wanted trust and respect, collaboration and communication. More than 40 of the 85 participants signed up to form a steering committee. Another round of planning meetings, to prepare for a July 1 follow-up to the summit, is underway.
Noble Neighbors gather for first community event

Brenda H. May

On Saturday, June 7, 50 neighbors gathered to pick up litter, sweep and clean up Noble Road sidewalks between Noble Elementary School and Woodview Road at the first “Noble Neighbors’ Pick Up for Pride!” event. There were so many volunteers with brooms, shovels and grabbers that the group cleaned portions of Monticello Boulevard and some side streets, too. Kids, young parents, middle-aged adults and folks well into retirement proudly picked up together.

Noble Neighbors (www.nobleneighbors.com) is a neighborhood organization that started in January 2014 in a living room on Montford Road. Friends and neighbors of a woman who was brutally and randomly attacked a week earlier called for a meeting with police and city representatives. The group has quickly grown to five times its original size, and just added 20 new members at its Pick Up for Pride event.

Noble Neighbors has developed into an action team of people who want to see our neighborhoods along Noble Road thrive in friendliness, beauty and safety. We want to attract new homeowners to raise a family and to grow old. So many of the neighborhood churches have embraced us that we have the luxury of rotating our meeting places among their buildings.

Noble Neighbors is creating events that help foster community and safety. Pick Up for Pride—our first community event—was a resounding success. In addition, several new street clubs and block watches have formed in the past four months. A “cash mob” to support our Noble Road businesses is in the works for late summer. Noble Neighbors is, above all, about being neighbors. We cherish our diversity and we gladly join together to help each other thrive. The word that describes us best is—home. This is home.
Elizabeth “Libby” Ellis is the new community development coordinator for the City of University Heights. Ellis, whose first day on the job was May 19, said that the city has had similar positions in the past, but that hers is an expanded role.

“My goal is to advance the quality of life in University Heights,” she said. Her role includes both attracting new businesses to the city and cultivating and supporting the many small, local businesses that are already located there.

She will work to cultivate financial support through grants and other means, represent the mayor at community functions, build relationships and develop new programs.

Ellis, who has a B.A. in political science from Kent State University, has a background in community development and nonprofit management. She founded a nonprofit called First Step Alliance in Cleveland and ran it for 10 years. The agency coordinated donations for organizations that help homeless people transition to a place of their own. “It was innovative at the time, and we grew into 28 member agencies, many of which still exist,” she said.

Ellis lived in Cleveland Heights for 10 years, and her two daughters attended Noble Elementary School. Her family then moved to another city in Ohio and opened an educational center for young children in Lakewood. After 10 years, she returned to Cleveland Heights and to her home city of Akron.

Ellis said she is looking forward to meeting business owners and residents. Contact her at University Heights City Hall at 216-932-7800, ext. 203 or eellis@universityheights.com.

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

Do what you love

Children’s classes available Jul 28-Aug 8
CIA’s Continuing Education program includes a wide range of courses for adults and children in art and design taught by accomplished faculty, in a dynamic, friendly and well-equipped learning environment.

View course listings and learn more at cia.edu/continueded

Finally, it’s patio season!

Bring Luna’s fresh fare to the open air. Luna uses the finest, all-natural ingredients & bakes from scratch everyday. Come enjoy a salad, crepe, or delicious dessert served a la mode with Sweetie Fry ice cream.

Patio open until 8pm every night!

EVA S. BRILEY is the new City of University Heights community development coordinator, a position that hadn’t existed in recent years. Before coming to University Heights, Briley worked in a similar capacity in Davenport, Iowa, where she helped revitalize the downtown. The Access Cleveland Heights app mirrors similar efforts in Lakewood and Davenport, Iowa, where Briley helped to launch that city’s mobile app. She said that the new initiative positions Cleveland Heights as a leader among peer cities.

“I think that we’re never afraid to try things,” said Briley. “City apps aren’t common. I don’t think they’re very common in our region, and so we’re happy to be leaders on that front.”

“We’ll always be looking for ways to use technology to make us more effective and efficient,” Briley said. “It really, for me, is about improving communication and enhancing accessibility.”

Alastair Pearson, a Cleveland Heights resident and a 2014 Saint Ignatius graduate, will attend Columbia University this fall.

LUNA Bakery Cafe

Luna uses the finest, all-natural ingredients & bakes from scratch everyday. Come enjoy a salad, crepe, or delicious dessert served a la mode with Sweetie Fry ice cream.

Patio open until 8pm every night!

35 Years in the HTS

Full-service care for your lawn and yard
• Spring Cleanup
• Weekly Mow & Trim
• Lawn & Landscape
• Shrub & Bed Maintenance
• Lawn Treatment Programs
Call for a free consultation
Visit us online
(440) 449-3050 • NeffLandscaping.com

Cleveland Institute of Art

Creativity Matters

Do what you love

Register today!
Children’s classes begin Jul 28

CIA’s Continuing Education program includes a wide range of courses for adults and children in art and design taught by accomplished faculty, in a dynamic, friendly and well-equipped learning environment.

View course listings and learn more at cia.edu/continueded

Neff Landscaping

Full-service care for your lawn and yard
• Spring Cleanup
• Weekly Mow & Trim
• Lawn & Landscape
• Shrub & Bed Maintenance
• Lawn Treatment Programs
Call for a free consultation
Visit us online
(440) 449-3050 • NeffLandscaping.com

Apple Construction

Residential Contractor
Serving Greater Cleveland since 1980
Kitchens, bathrooms, additions and more
216-391-6639

www.apple-construction.com • email: appleconstructioncle@gmail.com

Elizabeth “Libby” Ellis, economic development coordinator for the City of University Heights, then to Boston in 2006. A job opportunity with Oberlin College brought her back to Northeast Ohio, and she was thrilled when she learned of the chance to work in University Heights.

“University Heights is a wonderful place for young families to buy a house and be part of a close-knit community. We have safe neighborhoods and affordable houses. I am looking to expand the amenities we already have and to help University Heights continue to be a great place to live,” she said.

Ellis said she is looking forward to meeting business owners and residents. Contact her at University Heights City Hall at 216-932-7800, ext. 203 or eellis@universityheights.com.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.
Alderman Steven Sims asked to insert language into the bidding. The process was not a problem, according to Procurement Director Todd Mirablil. The city is working to address it.

Sewer cleaning
Cleveland Heights is looking to return its waterlines back to the City of Cleveland—a process that could take two to three years. The city is interested in making repairs to those hydrants.

Fire hydrant maintenance
Fire Chief Douglas Zook announced that fire hydrant flushing was completed and 21 hydrants required maintenance. Five of those hydrants are out for repair or replacement by the Cleveland Water Department.

Company coming this summer or fall?
We have cozy rooms and spacious apartments for your out-of-town guests!

With rates starting at just $89/night*, you can host that family reunion after all!

* plus tax. Complimentary continental breakfast and parking in our underground garage included!

For reservations, 216-321-5400 or visit us online: www.thealacazar.com

Look for earlier, and often expanded, postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. These meeting summaries are abstracted from WV Observer’s written reports. The summaries have been edited and compiled by Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Reporter Charity Rose McGraw. To receive email notifications of future summaries, send an email to lbrahm9515@gmail.com or join through Google groups using “lwv-Beachwood-l” as your subscribe keyword.

For more information, call Jeremy Purnell, 216-334-5509.
Discover Cedar Fairmount Festival is Aug. 10
Kaye Lowe

Plans are progressing for Cedar Fairmount’s 13th annual festival, to be held on Sunday, Aug. 10 from noon to 5 p.m. This year, the festival committee has added more entertainment and venues to the event.

The musical lineup includes Cleveland Heights groups Eclectic Vision, Blue Spruce Cars, The Sypder Stompers with Sister Sugar Pie and Get Back Duo. Scott Alan, who performs as the Island Doctor, will return after a four-year absence to share his island-style music. Musical Mark and Whipples the Clown will be back to delight little ones.

The Cleveland Heights Church will provide accommodations from Buffalo Wild Wings, Fifth Third Bank is sponsoring a bounce house. The popular Euclid Beach Rocket Car will offer rides throughout the day, thanks to Dave’s Market. Back by popular demand will be the Batmobile, with Batman and Robin.

This year’s fair will include a pet section, where the Cleveland Animal Protective League will offer pet adoptions, and a pet parade. Cedar Hill Nursing Home is sponsoring a pet parade at 2 p.m.

Roy Larick will present a lecture and slide show entitled Archaeology at the Alcazar: Finding Deep Time in Your House and Neighborhood. Local authors will appear at AppleTree Books.

In all, more than 50 artists, crafters and vendors are expected to participate, as will many Cleveland Heights nonprofit groups. This free family-friendly event is made possible by donations from Cedar Fairmount businesses and neighbors, the Cleveland Fairmount Special Improvement District and a grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

For an application, or more information about the festival, visit www.cedarfairmount.org or Cedar Fairmount’s festival Facebook page, or call 216 791-3772.

Kaye Lowe is executive director of the Cedar Fairmount Special Improvement District.
Halim served as president of Heights High’s Poetry Club. She began participating in poetry performances a couple of years ago, including the annual Teen Poetry Slam at Heights Libraries and several events at Lake Erie Ink, and got hooked. “I got a name for myself, kind of, and so people know me and it’s really cool,” Halim said. “It’s just something that makes me feel good, and hopefully what I’m saying helps somebody else feel better and they can relate to what I’m trying to say.”

Halim said that she can often write poems on request, as long as it is something she has some experience with. “Most things I can just be like, OK. It might not be really good at first, but then I always come back, erase, fix, switch lines, and it will turn into something,” she said. She counts among her mentors the poet Maya Angelou, who she said she has loved since she was a child, and local poets Phoenix Clouden and Eric Odem, who she met at poetry slams. And then there is Amy Rosenblum: “Amy is really important,” said Halim. “She keeps pushing me to turn into something,” she said.

She counts among her mentors the poet Maya Angelou, who she said she has loved since she was a child, and local poets Phoenix Clouden and Eric Odem, who she met at poetry slams. And then there is Amy Rosenblum: “Amy is really important,” said Halim. “She keeps pushing me to turn into something,” she said.

Halim plans to attend nursing school, but has to wait until she is old enough, next spring. This fall, she will work to save money for school and take classes at Tri-C to get some prerequisites out of the way. “I want to be a pediatric nurse. I love kids and I do silly poems,” said Halim. She doesn’t know exactly how they can relate to what I’m trying to say.”

Halim plans to attend nursing school, but has to wait until she is old enough, next spring. This fall, she will work to save money for school and take classes at Tri-C to get some prerequisites out of the way. “I want to be a pediatric nurse. I love kids and I do silly poems,” said Halim. She doesn’t know exactly how her poetry will fit in to her career, but said, “I’m going to keep writing and performing so I can keep the poetic juices flowing.”

Halim said that, as teen poet laureate, “I want to spread poetry—not just performance poetry, but poetry to the younger kids. Some kids are going through some really tough stuff so if they have some way to express themselves it will make their lives a lot easier.”

Halim envisions poetry clubs for boys and girls. “We’ll meet twice per month and have a showcase to show people in the community what we have been working on. We’ll do some collaboration with the boys and the girls, and it will be really cool to have all of the kids working together,” she said. “They’ll have friends that will last because they will become part of something bigger.”

At the June 19 event, Halim read her poem “I’m a teenager.” She said she wrote it during her senior year of high school, when she was facing many challenges. “It’s not easy being a teenager, because times have changed. I wrote it as a way to express myself because that was how I was feeling at the moment, and it turned out to be useful in this instance.”

Halim is eager to get started. “I was so happy,” she said, recalling her reaction when she found out she had been selected teen poet laureate. “I haven’t stopped smiling.”

Deanna Bremer Fischer is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.
Traditioanal and Gourmet Pizza
Calzones, soups, pasta, subs, salads, wings, pizza
by the slice, authentic Italian gelato and more

Mention this ad for $2 off a large pizza or $1 off a large sub
(Not valid with any other offer)

2188 Murray Hill Road (at Cornell) • (216) 229-9050
www.LaPizzeriaLittleItaly.com
Mon-Thurs: 10:30am-10pm • Fri-Sat: 10:30am-Midnight • Sun: Noon-10pm

St. Alban’s Episcopal Community
www.saintalbanchurch.org

Worship
Wednesday
6 p.m. – Agape Community Meal (students welcome)
7 p.m. – Neo Monastic Evening Prayer
July 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30
Sunday
10 a.m. – Community Eucharist
July 6, 13, 20 and 27

2555 Euclid Hts. Boulevard, Cleveland Heights (at the corner of Edgehill)

13th Annual Summer Festival and Arts & Crafts Sale

www.cedarfairmont.org

 Heights Observer July 1, 2014 10  www.heightsobserver.org

H ow HY C got its start

Mary Krogness

Irene (known as Renie) and Dave Smith have made an indelible and lasting contribution to the Cleveland Heights and University Heights community. The Smiths were two of the visionaries who, in 2004, decided that young people in the community needed a place to not only to hang out and socialize but also to learn, and take school and themselves seriously; in a safe and nourishing atmosphere.

Such a venture didn’t just happen. Louise Westfall, the former minister of Fairmount Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights and co-founder of the Heights Youth Club (HYC), and Louisa and Bob Matthias, members of the church and co-founders of the club, had dreams for Cleveland Heights children and teens.

They wanted to create a club with an after-school program to improve the lives of many young people in this forward-thinking Cleveland suburb. But Westfall and the Matthias couldn’t accomplish this Herculean task on their own.

Westfall asked Renie and Dave Smith, also members of her congregation, to join the team, knowing that the couple could make things happen. Westfall understood the depth of their devotion to the Heights community and, in particular, to its young people. “I wanted the children in my Cleveland Heights community to have what my own grandchildren have: the opportunity for personal growth, satisfaction and accomplishment,” Renie said.

Between 2004 and 2007, the founders raised $1 million in capital donations from major donors, including Mal and Barbara Mixon, who established a matching fund of $100,000, which Fairmount Church members matched in just a few months. Peter B. Lewis, John Drinko, Renie and Dave Smith, the Bruening Foundation, the Gund Foundation, the Wean Foundation and the State of Ohio contributed generously; as did the City of Cleveland Heights, which continues to support HYC. The Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland pays for 65 percent of HYC’s operating costs. Lee Weingart, a paid member of the HYC executive director, standing and smiling at the new entrance welcoming eager Heights youth could gather. As secretary, Renie took voluminous minutes of the progress of the ambitious project. As community liaison, she wrote hundreds of letters asking for support from people outside the Heights community.

At the same time, Bob Matthias was managing the entire building renovation in 2006, and Louisa Matthias, a seasoned math teacher, tutored kids and willingly did anything that needed doing to move the project forward.

Dave Smith, a successful businessman and treasurer for the committee, headed the team that handled every financial aspect, fundaising, managing the balance sheet, sending out massive mailings for donations from a staggeringly long mailing list he compiled, and writing individual thank you notes.

Board members and community luminaries, such as Jimmy O’Neill, passionate HYC supporter and Heights restaurateur, worked tirelessly to reach their goal of renovating the church building to suit HYC’s needs.

Dave Smith said, “The reward is the giving. It’s made us better people—it’s filled up my retirement.”

In 2007, the doors of the Heights Youth Club opened to all Cleveland Heights and University Heights kids —with Roscoe Morgan, the club’s executive director, standing and smiling at the new entrance welcoming eager children and teens.

HYC, located at 2065 Lee Road, close to the high school, now offers after-school programs for students in grades one through 12. At 3:30 p.m. on school days, 70–90 club members bury themselves in homework during Power Hour, and receive help from the tutors standing by.

Mary Krogness is an author and longtime resident of Cleveland Heights. She now resides in Cleveland.
July 1-7 is Independents Week in the Heights

Clare Taft

At its June 16 meeting, CH City Council passed a resolution declaring July 1–7, 2014, Independents Week in Cleveland Heights. Representatives of FutureHeights and Heights Arts urged council to pass the resolution in remarks that preceded the meeting.

Council Member Jeff Coryell, who introduced the resolution, said, “Independents Week is a time to celebrate the independence of members of our community and the entrepreneurial spirit represented by our local independent businesses.”

Coryell added, “I want to emphasize that independent businesses help preserve the uniqueness of our community and give Cleveland Heights a stronger sense of place. Our independent businesses give back to the community in goods and services, time and talent, and the health of our economy depends on the support of businesses owned by the city’s friends and residents.”

Coryell urged residents to “go shop local and invest in our community by buying products and services from locally owned, independent merchant enterprises.”

Mayor Dennis Wilcox thanked Council Member Jason Stein with one from FutureHeights, described the community benefits of shopping at locally owned, independent merchants, and encouraged residents to make a conscious effort to shop at local businesses.

“Studies have shown that each dollar spent at a locally owned independent business returns three times more money to our local economy than one spent at a chain. The choices our residents make about where to spend their money are important to ensuring we keep these businesses that help define who we are and contribute to our sense of place,” she said.

Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights, described the community benefits of shopping at locally owned, independent merchants, and encouraged residents to make a conscious effort to shop at local businesses.

“Studies have shown that each dollar spent at a locally owned independent business returns three times more money to our local economy than one spent at a chain. The choices our residents make about where to spend their money are important to ensuring we keep these businesses that help define who we are and contribute to our sense of place,” she said.

Fisher invited residents to vote for their favorite businesses in FutureHeights’s annual Best of the Heights Awards contest. [See ballot below] “The owner of each business that is nominated receives a free ticket to our Best of the Heights celebration in September, where we announce the winners of the contest and honor all of our local businesses,” she said.

Greg Donley, a member of the Heights Arts Board of Directors, said, “Cleveland Heights is home to the arts and there is all this creative energy just waiting to burst out. Another part of what makes this community unique is all the independent local businesses, and there is a whole stream of creativity going on there.”

Donley described Make Your Mark, a new program of Heights Arts that enables residents and business owners to create a personalized stamp that they can trade with each other. “This was the brainchild of Rachel Bernstein, our executive director,” he said. “She realized that this is two branches of the same thing—there’s a great impulse to make great stuff in Cleveland Heights.”

Independents Week is part of a nationwide campaign facilitated by the American Independent Business Alliance. Learn more at www.aimba.net. Visit www.futureheights.org and www.heightsarts.org to learn more about these nonprofits and their programs to support local businesses.

Clare Taft is president of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.

Best New Business
Best University Heights Business
Best Cleveland Heights Business
Best Place for Sweet Treats
Best Live Entertainment
Best Customer Experience
Best Pizza
Best Bar, Pub or Tavern
Best Healthy Eats
Best Automotive Business

Best Home-Based Business
Best Carry Out Only
Best Hairstylist (individual’s name and place of business)
Best Barber (individual’s name and place of business)
Best Family-Friendly Business
Best Curb Appeal
Best Clothing-Related Business
Best African-American-Owned Business
Best Pet-related Business
Most Enduring CH or UH Business
Best Food
Bonus Question: What New Business Would You Like to See in the Heights?

Cast your ballot today for Best of the Heights!

Complete this ballot or go online to: www.futureheights.org

Deadline for ballot submission: August 31, 2014

Please Note! Voting is for Cleveland Heights and University Heights localities only.

One ballot per person.

In order for your ballot to be counted, you need to vote for at least half (11) of the ballot categories and include your name and contact information. Ballots not meeting these requirements will be considered invalid.

Mail your ballot to:
FutureHeights
2843 Washington Blvd. #105
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Questions? Call 216-320-1423

Name: ____________________________________________
Address: ________________________________________
Phone: ____________________________________________
E-mail: ____________________________________________

July 1–7 is Independents Week in the Heights

At its June 16 meeting, CH City Council passed a resolution declaring July 1–7, 2014, Independents Week in Cleveland Heights. Representatives of FutureHeights and Heights Arts urged council to pass the resolution in remarks that preceded the meeting.

Council Member Jeff Coryell, who introduced the resolution, said, “Independents Week is a time to celebrate the independence of members of our community and the entrepreneurial spirit represented by our local independent businesses.”

Coryell added, “I want to emphasize that independent businesses help preserve the uniqueness of our community and give Cleveland Heights a stronger sense of place. Our independent businesses give back to the community in goods and services, time and talent, and the health of our economy depends on the support of businesses owned by the city’s friends and residents.”

Coryell urged residents to “go shop local and invest in our community by buying products and services from locally owned, independent merchant enterprises.”

Mayor Dennis Wilcox thanked Council Member Jason Stein with one from FutureHeights, described the community benefits of shopping at locally owned, independent merchants, and encouraged residents to make a conscious effort to shop at local businesses.

“Studies have shown that each dollar spent at a locally owned independent business returns three times more money to our local economy than one spent at a chain. The choices our residents make about where to spend their money are important to ensuring we keep these businesses that help define who we are and contribute to our sense of place,” she said.

Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights, described the community benefits of shopping at locally owned, independent merchants, and encouraged residents to make a conscious effort to shop at local businesses.

“Studies have shown that each dollar spent at a locally owned independent business returns three times more money to our local economy than one spent at a chain. The choices our residents make about where to spend their money are important to ensuring we keep these businesses that help define who we are and contribute to our sense of place,” she said.

Fisher invited residents to vote for their favorite businesses in FutureHeights’s annual Best of the Heights Awards contest. [See ballot below] “The owner of each business that is nominated receives a free ticket to our Best of the Heights celebration in September, where we announce the winners of the contest and honor all of our local businesses,” she said.

Greg Donley, a member of the Heights Arts Board of Directors, said, “Cleveland Heights is home to the arts and there is all this creative energy just waiting to burst out. Another part of what makes this community unique is all the independent local businesses, and there is a whole stream of creativity going on there.”

Donley described Make Your Mark, a new program of Heights Arts that enables residents and business owners to create a personalized stamp that they can trade with each other. “This was the brainchild of Rachel Bernstein, our executive director,” he said. “She realized that this is two branches of the same thing—there’s a great impulse to make great stuff in Cleveland Heights.”

Independents Week is part of a nationwide campaign facilitated by the American Independent Business Alliance. Learn more at www.aimba.net. Visit www.futureheights.org and www.heightsarts.org to learn more about these nonprofits and their programs to support local businesses.

Clare Taft is president of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.

Best New Business
Best University Heights Business
Best Cleveland Heights Business
Best Place for Sweet Treats
Best Live Entertainment
Best Customer Experience
Best Pizza
Best Bar, Pub or Tavern
Best Healthy Eats
Best Automotive Business

Best Home-Based Business
Best Carry Out Only
Best Hairstylist (individual’s name and place of business)
Best Barber (individual’s name and place of business)
Best Family-Friendly Business
Best Curb Appeal
Best Clothing-Related Business
Best African-American-Owned Business
Best Pet-related Business
Most Enduring CH or UH Business
Best Food
Bonus Question: What New Business Would You Like to See in the Heights?

Cast your ballot today for Best of the Heights!

Complete this ballot or go online to: www.futureheights.org

Deadline for ballot submission: August 31, 2014

Please Note! Voting is for Cleveland Heights and University Heights localities only.

One ballot per person.

In order for your ballot to be counted, you need to vote for at least half (11) of the ballot categories and include your name and contact information. Ballots not meeting these requirements will be considered invalid.

Mail your ballot to:
FutureHeights
2843 Washington Blvd. #105
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

Questions? Call 216-320-1423

Name: ____________________________________________
Address: ________________________________________
Phone: ____________________________________________
E-mail: ____________________________________________
It’s not a movie tucked neatly into 90 minutes, with the swelling 80-piece orchestra directed by John Williams making it all a beautiful heartache. This is real life and it’s ugly, and it’s painful,” he wrote.

Eric is quick to reject the hero label so often given to those suffering a tragedy. “All the time people tell me and Kat, ‘I could never do what you’re doing,’ but they could. You do it not because you’re strong and not because you’re special. You do it because you have to,” he said.

The Meyers family kept on doing what they had to do, balancing the needs of their children, giving Rebecca guidance and limits despite her illness, maintaining as normal a life as possible. The children went to school and did their homework, mixed in with playdates and special events with their many loved ones.

In March, Carolyn honored her sister by sharing her head at the Cleveland Heights St. Baldrick’s event, raising more than $50,000 for childhood cancer research and inspiring numerous classmates to do the same, including three other fourth-grade girls who went bald in solidarity with their friend. The event raised a record-breaking $120,000 shaving 160 heads, including those of 25 Fairfax students and Rebecca’s teacher, Michael Heft. The event also marked one of the last truly hopeful and happy times for the Meyers. Four days later, an MRI revealed a new tumor growing behind Rebecca’s left eye. Doctors at the Clinic and CHOP determined that surgery would leave her severely brain damaged, and viable options were slim to none. Eric described his and Kat’s frustration at learning how little there was to even try at that point. “When you finish the standard protocols, there just isn’t anything left. And the few studies that do exist are reactive instead of proactive, so you don’t qualify until there’s already a tumor threatening to kill your child.”

After several weeks of searching and hoping and begging, Rebecca was granted entry into a clinical trial at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked.

Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked.

Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked.

Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked.

Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked.

But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked. Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked. Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked.

Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked. Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked. Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked. Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked. Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked. Rebecca rallied for her sixth birthday party, an over-the-top joint affair at the Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh, requiring thrice-weekly visits for an experimental drug everyone hoped would prolong her life. But partway through May, the spark they had known as Rebecca began to fade, her once boundless energy slowly draining from her body. The child who “never walked when she could skip” was sleeping more and more hours of the day, or sitting inert in a stroller she’d long since outgrown. The trial drug hadn’t worked.
Helping children cope with loss

Shari Nacson

While adults experience grief as a prolonged, deep sadness that incor-
porates shock, disbelief, anger and acceptance (rarely in any orderly pattern),
children experience grief in “bearable bits.” A child will seem to bounce from intensity to lev-
ity. Somehow, thankfully, children are self-propelled to keep being kids,
even in the face of painful realities.
Experts suggest following a child’s lead in terms of how deeply
to talk about loss. The adult’s job
is to listen more, talk less. If your
child needs concrete answers, it
is sometimes helpful to use a medical
term to clarify the uniqueness of the
situation and to reassure that
loved ones loved (and your child) are
healthy and safe.
How much of the sad details to
share depends on your child’s prox-
imity to a loss. In situations within
your child’s geographic or social
radius, consider whether he or she
will hear comments from others or
adults outside of the home. If so,
then it is best for the child to learn
about the event at home and from a
parent figure.
The “right time” to talk about
difficult subjects is when your child
is well-rested, has a full belly, is able
to concentrate, and when there is
time to be together after the talk.
Repeat back to your child your words
to clarify that you really understand
his or her ideas, questions and feel-
tings. This respects your child and
helps you identify any misconcep-
tions that need to be sorted out.
Present information in bearable bits.
Go easy on yourself if you feel like
you missed an opportunity or wish
you had used different words—kids
are self-propelled to keep being kids,
so often it isn’t just a coincidence. Tantrums
and arguments are an expected way
to process big feelings.
Increased crankiness and ob-
stancy, even with older children,
isn’t just a coincidence. Tantrums and
arguments are an expected way
to express something big that is on
a child’s mind. If your usual tech-
niques are not helping to reduce the
intensity of your child’s behavior,
then you can assume that this big
sad/mad/angry feeling is behind the
trouble-some behavior. After all,
what is more unfair or deserving of
argument than losing someone that
you love?
Children are not automatically
traumatized by exposure to loss,
particularly when they are helped
to feel and express what they need
to feel. Tricky things can be man-
aged. Therapy is not required for
most families, but can be a helpful
resource if you have a particular
concern or need to find the right
words. Reach out—our community
has many helpful resources.
Cleveland Heights resident Shari Nac-
son is a freelance editor and clinical
social worker in private practice, and a
child development specialist at Safe and
Sound Schools (www.safetandsound-
schools.org). Along with colleague Devra
Adelstein, Nacson has donated her time
to lead discussion groups for Heights
families and professionals who have
known and cared for Rebecca Meyer
and her family.

HRRC searches for new leader

Susie Kaeser

Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC)
has launched a search for an executive
director to advance its long-standing
focus on home maintenance for healthy
and diverse neighborhoods. This is
only the third time in 43 years that the
Cleveland Heights-based nonprofit has
changed leaders.
Rob Josey, HRRC board member, and Shouresh Amir-Tahmasseb, president of the HRRC Board of Directors, are co-chairs of the search committee,
formed at the organization’s June 9 board
retreat, to find an effective leader who
embraces HRRC’s mission and core com-
mittments to equity, empowerment and
sustainability.
Kathryn Lad retired as executive
director on June 13. During her eight-year
tenure, HRRC became a HUD-certified
housing counseling agency, adding pro-
grams to help homeowners manage
the housing crisis and to help prospective
homeowners become informed consum-
ers. HRRC initiated the use of volunteer
instructors with specialized knowledge
of all aspects of home maintenance, offered
new programs for seniors, and expanded
services beyond Cleveland Heights.
“All of our services benefit neighbor-
hoods,” said Lad. “The best way to ensure
a healthy and diverse community is to give
people the tools to care for their homes
and be responsible homeowners.”
“We are grateful for Kathryn’s in-
novations, and deep commitment to
our mission and our clients,” said Amir-
Tahmasseb. We understand that hiring
a new director is a rare and important
opportunity for us to refresh our efforts.
We must do this carefully.” HRRC will
hire an interim director in order to give
the organization time to conduct a thor-
ough and thoughtful search.
“We are looking for an experienced
leader who will contribute to the future
of Cleveland Heights and the entire re-
gion by keeping our programs relevant to
the changing realities that homeowners
face in our communities” said Josey.
The deadline for applications is July
15. For more information about HRRC
and the executive director position, visit
www.hrrc.org.
Susie Kaeser is a member of the HRRC
Board of Directors.
Cleveland leadership program seeks applicants for 2014

Sandra Kluk

In 2006, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, along with former Cleveland Mayor Michael White, established a leadership training program for engaged neighborhood leaders. The Neighborhood Leadership Development Program (NLDP) is a free, 15 session community engagement training program for residents of Cleveland and its inner ring suburbs.

“A large part of Cleveland’s future depends on the strength of its neighborhoods,” said Michael R. White, NLDP program director. “The Neighborhood Leadership Development Program identifies, engages and trains leaders working to improve their communities. Through an intensive, nine-month program, NLDP develops skills and abilities that will benefit its participants, their neighborhoods and the city for years to come.”

Twenty committed individuals are chosen for the NLDP program each year through an application process. NLDP seeks out individuals who are working on projects within the City of Cleveland and show a determination to make a positive impact on their communities. Beginning Sept. 6, the sessions will take place on Saturdays at Trinity Commons located at 2230 Euclid Ave. in Cleveland.

NLDP presenters and facilitators are leaders in the fields of nonprofit management, marketing, program planning, fundraising and organizational leadership. Every NLDP participant and NLDP graduate has ongoing access to the services of a program coach who gives advice and support tailored to the needs of the individual.

NLDP currently has 120 graduates who are working to improve life in their communities. The work and interests of NLDP graduates are varied. NLDP graduates build and maintain community gardens, work in community development organizations, support homeowners through financial literacy programs, teach computer skills to residents and build playgrounds for children.

NLDP graduates are community activists who work, volunteer, or do both, in their communities. They have created community kickball programs for youth, provided services to those in need, worked with the homeless and those facing re-entry. NLDP graduates enrich their communities through arts and culture and as advocates for housing rights.

Caitie Adams of Cleveland Heights is one such graduate. She learned about NLDP from an article about another Heights native who graduated from the program. Adams, who has a bachelor’s degree in environmental studies and a master’s in sociology, is passionate about environmental sustainability, environmental justice and social equality.

She came to NLDP with ideas for environmental stewardship and an urban gardening project. “I want to work with high school students so they can better understand the impact of their everyday actions on the environment,” said Adams. “The program would provide education on the environment and the local food movement.” Adams is a member of the Vital Neighborhoods Working Group of Sustainable Cleveland 2019. She was drawn to NLDP through her determination to make a positive impact on the City of Cleveland. “I really enjoyed meeting committed leaders and being exposed to an amazing network of community projects,” said Adams. “The program helped build my confidence and improved my ability to relate to others, especially in conflict management. It taught me to take one step at a time and face project issues head on and not to become overwhelmed by it all.”

For more information and to request an application, visit www.nldpcleveland.com or call 216-776-6772.

Sandra Kluk is a 30-year Heights resident and program administrator for the Neighborhood Leadership Development Program.

AN INVITATION TO

Celebration Sunday

South Euclid United Church of Christ cordially invites you to join members, neighbors and friends in celebrating our new church home.

South Euclid United Church of Christ
Formerly Euclid Avenue Congregational Church
4217 Bluestone Road (at Belvoir)
South Euclid, OH 44121

All are welcome to our diverse, multi-racial, multi-cultural, open and affirming congregation. Come as you are.

July 20, 2014
11:00 a.m.
Blended Worship Service
Pastor Courtney Clayton Jenkins
Senior Pastor and Teacher

12:00 noon – 4 p.m.
Outdoor Celebration
Activities for all ages including refreshments, music, displays, inflatables, face painters, games, storytellers, puppets, stilts walkers and more!

Charles Ramsey—the man who became famous last year after helping Amanda Berry, Gina DeJesus and Michelle Knight escape from a decade of captivity—met fans and signed his new book Dead Giveaway last month at Mac’s Backs Books on Coventry Road. Written with Randy Nyerges, the book is published by Gray & Co., Publishers, which is owned by Cleveland Heights resident David Gray. The book signing helped kick off “Local Tuesdays,” part of the Coventry Village Summer Series of free events.

Charles Ramsey visits Coventry Village

Pastor Courtney Clayton Jenkins, Senior Pastor and Teacher

South Euclid United Church of Christ

Heights Observer July 1, 2014 14 www.heightsobserver.org
Rebecca Stager

Some people are afraid of electricity. Past participants in Home Repair Resource Center's (HRRC) Home How-To women’s repair course, however, have found that by understanding the “mystery” of electricity, and learning how to remain safe when doing electrical work, they can be confident trying basic repairs.

Women are invited to enroll in the upcoming Electrical Repairs course module, consisting of eight workshops held on Wednesday evenings, 7–9 p.m., July 30 through Sept. 17. Participants will learn to replace switches and outlets, run wires through walls, install 3-way switches and GFCI outlets, put up ceiling fans, and more. The classes offer ample opportunity to practice using the tools and techniques required for many common electrical projects. No previous experience is required.

Regular tuition for the module is $120 for Cleveland Heights residents, and $150 for non-residents, with reduced rates for low-income participants, but a $20 early-bird discount will apply to applications received by July 2. The course emphasizes small-group instruction, and enrollment is limited to 18 women.

HRRC’s Home How-To women’s repair course comprises four modules (home maintenance, carpentry, electrical, and plumbing) that can be taken in sequence or individually. Classes are held at HRRC’s Learning Center, 2520 Noble Road in Cleveland Heights. For more information, visit www.hrrc-ch.org/programs/home-how-to-for-women or call 216-381-6100, ext. 16.

Becky Stager has been HRRC’s home repair education coordinator since 1989. Visit www.hrrc-ch.org or call 216-381-6100 for more information on programs and services.

Kim Sergio Inglis

North American Gurukul (NAG), a Cleveland Heights-based nonprofit organization, is sponsoring its sixth annual Connect, Discover, Serve online auction. The auction runs through July 12.

For the fourth consecutive year, a portion of the auction proceeds will benefit the Heights Emergency Food Center. The auction also helps to support NAG’s yoga service programs for recovery centers, halfway houses, prisons and inner city schools.

Beverly Singh, founder and director of the Arma Center on Lee Road, founded NAG in 2004, to support awareness and growth of Satyananda yoga throughout North America.

Auction items include a Viktor Schreckengost Jazz plate, donated by Heights resident Gene Schreckengost, a print donated by Heights artist Michael Greenwald, and gift cards donated by Heights merchants.

For more information about the auction, and to view all the available items, visit www.biddingforgood.com/northamerican. For information about NAG, visit www.northamericanorganizational.org.

Kim Sergio Inglis is editor-in-chief of the Heights Observer. She lives in the Shaker Farm Historic District in Cleveland Heights.

Goldie Montgomery enjoyed a prolific career as an opera singer in Cleveland during the 1950s. One of the gowns she wore when performing for visiting dignitaries is now part of the Western Reserve Historical Society’s permanent collection.

When the time came for her family to look at assisted living options, they chose Judson Manor.

“The artist-in-residence program, where Cleveland Institute of Music students live at Judson Manor, was a huge pull given mom’s background” says daughter K.J. Montgomery. “As she adjusted to the environment, the welcoming staff gently encouraged her to attend programs, while also respecting her privacy. Knowing she has options and choices, she couldn’t be happier!”

For more information about Judson’s assisted living program, please call (216) 791-2004 today.

Visit www.judsonsmartliving.org and click Assisted Living.

Kim Sergio Inglis

North American Gurukul (NAG), a Cleveland Heights-based nonprofit organization, is sponsoring its sixth annual Connect, Discover, Serve online auction. The auction runs through July 12.

For the fourth consecutive year, a portion of the auction proceeds will benefit the Heights Emergency Food Center. The auction also helps to support NAG’s yoga service programs for recovery centers, halfway houses, prisons and inner city schools.

Beverly Singh, founder and director of the Arma Center on Lee Road, founded NAG in 2004, to support awareness and growth of Satyananda yoga throughout North America.

Auction items include a Viktor Schreckengost Jazz plate, donated by Heights resident Gene Schreckengost, a print donated by Heights artist Michael Greenwald, and gift cards donated by Heights merchants.

For more information about the auction, and to view all the available items, visit www.biddingforgood.com/northamerican. For information about NAG, visit www.northamericanorganizational.org.

Kim Sergio Inglis is editor-in-chief of the Heights Observer. She lives in the Shaker Farm Historic District in Cleveland Heights.

Goldie Montgomery enjoyed a prolific career as an opera singer in Cleveland during the 1950s. One of the gowns she wore when performing for visiting dignitaries is now part of the Western Reserve Historical Society’s permanent collection.

When the time came for her family to look at assisted living options, they chose Judson Manor.

“The artist-in-residence program, where Cleveland Institute of Music students live at Judson Manor, was a huge pull given mom’s background” says daughter K.J. Montgomery. “As she adjusted to the environment, the welcoming staff gently encouraged her to attend programs, while also respecting her privacy. Knowing she has options and choices, she couldn’t be happier!”

For more information about Judson’s assisted living program, please call (216) 791-2004 today.

Visit www.judsonsmartliving.org and click Assisted Living.
Summer events in the Heights

Summer in the Heights kicked off with the annual University Heights Memorial Day Parade. Other highlights so far include the Cleveland Heights Chicken Coop Tour, Cleveland Heights Fan with Trucks Day, movies at Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park and a Heights Foodies panel discussion. Upload your summer event photos and brief description to www.heightsobserver.org.

Chicken Coop Tour: Ten Cleveland Heights families opened their backyards to the public on June 21 to show off their chicken coops. Kira Cicciro holds one of the Smith family’s hens, while her brother, Jonas, feeds the hen a piece of cracked corn. See more photos at www.heights-chickeneers.com.

Heights Foodies: Tommy Fallo shares a story about his first day as a restaurateur.

Fun with Trucks Day: The Cleveland Heights Police Department’s Bomb Squad shows off its robot.

Coventry Village: Hundreds of families attended a special free screening of Disney’s hit movie “Frozen” in Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park on Thursday, June 12. This was the first movie in the Coventry Village Summer Free Movie Series. For a list of upcoming Thursday night movies in the park, go to www.coventryvillage.org.

UH Memorial Day Parade: Crowds lined the streets to see the Rocket Car and other local favorites at the annual parade.
Grant Deming’s Forest Hill neighborhood plans multi-home garage sale July 19

Sarah Wean

The Grant Deming’s Forest Hill Historic District in Cleveland Heights will host its second annual neighborhoodwide garage sale on Saturday, July 19, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. More than 40 homes participated in last year’s sale, and again this year, bargains and treasures await.

Maps will be available online at www.grantdemingneighborhood.org/garagesalemap and at all participating houses—just look for balloons marking sale locations.

Grant Deming’s Forest Hill Historic District is bordered by Coventry, Lee and Cedar roads, and Lincoln Boulevard in Cleveland Heights. For more information about the sale and the neighborhood visit www.grantdemingneighborhood.org.

Sarah Wean lives in Grant Deming’s Forest Hill Historic District.

Bargain hunters enjoyed an array of goods at the 2013 Grant Deming’s Forest Hill garage sale.

July tours include Park Synagogue

Heights Bicycle Coalition

The Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) continues its series of Freewheelin’ Wednesday Rides with a kid-themed ride on July 2, a pub-crawl ride on July 16, and a special visit to Park Synagogue on July 30. All HBC Freewheelin’ Wednesday rides start at the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Arch at 6:30 p.m. Bring a helmet.

The Park Synagogue ride combines a bit of outdoor recreation with information about history and architecture. Ellen Petler, membership and program director at the synagogue, will show the group around. Families are welcome.

Park Synagogue was designed by architect Eric Mendelsohn, who grew up in Germany and designed some of the modern Berlin department stores that were bombed during World War II. He left Germany in 1933 and moved to England, then Israel, where he designed some buildings in Tel Aviv. He ultimately moved to San Francisco, but designed only a handful of buildings in America, mostly temples.

Park Synagogue is a 1950 building that makes many national lists of distinguished architecture. There is no stained glass in the sanctuary, as Mendelsohn wanted the worshipers to see the natural beauty of the park-like setting while they prayed. A portion of Dugway Brook runs through the synagogue property.

The HBC outing will circumnavigate the grounds by bicycle, then participants will go into the sanctuary. The bike tour is led by Cleveland Heights residents Bert and Alice Stratton. The outing ends at approximately 8 p.m.

Visit www.bikesintheheights.org for August events and other HBC information.

The Heights Bicycle Coalition was formed in 2010 to make the Heights area more bicycle friendly. The group’s mission is to educate and encourage citizens to use bicycles as a sustainable and healthy form of transportation and recreation. And . . . to have fun!

The Most Beautiful Place to Learn Music in Cleveland

FALL CLASSES: REGISTER NOW

Course Catalogs & online registration available for Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 offerings

Visit us online at www.TheMusicSettlement.org

Join us for the Bop Stop Grand Opening
Sunday, July 13, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.
2920 Detroit Ave., Ohio City 44113

EARLY CHILDHOOD - MUSIC THERAPY - MUSIC INSTRUCTION

Registration: www.TheMusicSettlement.org or call (216) 421-5806 xt. 100

The Music Settlement, 11125 Magnolia Dr., Cleveland 44106

The Music Settlement, 11125 Magnolia Dr., Cleveland 44106

Programs are generously funded by:

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giữ

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni

The Music Settlement is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization and is supported by the giorni
Free summer meals for kids
Angela Shaker

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District is participating in the Ohio Department of Education’s Seamless Summer Feeding Program. Through Aug. 15, free breakfast and lunch is available for any child, 18 years or younger, at the following locations and times:
Boulevard Elementary School, 1749 Lee Road: 8:30–9:30 a.m., and 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Cleveland Heights High School, 15365 Cedar Road: 7:30–9 a.m., and 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Community meeting
The board held a community meeting at Wiley Middle School to discuss the transition of Heights High to Wiley. Topics included the facilities timeline for the high school and middle school, Wiley capacity, changes in modular classrooms, student safety and security, routes to and from school, traffic patterns, career preparation and technical education, extracurricular activities, and building design.

Ohio constitutional changes
Teacher Art Klein reported that the Ohio legislature has changed* the wording in the Ohio Constitution to remove “thorough and efficient” regarding the education that the state is responsible for providing. He reported that the board is working closely with [Ohio’s public school teachers. The teachers’ union has passed a resolution urging that the wording be put back, teachers are seeking resolution for their district from other bodies and the general public.

* [WW Editor’s note: The Ohio legislature has no authority to change the constitution without voter consent. However, the Ohio legislature has legislation that would bring the Ohio Constitutional Modernization Commission (OCMC), which is hearing recommendations for revision of the Ohio Constitution. Members of the public can provide input to the OCMC by letter, at scheduled hearings, or through the OCMC website at www.ocmc.ohio.gov. Where more information can be found. All recommendations made by the OCMC will ultimately be placed on the ballot].

Superintendent appointment
The board approved the appointment of Talisa Dixon as superintendent, with a contract beginning Aug. 1, 2014 and ending July 31, 2017, at a salary of $157,000. Board members approved extended transition time of up to 30 days before Aug. 1 for the new superintendent.

Highs High Enabling Project
The board approved a change order to the Heights High Enabling Project for architectural work to prepare Monticello and Roxboro middle schools to function during the transition before their renovation. The work includes building, plumbing, roofing, swimming pool, and transport to and from school, traffic patterns, classrooms, student safety and security, routes to and from school, traffic patterns, career preparation and technical education, extracurricular activities, and building design.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education
Meeting highlights
MAY 20, 2014
All board members were present.

Race to the Top
The board approved the Race to the Top fifth-year no-cost extension. No funding will be received, but the program can continue.

Chinese 1 and 2
There was one first reading of the Chinese 1 and 2 course modification for the 2014–15 school year. Some students from Roosevelt Elementary School would like to continue with the Chinese course in middle school.

Facilities and University Heights
The board wants to cooperate with the City of University Heights in the upcoming facilities operations changes.

Leadership program for athletes
The Tiger-Up program to be implemented this fall is designed to develop student athletes who will represent the district well throughout the community. Freshman athletes will attend three Triple Impact Tiger workshops in which they make a commitment to themselves, their teammates, and the community. Coaches will attend workshops on incorporating Tiger-Up principles in their coaching, and athletes’ parents will attend a workshop. An athletic Leadership Advisory Council will be created.

Cleveland Heights Schools
www.heightsobserver.org

Free parking and a portion of proceeds is donated to Free parking and a portion of proceeds is donated to Free parking and a portion of proceeds is donated to Free parking and a portion of proceeds is donated to Free parking and a portion of proceeds is donated to Free parking and a portion of proceeds is donated to www.thunderrun.org www.thunderrun.org www.thunderrun.org www.thunderrun.org www.thunderrun.org www.thunderrun.org
Two students receive the 2014 Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship

Lita Gonzalez

Cleveland Heights High School held its annual Senior Awards Night on May 28. Among the seniors receiving local, state and national scholarship awards were the recipients of the 2014 Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship: Michael Kowalski and Cameron Steele.

"This year’s class did not make it easy for the scholarship selection committee," commented committee member Dawn Quintana, who made the presentations along with CH Police Officer Sean Hinkle, and Camille Harris, the 2011 West Memorial Scholarship award recipient.

"Eleven outstanding students submitted applications, and in the end the committee decided to award two scholarships," said Quintana. "We feel that these two students exemplify Officer West’s leadership and dedication, and see a career in law enforcement as a way of making a difference in their community."

Quintana told the audience, which included Officer West’s mother and sister, that, like Officer West, Cameron Steele’s interest in becoming a police officer started when he was very young. Teachers describe Steele as charismatic and inspiring, and a natural leader who seeks to be a positive role model for others.

Steele works at the Boys and Girls Club mentoring children of all ages, and is part of the Keystone Leadership Group, using his sense of humor to diffuse intense situations. In his essay, Steele wrote about the encouragement he received from his grandfather.

He plans to attend Lakeland Community College in the fall. Those who know him describe Michael Kowalski as a hardworking, diligent, dependable and thoughtful young man who is passionate about academics, athletics, his community and law enforcement. Last June, Kowalski attended a one-week session with the Ohio State Highway Patrol Academy as a junior cadet.

Kowalski has come to appreciate law enforcement is about helping people. He participates in various school activities and is a member of the high school lacrosse team. He plans to attend Ohio University in the fall.

Both young men passed the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy certification course.

In 2008, CH residents and business owners, along with family, friends and fellow officers, established the Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund as a way of honoring his memory. Responding to a disturbance call on May 26, 2007, West was killed in the line of duty. This year, the city will rename a section of Cedar Road—from Lee Road to Cottage Grove Drive—in honor of Officer West.

Contributions to the fund can be mailed to The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o The Treasurer’s Office, CH-UH City School District; 215 Miramar Blvd; University Heights, OH 44148.

Lita Gonzalez is co-chair and founding member of the Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Gearth principal resigns; search for new principal is underway

Camilla Walsh

Michele Evans, principal of Gearth Professional Development School, announced that she will be leaving the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District and accepting a position with the Wadsworth City School District.

NylaJean McDaniel, CH-UH superintendent, said, “Dr. Evans has been a strong and steady leader for the Gearth Professional Development School community and she will be missed. We wish her all the best in her new position, and we thank her for her hard work and success.”

“Saying goodbye to my students, staff and families has been very hard; I’ve been fortunate to work with such great people. I wish the Gearth family all the best and will do everything I can to help the new principal, once selected, transition into Gearth,” stated Evans.

“Our district is committed to finding a new principal who will continue to build on the great work that Dr. Evans has done with the Gearth staff, students and families,” said Angee Shaker, CH-UH communications and engagement director. “We will seek and include the insights and opinions of parents, staff and residents as we interview candidates to be Gearth’s next leader. We are looking forward to ensuring a smooth transition for the students, staff and parents of Gearth.”

The open position of Gearth Professional Development School principal will be posted immediately. Once applications for the position have been received, the district’s department of human resources and a team of administrators will narrow the candidates down to three.

Gearth staff and community members will be invited to a round of interviews with those final candidates, and will have an opportunity to ask questions in an open forum. Participants will be asked to fill out an interview reflection sheet. Responses will be used to help with the final selection, which will be made by Talisa Dixon, incoming district superintendent.

Camilla Walsh is the communications and community engagement department assistant for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

Join Us for Summer Worship

Sunday Mornings
7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist
9 a.m. Communion on the Lawn
10:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist (2nd, 3rd, 5th Sundays)
Morning Prayer (4th, 6th Sundays)

Special bluegrass worship at 9 a.m.
July 27 & August 24
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church
2747 Tammany Blvd., Cleveland Heights
(216) 932-5815 • www.stpauls-church.org

Make Your Mark for the Arts, the new community-wide project that brings together the arts and local businesses through a “stamp your passport” activity June 1–September 30.

Visit heightsarts.org/MakeYourMark to find out how to create your stamp and where to leave your mark through the Heights business communities. Sign up online for a stamp-making workshop led by a professional artist for $15 (free for Heights Arts members).

Unable to attend a workshop? DIY kits are available! Visit Heightsarts.org or call 216-371-3457 for more info.
Running the numbers: big data not just for big companies

Julia Murphy

In August 2012 and April 2013, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library conducted major studies of community demographics and customers’ experiences. The library used data from those studies to make decisions about library services.

The information, such as which neighborhoods have the highest number of young children, and which branches have the highest circulation rates per capita, has been used to make decisions about children’s programs and the allotment of branch hours.

What some people might not know is that, in addition to those large studies, the library gathers data constantly, utilizing door counters, program attendance, surveys, website visits, e-blast reports, Web link clicks and circulation statistics. For example, CollectionHQ, which the library recently purchased, is a computer program that uses circulation statistics to help librarians decide which new materials to purchase and where to locate them. The program’s ability to help focus the collection could potentially save the system up to $70,000 per year, which could be used to buy more materials.

Another example of data-driven decision making comes from library program statistics. A few years ago, the library was considering whether to discontinue the printed version of the Check Us Out program guide, but statistics showed that the quarterly guide was the primary way that residents learned about library programs. In 2013, 31 percent of library program participants heard about the programs through the guide, so Check Us Out lives on in printed form.

“It is alarming how much information the library is able to glean,” said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director. “We do live in the era of ‘big data,’ but rest assured, public librarians assure the right to intellectual freedom but your right to privacy. Everything collected is anonymous. The library doesn’t share information about who walks into the buildings, what books they borrow, or what programs they attend.”

The library collects data that will specifically help to better serve its visitors and users. This data helps each branch cater to its community, dictate how to spend its budget, and act as an advocacy tool to tell a library’s story.

“It may be a lot of information, but information is what the library is all about,” said Levin.

Julia Murphy is the marketing assistant for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library.

Library offers new digital streaming service

Sheryl Banks

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library is offering a new, free streaming digital service for mobile and online access. Called Hoopla Digital, the service offers library card holders instant access to thousands of movies, television shows, music albums and audiobooks.

Customers can instantly stream or temporarily download material to smartphones, tablets and computers.

“More and more of our customers are getting used to streaming digital media with services like Netflix, Pandora and Spotify, just to name a few,” said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director. “Hoopla offered us an easy way to keep up with their changing needs.”

Customers will be allowed to download a library card each month. A music album counts as one download, as does one television episode.

Much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, music files for seven days and much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, music files for seven days and much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, music files for seven days and much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, music files for seven days and much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, music files for seven days and much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, music files for seven days and much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, music files for seven days and much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended. Videos are available for three days, much like an e-book, the digital file “disappears” once the loan period has ended.
Heights Libraries receives state award for financial reporting

Sheryl Banks
The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library received the State of Ohio Auditor of State Award with Distinction for its 2012 financial audit.

The award is given to government entities that file a comprehensive annual financial report (CAFR) and other financial reports with the State of Ohio, and receive a clean audit report. Less than 5 percent of government offices in Ohio receive the award.

“A clean report means that Heights Libraries’ finances are in great shape, with no questionable costs or irregularities,” said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director. “The award is great news for us and for the taxpayers in our community—they can rest assured we have been spending money wisely, and will continue to do so.”

Michelle Stys, Cleveland regional liaison for the Ohio Auditor of State’s office, presented the award on May 15 to Levin and Jana Nassif, Heights Libraries’ fiscal officer.

Stys told Levin and Nassif that, judging by the preliminary results of the 2013 financial audit, which wrapped up in early May, Heights Libraries likely will receive the award again next year.

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

What’s going on at your library?
Heights Libraries has the summer covered, with programs offered every day of the week, all summer long. For a complete calendar listing of events, and to register for selected programs, visit www.heightslibrary.org.

### Coventry Village Library
1925 Coventry Road, 216-321-3400

**Instrument Petting Zoo**

**Thursday, July 24, 2 p.m.**

Explore the wonders of stringed instruments with students from the Cleveland Institute of Music (CIM). The “zoo” offers a unique opportunity for children to touch and feel a variety of stringed instruments under the guidance of CIM students, and a string quartet will perform. This program is open to the whole family.

**Lee Road Library**
2341 Lee Road, 216-932-5600

**Thursday, July 3, 7 p.m.**

**48th Annual Pet Show**

Bring your pet to the library to show off his or her best stuff. Animals of all shapes, sizes and dispositions can bark, howl, meow, skirch, scurry, and hiss in the library’s show. Kids must bring a grown-up to help handle the pet, but grown-ups are not invited to participate unless they are accompanying a child. Pets must stay in cages or on leashes. Registration for this event opens on June 19; please note type of animal, breed (for dogs), and pet name in the notes field when registering. [The rain date for this event is July 17.]

**University Heights Library**
15866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

**Saturday, July 12, 1 p.m.**

**Calligraphy Demonstration.** Learn about the art of calligraphy with Jim Williams of The Western Reserve Calligraphers.
Plentiful options for senior living communities in the Heights

Judith Eugene

The Heights offers many options for seniors considering downsizing or needing additional assistance.

Built in 1923, The Alcazar, on Derbyshire Road in Cleveland Heights, is a beautiful Spanish-Moroccan building offering independent senior apartments. All apartments have full kitchens and some have balconies overlooking courtyard gardens. Breakfast is served daily in the dining room, and educational and cultural events are plentiful. The elegant ballroom hosts many special events. The Alcazar also offers assisted and bed and breakfast rooms, and extended-stay suites that cater to out-of-state and international visitors. As one resident said, “The world comes to The Alcazar.”

The Homewood Residence at Rockefeller Gardens, on Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights, offers assisted living, and dementia and Alzheimer’s care. The cozy lobby is much like a living room, furnished with sofas, a fireplace, a fish tank and a jukebox. Homewood is able to offer as much or as little assistance as is needed. “We work hard to enable our residents to age in place and to get whatever level of care they need,” said Cheryl Wheeler, executive director.

McGregor, located on 32 acres on Private Drive in East Cleveland, near the Cleveland Heights border, offers a full “continuum of care,” including independent living, assisted living, long-term nursing care and hospice. Serving seniors since 1877, McGregor has a friendly, caring, home-like setting”, said Patrice Brady, director of assisted and independent living. McGregor offers full apartments with kitchens and walk-in showers. Amenities include restaurant-style dining, gardens, a community fruit orchard, a resident choir, exercise programs, and a view of Lake Erie. Judson Park, located adjacent to Cleveland Heights on Ambleside Drive in Cleveland, also offers all levels of care, including independent and assisted living, short-term rehab, nursing and dementia care. “Our residents can age in place, they don’t have to move to another residence when their needs change,” said Robert Lucarelli, director of communications. Judson offers an award-winning wellness program, an indoor swimming pool, intergenerational programming with local schools, continuing education through Case Western Reserve University, performances by local music students and an art gallery curated by the residents.

There are also several senior apartment buildings in our area. The Warrensville Community Apartments on Warrensville Center Road is home to the Jewish Community Center. The JCC offers a free hot lunch program with interesting programming (216-831-0700). Council Gardens, on Taylor Road, features garden apartments and life-enrichment programming (216-382-8625). Cleveland Heights elevator-equipped apartment buildings at Musicans Towers on Lancashire Road (216-331-1410), Warrensville Manor on Warrensville Center Road (216-291-0779) and three buildings at Severance Circle—Severance Towers (216-795-6797), Kensington Place (216-691-9444), and Concord Apartments (216-382-1616). University Heights apartments include Huntington Green on Milton Road (216-381-3177) and Cedar Center Apartments on Cedar Road (216-382-2514). You can reach The Alcazar at 216-321-5400, The Homewood Residence at 831-0700, Judson Park at 216-795-2345 and McGregor at 216-831-8200. It is a good idea to research options early so that if you need to make a move in the future, you will already know which location is the most suitable for your preferences and needs.

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 216-937-0336 or info@universityheights.com.

July 3: There is no program scheduled for this week.

July 10: Nylajean R. McDaniel, the outgoing superintendent of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, will reflect on her distinguished career in education as she prepares to retire on July 31.

July 17: William Whitney, chief operating officer of the Cuyahoga Land Bank, will discuss the nonprofit group’s work to acquire blighted properties and return them to productive use through rehabilitation, sale to new owners, economic development, creative re-use, ecological purposes, or demolition.

July 31: Alan Care, a retired military officer and history teacher at University School in Hunting Valley, reflects on World War I, a 1914-18 calamity that resulted in 37 million casualties, and profoundly altered Europe’s political, economic and cultural life. He’ll discuss the causes of the war, and how its impact is still felt today, 100 years after its start.

Cleveland Home Appraisal

Certified Real Estate Appraisers

Services Include:
Property Tax Appeals
Bank Appraisals
Bankruptcy
Divorce
Probate
Estate

Mike Neimeier
www.ClevelandHomeAppraisal.com
(216) 932-4663

Certified Real Estate Appraisal

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

SCOTT HAIGH
www.ScottHaigh.com
Seat@ScottHaigh.com
Direct: 216-272-6883

SOLD
1592 Edmon Rd. South Euclid

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

SCOTT HAIGH
www.ScottHaigh.com
Seat@ScottHaigh.com
Direct: 216-272-6883

SOLD
1592 Edmon Rd. South Euclid

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

SCOTT HAIGH
www.ScottHaigh.com
Seat@ScottHaigh.com
Direct: 216-272-6883

SOLD
1592 Edmon Rd. South Euclid

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

SCOTT HAIGH
www.ScottHaigh.com
Seat@ScottHaigh.com
Direct: 216-272-6883

SOLD
1592 Edmon Rd. South Euclid
20 songs about death add up to one fun afternoon

David Budin

Last summer, my folk group, Long Road, played a small number of concerts, on occasions that included the National Senior Games and the grand opening of Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging. It appeared that a pattern was forming, and I couldn’t help but wonder where we would go from there and where we would play this summer. I got my answer: Lake View Cemetery.

It seems like a natural next step—not that I feel ready to take that next step in real life. But show biz is another thing.

Among the beautiful and historic cemetery’s many wonderful features, it offers a summer concert series, now in its second year. The free concerts will be held on certain Sunday afternoons from 4 to 6 p.m. near the James A. Garfield Monument. When you drive in the Cleveland Heights entrance, on Mayfield Road, signs will guide you to the concert site.

The cemetery, which has been in continuous operation since 1869, straddles three cities: Cleveland, East Cleveland and Cleveland Heights. Its 285 acres of gently rolling hills contain Cleveland and Cleveland Heights. Its straddles three cities: Cleveland, East Cleveland and Cleveland Heights. Its

Interred at Lake View are locally and nationally famous figures, including J. D. Rockefeller and President James A. Garfield. The Garfield Monument, located in the Cleveland Heights section of the cemetery, is a great place to visit and to take out-of-town guests. If you happen to be there on Sunday, July 20, the lawn on the building’s north side will be the site of Long Road’s concert.

In Long Road’s repertoire, we have about 200 songs, and because we do a lot of folk songs, it wasn’t difficult to find 20 that have something to do with death. We also perform folk versions of old rock and country songs. Some of those happen to deal with death, too, in one way or another.

So that’s what we’re doing: 20 songs about death. Sounds like a fun afternoon, right?

Well, actually, it will be. Not all of the songs are sad. In fact, most of them aren’t. There are songs such as the Marty Robbins 1958 hit “El Paso,” for example (one of only two records to hit the charts in which the narrator of the story is a dead guy), a country-gospel tune or two, old Irish songs, and even newer singer-songwriter fare.

Bring lawn chairs or blankets to these concerts, and food, if you wish. The Aug. 3 concert features Rachel Brown and the Beatnik Playboys, another versatile group from this region. For all concerts, the rain date is the following Sunday.

We’re happy to be doing a concert in Lake View Cemetery, but I’m not sure I want to know where we might be asked to play next summer.

David Budin is a freelance writer for national and local publications, the former editor of Cleveland Magazine and Northern Ohio Live, an author, and a professional musician and comedian.

CH artist’s ancient technique is showcased in Judson exhibition

Rob Lucarelli

Through July 25, the Howson Gallery at Judson Park is featuring shibori artwork by Cleveland Heights artist Pam McKee. Shibori—from the Japanese verb shiboru, which means to wring, squeeze, press—is an ancient shape-resist dyeing technique in which cloth or paper is bound, sewn, clamped, folded, or twisted and then dyed. The part that is protected resists the dye. When opened, the material retains the memory of the process, and texture is created, thus a two dimensional piece can become three dimensional.

McKee has been influenced by the shibori work of Yoshika Wada and Joan Morris, and inspired by the work of Dutch artist Marian Bijlenga. She has a master’s degree in English literature, and taught English for 35 years. While teaching, she developed her art through classes and workshops at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Penland School of Crafts, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cuyahoga Community College and Morgan Conservatory.

McKee has been influenced by the shibori work of Yoshika Wada and Joan Morris, and inspired by the work of Dutch artist Marian Bijlenga. She has a master’s degree in English literature, and taught English for 35 years. While teaching, she developed her art through classes and workshops at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Penland School of Crafts, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cuyahoga Community College and Morgan Conservatory.

Through July 25, the Howson Gallery at Judson Park is featuring shibori artwork by Cleveland Heights artist Pam McKee. Shibori—from the Japanese verb shiboru, which means to wring, squeeze, press—is an ancient shape-resist dyeing technique in which cloth or paper is bound, sewn, clamped, folded, or twisted and then dyed. The part that is protected resists the dye. When opened, the material retains the memory of the process, and texture is created, thus a two dimensional piece can become three dimensional.

McKee has been influenced by the shibori work of Yoshika Wada and Joan Morris, and inspired by the work of Dutch artist Marian Bijlenga. She has a master’s degree in English literature, and taught English for 35 years. While teaching, she developed her art through classes and workshops at Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, Penland School of Crafts, Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts, Cleveland Institute of Art, Cuyahoga Community College and Morgan Conservatory.

Rob Lucarelli is director of communications for Judson Services Inc.

Pilates, yoga and hip-hop inspired dance moves to great music PLUS core and strength training!

BURN UP TO 600 CALORIES IN 60 MINUTES

Strength • Cardio • Core

90 days for $90 - expires July 31

M/W/Th 9:30 a.m.

South Euclid Methodist Church

M/T/W/Th 6:30 p.m.

Cleveland Hts. Community Center

Contact Mary Beth: (440)655-5394
marybethmccnn@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/JazzerciseClevelandHeightsSouthEuclid

Coming to the Cain Park Arts Fest?

Stay for eats, beats, balloons and libation!!

Experience the magic of balloon art with Swifty the Clown at Sweety Fee – 2307 Lee Rd. Saturday, July 12th – 4-6 p.m.

The ADMIRABLES

Bring a solo encore to The Wine Spot – 2271 Lee Rd. Saturday, July 12th – 6-8 p.m.

The WIND SPOT

The Bottlehouse Stage

2050 Lee Rd.

Zac Tw

The Wind Spot

Sat., July 12th – 9-11 p.m.

The WIND SPOT

The Bottlehouse Stage

2050 Lee Rd.

Zac Tw

The Wind Spot

Sat., July 12th – 9-11 p.m.
Linda Miller retires after touching thousands of young lives

Lynn B. Johnson

Linda Miller has had an impact on the musical lives of many children: 12,000 of them, by her best estimate. A Cleveland Heights resident since 1978, Miller was hired as a music specialist at The Music Settlement (TMS) in 1986, and retired from her post in May 2014.

In addition to her work at TMS, Miller taught kindergarten in the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District for about 25 years. “Pretty much all of my students have been under the age of six,” Miller said. “I have totally loved what I’m doing. It was a hard decision to retire because it’s fun, just a joy to work with these little kids. I’ve been very lucky to have that opportunity.”

Miller was feted at TMS in an event called the Early Childhood Ice Cream Social and Linda Miller Retirement Festival. “My friend Diana Johannessen [of Cleveland Heights], whose children attended The Music Settlement’s preschool, said she wanted to do something for me,” said Miller. “I said that the people who value most what I do are the parents and the kids. That’s all I had to say; she took it and ran with it.

“It was a gorgeous night, the first perfect night of the season, sunny and bright with a band and a taco truck from Barrio. The children sang a song I wrote, but with a new verse that the teachers wrote. I was bedecked with a floral tiara. Sylvia Easley, who hired me 28 years ago, came; and a lot of my coworkers and students’ families—current and former—came. It was great to see everybody.”

So now that she’s retired, is Miller finally finished with music? Not at all. “I’m looking forward to spending some time writing songs, music, and documenting music that I’ve written over the years,” she said, “as well as doing some recording with my flute.”

Lynn B. Johnson is director of marketing and communications at The Music Settlement.

Don’t wait until it’s an emergency call!

Save $25 on any Plumbing or Air Conditioning Service Call today. Coupon must be presented with your payment during normal working hours. Not valid with any other offers or discounts. Expires 8/31/2014.

Disciples Christian Church wins church choir festival

Ronald Werman

The Chancel Choir of Disciples Christian Church (DCC) in Cleveland Heights was named the winner of the WCLV Jubilation—the Elizabeth Stuart Church Choir Festival. As one of three finalists in WCLV’s competition, the choir had the honor of competing live on the air on the Cleveland classical radio station on May 8. WCLV broadcast the festival from the beautiful, historic sanctuary of the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist in downtown Cleveland. DCC competed against the St. Joseph VLQ (Very Large Quartet), the Trinity Lutheran Church Choir from Lakewood, and an all-male choir from Avon Lake. Adam Kukuk, DCC music director, chose a varied repertoire ranging from the spiritual “My God is a Rock” and Olivier Messiaen’s “O Sacrum Convivium,” to two pieces from the Sacred Harp that showcased Shape Note singing. Westlake Christian Church’s music minister, Jake Brigge, accompanied the DCC choir on the piano and organ.

In a very proud moment for Kukuk, the choir, senior minister Kristine Eggert and DCC, the judges named the DCC choir as the winner. The winning program was also sung during a Choir Sunday service. A video of the performance can be found on YouTube.

Disciples Christian Church is located at 3636 Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights. For information on the church and its activities, visit www.discipleschristian.org.

Ronald Werman is an elder and communications chairperson of Disciples Christian Church.
He remembers walking to the library to fill a wagon with books on summer weekends and becoming a voracious reader of novels. He had some thoughts about writing, but, having done well in biology in high school, he entered the University of California, Riverside, as a pre-med student. Unfortunately for medicine, Bilgere “had a problem with chemistry.” His advisor told him to drop the course for an elective, a “no-brainer such as creative writing.”

The course was a life-changing one. Bilgere had never read, let alone written, contemporary poetry. His first poem was about a Mr. Mkle. Bilgere talked to the elderly man daily when he worked as a feeder in a nursing home for two summer months, a job he found both troubling and exhilarating. He also found the class reaction to the resulting poem exhilarating. In biology, he was just another kid in a seat. In poetry, he received “that all important thing: praise.” He also found the choice between presenting students gathering in study groups, and poets gathering in coffee shops and bars, a “no-brainer.” He changed his major.

Bilgere went on to receive his master’s degree at Washington University where he studied with Howard Nemeyer, a Pulitzer Prize-winning classical poet. He received his doctorate at Denver University and then embarked on a 10-year career as a professional racquetball player, a sport he had played in college. He was, perhaps, the only poetry-writing racquetball player.

Next, a Fulbright scholarship took him to Bilbao, Spain, which was at the time surrounded by the rest of the world.” He met artists and poets, categories that merged as artists became radicalized by politics.

This period was the first time that Bilgere felt part of something larger than ordinary life, and during those years he traveled throughout Europe, bonding particularly with Germans. He returns annually to Europe, and, although he now feels “like a dinosaur,” he is renewed and excited by the creativity and entrepreneurship of YUCI, or young urban creative internationals, in East Berlin.

Bilgere published his first poetry collection, The Going, in 1995. “Most poets writing books are read by no one,” he said, and his was no exception until a divorce inspired a watershed collection written in 2000, contemplating the wreckage of his life, and with no summer plans, he decided to intentionally write himself through his feelings. He stayed with his sister in Santa Cruz, and for the first time dedicated himself to writing. Also for the first time, he put aside the tradition of ‘poetry as serious stuff,’ and allowed his natural humor to appear. He had fun, even writing about his divorce. When he finished the collection, he submitted it to the Akron Poetry Contest, not even knowing who the judges were.

This is what happened the day Bilgere’s life as a poet changed. He was watching Adam Sandler in “The Waterboy” with his young nephews. The phone rang, he answered it, and the caller asked for him. When he verified he was, indeed, Bilgere, the caller said, “This is Billy Collins.” Bilgere frantically waved to the boys to turn down the volume, not wanting Collins to know he was watching an Adam Sandler movie. Collins told him that he had picked him to win the Akron Poetry Contest, not even knowing who the judges were.

When the phone rang, he answered it, and the caller asked for him. When he verified he was, indeed, Bilgere, the caller said, “This is Billy Collins.” Bilgere frantically waved to the boys to turn down the volume, not wanting Collins to know he was watching an Adam Sandler movie. Collins told him that he had picked him to win the Akron Poetry Contest, adding “Oh, I am the U.S. poet laureate.”

By shining a light on Bilgere, Collins changed his life. He introduced Bilgere to National Public Radio’s Garrison Keillor, leading to a “whole career as someone known.” For Bilgere, it meant, “Instead of 15 people reading your poetry in a little journal,” thousands of people hearing and reading it. He has appeared on Keillor’s “Prairie Home Companion” 43 times, more than any other poet, and for three weeks was the top-selling poet on Amazon.

Bilgere also is a local treasure, having won the Cleveland Arts Prize in 2003 and a Creative Workforce Fellowship in 2014. In January 2014 he published Imperial and got an agent who books readings for him throughout the country.

Bilgere has taught at John Carroll University for 20 years and lives with his wife, Jodie, and 14-month-old son, Michael, in Cleveland Heights. Needless to say, being an older father with a young child is inspiring his art. Stay tuned (particularly to NPR), and check out www.georgebilgere.com for more information.

...
Antrobus Designs features unique hand-crafted jewelry

Antrobus Designs, a jewelry store at 2247 Warrensville Center Road in University Heights, is unique. Owned by Peter and Melissa Antrobus, the store sells handcrafted and custom-designed jewelry, most made by Peter. It also carries jewelry created by other local artists.

The store originally opened across the street, above Geraci’s Restaurant, in the spring of 1999. It moved to its current location in May 2008.

Peter, 56, grew up in Wilmslow, England. When he was 14, he saw a television documentary about a silversmith. “I immediately decided that was what I wanted to do,” he said. Two years later, he left school and began a three-year apprenticeship with a goldsmith.

“That’s when I started making jewelry,” said Peter. “And the person I learned from made everything by hand, so I learned a lot of hand technique.”

His wife, Melissa, 48, grew up in Cleveland Heights and attended Heights High. Initially, she wanted to be a singer and actor, but she ultimately graduated from Cleveland State University with a degree in communications and marketing. She then went into desktop publishing, design and software training.

Peter, meanwhile, decided that he wanted to leave England. His parents had moved to Cleveland in 1978, after his father, a steel-industry engineer, was transferred here. Peter followed two years later. He met Melissa at a local health spa, where she was teaching aerobics. They married in 1991, and have three daughters: Jess, 22, Chloe, 18, and Taryn, 16.

Melissa, who said she didn’t know anything about jewelry before she met Peter, now handles the business operations, including marketing, bookkeeping and the website.

Peter’s workshop is in the back of the store. Customers can look through the windows and watch as he designs and creates much of the store’s jewelry. All the jewelry Peter creates is made of gold or platinum, and, as a result, isn’t cheap. The least-expensive item costs about $400. One of his necklaces retails for $17,000. But some of the jewelry created by other local artists is not quite as expensive.

Peter also works with his customers to design custom-made pieces. “The ability to make something from scratch allows us to work on more complex pieces,” he said. “I really care about the work I do. It’s more than a business to me.” He believes his caring is part of what makes the store special.

The Antrobuses lived in Cleveland Heights for many years, but now make their home in Orange. Still, they love the Heights. “People here have a more sophisticated sense of design and more sophisticated taste,” Peter said. “It’s an artistic community, and that allows for more appreciation of quality and design.”

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.
independent bookstores thrive in Cleveland Heights

James Henke

Despite the fact that book sales have been plummeting for the past few years, Cleveland Heights is home to two successful independent bookstores, Appletree Books on Cedar Road near Fairmount and Mac’s Backs on Coventry. And, as of this month, Appletree has new owners: Jane Kessler, who is 93 years old and has owned Appletree since 1990, sold the store to Lynn Quintrell and Alice Webster.

Quintrell, who has lived in Cleveland Heights for 30 years, has worked at Appletree for the past eight. She plans to close the store for two weeks in August so she can make what she calls “cosmetic changes” to the interior. She plans to increase the floor space and put the upstairs balcony to better use. She also plans to update the store’s website.

Both Quintrell and Kessler said that the store’s business has increased since Border’s Books, which had a store at Severance Town Center, went out of business in 2011. “They were our main competition,” Quintrell said. “We have a lot more shoppers now as a result.”

They said their biggest competitor now is Amazon, but noted that there are still a good number of people who don’t want to buy books online. “People want to come in and physically look at the books,” Quintrell said. “You can’t do that online.”

Suzanne DeGaetano, the owner of Mac’s Backs, agreed. “Book browsing is a cultural experience,” she said. “People want to have a neighborhood spot where they can expose themselves to culture. It’s fun to do that.”

Both Quintrell and DeGaetano both stressed that the personal service they provide cannot be matched by Amazon or the larger chain stores. For example, Quintrell said that a customer came in recently and wanted four books from the 1950s. “Obviously, they are no longer being published,” she said. “But we were able to get copies for her, and she was very happy.”

Both stores host frequent author signings, though Appletree usually holds its events at Nighttown, which is just a short distance down Cedar Road. The two stores collaborate on a series of author events held at the Coventry Village Library. The next one will take place in early September, but the authors have not yet been determined.

In addition, Mac’s Backs is hosting an event in support of the Heights Library Foundation. It will feature Thrity Umrigar, a Cleveland Heights author who teaches creative writing and journalism at Case Western Reserve University. She will discuss her new book, The Story Hour. The exact date for the event has not yet been announced.

DeGaetano attributed much of the two stores’ success to the fact that the Heights has a strong book-buying culture. “People in our community recognize the value of bookstores, and they are supporting us,” she said.

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.