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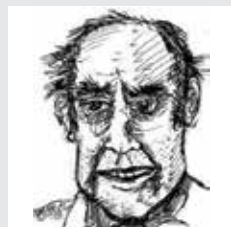
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FutureHeights  
2843 Washington Blvd. #105  
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

## Fairfax school community collaborates on playground projects

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

Three heartfelt and child-centered innovations to the outdoor area of Fairfax Elementary School, two years in the making, were completed this spring.

Early in 2013, members of the Fairfax PTA entered a national video contest sponsored by Big Lots. Their video, which highlighted the need to accommodate students with physical disabilities during recess, won the \$20,000 grand prize.

That money, with additional funds raised by the PTA, paid for three pieces of adaptive-play equipment that were installed in the spring of 2014.

More recently, the school community was brought together by the addition of some finishing touches. A Buddy Bench was installed as part of the Fifth Grade Legacy Project. Antwan McKeller, recently promoted fifth-grader, created the sign on it. He also received the school's Awe-



Students enjoying the main adaptive-play piece.

some Artist award. The bench was the culmination of an idea that was proposed more than 18 months ago.

In December 2013, when they were fourth-graders, students engaged in a project in their language arts classes that involved studying the contestants for the "CNN Heroes." After evaluating the impact of these global

heroes, students worked in groups to identify problems in their own community that they could remedy.

One of the most popular proposals was to install a Buddy Bench on the school playground, as a place of refuge for any student needing a friend.

When classes resume in the fall, school counselor Melinda Stoicoui will work with all grades on how to appropriately engage students who sit on the Buddy Bench.

The most moving piece installed this spring was a Little Free Library, in memory of two Fairfax students who died in 2014.

Trishka Tantanella Holcomb died of a respiratory infection in January 2014 at age 10. And Rebecca Alison Meyer died from a brain tumor on her sixth birthday last June. The PTA considered many ideas for a memorial, but decided on a Little Free Library. It is intended to, over the years, enable the family and friends of

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## Peggy Spaeth takes on a new challenge

Eleanor Mallet

When Peggy Spaeth retired from Heights Arts two years ago, she thought she would spend her time gardening and walking her dog.

She had founded the lively arts hub on Lee Road and ran it successfully for 13 years.

But Spaeth is a woman of boundless creativity and resolve. Pretty quickly she turned her attention to developing something new: a program to help addicts in recovery. You might say, that's a far cry from Heights Arts, but actually it's pretty close to Spaeth.

"Addiction seems to touch every family. I know it has mine. Today my beautiful daughter has been clean and sober for five years. But there was a time when I feared I would lose her as so many others have... [lost their loved ones]," wrote Spaeth in the beginning of a fundraising letter.



Peggy Spaeth and her daughter Rosey Coburn.

The letter was from the board of Sober Living Cleveland, a new nonprofit Spaeth, and now others, are fashioning.

The group is poised to put its plan into action, and is developing a Sober Living Home in Cleveland Heights for those addicts who have completed treatment, and even a

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## FutureHeights to offer neighborhood mini-grant program

Deanna Bremer Fisher

FutureHeights, in partnership with the City of Cleveland Heights, is launching a neighborhood mini-grant program for Cleveland Heights residents. FutureHeights will award grants of up to \$1,000 to neighborhood-based groups.

"Our goal is to help neighbors leverage their many assets and provide tools to enable them to strengthen their neighborhoods," said Richard Stewart, president of the FutureHeights Board of Directors. "Having a little bit of seed money for a project can make a big difference."

The grants are part of FutureHeights's Community Capacity-Building Program, which the organization launched this year. The program, funded by FutureHeights members and by the city through Community Development Block Grant funds, includes training for neighborhood leaders through a series of workshops, one-on-one mentoring and support, public forums on key topics—such as the Understanding Policing forum held in May—and small grants.

Fourteen residents completed the workshops. The participants live in several Cleveland Heights neighborhoods—Noble, Forest Hill, Cain Park, Boulevard, Severance and East Fairfax. The workshops covered a variety of topics which will help them formulate a grant-eligible project.

"We have several principles that guide the program," said Mark Chupp, an assistant professor at Case

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## New group seeks to keep CH water public

Deborah Van Kleef

Cleveland Heights Citizens for Safe, Affordable Water is a new organization that advocates public ownership and operation of the Cleveland Heights water system. The group formed in response to a move by the city to lease its ailing, century-old water system to a private utility.

On May 27, the City of Cleveland Heights tabled discussions with Aqua Ohio, a subsidiary of the \$3.76-billion private utility Aqua America. The decision followed a May 26 public

forum at which approximately 230 Cleveland Heights residents gathered to air objections to the proposed 20-year lease.

For more than two hours, participants lined up at the microphone to address questions, comments and, in some cases, admonitions to Tanisha Briley, Cleveland Heights city manager, and Edmund Kolodziej, Aqua Ohio president and chief operating officer.

Cleveland Heights purchases water from the Cleveland Water Department, and resells it to residents and

businesses. Out of 58 municipalities in Cuyahoga County, 54 receive water directly from the Cleveland Water Department. Cleveland Heights is one of only four "master meter" cities, which operate their own water departments.

Between 2013 and 2014, Cleveland's water charges to Cleveland Heights rose by 25 percent, yet Cleveland Heights collects payment for only 40 percent of the water it buys. While some of the remaining 60 percent is lost to inaccurate meters, an

*continued on page 3*



## Letters Policy

The *Heights Observer* welcomes letters to the editor. They must be submitted electronically, along with the writer's name, phone number and e-mail address, to: [www.heightsobserver.org/members](http://www.heightsobserver.org/members) or e-mail: [info@futureheights.org](mailto:info@futureheights.org)

## HEIGHTS OBSERVER

The *Heights Observer* is a citizen-based news source published monthly by FutureHeights, a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to civic engagement and quality of life. 2843 Washington Blvd. #105, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118 216-320-1423 Copyright 2015 FutureHeights, All rights reserved. Reproduction is forbidden without written permission.

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The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the *Heights Observer*, its publisher and staff, or of FutureHeights, its staff and board of directors.

Seed funding for the *Heights Observer* generously provided by the Cyrus Eaton Foundation, the Dominion Foundation, and the Katherine and Lee Chilcote Foundation. Powered by the 9th Estate.

## About the Observer

The *Heights Observer* is not an ordinary newspaper; it is a nonprofit publication for residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

The *Observer* has no writing staff; it is written by you—the readers.

Individuals throughout the community decide what stories they want to write, then submit them for publication. Anyone in University Heights or Cleveland Heights is welcome to contribute regularly, occasionally or even just once.

Is there something you think should be covered in the *Heights Observer*? If so, please write it on your own, or with friends, neighbors or colleagues. Our volunteer editors will make sure it's ready to publish and contact you with any questions.

If you're writing a news article, it should be clear and factual. If you want to express an opinion, submit it as a letter to the editor or an opinion piece. Either way, make sure it's about something specific to our two cities.

- To make a submission of any kind, go to [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org) and click on "Member Center" at the left.
- For information about writing style, article length, etc., click on "Become an Observer" at the left. For questions that aren't answered there, call the FutureHeights office at 216-320-1423 or e-mail [info@futureheights.org](mailto:info@futureheights.org).

Articles to be considered for the August issue must be submitted by July 13. We publish some articles online as they come in—and still consider them for the next print issue. We also publish an e-newsletter each Tuesday.

## Heights Observer 2015 local elections candidate policy

With the November election approaching, the *Heights Observer* is publishing its policy for contributions by candidates for local office.

As a community newspaper staffed by volunteers and committed to equal access for everyone, the *Observer* is unique among publications in providing opportunity for any member of the Cleveland Heights and University Heights communities to raise and discuss issues of local interest.

At election time, however, this commitment creates a challenge in

managing the finite space that is available for community members who are running for public office.

The policy, approved by the FutureHeights Board of Directors, is designed to address that challenge. It states the following:

- The August–November issues of the printed publication will not carry any editorial contributions from known candidates for office.
- During this pre-election period, *Observer* contributors who are not running for office will produce any

coverage of election issues.

- During this pre-election period, all candidate contributions of news or opinion will continue to be accepted for publication online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).
- Candidates seeking to place information in the August–November printed editions of the *Observer* may do so through advertising space purchased from the *Observer*.
- The *Heights Observer* and its parent organization, FutureHeights, do not endorse candidates.

## Bob Cheshier brought Little Free Libraries to Cleveland

To the Editor:

I was quite pleased to see the article regarding the Little Free Library in the June 2015 issue, but was dismayed that mention was not made of the late Bob Cheshier, who was responsible for bringing the Little Free Libraries to the Cleveland area. Bob was an ardent advocate for the advancement of libraries and associated reading skills. I know Bob would have been very pleased to see yet another Little Free Library.

Bob Humrick  
Cleveland Heights

## A correction to Motorcars article in June issue

To the Editor,

For the sake of accuracy, Motorcars is the largest private-sector employer in Cleveland Heights. The City of Cleveland Heights is the largest employer in the city, with more than 300 full-time employees. If you include seasonal and part-time, the city employ more than 400 people.

Rich Thompson  
Cleveland Heights

## Why the levy failed: finding reasons closer to home

To the Editor:

I found Sarah West's piece, "The Inequity of Social Spaces in the CH-UH School Community," (published in the June 2015 *Heights Observer*), disturbing—not for its descent into academic nomenclature or its application of cookie-cutter sociological concepts onto one section of our community—but for the lack of research about pre-existing conditions, local conditions and other contributing factors.

Her statement that "elites" run school levies highlights a lack of understanding of how campaigns are structured and who manages them, but I'll leave more discussion of that to someone else. Instead I will point out the three gaping holes in West's thesis: history, locality and timing.

West shows no research or interest in the history of school levies in CH-UH, in particular Cleveland Heights north of Mayfield Road (Ward Five). If she did, she would see this area's support for schools at the ballot box has been among the lightest in Cleveland Heights for the last 50 years. Forty to 50 years ago, when operating issues passed with far more support in the overall community, Ward Five showed considerably less. It may have been the fact that not one but two parochial schools serviced this neighborhood, St. Margaret Mary and St. Louis.

A cursory examination of voting patterns shows precincts that are home

to private schools of any denomination display weaker ballot support for public school issues. Support then increases in concentric circles away from the school. While both of these schools have closed, it does not mean long-held voting affiliations have changed.

We also need to keep in mind that as Cleveland Heights developed, the Forest Hills and Longwood Estates at Mayfield and Taylor roads caused Ward Five to develop a slightly different identity than the rest of Cleveland Heights, being not fully woven into the rest of the city until after WWII. In the 1950s and '60s, when we saw very strong support for school issues, Ward Five came along for the ride voting yes, but at significantly lower levels than the rest of the district.

The legacies of all of these factors can still be seen today, for although many variables have changed in the last 50 years, Ward Five's support for school levies has been strongest in presidential elections, good in congressional elections and then predicated on the strength of the campaign and general attitude in odd-year elections.

A cursory examination of the data would show West this—not the writings of a French academic.

It is often said all politics is local, and this may have been the case for Ward Five, and specifically the Noble neighborhood. Support in this neighborhood may have been muted by the projected closure of Noble Elementary School in the district's Master Facilities Plan. While understandable, withholding levy support based on this is not only shortsighted, it ignores the fact that we do not have a set time for Noble's closure. At present, it is unlikely that any current Noble students would be impacted by reassignment. This is another element West fails to examine.

Last, West does not review how this campaign stacked up against others in regard to messaging, funding, implementation or, more critically, timing. Even though this year's levy was among the lowest millages in the last 25 years, as well as four years since the last operating issue (instead of the more typical three), it was the ONLY issue on a spring ballot in an odd-year election. While we can examine and debate the strengths and weaknesses of the levy campaign, history shows that in low-turnout elections opposition voters are easier to get to the polls than those in favor of the tax issue.

When we add all of these fac-

*continued on page 3*

A h h , t h e  
b r i e f p l e a -  
s u r e o f p e o -  
n i e s

Every year I watch the peonies slowly rise from a patch of soil in the back yard. They don't show new growth until long after the first thaw—after the crocuses and daffodils have had their time in the sun.

They begin as red stalks and slowly grow thigh high while the tulips are showing off. By the time



the lilacs have scented the back yard in late April, the bulbs atop each peony stalk are beginning to develop. Over the next 3 or 4 weeks, the edges of the petals—bright pink in our yard—begin to show as the bulbs grow larger. And sweeter, apparently, as ants crawl all over the bulbs in the final week or so before the bloom.

And then it hits. The first couple of blooms appear one morning, each the size of a ball of yarn with a scent so strong and floral I'd never tolerate it from a bottle. . . .

—Bob Rosenbaum



tors together, we see that while the district needs to make greater efforts to engage Cleveland Heights north of Mayfield, this has more to do with the factors I outlined above than it does with academic theories that contour to someone's predetermined narrative.

Eric J. Silverman  
Cleveland Heights High School '87  
CH-UH School Board member

## Thank you from Coventry P.E.A.C.E.

To the Editor:

The Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Playground and Gardens work day on May 16 was a partial success in some ways and a great success in all other ways.

The great success shown that day was the dedication of community volunteers who came to help repair the playground equipment and spruce up the beautiful gardens. Roxboro Middle School Junior National Merit Scholars helped, along with Heights High and Coventry [School] alumni. Some neighbors who happened to be out walking pitched in, as did volunteers from various organizations that now are housed in the Coventry School building. Scott Jackson of The Wood Trader organized and performed the playground equipment repair.

The partial success was the garden cleanup. It is difficult to get all the weeding and other garden tasks done in one day, despite the valiant efforts of the garden workers. Thank you all for your extraordinary efforts to keep the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Playground and Gardens looking well-tended.

Phoenix Coffee and Zoss, the Swiss Baker, provided the welcome morning starter, Tommy's Restaurant provided lunch, and all was greatly appreciated. There were snacks, fruit and lemonade to round out the fare. Thank you all so much for your continued generosity.

Now that Coventry Village's dynamic schedule of summer activities has been published, and some of the activities will take place at the P.E.A.C.E. playground, why not bring along some garden gloves and small tools to continue the garden cleanup started by the May volunteers? Every little bit helps.

For those who are new to the area, perhaps you wonder what those initials mean: People Enhancing A Child's Environment (P.E.A.C.E.). Join us for the fall cleanup. It is fun (and a little work, too).

Joanne Campbell  
Cleveland Heights

SPAETH continued from page 1

halfway house program. Often referred to as a three-quarter house, it allows independence yet provides support for those still in the recovery process.

People who work in this field say that if recovery is to be successful, the emphasis has to shift to providing longer support than previously thought.

"Our culture is so based on drinking and drugging. Part of a sober life is developing a community of people who are sober. The thinking now is that after acute care, recovery housing is a big part of developing sober living," Spaeth said.

Spaeth grew the project in much the same way she did Heights Arts. "I would see people and talk about my situation and the need I saw," she explained. "I would see a spark. We would agree to keep talking. Or they would say, 'If you ever do something, call me.'"

In the fall of 2013, Spaeth called a group together and they began meeting. The group includes therapists specializing in recovery, lawyers, and an artist. Some of them are ex-addicts themselves, or have family members who are.

In 2007, drug abuse became the leading cause of accidental death in Ohio, according to the Ohio Department of Health, and the trend has continued. In 2013, more than twice as many Ohioans died from drug overdoses than from vehicle crashes.

The Sober Living Cleveland board has raised \$75,000 so far. In April, the board hired Elizabeth Ellis as director. She is an experienced fundraiser and nonprofit administrator with a background in mental health and addiction services. The board's goal is to raise \$260,000 from grants, individuals, businesses and government.

Some of the money will be used to purchase a house in Cleveland Heights through the Cuyahoga

Land Bank, and renovate it for a Sober Living Home. It would house six to eight women, over the age of 18. Board members plan to open the home by the end of this year, with the goal of opening more after that.

In the meantime, the board is hard at work hammering out the details, such as the criteria for admittance and certifications that may be needed.

Spaeth's daughter, Rosey, began to have difficulty when she was 14. At 15, she was sent to a 90-day treatment program in California. Then she relapsed and went to a 21-month residential program in Oklahoma. She did not want to come back to Cleveland, where her problems with drugs began. So she went to a Sober Living Home in St. Paul, Minn., where she lived for a year. Now, Rosey is living independently and wants to go back to school. At 21, she is doing well.

"It is the worst feeling in the world when you cannot help your own child," Spaeth said. "But there were these other people—strangers—who did help. I want to help others the way they helped me. And there is this gap [in services]. It is not rocket science. We can do it."

For more information about Sober Living Cleveland, or to make a contribution, contact Elizabeth Ellis at [info@soberlivingcle.org](mailto:info@soberlivingcle.org), or visit [www.soberlivingcle.org](http://www.soberlivingcle.org).

*Eleanor Mallet is a former columnist at the Plain Dealer and has written two books.*

WATER continued from page 1

outdated billing system, and unpaid consumer bills, most of it simply leaks into the ground. Cleveland Heights projects a water department deficit of \$3.7 million for 2015.

In a report issued on Jan. 12, the consulting firm Energy Systems Group (ESG) outlined options for repairing and updating the system, and for its future maintenance and management. The city could (1) borrow \$20 million, (2) join the Cleveland Water Department, or (3) engage a private partner.

May 26 public forum participants urged the city to fully explore the first two options. No one from the community spoke in favor of a deal with Aqua Ohio.

Cleveland Heights Citizens for Safe, Affordable Water plans to monitor the city's efforts, research and compile information, and provide community education and outreach. Information is available through the organization's Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/chsafeaffordablewater](http://www.facebook.com/chsafeaffordablewater).

To become involved, residents can message the group on Facebook, or contact Jim Miller, [jkmiller@igc.org](mailto:jkmiller@igc.org) or 216-321-9983.

The ESG report, Aqua Ohio Letter of Intent and other documents are available on the city's website, [www.clevelandheights.com](http://www.clevelandheights.com). A video of the May 26 forum is at [www.youtube.com/user/clevelandheightsob/videos](http://www.youtube.com/user/clevelandheightsob/videos).

*Deborah Van Kleef is a musician and writer. She grew up in Cleveland Heights, and has lived here as an adult for 30 years.*



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Cedar LEE Business District

Summer Life is better with the locals on Lee Road...

Light up Lee Road

Peggy Spaeth

On a recent beautiful early summer evening, my friend and I walked from our yoga class to the Stone Oven Bakery for a salad. Three adjacent blocks of Lee Road hosted tables filled with people from all over, dining at Taste, Anatolia, TavCo, Phoenix Coffee, Black Box Fix, or tasting at The Wine Spot. I am sure the patio behind the Colony was jumping, too. Just a few steps beyond this vibrant scene, there are storefront windows covered with paper and “for rent” signs.

I know there are funds waiting for completion of a streetscape infrastructure improvement plan. Perhaps there are scores of people behind the scenes working on an economic development plan to revitalize Lee Road. In the meantime, here are some ideas that would light up Lee for residents and visitors alike:

1. Vacant storefronts: When I was director of Heights Arts, my colleague Andrea Joki created a project to enliven vacant storefronts with colorful banners. The idea is not no-cost, but it is low-cost. Here are some ideas for banners that would be colorful and reflective of Cleveland Heights as Home to the Arts: Ask the Cleveland Orchestra and Cleveland Museum of Art if they would like to hang banners in empty storefronts. Reproduce art made in the art classes of neighborhood schools. Create a series of photographs of local bands or musicians, or artists and their work. Publish local poetry with a picture of the poet. Display plans for the streetscape renovations. You get the idea.

2. Lights: String lights from post to post down the street. At night, the Cedar Lee Theatre and Heights Arts, and even CVS, create an active space, but walking down the street past the vacant Meadowbrook lot to the other vibrant end of Lee Road is dreary. It would feel festive and safe with twinkling lights.

3. Murals: The mural behind the Cedar Lee Theatre transformed a dull

parking lot into a vibrant entryway to the district. The wall on the Ameritech building adjacent to the CVS parking lot and the TavCo wall on Kensington Road are begging for murals.

4. Vacant land: Make some effort to plant something, such as a native garden, on a portion of the empty Meadowbrook lot. Yes, mowing is easy but it's been more than 15 years that the lot has been unproductive. A community garden would be great on a year-to-year basis, as we wait for development.

Would owners of vacant storefronts provide local entrepreneurs an opportunity to create small boutique businesses on the street? Perhaps offer a year of free rent to those with sound business plans? Cleveland Cinema's Jon Forman allowed a bunch of artists to open a pop-up holiday store 15 years ago, and look at Heights Arts today. I know that retail is endangered by online shopping, but could there be unique local shops that local residents would support? Survey residents and ask, what would they buy in person, instead of online? A store that offered rain barrels, compost bins, mason bee houses, recycled products, organic gardening and chicken coop supplies, bird seed, etc., would be a big hit with me. I miss the thrift shop. Maybe the local nonprofits could get together and run one, dividing the profits. A retail store offering regionally created furniture would be awesome. Artist studios. Maybe retail is dead, but at least make an effort.

I happily worked on Lee Road for 13 wonderful years. I live nearby. I'm tired of seeing inaction and windows covered with paper on vacant storefronts, as if nobody cares. Residents and businesses rallied together around the concept of “We are a Colony” after the tragic death of Jim Brennan. Why not now build on the vibrant scene I witnessed on a warm summer night?

Peggy Spaeth writes about Heights residents and their impact locally, regionally and worldwide.

Heights Community Congress opposes bills that would gut fair housing laws

Pam Wetherill

Heights Community Congress (HCC) supports effective fair housing enforcement and opposes Senate Bill 134 and House Bill 149, currently before the Ohio General Assembly.

Equal housing opportunity and strong fair housing law currently exists in the State of Ohio, and there is no need to lower penalties or exempt some property owners from fair housing laws, which the proposed bills would do. Lower penalties do not deter discrimination, nor does allowing individual property owners to discriminate.

Sen. Bill Seitz, the Cincinnati Republican sponsoring one of the bills, introduced similar, but unsuccessful, legislation in 2014, which HCC also opposed. Should these current bills pass, it would render the Ohio Civil

Rights Commission ineffective in housing discrimination cases, and make it harder to eliminate illegal housing practices.

All Ohio citizens are encouraged to contact their state representative, expressing opposition to SB 134 and HB 149. SB 134 is sponsored by Sen. Bill Seitz and co-sponsored by Sens. John Eklund (R, District 18) and Tom Patton (R, District 24). HB 149 is sponsored by Reps. Jonathan Dever (R, District 28) and John Patterson (D, District 99). Its co-sponsors are Reps. Louis W. Blessing, III (R, District 29), Stephen Hambley (R, District 69), Steven Kraus (R, District 89) and Nathan Manning (R, District 55).

Pam Wetherill is a volunteer with HCC, and serves on its Fair Housing Committee. She lives in University Heights.



# Building for an unknown future



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

It's official. Heights High is closed. A proud history that started in 1926 ended this June as a platoon of moving trucks pulled away from the school laden with remnants of a glorious public space that has changed many lives.

Now, shiny silver letters attached to the façade of the former Wiley Middle School spell out Heights High. They declare that change has arrived. This will be the fourth building since 1902 to provide a high school education to residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

Construction crews and school strategists are at work transforming the 1950s Wiley building into a 21st-century educational environment in time for the arrival of our high school students in the fall. Don't get too attached to Wiley, though, because in two years students will be back at Cedar and Lee roads, housed in their hybrid old and new high school building, which we hope will serve us as well as our nearly 90-year-old Tudor castle has.

While all this coming and going is disruptive, it is temporary. More important, it is a visible expression of the value our community places on education. We are fortunate that it is a community priority. We invest in the bricks and mortar of education, and the manpower and content of learning. It is a glorious commitment that has received steady support as Cleveland Heights has evolved from a small farm community, into a prototype elite suburb, into a national model of a sustainable integrated first-ring suburb.

Cleveland Heights was organized as a hamlet in 1901 and incorporated as a village in 1903. Education was the first order of business; community leaders formed a public school district and built a four-room brick school building on the site of today's Boulevard Elementary. Lee Road School, as it was known, opened in 1902. The class of 1907 had five students—the Heights schools' first high school graduates. By 1910 the community had doubled in size and was home to close to 3,000 people. Its first public library opened in 1911 in Coventry School, and, by 1912, Lee Road School was too small. It was time to build a new high school.

A spacious building designed by Walker and Weeks to accommodate 400 students opened its doors in 1916 next door to Lee Road School. In 1920 Cleveland Heights had 15,560 residents, enough to incorporate as a city, which occurred in 1921. In the booming 1920s, the community invested in a city hall at what is now the location of Motorcars Honda. By

1930 the community had grown to 51,000 residents, and, once again, high school enrollment had outgrown its building. After only 10 years and multiple additions, the community invested in yet another new high school.

An elegant, spacious, up-to-date building opened in 1926, at the corner of Cedar and Lee roads. The new school was hailed for its grand auditorium and the amazing technology that gave every classroom access to state-of-the-art technology: the radio.

Multiple additions and upgrades over the years helped the building accommodate spikes in enrollment, which reached nearly 3,000 in the 1960s, and changes in educational technology, curriculum, teaching styles and physical plant management. Finally, the timeworn spaces, with outmoded and often incompatible operating systems, rendered this building expensive and obsolete. It was time for a fresh start.

Once again, the community understood, showed that it cared, stepped up, and in November 2013 approved a \$134.8 million bond issue. Voters made it possible to build a new high school, a dream come true. Most of the current high school complex at Cedar and Lee roads will be demolished this summer, and a new high school will be constructed around the remaining historic core.

In the 20th century, population growth was the primary driver of our facility investments. But a shrinking world, rapid changes in work and the economy, technological innovation, along with climate change and the importance of resource conservation, are considerations in designing a school in the 21st century.

Cleveland Heights High School has moved, grown and evolved as our community has invested in the education of its youth. I am grateful that we chose this moment to provide our students appropriate and comfortable spaces in which to grow. I also appreciate the community members and educators who invested their time and expertise in trying to fashion a school designed for our changing world.

When 2017 rolls around and the doors of a new high school open, a new tradition will begin. Only time will tell if our newest building is adaptable to an unknown future.

*[Correction: I mistakenly reported in my May column that Lynne Maragliono will retire this year. Her plan is to leave teaching next year.]*

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

FAIRFAX continued from page 1

the girls to feel as if they are actively engaging with the memories of their loved ones by sharing favorite books and stories.

David Smith, a Cleveland Heights resident and owner of Silsby Stained Glass and Woodworking, designed and built the library, which is shaped like a castle with purple flags on the turrets. Each girl's name is inscribed on a butterfly on opposite sides of the structure, and the back holds the image of a tree made from the green fingerprints of every Fairfax student. The purple fingerprints of Rebecca's classmates, now first-graders, were formed into flowers on the tree. Art teacher Jessica Friedland oversaw that portion of the project, ensuring that every child would be included in the creation of this special memorial.

The new additions were proudly displayed at the PTA's end-of-the-year picnic on May 26. Families of both girls were invited to the dedication ceremony, and Trishka's mother, Dortha Holcomb, spoke about the gift of raising children with special needs. Rebecca's sister Carolyn, who will enter sixth grade at Roxboro Middle School in the fall, sang Katy

Perry's "Firework," a favorite of her little sister, before the crowd headed towards Lee Road for the unveiling of the library.

The location of the library, near the Fairfax Community Garden at the intersection of Lee and Clarendon roads, was chosen to maximize community access, but it also increases the risk of vandalism. The public is asked to look out for this little castle in the hope that it will remain a special part of the neighborhood for years to come.

A thank-you sign was also installed, recognizing several large donors to the playground project. The side of the sign facing Lee Road sums up the feelings of the Fairfax students, staff and families: "Thank you to the many hearts and hands that contributed to the upgrade of this space. It is a testament to the collaborative spirit of our community."

*Krissy Dietrich Gallagher is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, a graduate of the Heights schools and a former Coventry School teacher. She is an active member of the Fairfax PTA, and is proud to raise her two sons in this community. She blogs at <http://krissygallagher.wordpress.com>.*

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Coventry PEACE Park. 9 PM

**7/2: Pee-wee's Big Adventure**  
Before the movie at 6:30 PM: SpyngaFlows Presents: Coventry Family Bike Ride. Meet at PEACE Park Arch

**7/9: Back to the Future**  
**7/10: Back to the Future Part II**

**7/16: Annie (2014)**

**7/23: Classic Cartoons & Coventry Pie Fight**  
(A Coventry Tradition!) Bring your own whipped cream pie.

**7/30: Big Hero 6**

**8/6: Cinderella (2015)**

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**7/18: Coventry Village Sidewalk Sale! 12- 6PM**  
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Coventry Outdoor Courtyard 1-3PM

**7/11: Outlaws I & II (Reggae)**  
**7/25: Heights Jazz Group (Jazz)**  
**8/1: Vernon Jones Blues Cartel**  
**8/8: R.A. Washington & The Family Dollar (Funk. Soul. Rock)**

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**Sundays, 6/14-8/16: 7PM**  
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### WEEKEND CULT CLASSIC MOVIES

Coventry PEACE Park. 9 PM.  
Outdoor Movies. 18+

**7/10: Back to the Future Part II**  
**7/25: American Splendor**  
**8/7: This is Spinal Tap**

Coventry Village Summer Series 2015 is supported in part by the residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture



# University Heights City Council

## Meeting highlights

MAY 18, 2015

Councilwoman Nancy English and Councilman Steven Sims were absent.

### All Geared Up bike event

Darren Carter of Ashurst Road reported that the new bicycling event All Geared Up was held on May 16. People had great fun and the event went [off] without a hitch. In spite of the rain, more than 90 people participated. The bike market successfully sold about 25 bikes for pennies on the dollar, and two bikes were donated to children from Cleveland.

### Gas line replacement

The gas line replacement project is continuing on Cedar Road, replacing the lines under the sidewalks from the Huntington Apartments to Green Road.

### Water department

Cleveland Heights is looking at options for outsourcing management of its water department, which will impact some homes in University Heights, which receive water from Cleveland Heights. The proposal was being presented to the Cleveland Heights City Council on first reading.

### Waste processing and disposal

Council authorized the mayor to participate in a consortium to request proposals for recycling processing services. A vendor in Twinsburg is currently processing the recyclables, but the contract is ending. Likewise, council authorized participation in a consortium for solid waste transfer and disposal services bidding. In neither case is the city obligated to sign the agreement, but the city had to join the consortium's request for bids in order to have the option to be included. Solid waste is currently being handled by the City of Cleveland Heights, which takes the trash collected by University Heights and transfers it to the appropriate centers.

### New park

Council authorized the mayor to seek bids for the construction of the new park. This will enable the city to advertise quickly for bids once the plans for the park design are approved.

### Cuyahoga County Planning Commission

The motion to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission to fund and develop a 10-year comprehensive master plan for the city was withdrawn for now. The process includes development of a steering committee, a survey of residents (questions are still being selected), and meetings with council. Councilman Mark Wiseman and Councilwoman Pamela Cameron felt that at least one council member should be on the steering committee, but Mayor Susan Infeld believed council was not supposed to be part of the committee. She will ask her contact at the county to clarify council's role and to see if two council members could be on the steering committee. Also tabled was a motion for an agreement with the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission to provide professional planning services for a University Heights community survey at a cost not to exceed \$8,400.

### LifeForce

Council authorized a contract with LifeForce for ambulance billing. LifeForce bills the insurance providers of people who are transported by University Heights ambulances. The fire chief learned recently that LifeForce charged different rates in different cities for this service. This new contract will lower the fee from 8 percent to 7 percent. It was noted that the company only bills insurance providers. Individual citizens are not billed.

### 2547 Ashurst Road

The motion to declare the property located

at 2547 Ashurst Road a nuisance was withdrawn as the property owners have now removed the fence debris from the yard.

### University Square

Law Director Luke McConville gave an update on [a lawsuit regarding] University Square. The defendants have filed a motion to dismiss the claim, saying that the city lacked standing and only the county could attempt to collect taxes from them. Their motion was denied. The next hearing will be June 23.

### Police body cameras

Police Chief Steven Hammett attended a seminar provided by Sen. Sherrod Brown to learn about grant funding options for police body cameras. He reported that funding is heavily skewed toward large cities and University Heights has virtually no chance of receiving funding. The county prosecutor has offered funding for dashboard cameras but the city already has those. There is a final grant possibility pending with JAG (Justice Assistance Grant program).

### Fire department

Fire Chief Douglas Zook announced that fire hydrant maintenance has been completed, and that four broken water mains were identified. There will be some openings in the fire department in the near future due to retirements. By law, no firefighter is permitted to work past the age of 62.

LWV Observer: Wendy Deuring.

JUNE 1, 2015

NOTE: No LWV observer was available to cover the June 1 council meeting.

Look for earlier, and often expanded, postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).

These meeting summaries are abstracted from LWV observers' written reports. The summaries have been edited and prepared by Anne McFarland, Charlene Morse and Maryann Barnes. To receive e-mail postings of full reports, send an e-mail to [mbarnes9515@gmail.com](mailto:mbarnes9515@gmail.com) or join through Google groups using "lww-chuh observer reports" as a search phrase.

These reports contain member observation and selected highlights of public meetings and are not official statements of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters Cuyahoga Area. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribution of these reports.

GRANTS continued from page 1

Western Reserve University's Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences and chair of the FutureHeights Civic Engagement Committee, which is leading the sessions. "We believe that institutions lead best by stepping back and supporting residents and voluntary groups, and that everyday people have the power to do extraordinary things right where they live."

The program takes an Assets Based Community Development approach, which means that it seeks to build upon a neighborhood's strengths. "For example," said Chupp, "the Cain Park neighborhood has this tremendous asset—Cain Park—that it can leverage and build upon. The Dog Project, in which residents came together to change a city law to enable dog walking in the park, is a good example of this. We also see residents of other neighborhoods, such as Noble, coming together to organize neighborhood cleanups and open houses. The small grants will give us a means to better support neighborhood activities like these."

Eligible projects must be neighborhood-specific. Groups must be comprised of neighborhood residents and stakeholders, and the project or event must be held in the same neighborhood.

All proposed projects must be planned and led by a group of at least three unrelated members of the neighborhood community, and at least one of those leaders must live in the neighborhood. Groups will be required to match 20 percent of the grant dollars either in outside funding or in-kind services, and to complete assessments and evaluation forms.

FutureHeights intends to award a total of \$7,500 in grants through two grant application rounds, one in the fall and one in the spring. The first application deadline is Sept. 15. The second deadline will be announced by January 2016, if funds are still available.

FutureHeights will hold an information session about the grant and how to apply on Wednesday, July 29, at 7 p.m. in Meeting Room A at the Lee Road Library. Interested residents are encouraged to attend. For more information, visit [www.futureheights.org](http://www.futureheights.org) or contact FutureHeights at 216-320-1423 or [info@futureheights.org](mailto:info@futureheights.org).

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

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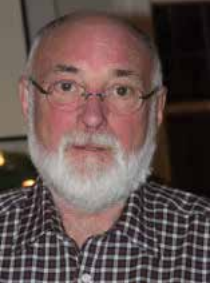


# Cleveland Heights artist wins award

**Jean Martin**

John Martin, a resident of Cleveland Heights and a former resident, for many years, of Shaker Heights, was awarded an Honorable Mention at the juried 39th Annual Fairmount Art Exhibition 2015.

Martin won for his monoprint *Winter on North Park*. His monoprint *Calm in the Face of Chaos* was also fea-



Artist John Martin.

tured in the show.

This season, Martin's work has also appeared in juried shows at the Morgan Conservatory, the Gallery at Lakeland in Kirtland, the Valley Art Center in Chagrin Falls and the Shaker Heights Main Library. More information about his art is available at [www.johnmartinart.com](http://www.johnmartinart.com).

*Jean Sycle Martin, wife of the artist, is a resident of Cleveland Heights, and a bookseller at Barnes & Noble at Eton in Woodmere.*



The Jeavons House.

## William R. Jeavons House



CLEVELAND HEIGHTS LANDMARKS

**Mark Souther**

The William R. Jeavons House at 2541 Arlington Road was built in 1910 and became a Cleveland Heights Landmark in 2000. Designed by prominent Cleveland architect Harlen E. Shimmin, the imposing beige brick home sits on a two-acre corner lot at the confluence of Arlington and Monmouth roads in the Shaker Farm Historic District.

Originally the core of the Van Sweringen brothers' Shaker Village development, before the majority of it took shape in the city of Shaker Heights to the south, Fairmount Boulevard and the winding streets to either side, including Arlington, [featured] some of the most opulent homes in the emerging suburbs—so much so that Fairmount Boulevard was even called the Euclid Avenue of the Heights.

William R. Jeavons was the founder of the Perfection Stove Company, and his house incorporated many of his company's innovations. The Tudor Revival-style house—which originally occupied 4.5-acres of grounds, until Jeavons and his wife, Grace, split off two new lots in 1919 to build homes for their son and daughter—features

many wonderful period details, including leaded and stained glass, decorative brackets, and its original clay-tile roof. Its Tudor Revival cross timbering pairs with Arts and Crafts features—a common assemblage at the time.

The house's interior was featured in the January 1913 issue of *Ohio Architect and Builder*, in an article about the interiors of Shimmin-designed houses, with extensive commentary on how it and other Shimmin houses reflected the emerging incorporation ("even in climates as severe as northern Ohio") of sunporches, and innovations in tungsten lamps and vapor heating, as well as the elimination of ceiling lights, bedroom fireplaces and claw-foot tubs.

Interestingly, Jeavons' son, William Norman Jeavons, was an architect who was a consultant to the Van Sweringens on their Shaker Heights master plan. Jeavons, who also founded the Hermit Club, designed many homes in Shaker Heights, as well as his own house at 2505 Arlington Road, next door to his parents' home.

*Mark Souther, a member of the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, wrote this article. This column is produced by members of the CH Landmark Commission, to highlight historically significant buildings in Cleveland Heights, and share its mission of preserving and protecting buildings, works of art and other objects of historical or architectural value to the community.*

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## Heights historical photo of the month



It wasn't just swimming that drew crowds to Cumberland Pool early in its history; there were also special events. One such event took place in August 1945, when Stubby Kruger put on his famous "water comedy" show. Kruger, an Olympic swimmer and diver in the 1920s, went on to work in Hollywood as an actor and stuntman. His traveling production featured diving and synchronized swimming stunts set to music in a variety-show format.

This photo was selected by the Cleveland Heights Historical Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and promoting the heritage of Cleveland Heights. For more information, and to view additional historical images, visit [www.chhistory.org](http://www.chhistory.org) or [www.facebook.com/clevelandheightshistorical](https://www.facebook.com/clevelandheightshistorical).

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# Cleveland Heights City Council

## Meeting highlights



MAY 18, 2015

Council Member Jeff Coryell was absent.

### Forestry services and system

Council approved an agreement with Knowles Municipal Forestry LLC, for a street tree inventory system, management plan and tree tracker software. The price for these professional services shall not exceed \$57,750 and the price for the software shall not exceed \$1,800.

### Water system management

Council heard a first reading of legislation calling for a non-binding letter of intent for leasing the city's water system to a private firm, Aqua Ohio Inc., for operation and maintenance. There will be a public forum about the proposed partnership on Tuesday, May 26, at the Community Center. The meeting will include a short presentation. Representatives from Aqua Ohio will answer questions and address concerns. The meeting will be taped and shown on the government channel (Channel 20 on Time Warner Cable) and on the city's YouTube channel. The letter of intent will be posted as well.

Later in the meeting Mayor Dennis Wilcox explained the background for this action. Despite the best efforts of the city manager, council and staff to find ways to improve the performance of the water system, current operations are losing money. The city has determined that investment in the system would be the best way to cut inefficiencies, but the city lacks the capital. Rather than borrowing up to \$20 million or turning the system over to the City of Cleveland, council proposes a partnership with a private entity, as outlined in the non-binding letter of intent noted above.

Wilcox listed a number of considerations and goals, including resolving the deficit, securing capital for improvement and continuous investment to avoid water system issues, maintaining high levels of service to residents, stabilizing rates, respecting the existing workforce and its dedication to the city, and protecting options for future city leadership.

The mayor said that the overall goals are safe drinking water at reasonable rates and bringing the system back up to where it should be. The most important thing the city can do now is to convey information to residents and hear their feedback. He welcomed citizen input at the meeting on May 26.

### Nuisance properties

Council declared two properties to be nuisances needing abatement: 3432 Altamont Ave. and 896 Greyton Road.

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.

JUNE 1, 2015

All council members were present.

### Public comments

Water services agreement: Acknowledging that the large audience might be there to speak to the proposed privatization of the city's water services, Mayor Wilcox announced that council had permanently withdrawn a pending letter of agreement with Aqua Ohio, [and that] council would be looking for other ways to make the water department self-sustaining.

Six residents, Jeffrey Seidel, Jim Miller, Linda Butler, Diane Hallum, Susan Miller and Alan Romanoff, commented on the water issue and council's decision to abandon that approach. They expressed a range of views, including gratitude to council for listening and addressing the issue, concern for city employees, the need for a regional solution, the significance of the community's vigilance, the potential to turn the community's interest into support for a fair solution, greater use of the skills of the community to help design a solution, problems with the City of Cleveland water department, and the need for citizen engagement when there are serious problems to solve.

### CDBG funds

Council approved dispersal of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to the following seven nonprofit organizations, to address various needs in the community:

- Cedar Taylor Development Association, \$10,000 for streetscaping,
- Center for Families and Children (the Centers), \$17,000 for the Pinpoint Program for middle school youth who have been suspended from school,
- Cleveland Tenants Union, \$7,000 for telephone assistance for landlord-tenant issues,
- Family Connections of Northeast Ohio, \$20,000 to provide in-home literacy support to 300 preschool and elementary [school] children and families,
- FutureHeights, \$26,865 for mini grants and staff support for neighborhood leadership development and community-building activities,
- Heights Emergency Food Center, \$9,855 for its food pantry,
- Home Repair Resource Center, \$137,500 for home repair training, counseling, grants and incentives.

### Road resurfacing

Council approved an agreement with Specialized Construction Inc., for not more than \$331,415, for surface treatment and crack sealing, and awarded \$1,526,910 to Ronyak Paving Company to execute the city's street resurfacing program for 2015.

### LGBT Pride Month

Council proclaimed June 2015 as LGBT Pride Month. Council Member Jeff Coryell noted with pride that Cleveland Heights is an oasis for the protection of citizens from prejudice and persecution for their sexual orientation and gender identity.

LWV Observer: Susie Kaeser.

Please note: YouTube videos of Cleveland Heights City Council meetings may be accessed at [www.youtube.com/cleveland-heights](http://www.youtube.com/cleveland-heights).

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org).

See disclaimer on page 6.



# Longtime resident leads community garden with wisdom and love



## OUT OF THE BOX

Jan Kious

Phyllis Thomas is in charge of the 81-year-old Oxford Community Garden located next to the Oxford Elementary School in Cleveland Heights. It's obvious why her predecessor chose her for the job. She is a straightforward woman who elicits respect through her warm and loving, no-nonsense approach to life and problems.

As the leader of the disparate group of gardeners, Thomas is tasked with enforcing the garden rules, recruiting gardeners, allocating plots and maintaining peace and communication among the gardeners.

"Oh, my goodness, if you had been here yesterday [when Tom Gibson and Elsa Johnson conducted a permaculture class] you would have seen all the different cultures and ages of people. Refugees from Nepal, a Vietnamese woman, blacks, a Russian woman, white people,

about 30 people in total. I was so proud to see everyone together. We try to work together, sometimes we have problems communicating, but I love this garden," she said.

When Thomas took over, she recalled, "I had a different vision from the person before me. I wanted to try different ways of gardening. I want the garden to be a place of peace and a place of inspiration. I come down here when I am stressed, and simply sit in the garden. I would love to see a permaculture garden with benches under the trees where people in the neighborhood could come for peace and relaxation."

Thomas has had a double plot in the garden for the past 16 years. She became the leader three years ago and, together with George Fleming, her deputy, she nurtures a community in this green and peaceful corner of Cleveland Heights.

Phyllis Thomas was born in Quitman, Ga., in 1947. She was raised in the Southern way, respecting her elders and calling everyone, even those only a little older than her, Ma'am or Sir. She misses the Southern tradition of looking everyone you pass in the eye and greeting each one.

Her husband, Willie, moved to Cleveland in 1968, when he got a job in the General Motors plant as a skilled tradesman. Phyllis and their oldest son moved here in 1970 to join him. They lived in Collinwood initially, then, in 1973, they bought a house on Monticello Boulevard, where they have lived for the past 42 years. Thomas, herself, also worked at GM as a technician for many years. Their three children—Gregory, Sherri and Willie—all graduated from Heights High and live and work in the Cleveland area.

"I am so grateful that all my children can take care of themselves. We raised them up so that [each] would be an asset to society. Sometimes, you can take care of yourself, but not be an asset to society," said Thomas, who also has six grandsons and two granddaughters.

When Thomas was a child, her mother told her that there is some-



Phyllis Thomas

thing important in everyone, and that she should try to love and treat everyone as if they are important. "When I have trouble with gardeners, I try to love them to death," Thomas said, "and I find that things turn out right."

*Jan Kious has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1974, and, with her husband, raised four children here. She is interested in people in the Heights community who fit the description of living "out of the box."*

# Get buggy with HRRC

Pam Wetherill

We all know how good (some) bugs can be. We spend time trying to attract ladybugs, mantises and pollinator bees to our yards and gardens, hoping the work they do will help us reduce or eliminate the use of chemicals. We understand how necessary bugs are, even providing food for birds and spiders.

If they manage to live through the summer and fall, though, where do they spend the winter?

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History (CMNH) and the Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) have teamed up to answer that question. On Saturday, July 18, 10 a.m. to noon, parents and children (suggested ages 6-10) can attend Build a Bug House, a hands-on opportunity to learn why bugs are good, and to build a bug house that can hang in one's yard. Attendees will also learn how to outfit the bug house with materials bugs can use over the winter.

The workshop will be taught by CMNH naturalist Nancy Howell and carpentry experts from HRRC. Long-popular in Europe, bug houses are beautiful, functional pieces of garden art. They are limited only by the builder's imagination, and make a useful addition to any outdoor area.



A sample bug house.

All children must have a parent or adult guardian to participate in the workshop—and vice versa. The cost is \$5 per family, plus \$10 per box built. All supplies will be provided, and a supervised area will be available for siblings too young to participate in the workshop.

The workshop will take place at the Oxford Community Garden, at the north end of Oxford Road (off Noble Road) at Oxford Elementary School.

To register, call HRRC, 216-381-6100, ext. 16. Registration and payment are due by Friday, July 10.

*Pam Wetherill is the home repair education coordinator at HRRC.*

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## Heights Heritage Home Tour planning is underway

Pam Wetherill

With Cleveland's roller coaster weather—It's Spring! It's Winter! It's Summer! No, it's Spring!—it might be hard to imagine the crisp days and cool nights of September, but that's exactly what the Heights Heritage Home Tour team has been doing since early March. The team has been busy planning the always-popular tour, sponsored by the Heights Community Congress (HCC), and is in the midst of lining up another amazing roster of homes and gardens.

The 2015 Heights Heritage Home Tour will take place on Sunday, Sept. 20. A preview party will be held on Saturday, Sept. 19, at the Alcazar, a Cleveland Heights landmark. Valet parking will be provided, and Lolly the Trolley will chauffeur partygoers around the town for a candlelight sneak preview of a sampling of homes.

Homes on this year's tour include an authentically renovated Rockefeller home, elegant homes in the Chestnut Hills and Fairfax neighborhoods, a charming bungalow, and a foreclosed home that has been expertly renovated. The tour will feature a variety of specialized gardens as well, including community and individual gardens with a mission or concept, and likely an interesting history, all in keeping with the theme of the 2015 tour: Step Into Our Stories.

Barry Solomon, longtime HCC board member, is chair of the 2015 tour, and Tom Fello is the honorary chair. Volunteers are needed for planning and also to staff locations on the day of the tour. For information on individual or group volunteering and participation, call HCC at 216-321-6775. Each member will be

thanked with a complimentary tour ticket.

For tour and ticket information, visit [www.heightscongress.org](http://www.heightscongress.org).

*Pam Wetherill is a volunteer with the Heights Community Congress. She serves on the Fair Housing Committee and is a resident of University Heights.*

## How to cruise around town on your bike



LIFE CYCLE

Heights Bicycle Coalition

If you want to join the growing number of Heights residents who use bicycles for short trips and exercise, this is the perfect time to start. If you plan to buy a bicycle, know what to look for to get the right bike for your needs. Local bike shops can help you find one in your price range, or, if you want to purchase a used bike, seek advice from a knowledgeable friend.

Bicycles range from awful to awesome, and you will need help finding the right one for you. You will also need to know some good routes and basic rules of the road.

**The bike:** If you want the health benefits of cruising to the coffee shop, around the neighborhood, or to work, you need a basic bike that is easy to mount and comfortable to ride.

Bikes with "step through" frames do not have a top bar. These bikes are easy to mount, offer an upright riding position and have a well-cushioned seat. Handlebars are flat or sloped up, and the frames are lighter than an old-school bike.

There are a few hills in the Heights, and a few gears are nice—three to eight is good for a city bike. Most bicycles have hand brakes, but you can still get old-fashioned coaster brakes on some models.

There is a bewildering array of bicycle styles. Hybrid or city bikes are good ones to get started. You can pull small children on a child trailer, or ride a tandem. Cargo bikes can carry larger loads with human power. An electric motor-powered bicycle lets you pedal, but the motor provides more speed and distance, and can boost pedaling for cyclists who are older, or have weak legs.

**You get what you pay for:** Bike shops carry a full range of adult and children's bicycles. They will cost more than poor-quality bikes



Blaise Lily (left), on her pedal-less push bike, with Joyce Brabner, whose bike features a small electric motor. Both bikes were purchased at Cain Park Bicycle.

sold at discount stores, but the price typically includes several months or even a year of free service.

A low-end adult bicycle at a local shop will start at about \$300. Bikes from discount stores are cheaper, but many riders are disappointed by their lack of durability.

**Knowledge + Skill + Route selection:** The more you ride, the more comfortable you feel on the road. Bicycles are classified as vehicles under Ohio law, so follow traffic rules and ride with the flow of traffic. If riding at night, use a white headlight and a red taillight. Cyclists can legally use the full lane, but ride as far to the right as you are comfortable. And, always wear a helmet.

Bike Cleveland's *Biking in Cleveland* booklet is a wonderful resource. Also, Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) and Bike Shaker produce a Heights bicycle map with suggested side streets for crosstown travel, sold at local bicycle shops for just \$2. A downloadable version is available on the HBC website, <http://bikesintheheights.org>.

Everything is closer than you think. Ride there.

*The Heights Bicycle Coalition was formed in the spring of 2010 and works to encourage citizens to ride their bicycles for fun, fitness and transportation. HBC member Mary Dunbar wrote this month's column.*

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## City Fresh CSA comes to Coventry

Erika Dunyak

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is building healthy, sustainable communities and, through a program called City Fresh, a new CSA has come to Cleveland Heights. Participants can pick up weekly shares of fresh, local produce every Tuesday this summer, next to the Coventry Village Library. The program began June 9 and will run for 20 weeks.

The City Fresh CSA is part of the New Agrarian Center (NAC), a nonprofit organization that has been at the epicenter of Cleveland's local food revival for the past decade.

The inspiration behind City Fresh was to end food deserts—neighborhoods in Greater Cleveland where there are few or no stores where fresh produce can be found. City Fresh supplies these neighborhoods with fresh produce and offers reduced pricing for families or individuals with limited incomes.

Unlike most CSA programs, in which a shareholder must pay for the entire season up-front, City Fresh orders can be placed for the whole season, monthly, or just for a single week. City Fresh offers individual shares for \$15 (\$9 for limited-income individuals) and family shares for \$28 (\$17 for limited-income families).

On the morning of a drop-off day,

City Fresh farm liaisons visit nearly a dozen farms within a 70-mile radius of downtown Cleveland. The farms are mostly Amish family farms, but also include the George Jones Farm, 70-acre research farm and nature preserve in Oberlin. At the farms, liaisons load the City Fresh truck with ripe fruits and vegetables, picked no more than 24 hours before the trucks arrive.

City Fresh then makes the rounds to designated “Fresh Stops” throughout Cuyahoga and Lorain counties, where shareholders can pick up their weekly shares. Each of the 16 Fresh Stops are run by volunteers ready to take orders for the following week and answer questions about the program and the produce.

Is there something in your basket you don't like or are allergic to? No problem. Every Fresh Stop has a “barter table,” where shareholders can place any unwanted item and swap it with another shareholder's unwanted produce.

To learn more about City Fresh, or to volunteer, visit [www.cityfresh.org](http://www.cityfresh.org), come to the Fresh Stop next to the Coventry Village Library any Tuesday this summer, 5–7 p.m., or call City Fresh at 216-469-0904.

*Erika Dunyak is the community liaison for City Fresh.*

## IPM invites participants to join in its immersion experience programs

Raluca Besliu

An Immersion Experience Program (IEP) with International Partners in Mission (IPM), an international nonprofit based in Cleveland Heights, is a life-changing opportunity to discover another culture, primarily by interacting with locals who are implementing initiatives focused on improving their communities.

IEPs are short-term trips to the places where IPM works. IEP participants, many of whom are from Northeast Ohio, will learn about the socio-economic, political, cultural and historic realities of these places.

This year, July 30 through Aug. 5, IPM is holding an immersion to the Native American Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. This is the seventh-largest Indian reservation in the United States, and is shared by the Shoshone and Arapaho tribes.

Participants will have the opportunity to learn about the Shoshone culture.

They will also be able to meet with representatives from Sacajawea Treasures, a Native American project that IPM supports. This program works with Eastern Shoshone tribal members to develop sustainable economic opportunities and promote native culture. The project is currently working to set up a Web page to show the traditional beadwork of the tribe members online.

During the immersion, par-

ticipants will visit several key sites of importance to Native Americans, such as the burial site of Sacajawea, the Native American woman who guided Lewis and Clark on their expedition in the western part of the United States. They will tour the cultural center to learn more about the history of the Shoshone, Arapaho and the reservation.

Participants will also have an opportunity to visit the reservation's oldest community, Washakie, home to Fort Washakie, which was a military outpost until 1909, when it was decommissioned. Finally, they will take part in the annual Gift of the Waters Indian Pageant—a celebration of native music and dance.

In addition to organizing immersion trips, IPM provides financial and technical assistance to 60 community-initiated and run projects in 20 countries throughout the world, including El Salvador, India and Kenya. IPM works across borders of faith, culture and economic circumstance, with children, women and youth, to create partnerships that build justice, peace and hope for all.

IPM encourages Heights residents to join its immersion trips. For more information, contact Melanie Strout at [mstrout@ipmconnect.org](mailto:mstrout@ipmconnect.org).

*Raluca Besliu, originally from Romania, is a staff member at IPM. She studied international relations from Vassar College and has a master's degree from the University of Oxford.*



## MUSIC on the Lawn! Ice Cream Social Wednesday, July 29<sup>th</sup> 6-8 p.m.

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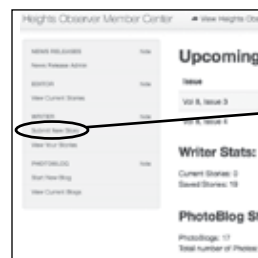
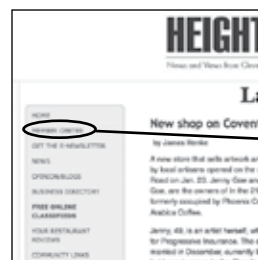
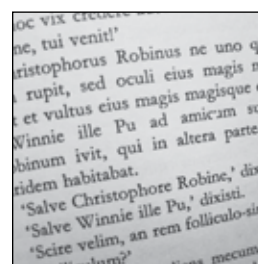
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4. **Reward yourself**; you're about to be published. We'll review and edit your article, and let you know if we have any questions.



# Cleveland leadership program seeks applicants

Sandra Kluk

In 2006, the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Foundation, along with then-Cleveland Mayor Michael White, established a leadership training program for engaged neighborhood leaders. The Neighborhood Leadership Development Program (NLDP) is a free, 15-session community engagement training program for residents of Cleveland and its inner-ring suburbs who are working on projects within the City of Cleveland and who are determined to make a positive impact on their communities.

Through an application process, 20 committed individuals are chosen for the program year.

NLDP participants and graduates have many interests and are working on a variety of approaches to improving life in their communities. The NLDP is now seeking applicants for its next training sessions, which begin on Aug. 29.

Orlando Boyd of Cleveland Heights is a recent NLDP graduate. He founded the Labyrinthian Egress Organization, which served adolescents who were close to aging out of, or who had already aged out of, the foster care system,



Orlando Boyd

COURTESY MARIA KAISER

and were no longer eligible for services. The organization helped them identify benefits they were entitled to and provided creative ways to approach life after foster care through the development of life skills, coaching, and positive expression through the arts. The organization's ultimate goal was to provide participants with the ability to recognize their gifts and talents, identify appropriate routes to accomplishing their goals and develop a commitment to becoming a greater asset to society. Boyd also has a passion to help the fatherless, primarily males, build self-esteem and self-awareness.

Currently, he is providing services to young people, 20 and older. He runs small, interactive sessions designed to build a sense of self-worth, leading the youths to understand that they are "bold and courageous enough to face the challenges in their lives."

Boyd credits NLDP with providing him with many skills useful in his work with youth. "NLDP taught me to appreciate the value of my and others' time. I learned an appreciation for the differences that people bring to the table, the value of facilitation techniques, and how to let ideas grow organically and take form. It was also priceless for me to learn to see life through an equity lens. I was able to learn from the experiences of other community leaders in my group, to see how they met challenges in their lives and work. There is tenacity on the part of those involved in NLDP to make sure the experience is the best for all participants."

The 15 sessions take place on Saturdays at Trinity Commons, 2230 Euclid Ave., beginning Aug. 29. The deadline for applications is Aug. 5. For more information and an application, visit [www.nldpcleveland.com](http://www.nldpcleveland.com) or call 216-776-6172.

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

# Unity Center hosts public forum on world religions

Susan Haberland

The Unity Center of the Heights celebrates the diversity of the Heights with a Civilization Transformation Forum on July 19 at 1:30 p.m. The forum is open to the public, and no registration is required.

Cynthia Rantala, founder and moderator of Civilization Transformation, and founder of Hershey Montessori School in Concord Township, Ohio, will moderate the forum and ask participants, "What is this world coming to? What is happening in this country with all these other religions coming into play here?"

Have you asked yourself these or similar questions? How much do you know about religions other than your own—whatever that "own" may be? The Civilization Transformation panel will explore these and other questions regarding religions, and how we relate to one another.

During the panel discussion portion of the forum, each participant will present and discuss the core values of respective religions while exploring the similarities and differences among them. A Q&A will follow the panel discussion.

The participants are: Rabbi Stephen Weiss, Senior Rabbi at B'nai Jeshurun in Pepper Pike; Ratanjit S. Sondhe, a Hindu/Sikh; Imam Farooq Aboelzahab, former Head Imam at The Islamic Center of Greater Toledo; and Rev. Tony Senf, Spiritual Director of the Unity Center.

The forum will take place at the Unity Center of the Heights, 2653 South Taylor Road, Cleveland Heights. There is no charge, but donations are appreciated, and make events like this one possible. For information, call 216-321-7566 or visit [www.unitycenteronline.org](http://www.unitycenteronline.org).

*Susan Haberland was born in Cleveland and lived in six states, Iran and France, before settling in the Heights. Most of her career was in the chemical industry, in business management and strategic planning. She is a member of Unity Center of the Heights.*

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# GardenWalk Cleveland tour is July 11 and 12

Mary Hosier

The Fifth Annual GardenWalk Cleveland will take place July 11 and 12, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Cleveland Heights resident Jan Kious, founder and chairperson of the annual event, said, "GardenWalk is an opportunity to show Cleveland at its best!"

While the free, self-guided tour of more than 200 private gardens, farms, vineyards and orchards is focused on the city of Cleveland, the annual event is organized in large part by a committed group of Cleveland Heights volunteers. Besides Kious, they include Dorothy Bier and Greta De Meyer, longstanding members of the Perennial Society.

Neighborhoods on this year's GardenWalk include Detroit Shoreway, Old Brooklyn, Larchmere, West Park and Slavic Village. Each neighborhood will have a designated headquarters where visitors can find garden maps, restrooms and water.

Guides showing maps of the gardens on the tour will be available for download beginning July 1, at [www.gardenwalkcleveland.org](http://www.gardenwalkcleveland.org).

*Mary Hosier is a recent transplant to Cleveland Heights from White Bear Lake, Minn. This is her second year on the GardenWalk committee. She writes an educational citizen science project, Journey North, that tracks animal migrations and seasonal change ([www.journeynorth.org](http://www.journeynorth.org)).*



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## Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education Meeting highlights

MAY 19, 2015

All board members were present.

### Career tech director

Superintendent Talisa Dixon introduced Brad Callender as the new director of the career tech education program.

### Strategic Planning Committee

The district is developing a five-year strategic plan. Superintendent Dixon introduced Amy Morgenstern, consultant and president of Main Stream Enterprises, and Saroya Queen-Tabor, Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) chair. The SPC includes teachers, officials, parents and community members to make informed decisions, develop best-thinking processes, force trade-offs among alternatives, and guide the district. The committee held its first meeting in January and is conducting an ongoing study that includes analysis of overall program effectiveness, alignment with studies, prioritizations, feasibility, benefits and costs. The goal is to improve the district's vision and mission statements. Currently, the vision statement is "Preparing all students for success in a global economy," or PASSAGE. These statements will be reviewed later, and none of the text was ready to be approved. The SPC will address the following:

- Student outcomes where every student graduates and pursues higher learning
- Excellent education for all students
- Parental and community engagement and support
- Human concerns and culture of excellence
- Operational resources and finance technology

### Facilities presentation

The architects explained the hard-cost estimate for the high school design development. The basis cost includes the Gateway building, design development work for the Delisle Center, detailed documentation of building systems, and actual quantities and materials. The adjusted budget for these is \$79,361,139. The estimates received in fall 2014 are now within \$16,000 of the budget. A summary report including site preparation, general trades work, and mechanical and electrical work showed savings. A concern is that labor for this project is competing with many projects in Cleveland. An alternate summary includes costs for a full geothermal HVAC plant for \$1,300,000 and field irrigation with rainwater storage for \$200,000. Also included for the Heights High auditorium are a new orchestra pit for \$750,000, historical theater seating for \$75,000, coffered ceiling restoration under the balcony for \$100,000, chandelier restoration for \$75,000, and a multicolor paint scheme for \$500,000. The board must decide on these quickly once construction starts.

The board approved the recommendation for the Cleveland Heights High School construction project design development phase estimate.

LWV Observer: Lillian Houser.

JUNE 2, 2015

All board members were present.

### Awards and recognitions

Board President Nancy Peppler and Super-



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intendent Talisa Dixon recognized student art award recipients, district retirees, and three award-winning educators: Sandy Womack, Hollis Munoz and Joyce Bukovac. They announced that Roxboro Middle School has been named an authorized IB (International Baccalaureate) school and all staff members have been trained.

### Preschool rates

The board approved preschool rates for 2015-16. Board President Peppler asked about parent fees. According to Treasurer Scott Gainer, the district subsidizes the preschool program with 30 percent of its cost supported by outside sources, including parent fees. Preschool program offerings will not change when the calendar is adjusted to align with the school calendar.

### Cleveland Clinic mobile unit

Jeffrey Johnston, student services director, reported an agreement, soon to be presented to the board, whereby a Cleveland Clinic mobile unit will come to the district once a week to provide medical services to students. Clinic medical staff will help students manage chronic conditions such as asthma or frequent stomachaches, possibly provide sports exams, and help connect students with needed medical care. Students will be referred by school nurses, and written parental consent will be required. Parents or their insurance, including that provided by the Affordable Care Act, will be billed for service. Nancy Peppler suggested that the agreement include educational opportunities for high school students in Allied Health Care Options.

### Transportation stipend to private schools

Steve Shergalis, director of business services, explained criteria that allow a public school district to provide a stipend to a private school in lieu of providing transportation for its students. These include the number of the school's students using the transportation, the time required, and the extent of disruption to the district's own transportation schedule. The State of Ohio sets the stipend amount, it impacts few private school students, and it saves the district money. The board approved such payments in lieu of transportation to Julie Billiart, Hawken, University, Laurel and Agnon schools.

### District's finance needs

Board President Peppler reported that the strategic planning process and the search for budget savings would continue. She stated that, in spite of the levy failure in May, the district needs additional resources because of Ohio's school funding system; board members must provide those resources because of their oath to educate the district's students.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org). See disclaimer on page 6.

LWV Observer: Nancy Dietrich.

## Oxford Elementary first-grade teacher Betty Miller retires



Betty Miller with Tom Schmida.

Patrick Carpenter and Karen Rego

All great teachers dedicate their lives to teaching, challenging and loving their students. Betty "Oxford" Miller has been a standout in this regard. She is retiring after 40 years as first-grade teacher at Oxford Elementary School.

With undeniable dedication, Miller has tirelessly advocated for both her students and her colleagues in education. She has done everything possible to challenge her students and see them succeed. Miller has helped generations of Oxford children and their families, often working through lunch and after school.

Throughout her time as an educator, Miller has worked hard for teachers' rights and better working conditions in Heights schools. She has been an advocate of issues and candidates focused on the needs of students.

Miller always made efforts to better her skills as a teacher through a variety of continuing education workshops and classes, and she has always been willing to learn and incorporate new techniques and strategies in her teaching.

Above all else, Miller will be remembered for putting her students first. She treated each and every first-grader with respect and love. Her classroom has always been a haven of cooperation and high expectations. She challenged each child, and accepted nothing less than a child's very best effort.

This May, Miller was honored by her colleagues around the district as the winner of Cleveland Heights Teachers Union's (CHTU) Tom Schmida Teacher Leader Award. Honoring the legacy of the union's immediate past president, the award recognizes CHTU members who touch the lives of students every day, as well as advocate for the profession. Miller was honored at the union's spring social, and also won two baskets in a raffle to support the local's scholarship for a Heights High senior interested in pursuing a career in education.

*Karen Rego and Patrick Carpenter are teachers at Oxford Elementary School. They serve as co-stewards for the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, representing their school.*

## Renaissance principal Reed retires

Joy Henderson

James Reed, Heights High Renaissance School principal, will retire after 27 years of service in the CH-UH City School District. A social studies teacher at Wiley Middle School for 11 years, he moved to the high school in 1999 to be a unit principal, responsible for a class of students as they progressed through the school. In 2003, he became a member of the Small Schools design team and was the founding principal of the Renaissance small school.

One of the guiding tenants of the small school model was an emphasis on strong relationships between students and staff as a basis for instruction and leadership. "One of the most rewarding aspects of working here has been getting to know students," said Reed. "When I could spend the time to understand students, it made it easier to guide them."

Reed said he has enjoyed working with the class of 2015: "This year's seniors are special to me. They have had an impact on the school and I know they will have an impact on their community and country."

Emily Vinson, senior class president, expressed her appreciation for Reed's leadership of her class and the school. "I first met Mr. Reed when my eighth-grade class visited the school," she said. "Little did I know that he would become someone who I could

count on for advice, support and guidance when I arrived here."

Leatrice Douglas, Renaissance teacher, worked with Reed for 24 years, and said, "Jim worked tirelessly to build a sense of family and cohesiveness in the Renaissance staff. As my administrator, he supported my work to be a creative teacher. His retirement is bittersweet for me. I am happy for him to have time to do the things that are special to him, but I am sad to see him go. I consider him my brother and my friend for life."

Reed has not yet made plans for the next chapter of his life, but is looking forward to new opportunities.

"I have great confidence in the school and district leadership," he said. "And I am very grateful to the parents and community for sending us their children. The families and students have made a positive impact on me."

For the 2015-16 school year, Heights High students will attend school at the temporary Heights High on the Wiley campus in University Heights. The school's leadership structure will comprise an administrative principal, Zoraba Ross, and four assistant principals: Alisa Lawson-McKinnie, Jane Simeri, Joe Nicklos, and one to be hired this summer.

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

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# Campfire Storytelling Series lets teens share their experiences

Julia Murphy

Traditions are often passed down in the form of stories and myths. Framing experiences in a storytelling narrative makes them more accessible to others and easier to remember. While the concept is as old as humanity, live storytelling is having a resurgence. For example, The Moth: True Stories Told Live is a New York-based nonprofit dedicated to the art and craft of storytelling. The Moth's podcast has become one of the top ten most popular on iTunes.

Another example is the once-a-month storytelling event called "Keep Talking" at The Happy Dog

in Cleveland. Hosted by two stand-up comedians who choose a broad theme, it invites participants to come prepared to stand and tell their stories. The only rule is that the story has to be true.

This is where Monica Wilson, Heights Libraries youth services associate, got the idea to start Campfire Storytelling Series, a storytelling program for teens. While they didn't have an actual campfire at the first session on June 12, the group sat outside in a circle and did eat s'mores. They practiced storytelling around last month's theme, My School Year Hero.

"I thought this would be a

great program for our teens because we often end up doing this type of activity anyway in our other programs," said Wilson. "I also think there's something magical about sitting outside in a circle telling stories."

Wilson attended Regina High School in South Euclid. One of her favorite memories from what she called "this wonderful, strange little place" was an affirmation circle activity in her theology class. She learned how to vocalize her appreciation for her peers, turn her experiences into a narrative and also how to listen.

"Being a teenager is an intense

time of self-discovery and it's good to be self-aware. Talking through these concepts, or composing thoughts into a story or narrative can really help people, of all ages, figure themselves out," said Wilson.

The program continues on Friday, July 10, at 3:30 p.m., with a theme of The Underdog, and on Friday, Aug. 14, at 3:30 p.m., with My Superpower as the theme. For more information, visit [www.heightslibrary.org](http://www.heightslibrary.org), or call the Noble Neighborhood Library at 216-291-5665.

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

## Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights

MAY 18, 2015

Board Member James Roosa was absent.

### In memoriam: Shony Long

Friends and colleagues of Shony (Sushano) Long, librarian at the Coventry Village Library from 1985-92, gathered to honor her as the board adopted a resolution regarding her service. Long died on April 4, and a memorial service will be in June.

One of her long-lasting projects was the development of deaf services at the library. In this, she was inspired by working with J. R. Doughty, then the custodian of the library, and deaf from childhood. She planned Deaf Expo 1988, an outstanding event featuring actors, performers and educators from around the country.

Doughty was present for the resolution, and sign-language interpreter Pat Cangelosi facilitated communication among guests, Doughty and the library staff.

Shony was also committed to children's services and built an outstanding collection of picture books, continuing the excellence of the Coventry Village Library in that area.

### Balanced Scorecard Measures of Success

Deputy Director Kim DeNero-Ackroyd presented highlights of the Balanced Scorecard Measures of Success for 2014-15, focusing on the visit of the Ohio State Library Mobile Tech Lab to the University Heights Library, engagement of staff members in national and local conference programs, growing attendance at teen open mic night at the Noble Neighborhood Library, and an update to the teen room at the Lee Road Library, including a Maker Space.

### Sunday hours in place

Director Nancy Levin was pleased to announce that Sunday hours are now on the schedule of all branches.

### University Heights Library parking enlargement

The acquisition of the house on Fenwick Road, adjacent to the University Heights Library



parking lot, will allow the enlargement of the library's parking lot. The appliances from the house have been removed and donated to the Heights Family to Family Collaborative. The plantings around the house will be transferred to the garden areas of the library.

### April public service report highlights:

- Associate Ellen Paulini established two additional book discussion groups at Huntington Greens and Cedar Center apartments. The monthly discussion at the Cleveland Heights Senior Center continues.
- Heights Community Congress partnered with the library to host the program "Connecting the Dots: Fair Housing and our Schools." A focus was the use by realtors of school ratings in connection with listed homes.
- The Springtime in Paris series continued, with two lectures and a visual presentation.
- Nationally known poet and poetry therapist John Fox joined local poet Linda Tuthill for the program Finding What You Didn't Lose, which included poetry readings and reflections on the power of poetry to heal and transform.
- On April 19 at Coventry Village Library, the Shire opened with a celebration and a door count of 867.
- Local author Martha Conway spoke about her new book, *Thieving Forest*, and shared her research process and writing approach. The book was the winner for best historical fiction in the 2014 North American Book Awards. Its subject is the intersection of Native Americans and settlers in 1806 Ohio.

LWV Observer: Anne S. McFarland.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org). See disclaimer on page 6.

## Heights Libraries names new finance manager

Sheryl Banks

Heights Libraries has named Deborah Herrmann as the system's new finance manager. Herrmann will begin her new job on July 1, and succeeds Jana Nassif, who left the position in April.

Prior to joining Heights Libraries, Herrmann, who lives in University Heights, served as treasurer of Strongsville City Schools. Before that, she worked as treasurer for Cuyahoga Heights School District, Kirtland Local School District and Richmond Heights School District. She also served as Gauga County's chief deputy auditor and was a tax administrator in the Medina County Auditor's Office.

"Deborah brings with her a wealth of government experience, in public school districts, and city and county governments," said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director. "That experience fits perfectly with the finance management needs of a tax-funded organization like Heights Libraries."

Levin added, "She also has experience managing construction budgets, which she will put to good use on the renovation of our University Heights branch next year."

"I have always been a voracious reader and, having worked in schools, I know the important opportunities for learning a library can provide,"



Deborah Herrmann

COURTESY HEIGHTS LIBRARIES

said Herrmann. "I am excited about the prospect of using my knowledge of government finance to benefit the library staff and patrons."

Herrmann earned her Master of Public Administration degree from Kent State University, and is licensed by the State of Ohio to serve as a public school treasurer. She is a member of the Ohio Government Finance Officers Association, the Business Advisory Committee and Insurance Committee of the Ohio Schools Council, and the Ohio School Association of School Business Officials.

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

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## Free healthcare screenings for seniors



SENIOR SCENE

Judith Eugene

Taking advantage of free healthcare screenings is a smart and affordable way to keep track of your health and detect potential problems early. The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center (SAC), located in the Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers several free screenings throughout the year, including vision screenings on July 14, conducted by Cleveland Clinic's Cole Eye Institute. There is no cost, but appointments are necessary.

Other screenings to be offered at the SAC include bi-monthly blood pressure checks administered by Case Western Reserve University medical students; vision, hearing and balance screenings administered by Cleveland Clinic; and flu shots administered by Rite Aid and

Walgreens. The SAC also hosts an annual health fair that includes screenings for glucose, cholesterol and body mass index.

For a schedule of SAC screenings, to schedule an appointment, and to arrange for low-cost transportation to the screenings, call 216-691-7377.

Cleveland Clinic is offering free blood pressure screenings at Hillcrest Hospital in Mayfield Heights on July 14, 10 a.m. to noon. Call 440-312-4784 for more information.

The Clinic is also holding a For Men Only Health and Wellness Fair on Aug. 29, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at South Pointe Hospital in Warrensville Heights. Free screenings include blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol, vision and prostate. Prostate screenings require an appointment. Call 216-491-6532 for information and to make an appointment.

If you have enrolled in Medicare Part B within the past year, you are eligible to receive a one-time preventive checkup at

the Clinic's Stephanie Tubbs Jones Health Center in East Cleveland. The exam consists of a visual acuity screening, measurement of body mass index, and other screenings. Call 216-767-4140 for information and to make an appointment.

Women over the age of 40 who do not have insurance are eligible for free mammograms at the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Health Center. Call 216-767-4140 and mention "Mammogram Mondays" to qualify. Transportation is available.

For all screenings, be sure to call ahead to confirm dates, times, and whether an appointment is required; and always discuss your screening results with your doctor.

*Judith Eugene is a native of Cleveland Heights who provides life-enrichment classes and activities for senior adults and those with physical and mental challenges through www.lovinghandsgroup.com. She can be reached at 216-408-5578 or judith@lovinghandsgroup.com.*



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## Senior Citizen Happenings

Senior Citizen Happenings, sponsored by the City of University Heights, are open to all senior citizens. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. at the University Heights Library. For information, and to suggest program topics, contact the UH Office for Senior Services at 216-397-0336 or info@universityheights.com. To receive the monthly schedule by e-mail, call 216-932-7800, ext. 205, or send an e-mail to info@universityheights.com.

**July 2:** Joanie Kaufman, who provides the delightful piano music for the popular High Tea served every Wednesday afternoon at the Cleveland Clinic, will celebrate Independence Day by performing a medley of patriotic hymns and the best of Broadway's hits.

**July 9:** Paul Sobel, president, and Arthur Raby, vice president/secretary, will talk about launching Village in the Heights, part of a national network of 90 "villages" in 36 states, to provide programs and services to enable seniors to lead healthy and active lives in their own homes.

**July 16:** Melody Hart, board member and finance committee member for Mercado Global, will describe the work of the innovative nonprofit fair-trade organization. Cleveland

Heights native Ruth DeGolia founded Mercado Global after witnessing poverty in Guatemala. The company connects indigenous women artisans in the Guatemalan highlands with major international retailers, providing the weavers and sewers with unprecedented economic opportunities, enabling them to provide for their families.

**July 23:** Steve Cagan, socially engaged activist photographer, will describe his artistic contributions to movements that are trying to change things for the better. Through his work, he has explored mechanized gold mining in Colombia, housing discrimination in urban areas of the U.S., and the plight of refugee families following Nepal's earthquake.

**July 30:** Carole Wallencheck, reference associate at the Lee Road Library, will track the rise of Paris as a world-renowned fashion center through an image-packed presentation that explores the city's high-profile designers and great couture houses.

[Note: Senior Citizen Happenings will take a break in August, and resume its regular schedule in September, after Labor Day.]



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# Cleveland Heights couple creates unique works of art

James Henke

Two Cleveland Heights residents—Matthew Hollern and Pam Argentieri—are well-known around the world for the jewelry and other art they create using metals and other materials. Some of their work is in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., and in the Vatican Archives in Italy.

Hollern and Argentieri have been making artwork together since they first met in 1990 at the Cleveland Institute of Art (CIA). Two years later, they got married, and have lived on Kingston Road in Cleveland Heights since 1992. In addition to creating works of art together, Hollern and Argentieri both do individual projects as well.

Hollern, 51, grew up in Madison, Wis. He got into art as a young child. “I remember doing art projects in the first and second grade,” he said. “I was really into carving and ceramics. Then, in high school, my homeroom was a jewelry classroom, and I really got into that.”

After high school, Hollern attended the University of Wisconsin in Madison and majored in art and French. He focused on jewelry and metalwork, and spent his junior year in France. He then attended the Tyler School of Art at Temple University in Philadelphia, where he earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1989. He subsequently moved to Cleveland and began teaching at

CIA. “I lived in Little Italy and had a studio at the Murray Hill School for about three years,” he said.

Argentieri, also 51, grew up in Shaker Heights. “I’ve always been involved with art, starting as a little kid,” she said. She attended Beaumont School, which she said had a great art department. She went to college at CIA, and earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1987. In her senior year at the institute, she won the school’s top award, the First Agnes Gund Scholarship for international travel and went to Florence, Italy, where she studied jewelry design at the Studio Arts Center International. She then returned to Cleveland and set up a studio.

Both Hollern and Argentieri have had their work exhibited at various museums and galleries around the world. Argentieri’s work was part of a May show at the Cleveland Museum of Art, and Hollern’s work has been exhibited at the Design Museo in Helsinki, Finland.

One of the most memorable events of their artistic careers occurred in the fall of 2001, when they were commissioned by John Carroll University to design a Global Champion of Freedom award for Pope John Paul II. The couple designed the award and then attended the presentation to the Pope. “We had an audience with the Pope,” Hollern said. “It was really amazing.”

Hollern and Argentieri have designed chalices and wine cups for churches in the area. They also cre-

ated a special edition of mezuzahs for Park Synagogue on Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights.

In addition to designing pieces of jewelry, and accepting commissions for religious and secular items—such as awards for medical institutions—Hollern and Argentieri also make a variety of other objects, including vases, candlesticks, teapots and urns. Their artwork can be seen on their websites: [www.argentieridesign.com](http://www.argentieridesign.com) and [www.matthewhollern.com](http://www.matthewhollern.com).

This past May, Hollern received CIA’s Schreckengost Teaching Award, which honors professors for teaching excellence over a period of at least 10 years. Hollern has now been at CIA for 26 years, and is chair of the Jewelry and Metals Department. Students, alumni and faculty determine the winner of the award.

“Matthew has influenced and shaped the lives of many successful artists over the years, supporting them and mentoring them as students and as working professionals in the field,” said Christopher Whittey, vice president of faculty affairs and chief academic officer, when he presented Hollern with the award at CIA’s commencement ceremony on May 16. “Undoubtedly, he passes all of his experience to his students, putting them in a position of leadership and empowering them both personally and professionally. He has truly dedicated his life to passing along his incredible talent to his students.”



Pam Argentieri and Matthew Hollern in their Cleveland Heights home. Some of their creations are on the mantle behind them.

“It was really wonderful to win this award,” Hollern said. “It meant a tremendous amount to me.”

Hollern and Argentieri both love living in Cleveland Heights. “I like walking around the different neighborhoods,” Argentieri said. “I walk all of the time. I also love the different areas like Coventry, Lee Road and the Taylor Fairmount area. And there are so many beautiful homes here.”

Hollern also loves walking, and occasionally walks from his house to CIA. “Cleveland Heights is really something,” he said.

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

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# Musicians share experiences of living and working in the Heights

James Henke

Cleveland Heights is known as “Home to the Arts,” and six Heights musicians took part in a recent panel event, “Welcome Home: Heights Musicians,” to recount their experiences as musicians who live, and often work, in the Heights community.

Organized by FutureHeights, Reaching Heights and Friends of Heights Libraries, the event took place on May 19 at Rockefeller’s, the restaurant and bar located in the historic Rockefeller Building on Mayfield Road.

The musicians represented a variety of musical styles, ranging from classical to folk, and gospel to “newgrass.” Two of the musicians play with the Cleveland Orchestra: Beth Woodside, a violinist who has been with the orchestra since 1992; and Scott Haigh, who plays stand-up bass, and joined the orchestra back in 1978. Panelist Charlie Mosbrook is a folk singer-songwriter who has been on the Cleveland music scene for decades, and has so far released 11 CDs over the course of his career. Brendan O’Malley plays mandolin and sings with the



Moderator David Budin and the panelists at the “Welcome Home: Heights Musicians” event (from left): David Budin, Scott Haigh, Charlie Mosbrook, Brendan O’Malley, Beth Woodside and Willie J. Wright.

newgrass band Honeybucket; and Willie J. Wright is a vocalist with the Wright Family Singers, a 10-member vocal group established in 1978, that performs gospel and spiritual music. David Budin, a Cleveland Heights writer and musician who plays guitar and sings with the band Long Road, served as the moderator for the event.

Three of the panelists—Mosbrook, O’Malley and Wright, as well as moderator Budin—grew up in the Heights. They all talked about how Heights schools influenced their musical passions.

“I was always exposed to a lot of different music when I was in school,”

O’Malley said. Mosbrook noted that he started taking drum lessons when he was in fifth grade at Fairfax Elementary School and then got involved with the school choir when he went to high school. Wright recalled that he was in the sixth-grade choir when he attended Boulevard Elementary School, and said, “All the way through high school the teachers really lit the fire and set the passion for music.”

All three spoke of the influence that the Heights, in general, has had on their love of music. “Cleveland Heights has always been this bastion of artistry and music,” Wright said. “I loved hanging out on Coventry and go-

ing to the Coventry Street Fair. There has always been so much energy there on Coventry.”

O’Malley said that, when he was growing up, his parents always took him to see music in the area, and he recalled attending shows at the Grog Shop on Coventry, the Barking Spider in University Circle, Cain Park and the Hessler Street Fair.

Neither Woodside nor Haigh grew up in Greater Cleveland, but both moved to the Heights after joining the orchestra. “I love Cleveland Heights,” said Woodside, who was born in Rochester, N.Y. “It’s really wonderful raising my two daughters here. You walk into a coffee shop, and you hear music. And there are so many opportunities for children to sing in choirs at the schools and at the churches.”

Haigh, who grew up in Illinois, added, “There’s a real concentration of artistic diversity here. It’s an interesting and vital community. It’s not the kind of community with mega-malls and mansions that were built five years ago!”

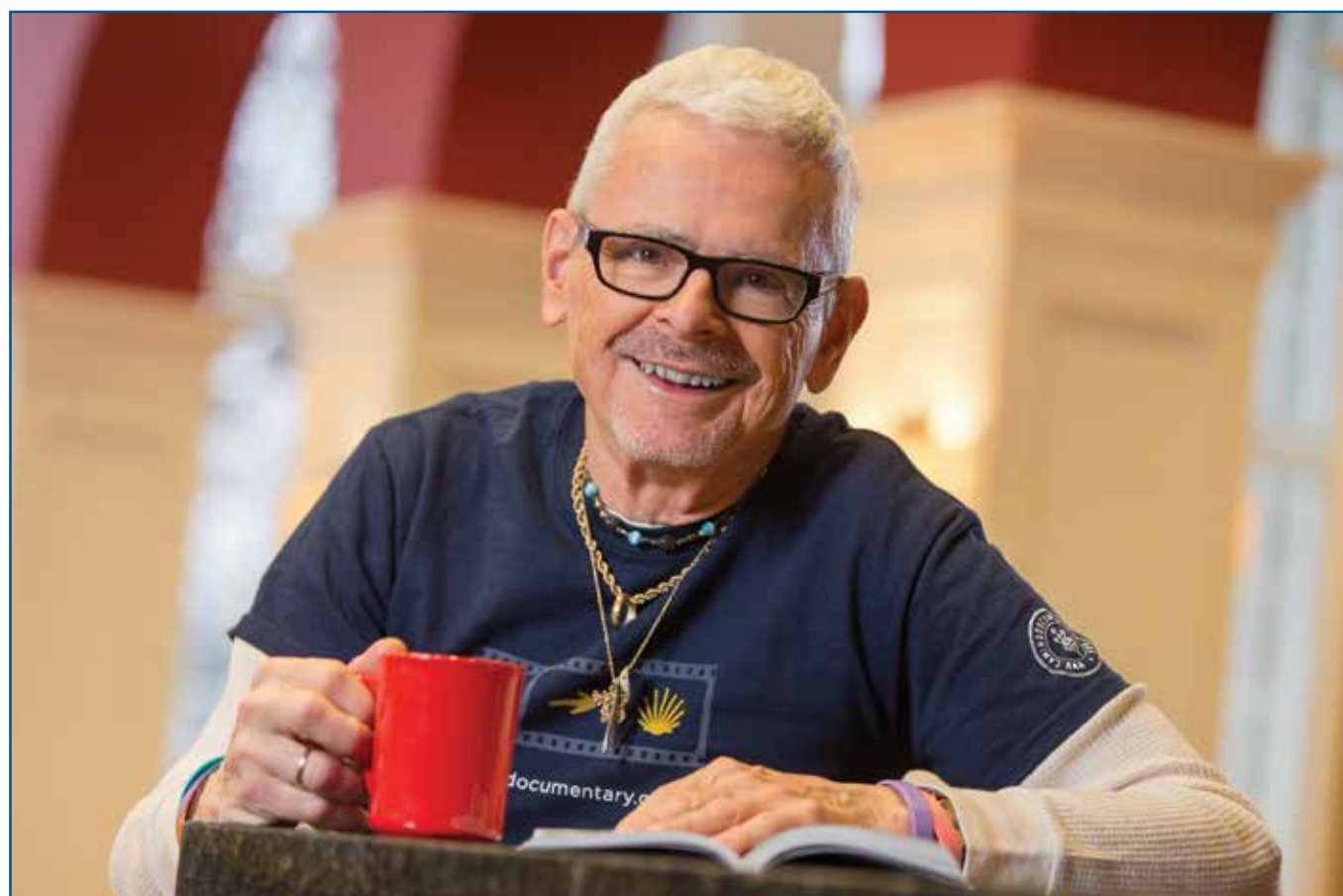
In addition to his own music, Mosbrook is known for the open-mic sessions that he runs every Monday night at Phoenix Coffee on Coventry Road. He first started doing open mics about 25 years ago, when he worked at Arabica Coffee on Coventry.

This past February, Wright formed a community choir called Ties That Bind. It’s open to all cultures and all denominations, and rehearsals are held on the second and fourth Monday of each month, 7–8:30 p.m., at the Heights Christian Church on Van Aken Boulevard in Shaker Heights.

After the panel discussion, the audience asked the musicians questions. Then, Wright sang an a cappella version of “Forever Me with Love,” followed by Mosbrook and O’Malley performing “I Will Be Coming Home to You,” with Mosbrook on guitar and O’Malley on mandolin.

The “Welcome Home: Heights Musicians” event was the third in an ongoing series of community panel discussions featuring some of the creative people who live and work in Cleveland Heights and University Heights.

*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.*



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# Renovations are underway at Heights Arts

Mary Ryan

Last year, Heights Arts was honored to receive a transformative donation from the Jean, Harry and Brenda Fuchs Family Foundation. It was the largest single gift in the nonprofit arts organization's 15 year history, and was designated in part to provide ongoing improvements to its 2,400-square-foot exhibition/performance/retail space at 2175 Lee Road.

Heights Arts staff and board members worked with John Williams of Process Creative Studios to determine how the gallery could be re-configured to provide an enhanced space for multi-disciplinary programs, offer spotlight art exhibitions in addition to the six main exhibitions each year, and better display the works for sale by local artists and artisans in the retail shop. Construction began in mid-June and is expected to conclude in mid-August.

Planned renovations entail the relocation of walls to create a more-open, flexible area for community events and exhibitions; addition of carpet to improve acoustics for Heights Arts's expanding calendar of gallery concerts and classes; a centralized sales desk with better sightlines; and revitalized displays



Heights Arts began renovations in June.

for showcasing the jewelry, ceramics, hand-blown glass, prints, photographs, stationery and homewares created by more than 70 local and regional artists.

"The renovated space will enable us to expand our programming and hold performances in the gallery, and to better define who we are and what we do. Many people who visit the gallery shop are unaware that all of the items on display are created by local artists and artisans—a high percentage of whom are Heights residents," explained Rachel Bernstein, Heights Arts executive director.

In recognition of the generosity of the Fuchs family and its commitment to the creative spirit of

the Heights, the newly renovated exhibition area will be renamed the Jean, Harry and Brenda Fuchs Family Gallery, with a spotlight exhibition of paintings by Brenda Fuchs as part of Heights Arts's reopening celebration in September.

In the meantime, Heights Arts continues to serve the Heights community during the renovation. The gallery shop temporarily has moved next door, to 2169 Lee Road, with normal gallery hours from Tuesday through Saturday.

"You will still be able to find all the unique, creative, high-quality art and gifts which directly support our local talent. At the same time, we are sponsoring a wonderful, collaborative exhibition in which the entire community can participate, at the Mandel Jewish Community Center, through Aug. 2. We will also be providing arts activities at a number of summer festivals, including the Cain Park and Larchmere arts festivals," commented Bernstein.

For more information on Heights Arts programming and opportunities for community involvement, visit [www.heightsarts.org](http://www.heightsarts.org), or call 216-371-3457.

Mary Ryan is marketing and communications coordinator at Heights Arts.

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## Celebrate National Day of Dance July 25

Sarah Hricko

What better way to celebrate a birthday than with a party and dancing? DANCECleveland is doing just that when it celebrates its 60th Anniversary season, beginning with its co-presentation of New York City-based Parsons Dance at Cain Park's Evan's Amphitheater, on July 25 at 8 p.m.

DANCECleveland—started by visionary Heights-area women in 1956, and first known as Cleveland Modern Dance Association—is one of the oldest dance-only presenters in the United States. This year, the organization returns to Cain Park after a 10-year hiatus.

Named "one of the great movers of modern dance" by *The New York Times*, Parsons Dance seemed like the perfect company for the occasion—a favorite in Northeast Ohio, and known throughout the world since 1985 as a family-friendly, uplifting dance company.

To celebrate the National Day of Dance, the performance will be supplemented by several events for dancers and non-dancers alike to take part in. Advanced dancers over 16 years of age can participate in a free dance master class at 11 a.m., with David Parsons himself, on the Evans Amphitheater stage. RSVP is required by e-mailing [sarah@dance-cleveland.org](mailto:sarah@dance-cleveland.org). Space is limited.

Dance lovers of all ages can arrive early at Cain Park to enjoy free beginner ballroom and popular line dance "classes" in the Colonnade, with music and more. Audience members over 21 can also take part in a wine tasting at 6:30 p.m., hosted by Cain Park. Wine tasting tickets

are \$10 and can be purchased in advance at [www.cainpark.com](http://www.cainpark.com) or in person at the Cain Park ticket office.

Making the day even more of a celebration, dancers, from beginner to advanced, are encouraged to learn the National Day of Dance's official 2015 routine and arrive early to perform together on stage alongside Parsons dancers. Started in 2010 by "So You Think You Can Dance" co-creator and Dizzy Feet Foundation co-president Nigel Lythgoe, the National Day of Dance is an annual celebration that encourages Americans to embrace dance as a fun and positive way to maintain good health and fight obesity. Those interested should learn the routine in advanced by watching it online at [www.dizzyfeetfoundation.org](http://www.dizzyfeetfoundation.org) or on DANCECleveland's Facebook page. The updated choreography video features different versions so that dancers of all abilities can take part. On the day of the performance, arrive at 7 p.m. to perform with others on stage and be videotaped as a group. DANCECleveland will send the recording to the Dizzy Feet Foundation with the possibility of the tape being shown on "So You Think You Can Dance."

Tickets for the performance, \$20 to \$25, can be purchased online at [www.cainpark.com](http://www.cainpark.com), by phone at 216-371-3000, or in-person at the Cain Park ticket office. Discounts for groups of five or more are available by calling DANCECleveland at 216-991-9000.

*Sarah Hricko, a Cleveland Heights resident, is the marketing manager at DANCECleveland.*

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## Coventry Village to dedicate Pekar Park

Angela Hetrick

The Coventry Outdoor Courtyard, at the northwest corner of Coventry Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard, was a treasured spot for Harvey Pekar—internationally known underground comic author, music critic and media personality—who often referenced the Coventry neighborhood in his work. Pekar, a longtime Cleveland Heights resident, died in 2010.

On Saturday, July 25, the courtyard will be renamed Pekar Park in a special public dedication event. The Coventry Village Special Improvement District, the City of Cleveland Heights, Jakprints and the Harvey Pekar Estate all collaborated to make this event possible.

A festival, from noon to 6 p.m. in Pekar Park, will celebrate Pekar's work, and that of other Greater

Cleveland comic book writers and graphic novelists. The official dedication will take place at 12:30 p.m., followed by live jazz, 1-3 p.m., and storytelling, 6:30-8:30 p.m. The dedication will conclude with a free 9 p.m. showing of "American Splendor," the 2003 film based on Pekar's life and work, in Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park.

[Note: In case of severe bad weather, the event will be held on Sunday, July 26.]

Tommy Fello, owner of Tommy's Restaurant on Coventry Road, commented, "It seems fitting that the park will give tribute to the memory of Harvey. With this dedication Harvey (in memory) can return to his favorite meeting place after all these years."

*Angela Hetrick is executive director of Coventry Village Special Improvement District.*

## Chen's long journey to Carnegie Hall

Joanne Westin

The traditional answer to the question "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" is "Practice, practice, practice." In the case of Baolu Chen, former music director at Noble Road Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights, the answer is a lot more complicated.



Baolu Chen

Chen grew up in China. His father's career as a player of folk instruments was cut short by the Cultural Revolution, but the father's love of music kept the house filled with the sounds of classical music of all sorts. Young Baolu fell in love with the sound of piano music that he heard on the radio and begged to learn to play. His parents provided him with a piano for his birthday, and lessons followed.

He continued his studies in the piano department at the Tianjin Conservatory of Music, earning bachelor's and master's degrees in music. He was often asked to play the compositions of a young woman named Erya Yu who was studying in the composition department at the same conservatory. Their partnership blossomed and they fell in love.

Chen believed that he could advance to a higher level in the West. In 2010, he chose to continue his studies at Cleveland State University (CSU) because he knew of Cleveland's fine reputation for classical music. At first, with a new language and culture, and the absence of Erya, he felt lonely. Because he had always found church music on the radio to be warm and beautiful, he found comfort in learning to play the organ, in addition to advancing his piano studies. When he heard of an opening for music director at Noble Road Presbyterian Church, he applied right away and was hired, beginning the job in January 2011. The church was thrilled to have such a talented musician.

Within a year, Erya Yu was able to join Chen in Cleveland and they were married in Noble Road Presbyterian Church in September 2011. After Chen earned his Master of Music degree from CSU, he went to work on a doctoral degree in musical arts

at The Ohio State University. Yu took over the job of music director at the Noble Road church in 2012, where she continues in this capacity. The church is thrilled to have its second talented pianist from China.

Baolu Chen has been awarded a very long list of prizes in world-class piano competitions, including the American International Music Talent Competition, Bradshaw & Buono International Piano Competition, American International Concerto Competition, Asian Youth Piano Competition, the Third Germany Wiesbaden International Piano Competition, and the Hong Kong International Open Piano Competition. Most notably, he won first place in the 22nd United States Open Music Competition in California in 2014, in which his wife accompanied him. After a series of competitions, Chen received the invitation to perform in Carnegie Hall—the most exciting day of his life, after the day he and Erya married.

In addition to his studies, Chen has been carrying on a busy schedule of teaching (group piano course and studio lessons at The Ohio State University), and piano accompaniment for others. He serves as director of music performance at the First Congregational Church in Twinsburg, and he is artist director at the Cleveland International Cultural Center in Cleveland.

Chen has been invited to serve as director of competition and chairman of the jury for the Second United States Virtuoso International Piano Competition in Cleveland. Preliminary rounds will take place at the First Congregational Church of Twinsburg on Sept. 6 and Weigel Hall at The Ohio State University on Sept. 13. The final round will be held in Drinko Hall at CSU on Oct. 3. This competition is sure to offer some outstanding piano playing. Chen is also co-founder and artistic director of the 2015 Cleveland International Piano Festival, which will include famed musicians giving master classes, solo recitals, and chamber recitals. Chen has also received an invitation to give another piano recital at Carnegie Hall next spring.

*Joanne Westin has lived in Cleveland Heights for 38 years. She is a retired CWRU biology instructor.*

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# Heights artist hopes to open Artful new studios and gallery

James Henke

If Shannon Morris gets her way, Cleveland Heights could become home to a new art gallery, studio and retail store. “The idea has always been in the back of my mind,” said Morris, who is 42 and lives on Kingston Road in Cleveland Heights. “The bottom line is that I want to provide affordable studio space on the East Side of Cleveland.”

According to a recent study, nearly 20 percent of all of the artists in Cuyahoga County live in Cleveland Heights. “I want to create a space where people feel comfortable, an environment where people can create and collaborate,” Morris said. To accomplish her goal, Morris has formed a new organization called Artful.

Morris grew up in Cleveland Heights. After graduating from high school, she moved to New York City, where she studied photography at New York University. After getting her degree in 1995, she remained in New York until 2002, when she returned to Cleveland Heights. She opened a shop on Lee Road called There’s No Such Thing as a Non-Artist. Located in the space currently occupied by Simply Charming, Morris’ shop included a studio, as well as places where she could hold art classes. “My goal was to make people feel creative,” Morris said. “It was definitely a precursor to Artful.”

Her Lee Road store closed in 2007, and Morris continued to focus on art. In addition to being a photographer, she also creates furniture, lamps and jewelry, generally made from recycled materials. “Between the time the store closed and now, I have been making custom pieces for people. I basically do whatever comes to me,” she said.

This past February, Morris decided to focus on her idea of opening a larger gallery and studio space in Cleveland Heights, and she posted her idea on Facebook. More than 200 people liked her idea in the first week, and one of her friends, Brady Dindia, came on board as Artful’s development director. “Our mission is to provide a space that is unique, vibrant and attractive to area residents and businesses,” Morris said. “When you lease a space, we’ll have a



Shannon Morris

database full of resources to help you with your art. We also want to teach younger people how to do what they want to do.”

In addition to the gallery, studios and store, Artful will focus on educational programs, where students, interns and artists can learn aspects of art as a business. Morris also hopes to present other programs, such as yoga classes, community art lessons and a series called Heights Nights, which would be a coordinated evening of open studios and galleries with a shuttle that would rotate between Artful, the Cedar Lee Business District and Coventry Village.

Morris would love to have Artful open its space in the Medusa Building, located at the intersection of Lee Road and Monticello Boulevard. Built in 1959, The Medusa Building was originally home to the Medusa Portland Cement Company. “I have been in love with the building since I was a little girl,” Morris said. The building has been vacant for a few years, and was recently purchased by Motorcars, the Cleveland Heights-based car dealership. Morris has not yet struck a deal with Motorcars to lease the building, but Trevor Gile, general sales manager of Motorcars Honda, said, “I think it would be a great thing for the community, and we’d love to see it happen.”

Before leasing any space, Morris is seeking a fiscal agent that can extend its nonprofit status to Artful so that Morris’ organization can start raising funds for the project. Morris is currently talking to FutureHeights, the organization that publishes the *Heights Observer*, and Heights Arts about the possibility.

“FutureHeights is working to

facilitate the process and connect Artful to the right people,” said Deanna Bremer Fisher, the executive director of FutureHeights. “Cleveland Heights is home to the arts, and I would love to see an Artful space in our city. We are doing what we can to help Artful find the right place.”

Rachel Bernstein, executive director of Heights Arts, said her organization does not yet have any official relationship with Artful, but is “very interested and supportive of their efforts.” Bernstein added, “Providing opportunities for artists to work in the Heights is an exciting development. Our entire community could benefit from this idea, and it would complement Heights Arts’ current programming nicely.”

Once Morris has a fiscal agent, she can start negotiating Artful’s lease and then move forward with the project.

Morris, who is married and has two children, has always loved Cleveland Heights. “When I moved back to Cleveland from New York, I refused to move anywhere but Cleveland Heights,” she said. “I was adamant. I love the energy here, and I love the diversity. It’s also very walkable, and the people are unique.”

*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.*



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# MoMo's Kebab offers tasty take on Moroccan food

James Henke

MoMo's Kebab, a restaurant that specializes in Moroccan food, opened last February at 2199 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights. Mohamed Abdessamad, the restaurant's chef and owner, was born in Morocco, immigrated to the U.S. in 1990, and moved to the Cleveland area in 2007.

Abdessamad, 55, said he has always had a passion for cooking, which he learned from his mother. When he was 21, he moved from Morocco to France, then Germany and finally Russia. He spent seven years there, primarily in St. Petersburg, where he attended college and earned two master's degrees, one in linguistics and one in education. While in Russia, Abdessamad was asked to

cook a meal for the Moroccan ambassador. "After he ate, he came up to me and shook my hand and told me how good the food was," Abdessamad said. "That was the first time I had cooked for someone, and his response really had an impact on me."

When he left Russia for the U.S., Abdessamad initially lived in Washington, D.C. He attended school to learn English, and worked in a Cajun restaurant and then an Italian restaurant. Then, he and two partners decided to open their own restaurant. "We served things like burgers and pasta," Abdessamad said. "It was not focused on one cuisine." The restaurant was not a success, and closed in less than a year.

Abdessamad then decided to leave D.C., and initially considered moving to California or Texas. But, he had attended a wedding party in Cleveland and had liked the city, so he decided to move here. Initially, he worked at Nordstrom. "I was just trying to make some money, and I was also looking around Cleveland to see what areas I liked," Abdessamad said. In 2008, he bought a house in South Euclid. After he moved in, he threw a party and cooked for his friends. It was a big success, so he started throwing parties once a month, cooking food at all of them.

Meanwhile, he was searching for a place where he could open a restaurant. Last year, when he saw the space formerly occupied by A Phiner Bistro, which closed in November 2013, Abdessamad decided it would be a great spot for MoMo's Kebab.

He completely redesigned the interior of the restaurant. He painted the walls, re-did the entrances to the



Mohamed Abdessamad and his wife, Khadija Ait Ammar.

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kitchen and restrooms, and added couches and other furniture in the front of the restaurant. "I wanted to give it a Moroccan touch," he said.

His menu features soups, salads, sandwiches, and dinner platters that are served with homemade wheat bread, rice, vegetables and salad. The platters feature marinated grilled-beef kebabs, marinated ground-beef kebabs and grilled-chicken kebabs.

Abdessamad's favorite menu item is the loin lamb chops, but he also loves the kefta—ground beef marinated with fresh lemon juice, olive oil and spices. He noted that his food differs from traditional Moroccan food in the herbs and spices that he adds to the entrees.

Abdessamad is the restaurant's chef, while his wife, Khadija Ait Ammar, does all of the baking. Her desserts feature a variety of French cookies and other French-Moroccan specialties.

"We don't use any canned food or any frozen food, and we do not cook anything in microwaves, either," Abdessamad said. "I go shopping almost every morning. I go to farmers markets and other places to get fresh vegetables, meat and other things."

So far, he said, business has been good, adding, "We're very busy Thursday evening through Sunday." In May, Cuyahoga Community College's Ethnic Foods and Culture program spotlighted MoMo's Kebab, bringing some 43 people to the restaurant. "We were packed, and it was really exciting," Abdessamad said.

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

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- Best New Business
- Best University Heights Business
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- Best Bar, Pub or Tavern
- Best Place for Health & Fitness
- Best Automotive Business

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- Best Hairstylist (individual's name and place of business)
- Best Barber (individual's name and place of business)
- Best Place to Enjoy a Family Outing
- Best Interior Decor
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- Best African-American-Owned Business
- Best Professional Service Business
- Best Longstanding CH-UH Business (15+ years)
- Best Restaurant
- Bonus Question:**

What New Business Would You Like to See in the Heights?

**FutureHeights**

**Cast your ballot today for Best of the Heights!**

Complete this ballot or go online to: [www.futureheights.org](http://www.futureheights.org)

Deadline for ballot submission: August 31, 2015

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

One ballot per person.

In order for your ballot to be counted, you need to vote for at least half (10) of the ballot categories and include your name and contact information. Ballots not meeting these requirements will be considered invalid.

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

Questions? Call 216-320-1423  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
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If you are a business owner or operator, name of business: \_\_\_\_\_

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