Heights’ Got Talent takes place Aug. 17

Deanna Brenner Fisher

On Sunday, Aug. 17, Motorcars Honda and Toyota will present Heights’ Got Talent at Cain Park’s Evans Amphitheater. Like its reality-TV namesake, the local talent show will feature a variety of acts competing for prizes. The difference will be that the performers could be your friends and neighbors. Motorcars is hosting the event to enable Heights residents to showcase their talents and bring the community together, and the company is giving away up to $10,000 in cash and prizes, both for participants and for audience members.

“The Heights is artistic and diverse,” said Trevor Giles, general manager for Motorcars Honda. “We know there are a lot of talented people in the Heights, and we thought this would be a fun way to celebrate that.”

According to Christy Horles, marketing associate at Motorcars, local celebrity judges—including Allan Licht, a local music coach and composer who has performed with and written songs for several national artists; James Henke, a music writer who has written several books and worked for Rolling Stone magazine; and Chuck Gile, owner of Motorcars—who use a point system to determine the winners, similar to the

Many of the people there admitted to not even knowing Brennan except by reputation—and as owner of their longtime favorite gathering place. It’s as if they were transferring their affection for the Colony and the community to his memory.

And those who knew Brennan best—such as the handful of current and former Colony employees sitting at The Tavern Company bar that night—seemed to talk out.

“I’ve talked with all the reporters and said what there is to say,” said Alison Edgerton, a server at the Colony for more than five years. She was sitting with Timothy Huber, a former Colony employee and now a criminal defense attorney. Together they formulated a single offering to those who didn’t know Brennan well. “He was a private guy. To many people it may have seemed like he didn’t have a lot to say. But [the Colony] was a good place to work and he really cared about people. As an employee, if something happened in your life and you needed money, he would give it to you out of his pocket.”

At the time, the restaurant’s reopening hadn’t yet been announced, but Edgerton said she would be there when it happened. It reopened July 12.

“JJB was about as quiet and private as you can get,” Arminson said in a separate conversation. "But with his passing we have a very sad void,

Wayne Mortensen to speak at FutureHeights annual meeting

Claire Toff

Wayne Mortensen, director of design and development for Cleveland Neighborhood Progress and a Cleveland Heights resident, will deliver the keynote address at the FutureHeights annual meeting at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 20, at the former Pontiac dealership, 3077 Mayfield Road.

Not your typical annual meeting, FutureHeights will give a brief overview of its annual activities and will then lead an interactive discussion about the state of the community. FutureHeights will present data showing current trends. In his keynote address, Mortensen will challenge participants to leverage the community’s strengths to confront its current challenges. He will highlight how similar communities have responded to adversity by defining a preferred future.

Cleveland Heights City Manager Tamisha Britley will respond, as will Deanna Brenner Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights. Participants will be able to ask questions and engage in a brief community-planning activity. In addition, Motorcars will share its plans to repurpose the iconic former Pontiac dealership that has been vacant for several years. A reception will follow.

“Cleveland Heights remains a strong and vibrant community and possesses assets that other communities desire,” said Richard Stewart, vice president of the FutureHeights Board of Directors. “We do, however, face challenges and see FutureHeights’ annual meeting as an opportunity to transpar

UH to put park bond issue on November ballot

Deanna Brenner Fisher

University Heights City Council passed Resolution 2014-12 at its July 14 meeting, which will enable voters to determine whether the city can issue $1.8 million in bonds to improve the city’s parks and recreation facilities. The bond issue would fund construction and equipment for a new park and related improvements on the site of the former Fuchs Mizrachi School, bordered by Fenwick and Saybrook roads. Councilman Mark Wiseman cast the only dissenting vote.

Council approved the ballot language at a special city council meeting on July 28 so that the issue could be placed on the Nov. 2 ballot. The vote was 5-1, with Wiseman again voting no. Councilwoman Adele Zucker was absent. The deadline for council to send the bond issue to the board of elections is Aug. 6.

Mayor Susan Infeld has compared the costs associated with the new park to the cost of building the Purvis Park pool 20 years ago. That bond issue, which added $25 in property tax for each $100,000 in home valuation, will be paid off in December 2014.

Infeld said the terms of the proposed $1.8 million park bond issue “would be for 15 years and would cost a homeowner the same $4 per $100,000 valuation that they paid for the construction of the pool and playground at Purvis Park.” The new bond issue thus would maintain the city’s current tax level by essentially extending the existing property tax previously used to fund Purvis Park.
An Observer blog excerpt

Read the whole story at blogs.heightsobserver.org

We’re going to be OK.

The June 30 murder of Jim Brennan was wrenching in so many ways, but within a couple days I knew, as I watched the community circle around those closest to the tragedy; this is still the kind of place I want to live.

The impromptu memorial that formed immediately outside Brennan’s Colony could be expected; that would probably have happened anywhere.

The vigil that next evening, where 1,200 people lit candles and hugged strangers, was a bit less de rigueur, though we’ve all seen film at 11 of such scenes in other places.

On the third day, Rebecca Smolen- sky and Jeanne Gordon—two thoughtful people I’ve never met—started a fund to help Colony employees in salary until arrangements could be made to reopen. In 72 hours, nearly 80 people stuffed it with more than $40,000. That’s a show of community you don’t see every day.

Meanwhile, the Cleveland Heights Police Department was quick to identify, arrest, charge and get confessions from four suspects, according to a police department statement issued on Facebook. Yes, we’re going to be OK.

Click-drive journalism

But not everyone sees this as the whole story: The Plain Dealer and Northeast Ohio Media Group (alias: PD/NEOMG) are now evaluating reports for the entire world to view as a representation of life in Cleveland’s east suburbs.

It’s not constructivistic, but it’s cheap.

PD/NEOMG reporters are now evaluating reports for the entire world to view as a representation of life in Cleveland’s east suburbs.

The convenient narrative

After the shooting occurred last week, Fernise quickly filed an initial report—a brief recitation of the few known facts with a needlessly snide reference to the fact that Police Chief Jeffrey Robertson hadn’t yet returned his call while a crime scene was being secured and a gunman ran down. This was, perhaps, part of Fernise’s ongoing payback for a spat last year involving a dispute over public police records. Fernise never bothered to report on the city’s position on the issue, which was only published after being put into a letter to the editor by Cleveland Heights City Manager Taneisha Bivley.

Soon after filing his first report on the Colony shooting, before it was known whether Brennan would survive, Fernise or someone else at PD/NEOMG augmented the online report with a poll—a feature for the specific purpose of boosting online page views. It asked readers if the shooting would discourage them from visiting the Lee Road business district in the future. It was eventually taken offline and . . .

—Bob Rosenbaum

Click on the QR code or go to blogs.heightsobserver.org to read this blog in its entirety.

Cedar Lee merchants mourn Jim Brennan’s death

To the Editor:

The merchants of the Cedar Lee Dis­trict offer their unified sympathy upon learning the news that Jim Brennan of Brennan’s Colony Tavern & Restaurant was shot while at business.

Jim was a good friend to many in the neighborhood. He will be missed for more than just his skills as a local and independent businessman. Jim created a “go to” place for great food and drink, and, most especially, a place where you could socialize with Jim and his neighbors on a Friday or Saturday night.

This news strikes at our hearts and will bring tears to many eyes across the Heights. We submit our prayers to Jim’s family and friends tonight and for the days to come as they reconcile his memory and this tragic occurrence.

While we mourn, we must keep this tragedy in its proper context. In this particular case, we hope the police catch and our courts prosecute the criminal(s). We also hope Cleveland­ers understand that this is clearly a random act of violence and that the Cedar Lee shopping district remains safe.

Simply, walk down the sidewalks of Lee Road on any given night and the street teems with neighbors and subur­banites enjoying our many restaurants, bars, and, of course, our beloved Cedar­ Lee Theatre.

The best way to honor Jim Bren­nan’s memory is to reject the views of those who want to use this situation to reinforce negative and incorrect opin­ions about the Cedar Lee shopping district. Jim’s death should not and cannot be minimized, but a random act of violence does not define our neighborhood.

We also need to come together to make sure the other establishments on Lee Road do not suffer—and the best way to do that is come out tonight and tomorrow night and each night after and fill the streets of Cedar Lee with people.

Some criminal took away a life. Please don’t let that person take away our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

John Zagara, Zagara’s Marketplace; and president of the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District

[Zagara wrote this letter on June 30.]
They determined that all money would be the one. Community-commerce partnership, this symbolize their sense of community. If community members could buy the shirts to help. In discussing what The Colony asked themselves what they could do thing to set the T-shirt sale in motion. For-profit or not-for-profit organization. The intent of the sale is not exploitative; it has the blessing of Jim’s family. The money will go back into the lovely tap it has the blessing of Jim’s family. The money will go back into the lovely tap. The Colonies have been conducted with goodwill, love, compassion—and in collaboration with Jim’s grieving family. To underscore the degree to which these efforts are supported by the Brennan family the “We Are A Colony” Facebook page on July 12 carried this post: “Please don’t let a rumor dampen the wonderful work you are doing. It has helped lift the spirits of my sister Kathy Murphy and the rest of our family.”

With respect, specifically to the We Are A Colony campaign, the original media coverage was clear that this T-shirt sale was started by citizens, not by any media outlets. Comments about Cleveland Heights are rampant via online media outlets. For his assailants, our community felt vulnerable, sad and under attack. Citizens flooded our merchants that night for their own safety, and negative comments about Cleveland Heights are doing. It has helped lift the spirits of my sister Kathy Murphy and the rest of our family.

We purchase houses based on walkability makes small business owners question the calculation of staying in business. We, as Cleveland Heights citizens, want them in our community: They are part of what makes this town a colony. We buy local. Cleveland Heights residents and professional, Shari Nacson is also a parent and partner in development alliance with a mission to promote community-commerce partnership. It’s a tightly regulated community development alliance with a mission to promote community-commerce partnership.

Details of what the money would be used for were admittedly absent. This was an activity that grew out of emotion, and took off so quickly that the planning would have to come later. But on July 13, one of the women of Team Tuesday was quoted in one media article saying: “Beyond the money we are raising … which we hope will go towards a memorial for JBF or additional safety resources, it’s our hope that these shirts can be a reminder that we are, and always will be, a colony. We will support one another through the best and worst of times. Because that’s really what it means to be a part of the Heights community.”

And it worked. Momentum from the T-shirt campaign—and a separate campaign by another group of citizens to cover payroll and vendor bills during the weeks the restaurant was closed—helped change the mood in the community, among residents and businesses alike. A violent crime in the community makes small business owners question not only their safety, but the cost-benefit calculation of staying in business. We, as Cleveland Heights citizens, want them in our community. They are part of what makes this town a colony. We buy local. We purchase houses based on walkability to a business district. We care for the owners and staff as neighbors. And, yes, we buy T-shirts to support causes, even before the details are worked out about how the money will be used.

So, neighbors, before you allege that merchants are exploiting Jim Brennan’s death by selling T-shirts, please check your facts. The merchants didn’t do anything to set the T-shirt sale in motion. The intent of the sale is not exploitative; it is community-building at its best, and it has the blessing of Jim’s family. The money will go back into the lovely tap- estry of citizenship and commerce that defines our community.

In the past three weeks, our community—our colony—has shown that the threads of this tapestry are strong. A Cleveland Heights resident and professional, Shari Nacson has also a parent and partner in the CH-UH City School District.

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Salad Days! Summer is the perfect time to enjoy Luna’s salads made from 100% locally-sourced produce. Top it off with a delicious dessert served a la mode with Sweetie pie. $5 for both. The perfect summertime treat!
It’s a wild life here, but animal traps should be used with care

Anne McFarland

One Friday my neighbor called to ask if I’d put out a chipmunk trap. No, although chipmunks are all over the place. We once had a cat named Frizzy that left dead chipmunks around. I would put them in an old car food bag and stick them in the freezer until trash day. No point in leaving them around to smell.

Well, my neighbor, there’s a skunk caught in a trap near my fence. She had called the city to no avail. Since her husband and grown son were dealing with it, I put it out of my mind until I went to bed that night. My bedroom smelled as though skunk was under the bed. I would check the foundation Saturday morning.

I walked around with a hoe and a long stick. A black-and-white tail was sticking out of a hole between two sets of brick steps. There were flies around, so I knew it was dead. Part of my youth was spent on a farm, so I put on the gloves and tripled bagged Mr. Skunk. Then I saw some black plastic; two pieces of it. So that was the trap. I put it in the bag with the skunk.

The next weekend our current cat set up a howl in the kitchen. By the time I got there, I saw a tail disappearing into the basement. Then a raccoon face peeped out of the basement. Great.

I put on the hiking boots, got the gloves and took a broom to get it out of the basement. It was hiding, so I got a ladder. We don’t, although the police suggested we reconsider this community, should we reconsider an animal control officer?

I checked city ordinances to see if there was any mention of animal traps. There were a number of references to plumbing traps, but the only relevant ordinance I found was: 305:12 HUNTING OR KILLING ANY ANIMALS PROHIBITED.

(Except as otherwise specifically provided in this chapter, no person shall hunt, kill or attempt to kill any animals within the City.)

Whoever violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree.

I doubt that I’ll ever know who set that trap, but it makes me nervous to know that someone in my neighborhood would set out a dangerous trap that could migrate from the original yard.

Anne McFarland has lived in Cleveland Heights for almost 40 years. She is a lawyer, a librarian and a writer. She is active as a Guardian ad Litem in the Juvenile Court of Cuyahoga County and serves on the Heights Youth Club Board of Directors.
Lilt and learning: playing music and teaching have a lot in common

THE COMMON GOOD

Sueie Kaeser

Things can be wonderful. Frequently, I am critical of the misdirection of our policy makers and the undermining effects of their narrative and policies on public confidence in public education, teachers and the education of the whole child. The blame, testing and punish approach to “school reform” just doesn’t jibe with the magic that occurs daily when we pull together as a community and when teams of educators collaborate from a place of trust to help children grow.

This month I want to focus on wonderful.

I witnessed it Friday morning, June 20, during the ninth rehearsal that week of the Reaching Heights Summer Music Camp Orchestra. The 88 elementary- and middle-school musicians had struggled all week to master a difficult piece of music—Paul Desmond’s “Take Five.” When Desmond composed the piece in the 1960s, it was revolutionary. The complex rhythms and five-beat measure made it both interesting and difficult. Our young musicians kept at it.

“Yeah—now it’s starting to live,” exclaimed the demanding and now thrilled conductor, Dan Heim. The ultimate compliment.

Music is not just playing an instrument or playing the right notes. Heim had pushed the musicians all week to include emotion. Playing music is communication; it should be played from the heart; it must be played with command—and with passion.

Just two days before, it had seemed unlikely. I had gone home and practiced more.

I witnessed it Friday morning, June 20, during the ninth rehearsal that week of the Reaching Heights Summer Music Camp Orchestra. The 88 elementary- and middle-school musicians had struggled all week to master a difficult piece of music—Paul Desmond’s “Take Five.” When Desmond composed the piece in the 1960s, it was revolutionary. The complex rhythms and five-beat measure made it both interesting and difficult. Our young musicians kept at it.

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I love music camp because it is such a powerful learning experience. I’ve been the director for all ten of its summer seasons and I’ve witnessed, year after year, how it moves children forward—much further than they can imagine. It helps them discover their own capacity to learn and the significance of commitment and effort. Camp is rigorous, fun and highly supported. After playing music from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.—with only a few breaks for lunch and recreation—most campers go home and practice more.

The camp day provides multiple opportunities for instrumentalists to explore music making, encouraged with modeling by high school coaches and expert instruction from music professionals. A musical community emerges, along with demonstrable changes in each camper’s control of his or her instrument. They learn to play in ensembles, understand more about how music is constructed, and grow as performers. In the end, everyone can hear the effect of the process.

They experience lilt! The magic is there for the adults, too. For viola teacher James Rhodes, coming to camp every year refills his “bucket of creativity.” We have staff who started as fresh high school grads, like bass player Alas Klein Stefanelli, who never misses camp, and Cleveland Orchestra musician Richard Waugh, who wouldn’t be kept away by a “herd of wild horses.”

It is completely rewarding for me. It is the most direct way I pursue my commitment to equity. Camp levels the playing field of opportunity for our children and opens doors to confidence and competence.

The camp works because of the music educators—led by Dan Heim, Tamar Gray and Betsy Neylon—who understand how children learn and have the unfeathered space to go about practicing their craft. I pull together the details associated with administrating a grand gathering of 88 campers, 25 high school coaches, and 16 professional musicians/educators. But they create the learning experiences.

Their work produces lilt during every minute of every year of music camp. These master teachers have not only perfected the skills of working with children, motivating engagement, and keeping focus, but they also do it with passion. Little victories occur every day, as well as during the magical moment of truth—the summer finale—the concert. The campers perform. The audience is blown away. Emotion fills the auditorium.

This magic is not unique to our camp. Teachers create it every day in our classrooms. Teaching is a lot like playing music. You must master the instrument, master the notes, and put it all together with passion and command.

Camp helps me focus on the beauty of learning. It is refreshing to witness how the staff and the camp promote self-discovery and growth.

We are fortunate that so many of the teachers in our public schools have the combination of skills and enthusiasm—just like effective musicians—to create lilt in our classrooms.

Another school year is about to begin. Remember to celebrate the orchestra of educators who create experiences that support learning—those wonderful moments of human affirmation.

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

JUNE 16, 2014
All council members were present.
Public comment
FutureHeights Director Deanna Bremer Fisher announced FutureHeights’ new loca-
tion in the former Coventry School. She also
asked council to pass the resolution declar-
ing July 1-7, 2014 “Independents Week.” To
recognize independent businesses who invest
in the community and its commercial
districts. She said brochures for the “Shop Lo-
cal” program are on the way, and the united
residents to vote for the Best of the Heights
Awards at www.futureheights.org
Access Cleveland Heights App
The city has launched a new mobile ap-
plication for smartphones, Access Cleve-
land Heights, which is available for free
through the iTunes store or Google Play.
More information is available at www.
clevelandheights.com on the “About Us”
page.
Tall grass violation
Council heard a first reading of legislation
amending the city codes to combine two
sections into one and to make vegetation
six inches or higher a violation.
Rebecca Alison Meyer
Council Member Melissa Yasnow gave a
moving tribute to Rebecca Alison Meyer, a
recent graduate of the Fairfax Elementary
School kindergarten, who died on her sixth
birthday of a brain tumor (anaplastic astro-
cytoma). Yasnow suggested donations to the
Brock’s shop in her memory.
Independents Week
Council declared the week of July 1-7, 2014
to be Independents Week. Council Member
Jeff Carrell urged residents to invest in the
community by shopping local. Mayor Dennis
Wilcox thanked residents who support local
businesses.
Community Development Block
Grants (CDBG)
Council approved the following CDBG
awards to:
• The Cedar Taylor Development
Corporation, $11,000 for assistance with
streetscape enhancements.
• Family Connections of Northeast Ohio,
$22,000 for its Family Schools Con-
nections Program, serving families with
children from birth to ten years old.
• The Home Repair Resource Center,
$133,500 for home repair and home
improvement programs, including grants
to assist senior citizens in purchasing new
hot water heaters for their homes, operat-
ing expenses, and housing counseling.
• Open Doors Academy, $11,000 toward
its year-round enrichment program for
young people living at risk.
• Start Right Community Development
Corporation, $977,620, for $5,000 toward
operating expenses for its food bank, which
serves Cleveland Heights and East Cleve-
land.
County sewer services
Council authorized an agreement with
Cuyahoga County to perform certain ser-
dices to help maintain the city’s sanitary
and storm sewers and catch basins. Council
members noted that the agreement will save
the city $380,000 and is an important step
in regionalization.
LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.
JULY 7, 2014
Council Member Jason S. Stein was absent.
Jim Brennan
The mayor began the meeting speaking
about the murder of Jim Brennan one week
ago, the community vigil, the swift arrests
and confessions of the alleged perpetrators,
and the fact that the accused had been
arraigned today and sent to the county
prosecutor. He praised the police and other
cooperating agencies and emphasized the
commitment of city council to strengthen-

ing and working with the community in the
aftermath. Each council member also made
statements.
Public comment
Resident Shaka Asberry, a performing
artist, offered his services to help with an
arts event in response to the murder of Jim
Brennan. Another resident, Renata Brown,
does not want the community to be defined
by a response and expressed her percep-
tion that the crime rate is rising. John Davis
moved here two years ago from Portland,
which he termed a very safe city. He and his
wife chose Cleveland Heights but are
now concerned about safety and the num-
er of robberies. He is impressed by the
CHPD response time and concerned about
prevention and prosperity.
Byou Bar and Grill
The conclusion of a court case against Byou
Bar and Grill on Noble Road means that the
bar will cease operation on July 15. Until
then it must close each night at 1 a.m.
The owner may not run another alcohol establish-
ment in Cleveland Heights.
Bond notes issued
Council passed legislation for the issuance
and sale of $2,151,000 of notes, in anticipa-
tion of the issuance of bonds. Earlier in the
evening, the finance director described the
purpose of the bonds:
• Reconstructing, resurfacing, and otherwise
improving city streets;
• Rebuilding Monticello Boulevard and
Taylor Road, including engineering and
planning costs;
• Acquiring related motorized equipment
and appurtenances;
• Acquiring computer hardware and related
equipment; and
• Improving the city’s water system by
constructing and installing water lines,
together with purchase of the necessary
related equipment, improvements and appurtenances.
Water and sewer fees
Council heard, on first reading, an amend-
ment of the city code to establish a $500
fee for tampering with water meters and to
establish a Water Review Board to hear any
appeals of these fees.
LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.
These meeting summaries are
abstracted from LWV observers’ written
reports. The summaries have been edited
and prepared by Anne Mihalopoulos,
Cherisse Morse and Maryam Barnes.
To receive email postings of full reports,
send an email to observer3150@comcast.
com or join through Google groups using
“lwv-chuh observer reports” as a
search phrase.
Look for earlier, and often expanded,
posings of meeting summaries online at
Zucca is new CH economic development chief

Greg Zucca, the new economic development director for the City of Cleveland Heights, doesn’t bring direct experience in leading suburban development efforts, but he does have extensive background in economic development focused on the technology sector.

Zucca, whose first day on the job was June 9, spent the past nine years at the Cuyahoga County Department of Economic Development—most recently as fund manager for the county’s Western Reserve Fund.

Before that, he was a strategic program officer with responsibility for design and implementation of programs to support entrepreneurship in the technology sector. He also served as a finance analyst, evaluating potential business development investments.

Before going to work for the county, Zucca was a researcher at Battelle Memorial Institute. There, he focused on technology-based economic development, and was involved with Ohio’s tech-oriented Third Frontier program. He earned undergraduate and master’s degrees in urban planning and economic development at Cleveland State University.

Zucca is excited about the job in Cleveland Heights because it will allow more creativity and immersion in the Cleveland Heights because it will allow more creativity and immersion in the community.

Bob Rosenbaum

Zucca grew up in Highland Heights, but lived in Cleveland Heights as a toddler. He said that over the years he has spent plenty of time here and has always felt connected to the city. “It’s a strong and vibrant community,” he said. “The sense of community is so strong here, and that’s a real asset. The history is filled with grassroots initiatives that speak to the commitment of its residents.”

Zucca chooses not to predict whether his work is likely to focus more on business-to-business development, or growth in retail and other consumer-facing businesses. “I think it’s going to be both—and it should be,” he said.

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

Greg Zucca assumed his new role as CH Economic Development Director on June 9.

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Currently, the high traffic volume on Warrensville Center Road, and between Fairmount Circle and Cedar Road makes it one of the city's most traveled roads with planning under way to improve walking and bicycling along these connections to local scenic pathways. Infeld hopes to make University Heights a more walkable community. “University Heights is a small city that is just 1.8 square miles across. Those residents who prefer to walk or bicycle to their destination need to feel safe in doing so,” she said. The project will create more options for family-friendly bicycling, safe routes to school and connections to local scenic pathways. Libby Ellis, the community development coordinator for the City of University Heights, is one of the projects to receive technical assistance from NOACA for this purpose. Currently, the high traffic volume and speed on Cedar and Warrensville Center roads keep many pedestrians from using the sidewalks along the roadway. No barrier separates the sidewalk from the street, placing pedestrians uncomfortably close to high-speed traffic.

"Many residents say they drive to commercial areas on those streets rather than use the sidewalks—even if they live nearby—because they feel safer in a vehicle than they do on the sidewalks," said Susan Infeld, mayor of University Heights. “One of our main goals is to minimize traffic congestion by reducing the number of short car trips, as opposed to people hopping in their cars and driving just three or four blocks.” The NOACA project team, in conjunction with University Heights officials, began its field work study of the targeted streets on July 14 and will continue its work over the next 12 months. The team will present a final plan to the community and University Heights City Council in June 2015. The NOACA partnership could also make the city eligible for future funding to carry out recommended improvements and amenities.

Silas hopes to make University Heights a more walkable community. “University Heights is a small city that is just 1.8 square miles across. Those residents who prefer to walk or bicycle to their destination need to feel safe in doing so,” she said. The project will create more options for family-friendly bicycling, safe routes to school and connections to local scenic pathways. Libby Ellis, the community development coordinator for the City of University Heights, is one of the projects to receive technical assistance from NOACA for this purpose.
St. Paul’s names interim rector

Kim Fry

The Rev. Dr. Harold T. Lewis will be- come interim rector of St. Paul’s Episco- pal Church, beginning Aug. 3.

Lewis recently retired as rector of Calvary Church in Pittsburgh, a con-
eral of his hymns appear in Church
in 1922. Lewis is a pianist who
search for the priest who will become
at St. Paul’s on June 1. Lewis will serve
the parish until the vestry concludes its
search for the priest who will become
St. Paul’s 10th rector.

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church is locat-
ed at 2474 Fairmount Blvd., Cleveland Heights. Learn more at www.stpauls-
church.org.

Kim Fry is the director of communications at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

Forest Hill outdoor worship is Aug. 16

Peg Wisenbren

Forest Hill Presbyterian Church will hold its informal first service of the Com- munity Supper at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 16. Friends and neighbors are invited to enjoy a thought-provoking sermon, along with music by Mother Willie Mae Casterline and the Women of Success, a popular Cleveland gospel and praise group.

After the service, a free supper of hamburgers and hot dogs with all the trimmings, fruit, baked beans, coleslaw and desserts will be provided by members of the church.

According to Pastor John Lentz, the service will include time for audience testimonies “so anything could happen!” On a more serious note, he added that when “communities and neighborhoods gather for celebration and praise, they’re better equipped to handle the more difficult times.”

The informal service will be held in the church’s rear courtyard where chil-
dren can enjoy the playground or join in the enthusiastic singing. Middle- and high school students will have a chance to meet Keon Ahner, Forest Hill’s new director of youth ministries.

Forest Hill Presbyterian Church is located across from Forest Hill Park, at 1030 Monticello Blvd. For more infor-
mation, call 216-321-2660 or visit www.

Forest Hill outdoor worship is Aug. 16.

Peg Wisenbren is a freelance writer and Web editor for Forest Hill Church in Cleveland Heights.
Heights Observer August 1, 2014

COMMUNITY NEWS

Heights Zen meditation group offers introductory workshop

Susan Rakow

The Cleveland Zazen Group, a Zen meditation group that has been in Cleveland Heights for more than 40 years, is offering an Introduction to Zen Meditation on Aug. 2, at 183 Wilton Road. The group practices in the tradition of the Rochester (N.Y.) Zen Center, founded in the 1960s by Roshi Philip Kapleau, author of The Three Pillars of Zen.

The one-day introductory workshop is aimed at providing a useful introduction to Zen Buddhism, demystifying the religion and giving basic instruction on how to practice Zen meditation. It’s a unique opportunity to learn firsthand from seasoned practitioners.

The group is made up of lay people from all walks of life—from college professors and students to the unemployed—and of all ages—from 20-somethings to seniors. Some sit on cushions on the floor, others sit in chairs.

Zen meditation offers not only a concrete way to de-stress; it’s much more than that. It’s an opportunity for individuals to gain insight into the three big questions all people confront: Who am I born? Why do I die? And what am I supposed to do while I’m here? While popular culture continually reminds us that life satisfaction and harmony come from “being in the moment,” rarely are we given instructions for how to calm the mind so that we are fully present.

Participants are asked to make a $10 donation for the workshop, and advanced registration is required as space is limited. If you have questions, or would like more information, contact group leader Susan Rakow at susanrakow@earthlink.net or visit www.zeneastland.com. The next workshop will take place in October.

Taco Bell and Tristan Thompson support HYC teenagers

Louise Khayat

On June 19, Heights Youth Club (HYC) seniors and teen leaders Olivia Morgan and Cameron Steele kicked off the Taco Bell Foundation for Teens event, which included special guest Tristan Thompson from the Cleveland Cavaliers.

Thompson spoke to the 150 teens in attendance. He congratulated all of the high school graduates and emphasized the importance of education and graduation. Prizes, including autographed basketballs and a bicycle, were awarded for outstanding achievements.

Thompson signed autographs, handed out T-shirts to graduates and took a “selfie” photograph with the teens. Taco Bell provided food and gift certificates to attendees.

“With so many seniors leaving this year, I’m looking for the next group of successful teen leaders in our community to keep the community service going,” said Roscoe Morgan, club director.

The HYC Teen Leadership program earned the event, along with a remodeling of the HYC Teen Room, through its work in the community. The remodeling, which will begin in August, will provide new furniture, flooring and a computer area. The room is scheduled to reopen Monday, Sept. 1.

Fairmount Presbyterian Church has contributed $25,000 toward updating the club’s children’s computer room, which will also take place in August.

Earlier this year, Taco Bell partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) and pledged $50 million for the next five years to update BGCA facilities that serve teens in communities across the nation. According to BGCA, the partnership “seeks to create a stronger generation of future leaders by providing critical resources that will inspire and enable teens to graduate from high school and unlock opportunities for college and jobs they may have only dreamed possible.”

By 2018, Taco Bell will have provided tools, resources and mentors to nearly all 4,000 Boys and Girls Clubs across the country and anticipates supporting more than 200,000 teens, focusing on high school graduation and success.

“On a local level, this funding helps to ensure all the clubs have the necessary programming and resources needed so that existing and future club members graduate from high school and go on to live successful futures,” said Ron Soeder, president of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland.

HYC is a nonprofit organization that is partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland. Donations are welcome and can be sent to HYC, 2065 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, or made online at www.heightsyouthclub.org.

Louise Khayat is the administrator for the Heights Youth Club.

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Cleveland Heights residents launch Time Bank

Greg Corderige

Residents of Cleveland Heights are launching an alternative service exchange system, called a Time Bank.

Time Banks place value on human support services that the current dominant economy deemphasizes. Providing such services strengthens the community fabric. Participants earn “time credits” or “hours” when they perform needed services for other participants. Credits or hours are electronically “banked” for spending on services from other participants. All time is valued equally.

John Clark, one of the Height residents helping launch the local service exchange system, believes a Cleveland Heights Time Bank can contribute to meeting the needs of the city and its residents, affirming people’s existing skills and talents, and helping rethink to create alternative monetary systems and, most importantly, supporting each other by building community. He first learned about Time Banks when visiting a sustainably oriented community in Missouri in 2010.

“Money is a tool for facilitating exchange,” Clark said. “Time Banks are another way for facilitating exchanges. My hope is that we can facilitate relationships and interdependence on one another. We rely on each other. Together, we can support one another.”

More than 300 Time Banks exist in 40 states across the country, with hundreds more in 34 other countries. A Cleveland Heights Time Bank would join similar systems in Kent, Cleveland and Akron in Northeast Ohio. Leah Davis, co-founder of the Akron Time Bank and staff member of the Northeast Ohio American Friends Service Committee, spoke about the Akron program in Cleveland Heights earlier this year. That marked the start of the local effort.

The Cleveland Heights Time Bank is just beginning. Several preliminary meetings have been held. The system’s infrastructure has been established. The Heights branch now has access to the 1Hourworld software system to track services and debts.

Clark believes the Time Bank can be useful to everyone in the area. “Even those who put in a lot of time in the dominant economic system still find time to help in building their community. A Time Bank is a way to keep track of and acknowledge the time we already give and to focus our time in ways that the community values as a whole. It gives a sense of gratitude. It symbolizes the service and time we give one another. It rewards everyone who contributes.”

There is no cost to join the Time Bank. For more information, e-mail chinembank@googlegroups.com.

Nighttown fashion show benefits two local nonprofits

Laura Potter

On Saturday, Aug. 30, Dress for Success Cleveland, Ten Thousand Villages and Virginia Marti College of Art and Design are partnering to bring an afternoon of fashion and philanthropy to Nighttown in Cleveland Heights. The event, Dressed to the Tens, features a fashion show produced by students from Virginia Marti College. Dressed to the Tens also supports two local nonprofits—Dress for Success Cleveland and Ten Thousand Villages—that work for the empowerment of women.

The mission of Dress for Success Cleveland is to promote the independence of economically disadvantaged women and to help them overcome barriers to employment. The organization provides professional attire, a network of support and the career development tools to help women thrive in work and in life. The clothing modeled in the fashion show will be for sale following the show. Among the items of clothing will be gently worn gowns, fur coats, dresses and suits.

Ten Thousand Villages is contributing fair trade personal accessories, both in the fashion show and for sale. The mission of Ten Thousand Villages is to create opportunities for artisans in developing countries to earn income by bringing their products to U.S. markets through long-term fair trading relationships. More than 60 percent of Ten Thousand Villages’ artisans are women who are able to empower themselves and their communities through craft sales, healthcare and education.

Dressed to the Tens is for all women who are looking for fabulous wardrobe purchases and the satisfaction of knowing that their purchases go a long way toward helping other women.

The event runs from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with the fashion show beginning at noon. Reserve a seat by calling 216-881-6048 or stop by Ten Thousand Villages, 1245 Cedar Road, to make a reservation in person for priority seating at the fashion show and to receive a raffle ticket.

Laura Potter is store manager for Ten Thousand Villages in Cleveland Heights, a member of the Ohio Fair Trade Expo Committee and the Cedar Fairmount SID Marketing Committee.

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Bob Cheshier Memorial Little Free Library installed at St. Paul’s

Nancy Sherwin

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 2547 Fairmount Blvd., is the site of the Bob Cheshier Memorial Little Free Library. Although Cheshier died just over a year ago, his legacy lives on in the Little Free Library movement that he brought to Cleveland.

The movement began in 2009 when Todd Bol of Hudson, Wis., built a model of a one-room schoolhouse as a tribute to his mother, a former school teacher who loved reading, and placed it on a post in his front yard with a sign that said, “free books.” His friend, Rick Brooks, a youth and community-development educator, saw the potential of the idea as a way to achieve a variety of goals for the common good.

The resulting Little Free Libraries movement has the dual goals of promoting literacy and a love of reading, and building a sense of community through shared skills, creativity and wisdom across generations.

Cheshier, a member of St. Paul’s, loved the idea and thought that there should be a Little Free Library near every Cleveland public school. He embarked on a mission to make it happen.

The first libraries he had built looked like Bol’s original model, a little red schoolhouse complete with a cupola and bell. Plain Dealer columnist Margaret Bernstein wrote about Cheshier’s efforts, and the idea spread. Soon, Little Free Libraries were springing up around Greater Cleveland.

Heights Libraries has two Little Free Libraries that it sponsors: one at Canterbury Elementary School and the other at the Noble Neighborhood Library.

Cheshier’s friends at St. Paul’s wanted to memorialize him and his work, so members of the church’s Global Mission Action Group and its affiliated nonprofit, Third World Books, commissioned the Bob Cheshier Memorial Little Free Library and placed it on the church grounds—near the preschool entrance off of North St. James Parkway. The library holds a memorial plaque, created by Todd Bol, that acknowledges Cheshier’s vision and devotion to his mission.

The Rev. Alan Gates, former rector of St. Paul’s (now the Bishop-elect of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts) dedicated the library in June, with more than 50 people in attendance, including students from Open Doors Academy, which meets at St. Paul’s.

Children, adults—anyone passing by St. Paul’s—is encouraged to “Take a Book—Leave a Book.”

For more information about the Little Free Library movement, visit www.littlefreelibrary.org. If you are interested in establishing a library in your neighborhood, contact Margaret Bernstein, local volunteer facilitator, at margaretbernstein@sbcglobal.net.

Nancy Sherwin is a member of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church and treasurer of Third World Books.

La Tea Dolly unveils Little Free Library Aug. 2

Deanna Bremer Fisher

La Tea Dolly, a children’s tea shop located at 1577 Lee Road, is the first Cleveland Heights business to host a Little Free Library on its premises. The shop will hold an unveiling ceremony and grand opening of the library on Saturday, Aug. 2, at 11 a.m.

Owner Monica Davis received a donated Little Free Library box from Margaret Bernstein of the Literacy Cooperative (www.literacycooperative.org) who secured the donor for my box and agreed to become the steward,” said Davis. “I am responsible for engaging the community, keeping the library full, promotions—and, of course, I’m redesigning it.” Davis will reveal the new design for the box on Aug. 2.

“I have been transforming it to match La Tea Dolly’s decor, so it is mostly pink and white,” she said. “But, hopefully, people will donate books for both boys and girls. You can follow the transformation on my website and on Twitter. But, it is not going to be just a cute little structure; its purpose is to build a sense of community, and to promote literacy and the love of reading by building free book exchanges worldwide.”

Davis said she loves reading. “When I came across this movement on Twitter, I knew I wanted to be involved,” she said. “It is a way for me to increase literacy and make a difference in this community. Also, I love the Little Free Library motto, ‘take a book, return a book.’”

Davis said that although the library will be located inside La Tea Dolly, she will place it outside the business when weather permits. “We hope that you stop by and bring a book, and take whatever book catches your fancy,” she said.

The ceremony will feature refreshments, crafts and, of course, books. “The library belongs to the neighborhood, not just La Tea Dolly,” said Davis. “The books are always a gift—never for sale.”

La Tea Dolly is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 5-8 p.m., and Saturday, 12-8 p.m., and by appointment.


Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.
Family Connections orients kids to kindergarten

Charniece Holmes

Do you have a child who will be attending a Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District kindergarten this fall? Family Connections and the CH-UH City School District invite you and your child to attend Kindergarten Kickoff, where your child can get a jumpstart on kindergarten at the elementary school he or she will attend.

Families will have the opportunity to meet with school staff, tour the school building, make ice cream sundaes and meet new kindergarten friends.

Incoming kindergarteners will visit a classroom and learn about sitting “criss-cross applesauce,” and each will receive a copy of Wimberly Worried by Kevin Henkes, which a teacher will read at the event.

Parents will receive tips on how to ease the transition to kindergarten, and the evening will end with a family craft.

Kickoff dates for each CH-UH elementary school are listed below, and all programs will take place 6–8 p.m.

Aug. 5: Gearity
Aug. 6: Canterbury
Aug. 12: Boulevard

Aug. 13: Fairfax
Aug. 19: Roxboro
Aug. 20: Noble
Aug. 21: Oxford

Space is limited at each event. Call Family Connections at 216-321-0079, 48 hours in advance of the event, to reserve your space. Childcare will be provided for siblings of incoming kindergartners.

Family Connections has been providing early literacy, parenting support and school-readiness services to Greater Cleveland families for more than 30 years. Its services for parents begin when their children are newborns, and continue through kindergarten.

Family Connections offers opportunities for parents with children up to six years of age to develop school-readiness skills, learn to play with a purpose with their children, and find support.

The organization views its partnership with the school district as a key to its mission to support families. Charniece Holmes is the coordinator for Family Connections neighborhood-based family literacy and engagement program, located in all CH-UH elementary schools.

Cleveland Cavaliers train at White Cloud Studio in CH

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The Cleveland Cavaliers have discovered the benefits of Pilates at White Cloud Studio in the Cedar Fairmount Business District. Troy McCarty, owner and lead instructor, works with several Cavs players weekly, supported by staff members Raudel Napoles, Or Sagi-Woodson and Laurie Guenther. Members of the Cavs who train at White Cloud include Alex Moore, who oversees the Cavaliers Performance Team; Derek Millender, assistant strength and conditioning coach; Anthony Bennett, power forward; Matthew Dellavedova, point forward; Scotty Hopson, small forward; Sergey Karasev, small forward; and Carrick Felix, shooting guard.

According to McCarty, the Cavs are always looking for new ways to supplement their workout regime: “Pilates is a favorite of more established players—think Kobe Bryant and even our very own (once again) Lebron James. Pilates offers them a new form of exercise that focuses on the core and its relation to the rest of the body.”

Guenther said, “The Cavaliers chose to approach Troy because of his reputation. Not only is he recognized in the local community as the go-to instructor for Pilates, he is also recognized on an international level. Troy’s experience with the Cleveland Indians was well known in the Cleveland sports community.”

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District outlines next steps in CHHS renovation project

Angie Shaker

[Editor’s note: Angie Shaker, director of communications for the CH-UH City School District, provided the following update on the Heights High floor and site plans, the exterior design concept and cost estimates.]

The Board of Education (BOE) approved the Program of Requirements (POR) at the June 17 board work session. The POR is a document that lists the spaces and sizes of spaces required to be included in the building, as well as notations of other information necessary to begin the design of the floor plans, such as how the spaces should relate to each other. The square footage allocations are subject to change as the plans are finalized.

During the week of June 23, Gary Balog, architect, and his team from Bla- nook/Emmons, Engineers & Architects, met with all of the internal working groups to show a concept design of what the internal floor plan of the renovated Heights High may look like. The purpose of these meetings was to gather additional input about the preferred location of the spaces inside the building, how the spaces relate to each other, and how the major building entrances need to be.

Balog and his team then adjusted the design based on the feedback from the internal working groups. The design team and internal working groups reviewed the changes and a preliminary site plan in early July and met with district leaders to review progress on the plans. During the phase of the design process, the construction management team of Gilbane/Ozanne is working with the design team, calculating potential costs for the construction and keeping the project on track to stay within the established budget.

The BOE held a School Design Project Special Meeting on July 15 and plans two more during the Schematic Design Phase.

At the July 15 special meeting, the design team presented a draft of the schematic floor and site plan to the board and community. The plan included the floor plans of the building and a site plan, indicating parking and traffic flow patterns. Community members had an opportunity to ask questions and provide input following the presentation.

At the Aug. 19 special meeting, the design team will provide another review of the site and floor plans and also present a concept of the exterior design for the renovated high school. Immediately following, the board will review the schematic design and discussion, the community will again be able to ask questions and the team will collect additional information and react to the design from the community.

The expectation for the Sept. 16 special meeting is that the final Schematic Design Package will be presented and the Gilbane/Ozanne construction management team will present a cost estimate for the construction of this design. Prior to the board voting on the final schematic design and cost package, the community will have yet another opportunity to ask questions and make comments concerning the design and budget. Upon approval of the schematic design, the project will advance to the Design Development Phase.

Throughout the process, all questions and concerns about the project should be e-mailed to info@chuh.org.

To continue to follow the project and review past presentations, go to the Create the Future blog at http://createthefutureheightsschools.org/.

Angie Shaker is director of communications for the CH-UH City School District.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education

Meeting highlights

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS’

School bus parking

The board approved a nonbinding proposal to place a 2.2 mill levy on the November ballot.

Voluntary student insurance

The board approved the recommendation to offer student health insurance for the 2014–15 school year. Few students accepted this offer.

Facilities update

Stew Zamoni, facilities manager, presented an update on the building and associated enabling projects, including the following:

• The program of space requirements was given, which included space requirements for 1,680 students. Space for depart- ments and offices was also listed.
• Documents for changing Willey Middle School to a temporary high school were given to the City of University Heights.
• Bus parking recommendations at Park Synagogue were to go to the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission in August.
• Monticello’s paving project is completed.
• Expansion of the auditorium project is scheduled for July 7.
• The task of finding a temporary pool for the high school is in progress. Contacts with other schools and communities, such as Warrensville Heights, are scheduled.
• The stadium project is on schedule.
• The public meeting process for the high school is complete. There were more meetings than with other projects. There was good participation and discussion of building space utilization, use of class- rooms, career tech, and which career tech programs to include, such as the culinary program.

Discussion of Zamoni’s presentation included requests for more information on the cafeteria, the band, and the location and purpose of equipment. The [new] pool was noted to be bigger than the old one, and a black box theater was discussed. These projects need much more research.

Program of requirements

The High School Reconstruction Project Program of Requirements (POR), dated June 17, was also addressed. Space footage requirements are not calculated on a strictly per student basis but according to program needs. Suggestions from the public, teachers and staff on how to use the space included:

• The design of the cafeteria.
• The space requirements for science education and storage.
• Visual art space, and art studio inclusion, such as for jewelry design.
• The student flow of the building and how to place the various departments.
• Community access and public use of the building and security issues.
• A box office and the auditorium.

The budget is below the estimate; however, because there is no design yet, it is based on similar projects. After the discussion, the board ap- proved the POR, with an estimate of $78,822,144, and the project schedule. The board authorized BSHM Architects to continue with the schematic design phase according to the POR.

Public comment

After debate among board members, an exception was made to allow out-of-attendance participation from four speakers, each limited to three minutes. The speakers stressed that the public wants a response to its sugges- tions, and that no answers were given to questions about increased programs for auto mechanic, fine arts, and culinary students. They said that cost estimates, if competitive with programs offered by other area schools.

LWV Observer: Jillian House.

JULY 8, 2014

All board members were present.

Superintendent McDaniel

The board presented her with a book titled 65 Things to do After You Retire.

Library levy

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board presented its need for a levy. The school board approved the request to place a 2.2 mill levy on the November ballot.

LWV Observer: Adaile Cohn.

Library levy

The board approved a nonbinding levy proposal to place the various departments. This proposal must go to the city’s planning commission, and costs and numbers are forthcoming. Facilities project monies would pay for expenses, including fencing, lanes and electricity.

Renovations of Heights High

Register announced the key meetings on the schematic design phase of the Cleveland Heights High School renovation. These meetings will encourage public discussion and take place at the Delisle Center at 7 p.m., July 15, Aug. 19 and Sept. 16.

LWV Observer: Adaile Cohn.

Graduation rates

Angie Shaker

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education

JUNE 17, 2014

Board member Eric Cible was excused.

Administrative appointments

Karinna Hicks, new principal of Heights High, were introduced, and each spoke.

Karinna Hicks

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education

JULY 8, 2014

Karina Hicks

With the input and participation of staff and parents, the Cleveland Heights-University Heights High School District selected Katrina Hicks to be the new principal of Gearity Professional Development School. Hicks takes over from the previous principal, Michele Evans, who accepted a position with the Wadsworth City School District.

Hicks has worked in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) since 1993. She began as a classroom teacher and later served as a program manager at the Emilie DeSauze Enrich- ment Center. She subsequently worked as an assistant principal and then prin- cipal with CMSD. Most recently, as principal of H. Barbara Booker Elemen- tary School, she supervised the school’s performance index from 66.1 to 74 over a two-year period. Hicks also serves as a school trainer for the Family and Children First Council. She holds both a B.A. and M.A. from Cleveland State University.

Administrative appointments

Karinna Hicks, the new principal, and Zorba Ross, new administrative principal of Heights High, were introduced, and each spoke.

JULY 8, 2014

Karina Hicks

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education

JULY 8, 2014

The present board members were in attendance.

Superintendent McDaniel

The board presented her with a book titled "65 Things to do After You Retire."
Heights High program helps student athletes prepare for college

Bob Rosenbaum

In the basement of Cleveland Heights High School, Peter Eckendorf—a 2003 Heights alumnus who could still pass for a student—is leading a program that raises standards for the school’s nearly 900 student athletes. Under the direction of Athletic Director Kristin Hughes, Eckendorf manages the Learning Center, which helps the coaches of varsity sports programs by tracking the grades of players and providing skilled tutoring to help them maintain academic eligibility. The coming school year will be the center’s third.

“We want to make a smooth transition for our kids from high school to college,” said Eckendorf. For a number of Heights students, athletics opens the door to college in the first place. “If you play in college, you have to go to study tables and you have to be accountable for the academic work you do.” The Learning Center is modeled after college programs and is the first high school program of its kind, to Hughes’ knowledge, and it provides four main services.

First, it tracks the grades of every student athlete. If a mid-quarter progress report shows a D or an F in a core class, the student is required to attend a study table and tutoring for 90 minutes between the end of the school day and the beginning of practice. Second, the program tracks eligibility—a separate calculation because required attendance at the Learning Center is triggered well before a player becomes ineligible. Third, it provides tutoring in English, science, math and social studies by six Heights High teachers, who are paid through supplemental contracts. Eckendorf has noticed more and more students coming in for help with assignments or test prep, even if their grades don’t require them to attend. Fourth, the Learning Center coordinates communication between the coaching staff of each sport, the students and their parents. Coaches know which of their players are required to attend, and they receive daily attendance reports. “If you don’t go, we’re going to call you until you figure it out,” quipped Jeff Rotsky, head football coach, who has arguably built the first winning culture in the last 30 years of Tiger football. “Winning football games is the last priority at all costs.”

African-American men and to be role models—and to get them into college at all costs.”

He considers the Learning Center an important tool in that effort. “The NCAA is not making it easier for kids to qualify,” Rotsky noted, “and, in a handful of cases, these kids are the first in their family to ever think about college.” The Learning Center is making sure kids are taking all the right classes and staying with them on all their work, making sure they’re signed up for ACTs and SATs, and doing a lot of legwork to make sure parents are involved.

Early indications are that the program works. Rotsky stated that 16 out of 30 seniors from last year’s football team earned college scholarships—something that was not happening when he started working at Heights.

At its peak last year—during the third quarter, when spring sports were starting—204 students were enrolled at the Learning Center. At least 25 percent of them brought up their grades enough, within a few weeks, that they were no longer required to attend, and most maintained academic eligibility to play. More precise figures are difficult to pin down, because many students continued coming to tutoring even though they were no longer required to do so.

“Our goal is to help our academic athletes get the highest grades possible and to have as many of them eligible to play as we can,” Eckendorf said. The program seems to work by serving student athletes at a critical stress point that typically gets overlooked. Students talk to teachers about grades, and they talk to coaches about the sport. The Learning Center offers guidance and support in that no-man’s land where the two intersect.

Cleveland Heights resident Bob Rosenbaum is chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee and is responsible for its advertising sales and market development.

New administrative principal named for Cleveland Heights High School

Angee Shaker

The Cleveland Heights–University City School District has announced that Zorora Ross is the new administrative principal of Cleveland Heights High School. Jhoanita Wiley, the former administrative principal, now serves as the district’s director of special programs and compliance.

Ross has worked in the South-Western City School District as assistant principal and athletic director at Central Crossing High School. In this role, Ross assisted the principal in supervision and evaluation of all personnel, and he was also responsible for management of the athletic department. Prior to joining South-Western, Ross served as a principal and assistant principal in the Groveport Madison Local Schools. Ross holds a bachelor’s degree from The Ohio State University and a master’s in education from Ashland University.

Ross was hired after a lengthy interview process. He was recently named 2014 Principal of the Year by the Ohio Alliance of Black School Educators. In addition to his extensive work experience, Ross has been an active member of the Columbus educational community, leading the Breakfast with a Purpose meeting of African-American school educators and co-authoring several published articles.

“This is a very exciting time for our high school and I am confident that Mr. Ross is the principal to guide our students through the transition and into the future,” said Tatina L. Dixon, the district’s new superintendent.

Angee Shaker is director of communications for CH-UH City School District.

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Peter Eckendorf played varsity soccer at Seton Hall University before returning to his alma mater as coordinator of the Learning Center for student athletes at Heights High.
Hot weather safety tips for seniors

**Judith Eugene**

Warm temperatures are a welcome relief from the frigid weather we had last winter. Hot and humid weather, however, can bring challenges and dangers for seniors. Here are some tips to help keep you safe during the summer.

**Keep cool.** When body temperature rises, our body naturally sends more blood to circulate through our skin. This leaves less blood for our muscles, which in turn increases our heart rate. The body faces additional stress when humidity is high, because sweat cannot readily evaporate through the skin to cool us.

University Hospitals (UH) advises to light-colored clothing, avoiding outdoor exertion between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., and taking refuge near a fan or air conditioner when you feel hot. Experts also advise limiting your intake of high-protein foods, as these can increase metabolic heat. You should also consider exercising indoors, in an air-conditioned fitness center or shopping mall.

**Stay hydrated.** The likelihood of dehydration increases as the temperature rises. In addition, our sense of thirst decreases as we age, making thirst an unreliable gauge of the body’s need for water. It is therefore very important to drink water even though you may not feel thirsty.

According to the Mayo Clinic, urine color is a reliable indicator of hydration. Urine should be clear or light-colored. Dark yellow or amber urine indicates insufficient hydration. Other signs of dehydration include a dry or sticky mouth, sleepiness, decreased urination, dry skin, headaches and dizziness. UH advises against drinking caffeinated and alcoholic beverages as perspiration does not change the taste or smell of food, so it is difficult to tell if something has become contaminated. Watch the clock or set a timer when you remove perishable items from the refrigerator.

People with diabetes need to take extra precautions in hot weather. The Mayo Clinic reports that high blood sugar can contribute to dehydration. Moderate your glucose levels and avoid sugary beverages and sports drinks when you are hot. Be sure to test your blood sugar levels more often in hot weather.

**Practice food safety.** As room temperature increases, the length of time perishable foods can safely stay out of the refrigerator decreases. The Mayo Clinic advises that perishables may be left out at room temperature for no more than two hours. When the temperature rises above 90 degrees, the safe limit decreases to one hour. Bacteria that cause food poisoning do not change the taste or smell of food, so it is difficult to tell if something has become contaminated. Watch the clock or set a timer when you remove perishable items from the refrigerator. Remember to practice these safety tips when you grill outdoors or bring perishables to a picnic.

**Protect yourself.** To help avoid skin damage from summer’s intense UV rays, wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunscreen when you go outside. UH recommends using a sunscreen with UVA protection and an SPF of at least 30. Wear protective clothing that allows perspiration to evaporate, and also wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from glare.

**HRRC helps eligible seniors replace their water heaters**

**Becky Stager**

Homeowners often encounter sticker shock when they need a new water heater. Recent safety regulations have greatly increased the price of replacement units, making it especially difficult for senior homeowners, who must manage on a fixed income, to find the necessary funds.

Cleveland Heights seniors can now get help from the Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC). A new water heater grant has been added to HRRC’s Financial Assistance Program, providing half the cost of materials and installation (up to $500) to eligible homeowners. The remaining cost is paid from the applicant’s personal funds or, if other repairs are undertaken, combined into one of HRRC’s loan programs.

To qualify for a grant, the applicant must be an owner/occupant of a Cleveland Heights home; the owner or co-owner must be at least 62 years of age, or fully and permanently disabled; household income must fall within federal low- and moderate-income guidelines; and property taxes must be current.

According to Wesley Walker, HRRC’s senior repair specialist, “We are really happy to provide this new way to help low-income elderly homeowners remain safe in their homes. [Because] seniors are no longer able to use Cleveland Heights’ $5,000 violation grant for interior repairs, and replacement costs have nearly doubled in recent years, our water heater grant ensures that our most vulnerable citizens will be able to have this necessary household appliance.”

For further information, call 216-381-6100, ext. 22.

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

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**“We love having the Orchestra and the Art Museum in our back yard now!”**

Beth Bohn is part of a growing trend at Judson—she and her husband Earl moved to Judson Park from the west side of Cleveland.

“We love having the Cleveland Orchestra and the Art Museum in our back yard now!” says Beth. “Plus, it’s great being close to the world-class healthcare of Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals.”

Judson Park’s distinct personality, which marries the best of Cleveland Heights with University Circle, appealed to Beth. “There’s a special mix of people here and it’s easy to make friends” she says. “I believe a good life includes strong bonds with friends.”

This is Smart Living™ defined at Judson Park. Interested in learning more? Call (216) 791-2004 to arrange for a tour today.

Visit www.judsonsmartliving.org and click Judson Park
4th annual Library Pet Show celebrates good pet care and beloved children’s book

Julia Murphy

Two ferrets, Chunky and Pepper, arrived on the back of a motorcycle. Chinese pigmy hamsters, a hermit crab and, of course, dogs were also there. Young owners brought their pets of all shapes and sizes and presented them center stage at the fourth annual Library Pet Show on July 3, outside the Lee Road Library. Most of ceremonies Brian Hare wore a full tuxedo for the event. His performance was marked by puns, some of which drew groans, and animal jokes set off by well-timed sound effects, including drum rolls and crickets.

“What rings true for every pet is that they are well-loved and cared for,” said Hare, who is head of youth services for the library. The pet show started four years ago with a grant from the Erza Jack Keats Foundation. Keats was a children’s author, known and loved in the literary world, who developed the use of collage in his illustrations. Keats’ 1973 book The Pet Show inspired the Library Pet Show. Just as in Keats’ book, every pet received an award. Also, as in the book, many different types of animals participated. A mural of an illustration from another Keats book, A Whistle for Willie, hangs in the atrium of the Lee Road Library. “The pet show gives us a chance to take library programs outside and engage with people in a different way,” Hare said. Rain and Kaya Wilson, owners of the ferrets Chunky and Pepper, noted, “We name most of our pets after things we can eat.”

The pet show drew almost 50 people, many of whom were passersby who stopped to see what was going on and were pleasantly surprised.

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

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board

Meeting highlights

JUNE 16, 2014
Board Member Abiyy Batnick was absent.

Coventry children’s room

Covellite Village Library’s new children’s room is being developed to resemble the one of the Hobbit books. The room will be in the back, and the wing that includes the fireplace will hold the entire adult collection. Now carpet will be installed throughout the space.

Traffic safety at Lee Road Library

In response to numerous complaints from staff and customers about danger from traffic on Lee Road, the Cedar Lee Special Improvement District has been working with the City of Cleveland Heights and ODOT to redesign the crosswalk in front of the Lee Road Library. Traffic-calming islands and relocation of the southern sidewalk are part of the redesign.

May public service report highlights:

• An update from the April report names the winners of Picture Book Madness, following the March Madness structure. Both Mickle Neighborhood and Lee Road Libraries held the contest. Noble’s winner was The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka. The Lee Road winner was Harry the Dirty Dog by Gene Zion.

• Lifelong Cleveland Heights resident Col. (retired) Howard B. Pearce of the Ohio Army National Guard gave a presentation on May 29 about a year of duty as a part of the NATO operation responsible for training members of the Afghan National Army.

• The Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, the Cleveland Heights Historical Society and the Heights Libraries celebrated Preservation Month with three programs, which included lectures and an instructional program on living wood windows.

• Coventry Village’s Swadley’s has 45 family and individual memberships in its first month.

• Kristin O’Hara’s appearance for the May Cedar-Cuyahoga Author Series drew 70 people to discuss her new book, The Soil Will Save Us. How Scientists, Farmers, and Foodies Are Healing the Soil to Save the Planet.

• Adult Services Associate Greg Fisher accepted a position as Riffle’s horror editor. Riffle is a Chicago-based publisher.

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Heights businesses unite behind Make Your Mark for the Arts program

Mary Ryan

More than 60 independent, local businesses—from Cedar Center, South Euclid, Coventry, Cedar Fairmount, Shaker Square and Van Aken Plaza shopping districts—have joined forces with Heights Arts to participate in the Make Your Mark for the Arts community-engagement project.

The program is now in its third month, and residents can take part by creating a personal stamp at a Heights Arts-led workshop. They then exchange their stamped marks at participating businesses in a passport-style booklet.

Businesses are grouped by categories, including food and drink, clothing and gifts, health and beauty, arts and culture, and services and miscellaneous retail.

Once a passport page has been filled with stamps from five businesses, it can be redeemed at Heights Arts Gallery for a rewards sheet with savings coupons from all participating businesses in that category.

Rewards vary by business. Free food incentives are being offered by Katz Club Diner, Cedar Lee Theatre, Shaker Square Cinemas, Buffalo Wild Wings and Phoenix Coffee, while Cleveland Running Company, Simply Charming, City Buddha, Shawn Paul Salon and Bremec Garden Centers are offering discounts on purchases.

Each rewards sheet has an estimated value of $5.

A complete list of program rewards can be seen at www.heightsarts.org. The company is scanning and labeling all of the prints that are being created with participants’ stamps to make a digital archive of the project.

Vogley believes the Heights is a unique place for independent businesses because of the community’s diversity, friendliness and neighborhood spirit.

“I really enjoy seeing a new batch of prints come through our door—the creativity in our community is fantastic,” Vogley said. “It’s been a fun family project, as well, with four to five members of a family all creating their own mark.”

An online photo gallery of the digital marks can also be found at the Heights Arts website.

For more information, including upcoming August workshop dates, contact Heights Arts at 216-371-3457 or visit www.heightsarts.org/makeyourmark.

Mary Ryan is a staff member of Heights Arts and has been a Heights resident for 27 years.
Ensemble Theatre’s 2014–15 season: the cult of personality

Jewel Moulthrop

In choosing plays for its upcoming seasons, Ensemble Theatre makes its selections based on a theme. The 2014–15 season is no exception and the theme is the “Cult of Personality.” Past themes have included “All You Need Is Love” (2013–14) and “Discover the Human Element” (2012–13).

If thought-provoking drama about strong characters appeals to you, a subscription to Ensemble’s upcoming season may be just the ticket.

Ensemble opens its 35th main stage season with “Anna Christie,” the Pulitzer Prize-winning drama by Eugene O’Neill. The play examines the problematic relationship between a sailor and the daughter he has not seen for almost 20 years. The play runs from Sept. 26 through Oct. 19.

In anticipation of the new year, one of the most famous party hosts takes the stage. Based on the classic American novel by F. Scott Fitzgerald, “The Great Gatsby” runs from Nov. 14 through Dec. 14.

There’s more to come as Ensemble celebrates Black History Month with “Thurgood,” dramatizing the life of civil rights giant Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court justice. “Thurgood” runs from Jan. 30 through Feb. 22.

Concluding an extraordinary main stage season is the Cleveland premiere of “Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo,” by Cleveland Heights native Rajiv Joseph. “Bengal Tiger” runs from April 24 through May 17.

The season continues. After a successful first year in its new Playground space, Ensemble will also continue its TheatreCLE offerings. When asked to describe the Playground, Celeste Cosentino, Ensemble’s artistic director, said, “It’s the new go-to black box we created last season. So now we have a main stage and a ‘little box,’ which we dubbed ‘the playground,’ where you come to play around. Kind of a research and development wing where we can do shows on a smaller scale, broaden audiences and test new technologies.”

TheatreCLE opens with “The Mercy Seat” by Neil LaBute, following up with Conor McPherson’s “St. Nicholas,” Mary Shelley’s “Frankenstein,” adapted for the stage by Oakley Hall, and concluding with William Shakespeare’s “Twelfth Night.”


Ensemble Theatre is located at 2843 Washington Blvd., in Cleveland Heights. For more information, contact the Ensemble box office at 216-321-2930.

Jewel Moulthrop is a Cleveland Heights resident and member of the Heights Observer’s Advisory Committee.

Yiddishe Cup plays free concert Aug. 7 at John Carroll University

Bert Stratton

The Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band will perform at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 7, on the lawn in front of the Grasselli Library at John Carroll University in University Heights.

Guest vocalist Shawn Pink will sing “Joe and Paul’s,” a humorous Yiddish/English song about a men’s clothing store in Brooklyn, N.Y., circa 1948. The band will also play “Warrensville Road,” a Yiddishe Cup original about TJ Maxx, Bob Evans and Target.

The concert, part of the University Heights Summer Concert Series, is free. Bring a blanket or chair to sit on. In case of rain, the show will move inside to the Dolan Science Center. For more information, contact University Heights City Hall at 216-932-7800.

Bert Stratton is a Cleveland Heights resident and the leader of the klezmer band Yiddishe Cup. He writes the Klezmer Guy blog at www.klezmerguy.com.
Artist Jeanetta Ho’s unconventional path

Jeanetta Ho

She started in the fiber department, but visiting artist Dorothy Gill Barnes inspired her to travel along another branch. Ho assisted the Columbus sculpture and fiber artist at a summer workshop and embarked on a continuing interest in using natural materials. Another influence was June Bonner, who taught papermaking using milkweed and other local plants.

In 1996, Ho graduated from CIA with a major in sculpture and “with a huge vocabulary of art.”

Subsequently, Ho earned a master’s in art education from Case Western Reserve University, briefly taught in the Cleveland public schools, opened a gallery and closed it after a year and a half, and cold-called Cleveland Opera and then for Tri-C for eight years. She could solder, sew, paint, do electrical work and lighting, move scenery—“I could make anything!” Ho said.

But at age 60, with unfinished projects beckoning from her garage and the work taking a toll on her, Ho retired to make art full time. At 64, she said, “It takes a while to hit your stride, and I haven’t hit my stride yet.” She works every day and sells her pieces at fairs and farmers’ markets, both in the summer and at holiday time. She makes art pieces for galleries and inexpensive items for the fairs. Both incorporate natural materials. Another influence was June Bonner, who taught papermaking using milkweed and other local plants.

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Equipped with abilities in many media and an infinite imagination, Ho said, “Technique doesn’t rule—I feel I can do anything.” Examples of her work and a schedule of fairs can be found at www.jhos.net.

Peggy Spalth was the founding director of Heights Arts. Currently she is imagining and exploring new projects.
Coventry Village is a clothing mecca

James Henke

The north end of Coventry Road, between Mayfield and Hampshire roads, is something of a mecca for people wanting to buy clothes. This short stretch of Coventry features six stores that specialize in clothing. There are three chain stores—American Apparel, Next and Avalon Exchange—and three small, specialty stores—Blush Boutique, Sunshine Headquarters Too and Heart and Sole. In addition, there’s also Attenston’s Books and Antiques, which carries a selection of vintage clothing.

As Steve Presser, owner of the Coventry toy store Big Fun, said, “It’s the most eclectic clothing district in Cleveland. No other block has so much variety, from new and used to funk and junk.”

The largest store, American Apparel is part of an international chain headquartered in Los Angeles. Founded in 1989, as a sweat-shop-free manufacturer, the company opened its first retail store in 2003, and offers clothing for just about everyone—from toddlers and infants to men and women. The chain now has more than 260 stores worldwide, but the Coventry store, opened six years ago, is its only Greater Cleveland location. The chain manufacturers all of the clothing it offers.

One store down from American Apparel is Sunshine Headquarters Too. Possibly the most unique clothing shop on the street, it has been on Coventry since 1972. Doug Hayslip has owned the store since 1972. Doug Hayslip has owned the store for more than 30 years. “We are a very special boutique,” he said. “We carry everything from minis to bongs. All of our stuff is hand-picked, and we carry very few of the same items.”

Two stores south of Sunshine is Next, an Ohio-based chain with five stores in Greater Cleveland. Next was founded in 1966, and the Coventry store opened in 2010. The store carries what could best be described as urban street wear, and offers both men’s and women’s clothing, as well as shoes and jewelry.

Next door to Next, at the corner of Hampshire and Coventry roads, is Avalon Exchange. Avalon also has stores in Lakewood, Columbus and Pittsburgh. The Coventry store opened in October 2010, and most of its inventory is used. “Someone comes in every five minutes to sell their clothes,” Laurie Hamblin, the store’s assistant manager, said. “We sell vintage clothes, designer clothes and standard mall-type items. And we have a lot of things you can’t find anywhere in other stores, but they are still available here.”

In addition to the used items, Avalon also offers some new clothing items. “We bring in new items once a month,” Hamblin said. “And that includes women’s apparel, men’s apparel and jewelry.” The store also has dollar sales twice a year. The next one will take place the first three days of August.

Across the street from American Apparel, on the east side of Coventry, are two locally owned stores, Heart and Sole and Blush Boutique. Heart and Sole opened in September 2007. Vince Manzano, 25, is one of the store’s owners, and he and two friends—Kenny Bencke and Kevin Washington—opened the store shortly after their graduation from Heights High. “We wanted to fill a void,” said Manzano. “We wanted to create the first sneaker boutique in Cleveland.”

“We try to carry rare, exclusive sneakers,” Manzano said, “the highest tiers, like Adidas, Reebok, Puma and New Balance. In addition to the sneakers, Heart and Sole also sells some clothing, including such high-end brands as Publish, the Quiet Life, Acapulco Gold, ICNY and Motivation. The store also presents art shows, featuring work created by students from the Cleveland Institute of Art. “We are trying to keep the spirit of Coventry alive,” Manzano said. “We don’t want the street to become a Crocker Park or a Legacy Village.”

Next door to Heart and Sole is Blush Boutique. Laurie Klopper, who was a lawyer for 12 years, opened the store in November 2009. “Cleveland has very little boutiques,” she said. “It’s more of a mall town. So I wanted to create a store that carried smaller, independent lines that you won’t find in a department store.” Blush focuses on women’s clothes, and among the brands it offers are Mystree, VFish, Rya, Oka-B and Frankie Four. “We try to keep the prices under $100 for all of the clothing,” Klopper said. “Not all boutiques are really expensive.”

Klopper only orders six of any one item. So when they are sold out, that item is no longer available. “The clothes we sell are things that you can pull out ten years from now, and you will still want to wear them,” she said. “And they are items that you can wear to work, to kids’ sporting events, on a date, etc.”

Blush also sells jewelry. All of it is hand-crafted, and 95 percent of it is created by Cleveland-area jewelers. “It’s a really good mix of stores,” Klopper said, “and I really love this neighborhood.”

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 10 years. He is the author of several books, including biographies of Jim Morrison, John Lennon and Bob Marley.

Laurel Klopper, the owner of Blush Boutique on Coventry Road.

Congratulations to the 2014 Senior Class of Cleveland Heights High School!

The graduating seniors of Cleveland Heights High School were accepted to the following colleges and universities and received scholarship offers of over $17.7 million.
Sunday, August 10th, 2014
Noon - 5 pm

Call 216.791.3172
or visit www.cedarfairmount.org

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Sunshine Headquarters Too: a Coventry Village Institution

Heights Observer August 1, 2014

Sunshine Headquarters Too is something of an institution on Coventry Road. The store has been there since July 14, 1972, and in many ways, still reflects that old hippie sensibility that was so prevalent on Coventry back in the 1970s.

The store carries a wide variety of clothing, ranging from leather vests and suits to fur coats. Its extensive jewelry collection includes body-piercing jewelry, watches and spiked bracelets. Sunshine also sells wallets and other accessories, including theatrical contact lenses, and novelty items such as sword, knives and throwing stars.

In addition, Sunshine carries vaporizers, e-cigarettes and hookahs, and the store makes custom-blown glass items. “We make anything from wedding goblets to smoking pipes,” said Doug Hayslip, who has owned the store for more than 30 years.

As for the front, as well as a price, ranging from $20 to $200. Customers don’t know what’s inside the bag until they purchase it, but generally the contents are worth at least the price they paid, if not more.

Over the years, Sunshine has had many famous people visit the store and make purchases, including Nikki Sixx of Motley Crue, Alice Cooper, members of the Black Crowes, Fred Schneider of the B-52’s and Pete Townshend of The Who. In addition, many professional basketball and football players have also been to Sunshine.

Sunshine may be only store in Greater Cleveland where customers are greeted by a panther chameleon. Oliver J. Dragon is the chameleon’s name, and he has been at Sunshine for the past few months. Prior to Ollie’s arrival, the store had a resident iguana, who was there for 17 years.

Hayslip said of his store, “We really focus on hard-to-find items. We really like carrying different items than you can find elsewhere, and we probably have something for everyone.”

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years. He is also the author of several books, including biographies of Tom Morrison, John Lennon and Bob Marley.
Fratantonio’s Barber Shop celebrates more than 50 years in the Heights

James Henke

On March 20, 1962, George Fratantonio moved his barber shop from Taylor Road, where it had been located for 22 years, to the Fairmount Circle Medical Building on John Carroll Boulevard, almost directly across from John Carroll University. Now, more than 72 years later, the barber shop is still in the same location, and it is still owned by the Fratantonio family.

Over the years, Fratantonio’s Barber Shop has become an institution in the Heights, and it has had many famous customers, including Art Modell, back when he owned the Browns; former U.S. Senator Howard Metzenbaum; and former Ohio Governor and U.S. Senator George Voinovich.

The shop’s current owner is “Sonny” Fratantonio, George Fratantonio’s son, and the manager is Mark Vanek, 34, who has worked at the shop for 13 years. The shop also employs three other barbers: Joe Dauria, Maria Petralia and Jo Ann Medaglia.

Dauria, who is 69, has worked at Fratantonio’s for 59 years. “It was my first job,” he said. “I got out of barber school and came here. I was only supposed to be here for four months, then two of the other barbers got into a fight, and George fired them and hired me. I still enjoy it, and I hope I can be here another 10 years.”

Petralia has worked at the shop for 20 years, and Medaglia has worked there for 14 years. All of the barbers agree that one of the things that makes Fratantonio’s special is the family atmosphere. “It’s really a family barber shop,” Dauria said. “Some of our customers are the fourth generation of their families who have been coming here. We don’t advertise, and most of our business comes from referrals. People who come here bring their family and friends.”

Vanek agreed. “I love the customers who come here,” he said. “A lot of families come here, and people bring their kids. It’s a great place, and a nice place where you can come in and hang out.”

Despite its location near the university, the shop only gets a few students as customers. “A lot of the students cut their own hair,” Dauria said, joking. “Then they use their haircut money to buy beer!”

The shop’s interior has not changed since it opened. “The chairs are all the original chairs from 1962,” Dauria said. “And everything else is the same, except that we have painted the walls.”

The shop is open five days a week, Tuesday through Saturday, and it opens at 6 a.m., which is extremely early for a barber shop. “We usually get from six to eight people early in the morning, before 8 a.m.,” Vanek said. “And then it gets busier as the day goes on.” The shop doesn’t require appointments, and most of the customers are walk-ins.

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.

Fratantonio’s Barber Shop
216-371-7032
20620 John Carroll Blvd.
Tuesday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Saturday, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed Sunday and Monday

James Henke

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