Heights High’s science wing is demolished

Joy Henderson

The demolition of several sections of Heights High is underway. Perhaps the most anticipated is the destruction of the circa-1962 science wing, thought by many to be an unfortunate design that obstructed the beauty of the original building.

At noon on Friday, Aug. 14, a large excavator with a grapple began removing the exterior wall of the swimming pool, at the east end of the science wing. By 11:55 p.m., the entire wall had been removed and the excavator had moved on to the Cedar Road side of the pool and then on to the science wing.

The demolition of the back of the school building began on Aug. 3 with the removal of the East Gym, kitchen and Career Tech portions of the building.

The original 1926 core section of the building will not be demolished, but will be renovated and new additions will be constructed. The design of the new additions will be more closely aligned to the historic style of the original building.

Before demolition began, the salvage crew removed many architectural elements for use in the new building, and many other items were removed to use at the temporary Heights High, on the Wiley campus in University Heights, or at other schools. These items include kitchen equipment, which has been placed in other schools; the library desk from the old building, which will be used in the main office at Wiley; and gym

Wilcox will not seek fifth term; eight others vie for CH City Council seats

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Cleveland Heights Mayor Dennis Wilcox has announced that he will not run for reelection in the Nov. 3 general election. Wilcox, 62, is a principal with Climalco, Wilcox, Peca, Tarantino & Garofoli Co., L.P.A., specializing in business and corporate law. He has served four consecutive four-year terms on council, and was elected president of council—mayor of Cleveland Heights—in 2014. In Cleveland Heights, city council president is elected by city council members.

Wilcox cited the need to run his law firm and the desire to spend more time with his family as the reason for his decision not to run.

“Cleveland Heights is a great city, and I have enjoyed working with our excellent city staff and my hardworking colleagues on council,” he said in a press release. “I will dedicate myself to achieving goals in the next five months that council and the city have made a priority, including working to pass our additional 0.25 percent income tax in November.”

Every two years, three or four of the city council seats are on the November ballot for four-year terms.

38th annual Heights Heritage Home & Garden tour set for Sept. 20

Pam Wetherill

The 38th annual Heights Heritage Home & Garden Tour, sponsored by Heights Community Congress (HCC), gives tourgoers the opportunity to discover six Cleveland Heights homes and five gardens, to explore our community, while promoting Cleveland Heights to visitors.

In its first year, 2013, the Hop drew about 1,200 people to the Cedar Lee neighborhood. Last year, an estimated 1,300 people visited 17 homes and highlights on this year’s tour:

The 38th annual Heights Heritage Home & Garden tour set for Sept. 20
The Observer welcomes opinions about candidates and issues

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Municipal elections are coming up this November. This is the fourth local election cycle that the Heights Observer has been through since its inception, and it, like the ones that have come before it, is an important one. Cleveland Heights residents will vote for three of seven members of city council this year. University Heights residents will vote for four of seven members of council. Residents of both cities will vote for two of five members of the CH-UH Board of Education.

In addition, the City of Cleveland Heights has a proposal on the ballot to raise its income tax rate from 2.25 to 2.5 percent. As a hyper-local publication with a goal of providing information to Heights residents in order to build a better community, municipal elections are very important to the Observer.

Many civic-minded people and groups are seeking opportunities to express their opinions about candidates and issues. The Observer, in its role as a forum for sharing information about the community, welcomes the opportunity to publish these diverse opinions.

Contributors may include the candidates themselves; however, because we have limited space in our print publication (each page of the newspaper costs money to print, and the number of pages we print is based on the advertising revenue in that issue), we must limit candidate submissions in the print edition between September and November to paid advertisements. Moreover—where we have no space limitations—candidates can submit articles, blogs and opinion pieces. All candidates are invited and encouraged to make submissions at the Heights Observer website (www.heightsobserver.org) and the Heights Observer blogs (www.blogs.heightsobserver.org). This ensures that everyone is treated equally.

In the print issue, we welcome comments and contributions of non-candidates right up until the election. In partnership with the nonpartisan League of Women Voters, we will provide detailed information about the candidates—curated by each candidate—in a Voters’ Guide in the October print issue. We will also partner with the League to host two candidates forums, to introduce candidates for local elections.

A forum on Sept. 29 will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. at John Carroll University’s Dolan Hall, and will feature candidates for University Heights City Council and the CH-UH Board of Education (BOE). An Oct. 14 forum will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Cleveland Heights Community Worship & Activity Center, and will feature candidates for BOE and Cleveland Heights City Council.

One point that bears emphasis is that the Observer will not endorse candidates. The Heights Observer is published by FutureHeights, a community-building organization with 501(c)3 status, which means that the IRS recognizes it as not-for-profit/tax exempt. As such, neither FutureHeights nor the Observer is permitted to endorse any individuals running for public office.

FutureHeights is permitted, however, to advocate for a “yes” or “no” vote on a particular issue or ballot initiative. If FutureHeights decides to advocate for an issue, the opinion will be clearly marked as such.

The Heights Observer itself will not take a position but will welcome all opinions. So, the opinions you see in our newspaper, and on its websites reflect the views of the individual authors, not the newspaper.

We encourage you to educate yourself about the candidates and issues, and then vote on Nov. 3. Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

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, and we 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 submit a submission of any kind, go to 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 216-321-1435 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

Articles to be considered for the October issue must be submitted by Sept. 11. 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.

Fall Open House

Sunday, November 1, 2015
2-4 pm

Ruffing Montessori School — the second oldest Montessori school in the country — is located right here in Cleveland Heights and has been serving children, ages 18 months through 8th Grade, for generations! Join us for our Open House to learn more about Montessori education and how Ruffing will prepare your child for success!

For more information, contact our Admissions Office at 216-321-7571 or info@ruffingmontessori.net.

3380 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
Ohio’s state report card does not measure what counts

Ari Klein

We live in a time where everyone demands accountability. For public schools this has been twisted into making comparisons between different schools and students using some supposedly standard measures. Many of these measures are based on high-stakes tests that purport to test what students should have mastered at a particular point in time. Other measures report on graduation rates, gap closing and student progress. In fact, there are so many categories on which to report, we often get lost in the mud of numbers. The more numbers there are, the more we blindly accept their legitimacy.

The main problem with reducing schools and students to numbers to be charted is that not all kids start out with the same advantages. Just as children learn to walk at different times, some children have advantages at home that will help them succeed in school more easily than other students. For instance, a first-grader whose parents read to him or her often is probably going to have an easier time learning to read than a child whose parents can’t read and don’t have books in the house. Think about it. The same is true for a child whose parents are working so hard to feed the family that they are too exhausted at the end of the day to read to the child if they even get home before the child is in bed. First-graders with these very different experiences are often found in the same classroom in our schools.

In our public schools we do a great job of teaching students. Students are learning tremendously. A problem with standardized measures is that if students don’t meet arbitrary levels at arbitrary points in time, the school gets dinged. Why should students, teachers, schools, the district and, ultimately, the community be punished by the state accountability measures when students are learning? Is this the best way to ensure “accountability?”

Another example (of arbitrary measures) is graduation rate. The state requires us to take the students we have in ninth grade and see how many graduate in four years. When a student moves, we have to track where the student goes, and still have to see if he or she graduates in four years. If a student has multiple handicaps and is guaranteed an education until age 22, we get dinged when the student doesn’t graduate “on time.” Shouldn’t we celebrate every child who is able to meet the graduation requirements, regardless of how long it takes? For students who take five or six years, it shows they stuck with it and kept on trying, probably by overcoming tremendous obstacles. This achievement through adversity is a great skill for students to have, for whatever they decide to do with their lives. We should respect that kind of hard work and dedication, but instead our schools lose points on the state report card.

Our Heights schools do amazing things in all sorts of ways. Our students are wonderful, but they come to us from an array of different circumstances. I believe we can always improve what we do, but the measures that the state has put in place are a distraction to being able to teach. It is hard to focus on the needs of our students when the predetermined goal may or may not always be realistic in the time frame we are given.

Standardization seems to me the absence of creativity—it is about uniformity and compliance. Anyone who knows anything about people knows that we are far from standardized. Unfortunately, standardization is the state’s goal for our students. We should have more conversations about what we believe success really looks like in school.
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TAMPERED, WE DON’T INTEND TO BECOME

What lessons can the Heights draw from the epic unfolding of a mammoth’s restructuring? Regionalization has been the outcry of more than a few solitary individuals as a method of saving our cities from the crushing weight of their own bureaucratic blunders. Indeed, through changes such as Cuyahoga County becoming a charted entity, the creation of organizations like RITA, and discussions of municipalization, we are shown that the methodology can be effective for reducing cost, and increasing efficiency and transparency. The question then becomes, what else can we do in an effort to become a stronger community?

Another area of opportunity may be right under our noses. Cleve-

ne may declare their candidacy: Julie So far, six additional residents for election. Both Dunbar and Seren appointed to fill the seat vacated by the seven-member Cleveland Heights City Council seats are up for election. This year, in addition to Wilcox’s seat, the seats of Council Member Mary Dunbar, who has served on council since 2011, and Kahil Seren, who was appointed to fill the seat vacated by Janine Boyle in January 2015, are up for election. Both Dunbar and Seren are running in the Nov. 3 election. So far, six additional residents have declared their candidacy: Julie Love, a CPA and freelance writer; Joe Miller, a technician with Ems Supply; Tas Nadas, a senior project manager at the Cleveland Clinic; Ryan Pierce, a project coordinator for government and foundation relations at Case Western Reserve University; Carol Ann Roe, a registered nurse and licensed attorney; and Keba Sylla, an advocate of community building.

The solution is both simple and similar to Alphabet: the creation of a prodigious umbrella organization that houses local nonprofits’ multiple foci, with a major focus on community development. Communities such as Shaker Heights and Lakewood got their start long ago, and thus have a competitive edge. But the Heights, to echo Page’s headline statement, is not a conventional community. And you if believe in the creative forces that draw enterprises like Big Fun and Trapped, we don’t intend to become one.

Chris Hanson, coordinator of Growing Heights, graduated from Cleveland State University with a B.A. in Urban Studies, and is an advocate of community building.
Cutting funds will not improve public schools

Resilience is an essential quality for surviving adversity, and I’m worried. Are our public schools resilient enough to survive the constant attacks by the Ohio legislature? Our schools are suffering from a regime that uses testing as a substitute for support; unfairly labels schools, children and communities as failed; ties high stakes decisions with real consequences to an unreliable testing system; and then gives away public funds to private and charter schools with no oversight or accountability. That’s how crazy it is.

This route is expensive and violates our widely held belief that the public purse is sacred and should be used as wisely as possible, and it is destabilizing an essential institution.

The EdChoice voucher program is the latest threat. Ohio’s voucher program punishes schools with low test performance by giving voucher program guarantees that every K–8 voucher student, but the state will provide the CH-UH City School District with $2,550 for each student enrolled in the district and for each voucher student, but the state guarantees that every K–8 voucher student will receive a $4,650 scholarship. Local districts are expected to make up the difference out of the rest of their state allocation. That means an additional $5,100 slated for the CH-UH public schools will instead follow each voucher student.

The voucher program has been around for several years but did not affect our school district until two years ago. Five area private schools are now receiving EdChoice funds. Last year, 66 residents of the district used vouchers at a cost of $340,000 to CH-UH schools, and, as of mid-August of this year, 286 students residing in the Heights have received vouchers for the upcoming school year, which will more than quadruple the money lost to this program. Voucher recipients will include the 66 previous recipients, 149 new kindergarteners, and five other students. Of the kindergarteners, 133 will be enrolled in religious schools.

The loss of students to private schools using public funds does not translate into savings for the district. First, many families benefiting from vouchers never intended to. Second, the loss of students increases costs, because the school system’s operating costs are spread over fewer students.

Last year, the Heights district was allocated $19 million in state funds, but $5.5 million of that allocation never came to the schools. Instead, those dollars went to state-mandated choices—charter schools, open enrollment, and a variety of scholarship offerings, including EdChoice—where the guaranteed per-pupil contribution far exceeded the funds those students generated for the district. This year the loss will exceed $6 million.

The constant erosion of public funding jeopardizes public education. The Ohio legislature now says public isn’t really that important. Nor, apparently, is accountability for public funds. The legislature’s reckless use of precious public funds makes its stated commitment to accountability a farce. Public school children must be tested and labeled resources available to the schools that performance data suggest need that money. Many voucher scholarships are used in religious schools, violating the separation of church and state. When state education dollars intended for public schools go to private education, the state abdicates its responsibility to fund an effective system of public schools and shifts even more of the school-funding burden to local taxpayers. The state contributes only 18 percent of the money needed to run the school system’s coffers are now open to unaccountable charter and religious schools, no questions asked. This double standard is intolerable.

Public education, a source of stability, is under attack, and this attack undercuts hope for a more equal society where everyone has opportunities, not just those who have always had them. The essence of democracy is lost.

Susie Kasser is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and former director of the National Board of Parents for Public Schools.

Susie Kasser

THE COMMON GOOD
Open house at Heights High’s Wiley campus draws interested residents

Joy Henderson

More than 120 curious neighbors, community members, retired teachers and Heights family members attended the Aug. 20 open house at the newly renovated, temporary Heights High on the Wiley campus in University Heights. University Heights City Council and UH Mayor Susan Infeld hosted the event, to give community members a chance to tour the renovated building and learn more about the school’s programming.

Mayor Infeld, Talisa Dixon, superintendent of Cleveland Heights–University Heights schools, and Zoraba Ross, Heights High’s administrative principal, spoke briefly to the attendees.

The main attraction, however, was the building. Parent Ambassadors led building tours to show the additional gymnasium, five hallways of modular classrooms, a music wing and an expanded cafeteria.

All seven members of University Heights City Council were in attendance at the event: Pamela Cameron, Nancy English, Phillip Ertel, Susan Pardee, Steven Sims, Mark Wiseman and Adele Zucker.

The University Heights Community Engagement Committee of Council was largely responsible for the event. “The people I talked to were so impressed and very happy to see the changes to the school,” said Nancy English, committee co-chair. Susan Pardee is the committee’s other co-chair.

Heights High students will attend school at the Wiley campus in University Heights for two years. In the fall of 2017, students will return to the building at Cedar and Lee roads in Cleveland Heights. The original 1926 building is being renovated and the later additions to the building are being demolished. "Joy Henderson is the parent/community liaison for Heights High.

Voters will elect three to fill four UH council seats

Deanna Bremer Fisher

The race for four open seats on University Heights City Council is a bit of a yawn this year. Four of the seven council seats are up for election, including those of council members Pamela T. Cameron, Steven Sims, Nancy English and Adele Zucker, but only three candidates will be listed on November’s ballot: Cameron and Sims, who are both running for reelection, and newcomer Michele Weiss.

Weiss, a controller at Hebrew Academy in Cleveland, has served as a member of the city’s finance committee since 2014. She served as campaign treasurer for Councilwoman Sue Pardee, and has served as an observer of University Heights City Council for the League of Women Voters for two years.

The history of one of the seats is complicated. Councilman Mark Wiseman was appointed to fill the vacated seat of Thomas Cozzens, who died in 2013. In the November 2014 election, however, Wiseman chose to run for a full four-year seat, rather than for the remainder of Cozzens’ term. Nancy English ran for the remaining year of Cozzens’ vacated seat, and won the election. She has decided not to run for re-election in 2015.

Adele Zucker, who has served on council for a total of 30 years, did not meet the filing deadline and will not appear on the ballot.

So in November, University Heights residents will elect three people for the four seats, and the election will be for more than two years, the charter requires the appointee’s seat to go back to voters at the next municipal election in 2017. Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.

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Understanding crime in Cleveland Heights: A snapshot of the CHPD

Bob Rosenbaum

At a public forum this summer, sponsored by FutureHeights and the Heights Observer, Cleveland Heights Police Chief Jeffrey Robertson said that maintaining diversity on the police force is a management priority. “Officers in this department come from many different backgrounds, as do the residents of the city,” Robertson said. “I feel that a well-educated work force that reflects the community that it serves is helpful in the job that we do.”

The CHPD currently employs 103 sworn officers, all of whom undergo state-regulated police academy training. Among these are the chief, deputy chief, three captains, four lieutenants, eight sergeants and 54 police officers. All of these are civil service positions—meaning candidates must have a four-year college degree and take a civil service exam to be considered for the job.

The remaining 30 positions are basic patrol officers—no civil service exam and no degree requirement. Once hired, these officers are encouraged to complete their degrees so they can take the civil service exam, Robertson said.

Three-fourths of the officers have advanced degrees beyond high school. Of these, seven have associate degrees, 48 have bachelors degrees, 11 have earned a master’s and another two are in progress; five have law degrees, with another two in progress; and one has completed coursework on a Ph.D. in psychology and is working on her doctoral thesis, according to Robertson.

Twelve officers are women, while 89 are men. Twenty-four are African American and 74 are white. An Orthodox Jewish officer recently joined the force, and two officers are naturalized citizens fluent in Russian.

Cleveland Heights resident Bob Rosenbaum is co-chairman of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee, and is responsible for its advertising sales and market development.
TAX BUDGET HEARING
City Manager Tanisha Briley explained that the budget process begins with the tax budget, which is then modified by the council. She noted that the 2015 budget is modest $1.6 million reserve and the budget is projected to break even in 2015. Projections through 2020 show increasing shortfalls each year. Actions taken to deal with declining revenue, dating back to 2008, have included budget cuts, wage freezes for non-bargaining workers, increasing employees' healthcare costs, and personal cuts (19 positions are currently held vacant). She said the need for increased revenue is serious. Cleveland Heights is budgeting $42.7 million for 2015, the same total as in 2010.

Revenue sources include income tax (35 percent or $22.4 million), property tax (19 percent or $7.2 million), and other revenues (16 percent or $5.5 million). The full city payroll is $2.6 million without cutting into core services.

City manager Tanisha Briley explained that the city properties, and the cost of vehicles and computers. Mayor Dennis Wilcox pointed out possible confusion about the general fund budget, which includes capital expenditures and grant funding. The federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money provided loans to the developer in question.
Grant Deming’s Forest Hill Historic District

For most of its history, Grant Deming’s Forest Hill Historic District was a neighborhood in search of its own identity. Developed more than a century ago as the Forest Hill Allotment, to evoke images of John D. Rockefeller’s summer estate of the same name, the neighborhood gradually lost its name. Once fully developed, it no longer appeared in newspaper advertisements. Then, after John D. Rockefeller Jr.’s land along the East Cleveland border was laid out as another Forest Hill in the late 1920s, the original Forest Hill neighborhood became a place identified primarily in relation to nearby areas.

With the rise of the Coventry and Cedar Lee commercial districts in the 1920s, residents of Deming’s development began to identify with them. The longtime presence of Coventry School on the neighborhood’s northwest corner caused many to say they lived “in the Coventry neighborhood.” Likewise, religious institutions offered a degree of definition. The neighborhood’s proximity to St. Ann’s Roman Catholic Church, which had its own school, led many to see themselves as living in the St. Ann neighborhood.

The original Forest Hill neighborhood owed its origins to Grant Deming, a real estate developer from Canada. Sizing the eastward push into the Heights, Deming shifted his focus to suburban speculation. In the early 1900s, he acquired almost 200 acres of land owned mainly by John D. Rockefeller Jr. and the heirs of James B. Haycox, a dairy farmer who lived on Lee Road in the vicinity of present-day Zagar’s Marketplace. There, Deming imagined Forest Hill, which his promotional literature, with more than a touch of hyperbole, dubbed “America’s Richest Suburb.”

Deming thought big. His marketing materials attempted to duplicate Forest Hill in the company of Boston’s Brookline, New York’s Llewellyn Park, and Washington D.C.’s Chevy Chase. Like these venerable garden suburbs, Forest Hill would have gently curving streets, setback sidewalks, and a pastoral air. Deming characterized the streets—laid out by the F.A. Pease Engineering Company, the same firm that platted Shaker Heights—as “natural openings through the giants of the forest,” but the landscape was more accurately a mosaic of woods and meadows. An exception was the western side of the tract, where two branches of the Dugway Brook meandered through thickly forested ravines in their descent to Lake Erie.

Almost completely built out by the time the Great Depression hit, Forest Hill not only yielded its name to the newer Rockefeller allotment to the north, it also fell on the same hard times that soon curtailed construction in the newer development. Deming’s Forest Hill was largely complete, but its residents faced challenges of their own. Many took in boarders, some of whom likely occupied onetime servants’ quarters. In the early 1930s, the arrival of the first African American family, in a house at Washington Boulevard and Cottage Grove Drive, prompted a bombing before cooler heads prevailed. It would take another four decades for racial integration to make real progress.

The 1960s brought new concerns about racial steering and “blockbusting” real estate brokers, in Forest Hill and across the Heights, leading residents to organize to promote stable and orderly integration. The defeat of the planned Lee Freeway, which would have obliterated Parkway Drive and dozens of homes just west of Lee Road, played a similarly important stabilizing role. Not until it was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2010 did Grant Deming’s Forest Hill reenter the public imagination. Once forgotten, the original allotment developer became the namesake for a new online forum (www.grantdemingforesthill.org) that cemented, perhaps, the neighborhood’s intrinsic identity for the first time since Rockefeller stole Deming’s thunder decades before.

So well known is Grant Deming today, in fact, that many simply say they live in the Grant Deming Neighborhood, once more obscuring the name Deming chose for his neighborhood. If its name continues to produce confusion, however, the neighborhood today melds an unmistakable sense of place with a socially diverse population.

[Adapted from Mark Souther, “Grant Deming’s Forest Hill,” www.clevelandhistorical.org/items/1064/4/47.]

Mark Souther, a member of the Cleveland Heights Landmarks 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 promoting buildings, works of art, and other objects of historical or architectural value to the community.

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Mazie Adams

This fall, the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, the Cleveland Heights Historical Society, Heights Libraries, and Cleveland State University Center for Public History + Digital Humanities are partnering to present a series of historic lectures and tours centered in Cleveland Heights.

All events will take place rain or shine, and registration is required for some events. To register, call 216-291-4788.

Sept. 5, 10 a.m. to noon, Cleveland Heights Rocks and Waters 2015: Dugway Brook West branch walking tour and lecture

This lecture and tour, led by Roy Larick, Korbi Roberts and Jim Miller, will trace Dugway Brook through Coventry and Lake View Cemetery. Learn about Caleb Eddy’s 1805 Lake View bluestone gristmill, and Ezra Lacy’s 1854 Rock Court sandstone quarry—and much more. [Ensemble Theatre at the Coventry School building, 2843 Washington Blvd.; registration required.]

Sept. 10, 7 p.m., House History Workshop

Using local research tools as well as online sites, Kara Hamley O’Donnell, Cleveland Heights city planner, will teach workshop participants how to research their home’s history, to find out when it was built and by whom, who were its past owners, and how to locate historic photos. The workshop will also cover how to use Plain Dealer indexes to find out what may have happened at a property—from home sales to society events. Participants who pre-register and provide their mailing address will receive basic information to enable them to start their property research; others can receive the information at a later date. [Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road; reservations encouraged.]

Sept. 12, 10–11:45 a.m., App-enhanced Coventry Village Walking Tour

Mark Souther, Cleveland State University professor, and a team of CSU graduate students, will lead this interactive tour of Coventry Village, which developed along Coventry Road in 1919, saw the migration of Jews between the 1920s and 1950s, and emerged as Cleveland’s own Haight-Ashbury in the late 1960s. Bring your iPhone or Android phone to discover even more colorful history in an old-meets-new twist on the familiar walking tour, utilizing the Cleveland Historical App. [Meet at the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. arch outside Coventry Village Library; reservations required.]

Oct. 1, 7 p.m., M.M. Brown’s Mayfield Heights Allotment Lecture

This neighborhood, bounded roughly by Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry, Mayfield and Superior roads, originated in the late-1800s. It is rich in history, and features 19th- and early 20th-century homes. Mark Souther and Chuck Owen, founder of CH Historical Society, will talk about this area that many consider “Coventry Village.” [Lee Road Library; no reservations needed.]

Oct. 3, 10 a.m., Tour of Nela Park

David E. Korow, senior lighting specialist, will lead a tour of GE Lighting’s historic, 102-year-old Nela Park in East Cleveland. Learn about the company’s roots, and the world’s first industrial park. The tour will include the Lighting Institute, two lighting demonstration areas and the GE Lighting Museum. [Reservations required.]

Oct. 10, 10–11:45 a.m., App-enhanced Coventry Village Walking Tour

This is a repeat presentation of the sure-to-be-popular Sept. 12 tour. [Meet at the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. arch outside Coventry Village Library; reservations required.]

Mazie Adams is chair of the CH Landmark Commission.

and around Cleveland Heights.

Doan Brook seeks volunteers for Sept. 5 storm drain stenciling event

Graham Welling

The Doan Brook Watershed Partnership (DBWP) is looking for volunteers to help “paint the town” on Saturday, Sept. 5, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., in Cleveland Heights. This will be nonprofit organization’s final Storm Drain Stenciling Saturday for this year.

Volunteers are needed to help mark curbs next to residential storm drains with the stenciled message “Lake Erie Starts Here,” and to distribute information about the signage to neighborhood residents.

On Sept. 5, participants will meet at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, 2259 Warrensville Ctr. Road, for a short stenciling demonstration and to pick up needed supplies and assignment forms. Refreshments will also be provided.

The storm drain stenciling program was initiated because of the high amount of contaminants that flow into the Doan Brook, and subsequently Lake Erie, from storm runoff. These contaminants include used motor oil, litter, pet and yard waste, and fertilizers and pesticides from lawns.

Doan Brook runs for eight miles, from Shaker Heights through Cleveland Heights and University Circle to Lake Erie. Most storm runoff does not pass through the sanitary sewer system, and does not receive any kind of treatment. Polluted runoff is a major cause of algae blooms and other ecosystem damage.

Storm Drain Stenciling Saturdays are one of several initiatives offered by the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership to help improve the health of local waters, with support from the cities of Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights and Cleveland. Individuals, families and organizations, such as scouts, school or church groups, neighborhood associations and service clubs, are invited to sign up to help. Large volunteer groups may inquire about alternate dates. For more information or to register, call 216-325-7788 or send an e-mail to welling@doanbrookpartnership.org.

The Doan Brook Watershed Partnership is a multi-stakeholder, nonprofit organization with broad participation from the cities of Cleveland Heights, Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights. Its mission is to protect and restore the Doan Brook and its watershed through collaboration and sharing of resources.

Graham Welling is on the staff of Doan Brook Watershed Partnership.

Cleveland Heights News
Beth El offers free tickets for the High Holy Days

Joe Buchwald Gelles

Beth El – The Heights Synagogue (BethEl) is offering free tickets for the High Holy Days again this year.

“We’ve never charged for High Holy Day tickets,” said Erica New, Beth El’s co-president. “It’s kind of a ‘homecoming’ and we’re happy to have anybody join us.”

BETHES is a traditional egalitarian synagogue located at 2346 Desota Ave., at the corner of Berkeley and Desota avenues, and a stone’s throw from Lee Road and Euclid Heights Boulevard. The main entrance is on Berkeley Avenue.

Rosh HaShanah services will be held Sunday, Sept. 13 at 7:45 p.m., Monday, Sept. 14 at 8:30 a.m. and at 8:30 p.m., and Tuesday, Sept. 15 at 8:30 a.m. The Yom Kippur Kol Nidrei service will be held Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 5:05 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 23 (including Yizkor) at 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. The blowing of the shofar will be on Wednesday at 8:05 p.m.

BETHES services are traditional, mostly in Hebrew, with mixed seating. Rabbi Moshe Adler and members of the congregation will lead the services. The congregation will provide prayer books for participants.

To obtain free tickets for the High Holy Days, call 216-320-9667 or send an e-mail to info@bethelheights.org. For more information call 216-321-9754.

Jamison Babb is a Cleveland Heights resident and an HBC member.

HBC offers discounted home tour tickets for bicyclists

Jamison Babb

Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) is partnering with Heights Community Congress (HCC) to offer discounted tickets to HCC’s Sept. 20 Heights Heritage Home & Garden Tour, to encourage bicycling as a means of transportation during the tour.

Tourgoers who would like to ride bicycling during the tour.

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Tourgoers who would like to ride a bike on the tour can purchase advance tickets for $15—a $5 savings off a standard pre-sale ticket—through HBC’s website, www.bikesintheheights.org, beginning Sept. 1. Contact Sarah O’Keeffe at chbikecoalition@gmail.com with any questions.

Jamison Babb is a Cleveland Heights resident, a book publisher and graphic designer.

FutureHeights and League of Women Voters to host candidates forums; publish voters guide

FutureHeights and the CH-UH Chapter of the Greater Cleveland League of Women Voters (LWV) will host two forums to introduce candidates for local elections to Heights residents.

A forum on Sept. 29 will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. at John Carroll University’s Dolan Hall, and will feature candidates for University Heights City Council and the CH-UH Board of Education (BOE). An Oct. 14 forum will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Cleveland Heights Community Center, and will feature candidates for BOE and Cleveland Heights City Council.

FutureHeights and the LWV will publish a Voters Guide in the October print issue of the Heights Observer, which will be available at CH and UH city halls, schools, libraries, religious institutions and local businesses, and online at www.heightsobserver.org.

Bicyclists on an HBC-sponsored bike tour of historic districts in Cleveland Heights stop at a home on Washington Boulevard last May.

Joe Buchwald Gelles is a longtime Heights resident, a book publisher and graphic designer.

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GrowingHeights names new coordinator

Jaclyn Mace

GrowingHeights, a Heights-based organization created to connect and grow local community gardens, has added a familiar face to a leadership role. Chris Hanson assumed the role of coordinator on Aug. 1.

The position was originally held by Samantha Provencio, who was known for her highly detailed and helpful newsletters and website.

Hanson had his first taste of the Heights as a FutureHeights intern in 2012. He graduated cum laude that year from Cleveland State University with a B.A. in Urban Studies. Wanting to continue service to his community and country, Hanson then enlisted in the Ohio Army National Guard as a combat engineer. He now lives in The Canterbury, a building located in the Cedar Taylor neighborhood of Cleveland Heights.

Hanson said he hopes to expand membership by “getting dirty,” adding, “I’d like to be an active participant in this community and help out in every way I can, even if that means breaking new ground myself. I want to help start more gardens across the Heights area. It’s important.”

GrowingHeights, former- ly the Community Garden Network, was founded by growing Heig- hts Council Member Jeff Coryell and others, to enable local community gardens to share resources, manpower, interest and knowledge.

Under Provencio’s helm, the organization grew its membership and presence through popular programs such as seed banking and plant swapping. Provencio also garnered attention for the GrowingHeights newsletter, available at www.growingheights.com.

The organization is now heading back to its roots by focusing on programming that will aid the community with gardening know-how and support. Hanson hopes to expand the resources GrowingHeights offers to the community.

Community Programs in the works include regional speakers, workshops, and classes from a partnership with The Ohio State University Extension of Cuyahoga County.

Jaclyn Mace is a volunteer media specialist at GrowingHeights.

Annual Shaker Lakes Hike & Run scheduled for Sept. 20

Lisa Fredrickson

The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes will hold its annual Shaker Lakes Hike & Run on Sunday, Sept. 20. Runners and hikers of all ages and abilities are invited to participate. The event benefits the Jenny Goldman Fund and environmental education, promotes health and wellness, and celebrates the Shaker parklands.

The 5K and 10K races will begin at 8:30 a.m. at the intersection of South Park Boulevard, North Park Boulevard and North Woodland Road, finishing at the Nature Center. The courses take runners along the tree-lined streets of the Shaker parklands, around Lower Shaker and Horseshoe lakes. The 10K course extends east along Shelleburne Road to Chesterton Road and back to the Nature Center along South Park Boulevard.

Both races will be chip-timed and offer awards for winners in various age divisions. Registration by Sept. 18 is $20, and race-day registration is $25.

The guided hikes depart the Nature Center at 8:45 a.m. Hiking options include a one-mile, pet-friendly, family hike through the forest, marsh and demonstration prairie within the Nature Center grounds; a four-mile hike through the Doan Brook gorge.

Hikes are $5 for adults, and $3 for children under 12, scouts and school club members.

Event-day registration begins at 7 a.m. at the Nature Center, 2600 South Park Blvd. Participants can park at the Shaker Heights Board of Education parking lot and cross Shaker Boulevard to get to the Nature Center. Parking is also available at Hathaway Brown and Beaumont schools, where a shuttle van will run to and from the Nature Center.

All registrants will receive a T-shirt and refreshments. For more information and to register, visit www.shakelakes.org or www.bmapromotions.net, or call 216-321-7935.

Lisa Fredrickson is the media and event manager for the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.
Planning for Eastside Greenway advances

Nancy Boylan

A recently concluded study highlights the potential for a network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities linking the City of Cleveland’s east side with 19 other municipalities, including Cleveland Heights and University Heights and all of their neighboring cities. The Eastside Greenway, as the proposed network is known, would increase connectivity in eastern Cuyahoga County and enable greater access to active transportation and recreation. The study’s soon-to-be-released final report will include infrastructure recommendations tailored to major routes and amenities, and a strategy for design and implementation.

Many Eastside Greenway trail segments already exist in east side cities but important connections between the segments are lacking. Linking the existing segments through a series of on- and off-road connectors would provide greater bicycle and pedestrian access to employment centers, public transportation and parks, and would provide recreational, economic and health-related benefits.

One of the first improvements could accompany a planned resurfacing of Noble Road in Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland sometime in the next few years. In a scenario that would be fine-tuned as the time in the next few years. In a scenario that would be fine-tuned as the time in the next few years. In a scenario that would be fine-tuned as the time in the next few years. In a scenario that would be fine-tuned as the time in the next few years.

The proposed improvements to Noble Road, which would turn a bicycle-unfriendly street into one that bicyclists would seek out, while also making the street more pleasant and predictable for motorists, could eventually link to recommended improvements on Euclid Avenue. The study calls for adding protected bike lanes—possibly, in part, in a mid-street “cycle-track” configuration—to Euclid Avenue between Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and East 22nd Street. The new stretch of bike-friendly Euclid Avenue would connect to the existing bike lanes that run on Euclid from East 105th Street to Playhouse Square. The Euclid Avenue improvements would take longer to complete and most likely would not all be put in place at the same time.

The Eastside Greenway planning process, a good example of planning at a regional scale, was guided by a steering committee consisting of representatives of the 20 participating municipalities and advisory members from major regional organizations, such as the Ohio Department of Transportation, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Cleveland Metroparks, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), and was further informed by 12 public meetings held between September 2014 and May 2015.

The study, which grew out of an idea that emerged at Cleveland State University in 2012, was funded primarily by a grant obtained through NOACA and was jointly led by the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission and LAND studio, with SmithGroupJJR as lead planning consultant. The study’s final recommendations include 10 near-term priority projects, including the Noble Road project, which would dramatically improve transportation connectivity within the study area. These are accompanied by recommendations for three long-term, transformative priority projects and 11 of lesser priority. These findings were presented at a final public meeting in July 2015.

The focus of the Eastside Greenway project will now move from planning to implementation. An article by Steven Litt in the Plain Dealer highlighted the importance of a concerted push to get the network built, and Glenn Coyne, executive director of the Cuyahoga County Planning Commission, stated that “continuing the momentum is really critical.” Planner Neal Billetdeaux, of SmithGroupJJR, noted that the municipalities that make up the Eastside Greenway should officially endorse the project. "It would bring a lot more validity to the plan," he said, "and it could help with fundraising." The project has already received significant positive feedback.

Copies of the report will soon be available at download at www.eastidegreenway.weebly.com, and questions or comments about the project can be addressed to nboylan@land-studio.org.

Nancy Boylan is a project director at LAND studio.
Student buys CH home through new land bank program

Katherine Bulava

The Cuyahoga Land Bank is handing over the keys to the first home sold through its BRAIN (Buying and Retaining Academic Investment Now) program to Cleveland State University (CSU) student Peter Camba.

“Brain gain”—the attraction and retention of young professionals with higher-education degrees—has long been touted as an economic development driver, and affordable housing is one of the factors in retaining young talent. With several well-respected universities in the area and an inventory of vacant homes ready to be renovated and returned to productive use, the Land Bank recognized an opportunity to play a role in retaining talent in Cuyahoga County by connecting students and recent graduates with great, affordable housing. With this goal in mind, it created BRAIN.

BRAIN offers eligible students and recent graduates the chance to purchase a newly renovated home at a discount of 15 percent off the purchase price and an additional 5 percent of the purchase price to be applied to closing costs. To participate in the program, students must be currently enrolled in a college or post-graduate degree program, or submit a BRAIN application within two years of graduation.

With the help of CSU trustees Dan T. Moore and June Taylor, the temporary Heights High on the corner of Cedar and Lee roads temporarily modular locker rooms have been installed on the northwest side of the field. They include showers, and basketball locker rooms were removed and installed in the modular locker rooms.

Heights High students will return to a fully remodeled school building in the fall of 2017. During construction, students will attend school in the temporary Heights High on the Wiley campus.

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

Land Bank cemented a memorandum of understanding with the university, whereby students have the opportunity to learn about the program and gain valuable information about how to prepare for the purchase of a home.

Through BRAIN, CSU student Camba realized that homeownership was within his reach. Originally from California, Camba likes Greater Cleveland and wants to stay beyond college. He was able to purchase a three-bedroom, red brick colonial with a deck and a fireplace in Cleveland Heights at a significant discount.

“I think it’s amazing that there are programs out there like this to help students,” said Camba. “My new place is close to school, University Circle, Little Italy and plenty of retail. I love the location. As soon as I saw it, I thought, this place is perfect.”

The long-term success of our community is reliant upon the success of the future generation,” said Dennis Roberts, Cuyahoga Land Bank director of programs and property management. “We realized that we have the ability to increase those chances by connecting young graduates with low-cost affordable housing, giving them a jumpstart on building a productive future, and that’s why we decided to create BRAIN.”

“The BRAIN program offers the student who is ready, willing and able an opportunity to purchase a quality home at an excellent price with guaranteed equity,” said Taylor. “This is a win for both the student as well as for the community at large, which will ideally benefit from retaining bright and talented professionals.”

For more information, visit www.cuyahogalandbank.org/brain. Katherine Bulava is president of Mathos Communications. Cuyahoga Land Bank is a client.

HRRC offers electrical repair course for women

Becky Stager

Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC) is accepting applications for the next module in its Home How-To for Women course: Electrical Repairs. The course will begin Sept. 30 and run through Nov. 18, with classes held each Wednesday 7–9 p.m., at the HRRC Teaching Center, 7520 Noble Road in Cleveland Heights.

The module’s eight classes cover common electrical home repairs:

- Introduction to electricity
- Replacing switches and outlets
- Three-way switches and GFCI outlets
- Running a new circuit
- Low-voltage systems (doorsbells, phones, landscape lighting)
- Lighting options
- Ceiling fans
- Bathroom exhaust fans

Regular tuition for the module is $120 for Cleveland Heights residents and $30 for non-residents. A $20 early-bird discount will be offered for applications received by Sept. 16. Reduced tuition is available for low-income applicants; call for information. To encourage small group learning, enrollment is limited to 18.

Women interested in registering for the course can submit an online application here or call 216-381-6100 ext. 16. Becky Stager has been on the HRRC staff since 1989 and currently serves as marketing and development associate. Visit www.hrrec.org or call 216-381-6100 for more information on programs and services.
Noble Road Presbyterian hosts Sept. 5 rummage sale

Judith Bauer

Every two years, Noble Road Presbyterian Church, located at the corner of Noble and Kirkwood roads, hosts the ultimate recycling event—a community rummage sale.

The 2015 sale will be held on Saturday, Sept. 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The purpose of the sale is twofold: to provide a place where items can be recycled through re-use, and put in the hands of new owners; and to raise money for the church’s mission activities.

This year’s sale will feature living room and dining room furniture, as well as some smaller pieces. All the usual garage sale items will be offered for sale, including adult and children's clothing, books and plants. The event will also feature music and activities for children, as well as a bake sale, and will take place rain or shine. For more information, visit www.noblechurch.wordpress.com.

Judith Bauer has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1992, and is a member of Noble Road Presbyterian Church.

St. Paul’s welcomes new rector and youth minister

Mary Cushing

As a new fall worship and program year begins, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church welcomes two new leaders to its clergy and staff. The Rev. Jeanne A. Leinbach will assume her duties as rector on Sept. 1, and Miguel Covarrubias became youth minister in early August.

In the Episcopal Church, a rector is the priest in charge of a self-supporting parish. Leinbach is the 16th rector of St. Paul’s, the largest parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio, and the first female rector in its 169-year history. Since the mid-1980s, four women have served as associate rector: The Revs. Charlotte Dudley Cleghorn, Harper Turney, Angela Hill and Lisa Hackney-James.

Leinbach comes to St. Paul’s from Winnetka, Ill., where she was associate rector at Christ Church. A lifelong Chicagoan, she was ordained to the priesthood in December 2007 and is the mother of two sons, ages 19 and 22.

In her previous career, Leinbach was a management consultant. She holds a B.A. from Mount Holyoke College, an M.B.A. from Cornell University, and a Master of Divinity from Seabury-Western Theological Seminary.

In addition to her leadership skills, honed through both parish experience and in the business world, Leinbach met other criteria the parish desired in its new rector, including the ability to help St. Paul’s discern the most meaningful ways to connect with the surrounding community.

Tami Brown, St. Paul’s senior warden, said, “Those on the search committee, the Vestry, and staff who have met Jeanne have been struck immediately by her warmth, authenticity and enthusiasm for everything that St. Paul’s represents and can become. Jeanne’s experience, new ideas, and vision for building upon the strengths at St. Paul’s will guide and shape this next phase in our lives together.”

Bishop Mark Hollingsworth said, “The thoughtful and thorough work of the search committee has resulted in an exceptional choice in the Rev. Jeanne Leinbach. Among many gifts, her accessible and genuine presence and her wide leadership experience will make a worthy companion to the parish as it enters this new season in its life and ministry. I am delighted to welcome her to the Diocese of Ohio.”

Leinbach said she was drawn to the parish from her first reading of St. Paul’s parish profile. In June, she wrote to the parish, “Your desire to partner with the parish as it enters this new season in its life and ministry. I am delighted to welcome her to the Diocese of Ohio.”

Leinbach will preach at all services—7:45, 9 and 11:15 a.m.—on Sunday, Sept. 13, and an installation service and celebration will be held on Friday, Oct. 23, at 6 p.m.

Also new to St. Paul’s is Youth Minister Miguel Covarrubias, who, with his wife, Cathy, moved from Colorado Springs, where he was director of communications, youth and young adults at Chapel of our Saviour Episcopal Church. Prior to that, he served as youth minister at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Jamestown, N.Y. With more than 10 years of experience in youth ministry, Covarrubias fills a position that provides leadership to middle and high school students, and young adults in their 20s. "Youth ministry is living life with youth and their families through education and sharing the amazing love of God," said Covarrubias.

With a Bachelor of Fine Arts in youth ministries and a minor in theater from Colorado Christian University, Covarrubias is eager to bring his passion for theater to St. Paul’s active youth theater program.

All are welcome to attend services at St. Paul’s, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. To learn more and to view the parish profile, visit www.stpauls-church.org.

Mary Cushing is a member of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

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Zen and the craft of teaching

Jan Kous

When Susan Rakow was a 19-year-old college student in Buffalo, in 1968, she attended a lecture that changed the direction of her life. Rakow, with hundreds of other students, heard Roshi Philip Kapleau, of the Rochester Zen Center, speak on Zen Buddhism. When he walked onto the stage, she thought, “I want what he has.” She saw a calm strength and equanimity in all he did, and that made a profound impression on her. Rakow had been seeking answers to religious questions and, for the first time, glimpsed an answer. The practice of Zen did not provide a set of beliefs but a way of being in the world.

When Rakow and her new husband, Larry, moved to Cleveland in 1971, they became part of a small Zen group in Cleveland Heights. In 1974, they moved to Geneva, Ohio, as part of a back-to-the-land experiment that lasted for two years. Both realized they were more accustomed to urban living and returned to Cleveland Heights, where they have remained since.

The Cleveland Zazen Group met in their home until four years ago when the Rakows and some friends purchased a bungalow on Wilton Road, rehabilitated it, and turned the first floor into a Zen meditation center. Rakow is the leader of the group, organizing introductory classes, an annual intensive weekend retreat, and a schedule of meditations on Sunday mornings and Tuesday and Thursday evenings. She thought she was doing something wrong when so few of the people who attended an introductory session returned to the center, but Rakow knows from experience how very difficult it is to work with “monkey mind,” to quit the chatter and be present in life. Zen meditation is not for everyone, but it has been a major influence on all aspects of Rakow’s life, including her teaching career, which began at Roxboro Middle School in 1971. She admits she was not a great teacher in the beginning. She struggled to find a way to engage the students in class discussions. One day she was surprised when her students did engage, and she asked why they had suddenly become more vocal. One of the boys replied, “This is the first time you let it happen!”

Most of her teaching career was spent working with gifted middle school children. Not much research had been conducted on this population, so Rakow did research and received a Ph.D. from Kent State University on the subject. She wrote several books about teaching gifted middle school students, and, upon retiring after 30 years, took a new position at Cleveland State University teaching teachers how to work with this population. She also obtained a counseling license and now has a private practice, working mostly with children and parents.

Teaching and caregiving are constant themes in Rakow’s life. Her Jewish upbringing stressed the importance of keeping family connections strong and sacrificing for the sake of family. Doing what you say you are going to do, having integrity and fulfilling commitments are very important to her. As she sees it, education of all kinds, and learning how to live with people who are different from you, are important aspects of life in the 21st century. Seeing “Buddha nature” or the inherent potential for good in everyone, no matter how hard that is to do, is an important practice and value for Rakow.

Rakow has remained true to the example and inspiration of Kapleau, whom she first encountered 47 years ago. She and others have created a unique space for Zen meditation that is accessible to all in Cleveland Heights and beyond. More information about the Cleveland Zazen Group can be found at www.zenleveland.com.

Jan Kous, a resident of Cleveland Heights since 1975, raised four children here with her husband. She is interested in people in the Heights community who fit the description of “living outside of the box.”
Osteoporosis affects both men and women

Osteoporosis is a disease that makes bones porous, which weakens them and makes them more susceptible to fractures. Often a person has no symptoms or pain, so the disease may not be discovered until a bone breaks. Osteoporosis is a natural part of the aging process. Throughout our lifetime, our bodies naturally replace old bone mass with new. When we are young, bone growth exceeds loss. New bone production slows as we age, however, and by the time we reach our late 20s, loss begins to exceed growth.

Loss of bone mass is accelerated in women when they reach menopause. According to the Cleveland Clinic, women are four times more likely to develop osteoporosis than men. It is often thought of as a “woman’s disease.” However, at around age 65, men and women begin to lose bone mass at the same rate.

Osteoporosis is “a significant threat to more than 2 million men in the United States today,” according to the Cleveland Clinic, which estimates that one-fifth to one-third of all hip fractures occur in men. Six percent of men over 50 will suffer a hip fracture as a result of osteoporosis. Spinal fractures occur about half as often in men as in women.

Fortunately, osteoporosis is both preventable and treatable. The Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases National Resource Center of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommends several lifestyle changes that can help us reach peak bone mass and continue building it as we age.

The first of these is adequate calcium and vitamin D intake. NIH recommends daily intake of 1,000 mg for men ages 51-70, and 1,200 mg for women, beginning at age 51, and for men ages 70 and older. The recommended daily intake of vitamin D is 600 IU for all adults up to age 70, and 800 IU for those over 70.

Other preventive measures include not smoking and not drinking more than three ounces of alcohol a day. The NIH also advises avoiding medications that cause bone loss or inhibit absorption of calcium and vitamin D. Engaging in weight-bearing exercise, such as walking, hiking, climbing stairs and dancing, helps bones become stronger.

For those already affected by osteoporosis, the same health, nutrition and exercise recommendations apply. NIH also suggests taking measures to prevent falls, which increase the likelihood of bone fractures and breaks. Preventative measures include using a cane or walker for stability, and wearing flat rubber-soled shoes. Keep stairs and walkways clear of clutter, tape down throw rugs and extension cords, install grab bars in the bathroom, and make sure all rooms and outdoor areas are adequately lit, both day and night.

The Cleveland Clinic is holding a health talk, Aging Essentials for Men and Women, on Sept. 10, 6:30-8 p.m., at the Chagrin Falls Family Health Center. Osteoporosis will be one of the topics. Call 216.444.3641 for more information, and to register.

As always, consult with your doctor before making any changes to your diet, medications, or exercise routine.

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.lovingshandsgroup.com. She can be reached at 216.408.5578 or judith@lovinghandsgroup.com.

Osteoporosis

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Senior Citizen Happenings

After an August break, Senior Citizen Happenings resumes its schedule of weekly talks on Sept. 10. Sponsored by the City of University Heights, the talks are open to all senior citizens, and 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.

Sept. 10: Joseph Valencic, president of the National Cleveland-Style Polka Hall of Fame and Museum, will present the story of Frankie Yankovic, Cleveland’s own legendary Polka King. This year marks the 100th anniversary of Yankovic’s birth, in 1915, and Valencic will share tales of Yankovic and the music he popularized in his many years of touring around the country.

Sept. 17: Marian Morton, John Carroll University history professor emeritus, will trace “The Several Lives of Severance Town Center in Cleveland Heights, 1890-2015.” Her image-packed presentation will explore the site’s transformation—from farmland, to mansions, to indoor mall, to refurbished strip mall—to dramatic changes in both the city and the shopping center.

Sept. 24: The Cleveland Play House is celebrating its 100th season as America’s first regional theater. Its artistic associate, Rachel Lerner-Ley, and associate producer, Corey Atkins, will talk about their work—nurturing artists, creating bold new work, initiating innovative educational programs for young people, and satisfying audiences—and discuss the eight stage productions planned for the 2015-16 season.

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Osteoporosis is a disease that makes bones porous, which weakens them and makes them more susceptible to fractures. Often a person has no symptoms or pain, so the disease may not be discovered until a bone breaks.

Osteoporosis is a natural part of the aging process. Throughout our lifetime, our bodies naturally replace old bone mass with new. When we are young, bone growth exceeds loss. New bone production slows as we age, however, and by the time we reach our late 20s, loss begins to exceed growth.

Loss of bone mass is accelerated in women when they reach menopause. According to the Cleveland Clinic, women are four times more likely to develop osteoporosis than men. It is often thought of as a “woman’s disease.” However, at around age 65, men and women begin to lose bone mass at the same rate.

Osteoporosis is “a significant threat to more than 2 million men in the United States today,” according to the Cleveland Clinic, which estimates that one-fifth to one-third of all hip fractures occur in men. Six percent of men over 50 will suffer a hip fracture as a result of osteoporosis. Spinal fractures occur about half as often in men as in women.

Fortunately, osteoporosis is both preventable and treatable. The Osteoporosis and Related Bone Diseases National Resource Center of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommends several lifestyle changes that can help us reach peak bone mass and continue building it as we age.

The first of these is adequate calcium and vitamin D intake. NIH recommends daily intake of 1,000 mg for men ages 51-70, and 1,200 mg for women, beginning at age 51, and for men ages 70 and older. The recommended daily intake of vitamin D is 600 IU for all adults up to age 70, and 800 IU for those over 70.

Other preventive measures include not smoking and not drinking more than three ounces of alcohol a day. The NIH also advises avoiding medications that cause bone loss or inhibit absorption of calcium and vitamin D. Engaging in weight-bearing exercise, such as walking, hiking, climbing stairs and dancing, helps bones become stronger.

For those already affected by osteoporosis, the same health, nutrition and exercise recommendations apply. NIH also suggests taking measures to prevent falls, which increase the likelihood of bone fractures and breaks. Preventative measures include using a cane or walker for stability, and wearing flat rubber-soled shoes. Keep stairs and walkways clear of clutter, tape down throw rugs and extension cords, install grab bars in the bathroom, and make sure all rooms and outdoor areas are adequately lit, both day and night.

The Cleveland Clinic is holding a health talk, Aging Essentials for Men and Women, on Sept. 10, 6:30-8 p.m., at the Chagrin Falls Family Health Center. Osteoporosis will be one of the topics. Call 216.444.3641 for more information, and to register.

As always, consult with your doctor before making any changes to your diet, medications, or exercise routine.

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.lovingshandsgroup.com. She can be reached at 216.408.5578 or judith@lovinghandsgroup.com.
Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland turns 150

Julia Murphy

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the publication of Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland—a milestone of longevity that few books reach. A novel about a girl who fell through a rabbit hole to encounter nonsensical talking animals somehow became a classic. Alice has inspired countless adaptations in the form of other books, artwork, live theater, ballet and film. One explanation for its popularity is that the literary nonsense genre is fun for young readers, and also allows for infinite interpretations for adults. It’s a fantasy book for children, a clever satire of Victorian England, and, perhaps, something else altogether.

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library is celebrating the book’s anniversary with Alice-themed programs for all ages during its fall season. This year’s theme for the Science and Nature Study Group is Curiouser and Curiouser, and its activities begin on Wednesday, Sept. 16, 7 p.m., with a program called Alice in the Many Sides of the Mushroom, to be held at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. The program will explore hallucinogenic, poisonous, and medicinal mushrooms and plants.

For children and families, the Lee Road Library will present an interactive trip through Wonderland on Thursday, Oct. 8, 6–8 p.m., where participants can listen to a story under a giant mushroom. The Lee Road Library Art Gallery will host Altered Alice, a drop-in program for adults, on Saturday, Oct. 17, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Visitors can make mini-books or collages based on the whimsical poems and classic John Tenniel illustrations from Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland. The gallery will be home to its own interactive Alice-themed exhibit throughout the month of October.

Closing out the celebration, on Monday, Nov. 2, at 7 p.m., Dobama Theatre (located in the Lee Road Library building), will present a program called Alice: The Real Story of Us, featuring WPCN’s Dee Perry. This spirited and dynamic presentation will explore the story behind the story, and the sense behind the nonsense.

For more information, visit www.heightslibrary.org or call the library at 216-932-5800.

Julia Murphy is the marketing and volunteer coordinator for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.
Library joins the ‘maker movement’ with new teen program

Sheryl Banks

Every Thursday afternoon at 3:30 p.m., a small corner in the back of the teen room at the Lee Road Library is transformed into a workshop. Tables and supplies are brought out of storage, and teens crowd around to see what tools and craft supplies may spark a creative idea. Needle and thread? Hammers, nails and wood? Yarn, beads, or electric circuits?

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library has joined the growing “maker movement” with its Maker Thursdays program for teens at the Lee Road Library. A March 2014 Fast Company article summed up the maker movement as: “The umbrella term for independent inventors, designers and tinkerers. . . . A convergence of computer hackers and traditional artisans, the niche is established enough to have its own magazine, Make, as well as hands-on Maker Faires that are catnip for DIYers who used to toil in solitude.”

Maker Thursdays is led by youth services associates Peggy Hull, a former Heights High English teacher, and Cassandra Anselmi, a former teaching artist at The Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh. Hull and Anselmi are using their combined experience to create a program for teens that will build critical-thinking skills while providing a creative outlet.

“Our main focus is to foster creativity and nurture an environment in which experimenting and failing are positive learning experiences,” said Hull. “The program also teaches kids the importance of collaboration, and supports STEAM [science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics] programs in the local schools.”

During its first month, more than 100 teens participated in the program. One of them, recent Heights High graduate Arnaz Simpson, has attended nearly every program. “You can create whatever you can think of,” Simpson said, while putting the finishing touches on a laptop bag he made with colorful fabric and a sewing machine, both donated to the library.

“Maker spaces in libraries is a newer concept nationwide that provides people, especially young adults, with exposure to tinkering, building, crafting, making and doing,” said Anselmi. “We believe this program will benefit teens in our community by building stronger critical-thinking skills and providing creative outlets to help them find their own voice.”

As the maker program grows, the need for donated supplies will continue to grow as well. Needed supplies include tools and hardware (hammers,  box cutters, rulers, screwdrivers, nails, glue, duct tape), craft supplies (yarn, fabric, notions, felt, leather, thread, needles, embroidery hoops, floss, beads, jewelry supplies, velcro, screen-printing supplies, pencils, burtons, picture frames, magnets), miscellaneous mechanical parts and electronics (foys, typewriters, sewing machines, keys, clock parts, gears), and storage containers of all sizes.

Anyone interested in donating supplies is encouraged to drop off items in the collection box in the Lee Road Library lobby. To donate items too large for the collection box, call 216-932-3600, ext. 1277.

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

What’s going on at your library?

Heights Libraries’ summer reading programs have wrapped up, but the fun continues into fall with new programs.

Coventry Village Library

1925 Coventry Road, 216-327-3400

Wednesday, Sept. 2, 7 p.m.


Lee Road Library

2345 Lee Road, 216-932-3600

Thursday, Sept. 10, 7 p.m.

House History Workshop. Using local research tools as well as online sites, this workshop will teach participants how to research their home’s history, to find out when it was built and by whom, who were its past owners, and how to locate historic photos.

Noble Neighborhood Library

2800 Noble Road, 216-291-9065

Thursday, Sept. 24, 7 p.m.

For the Love of Food. Film screening and discussion with local filmmaker Brad Mai. This film explores how Oberlin, a small town west of Cleveland, localized its food supply and discovered a stronger sense of community in the process.

University Heights Library

15866 Cedar Road, 216-321-4700

Saturday, Sept. 5, 10:30 a.m.

Cookie and Milk Storytime with Panera. What could be better than storytime at the library, with a cookie and milk provided by Panera Bread? Registration began Aug. 22. To register, visit www.heightslibrary.org.

High school students

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Beaumont School has partnered with One Seed Heritage to offer its students the option of purchasing uniform skirts that are made by fair-trade workers and ethically sourced. The skirts are handmade by women of the Mayan community of San Juan La Laguna in Guatemala. These women are paid fairly and create the skirts using organic cotton grown on family farms and dye created from plants. Five percent of purchases will fund scholarships for Guatemalan plants. Five percent of purchases will fund scholarships for Guatemalan students. The skirts will be offered at a price that is competitive to that offered by Beaumont’s existing uniform provider, which families will still be able to order from. Skirts from both providers cost around $50.

Beaumont is supported by the Ursuline Sisters, who have a continuing tradition of social justice work. A partnership with One Seed Heritage reinforces Beaumont’s mission by educating students about the importance of creating social and economic mobility within communities of need, igniting human empowerment, and creating sustainable products.

Beaumont is a Catholic, all-girls high school founded in the Ursuline tradition. Visit www.beaumontschool.org for more about our school. To learn more about One Seed Heritage, visit www.onesetheritage.com.

Anna Beyerle is the public relations and marketing manager at the Beaumont School in Cleveland Heights.

Shaker leaves CH-UH district for a new role with Cleveland schools

Ange Shaker, director of communications and community engagement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, left her position at the end of August to become the executive director of strategic engagement for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD). She will work within CMSD’s division of portfolio planning to lead engagement activity and provide internal and external communications that support “Cleveland’s Plan for Transforming Schools.”

Shaker served as director of communications and community engagement for the CH-UH district for six years. “During her time in this role, Ms. Shaker became a trusted advisor, champion of the district’s brand, and a reliable voice for education in the community,” stated Superintendent Talsia L. Dixon. “She has facilitated our strategic planning efforts that engaged over 1,800 stakeholders, including students, staff, families and partners.”

Shaker and her team improved the district’s communications and community engagement efforts in numerous ways, including the following:

- Cultivated a relationship of trust and transparency with the district’s media partners to increase positive stories about student and staff accomplishments.
- While I’m very enthusiastic about taking on this new and challenging role with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, I’m saying goodbye with a heavy heart. I’m going to deeply miss my colleagues, the students and families of the district, and our community partners. I’ve grown so much from my work here and I’m grateful for getting to be a part of such a powerful and inspiring school community,” said Shaker.

Before coming to the district in 2009, Shaker was vice president of education and workforce development for the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce. She is a former news anchor for WYTV in Youngstown and WTOV in Steubenville.

“We will begin the search for Angee’s replacement immediately. The communications and community engagement position has been posted on our website at www.chubs.org,” Dixon stated.

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

Beaumont offers students fair-trade school uniform option

Beaumont School is exploring the option of fair-trade skirts with One Seed Heritage during the 2014-15 school year, with two students testing out prototypes for several months. The skirts will be offered at a price that is competitive to that offered by Beaumont’s existing uniform provider, which families will still be able to order from. Skirts from both providers cost around $50.

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CH-UH voters will elect two new school board members on Nov. 3

Angie Shaker

Residents of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District will elect two new members of the five-member CH-UH Board of Education this fall. The seats of Nancy Peppler and Eric Coble, who each served two-year terms, are up for grabs as neither is running for re-election.

The candidates will be on the Nov. 3 ballot: James Posch, CEO of Three Choice (EdChoice) Program provides the Tangible Personal Property tax reimbursement from the state, and EdChoice vouchers. [The Educational Choice (EdChoice) Program provides students from underperforming public schools the opportunity to attend participating private schools. The EdChoice scholarship amount is currently $4,250 for grades K-8. When families opt to take advantage of this program, the district loses both the student and the state funding.]

“We eliminated 10 positions back in May. We also reduced positions in the preschool program earlier this year. Through the ongoing strategic planning process—and move of the high school to the Wiley campus—vacant positions have remained unfilled and plans are in process of removing staff to absorb that work. We’ll do more with less,” stated Gainer.

The district is eliminating a total of 48.2 positions, saving the district $5.7 million. These include those mentioned above, as well as additional teachers, counselors, social workers, office staff and administrators. Also included is a $180,000 proposed reduction in supplemental contracts, a 10 percent reduction in materials and supplies (saving $75,000), a reduction in professional services (IT) of $360,000, and utilities savings of $430,000 (natural gas through the Ohio Schools Council consortium). Total proposed savings are just under $5 million.

Ron Register, BOE vice president, expressed concern that, with the proposed cuts, some class sizes might increase. For example, the district would eliminate five special-education teachers. Talisa Dixon, superintendent, said special-education class sizes might increase by two or three students, but class sizes would still remain under state requirements.

“If I’m not a fan of this—the cuts, the economic impact—but I would have to go on the ballot and we lose and the city loses and we’re back on the ballot in 2016,” said Eric Silverman, board member. (Cleveland Heights City Council is proposing that an increase in the city’s income tax be placed on the November 2015 ballot.)

“The cuts in salaried positions and non-salaried spending provide us the ability to delay placing a levy on the ballot until 2016,” stated Gainer.

Board member Eric Coble said the cuts will be felt in the schools and the community: “It’s important for the community to realize this will not go unnoticed. There will be pain involved.”

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

Angee Shaker

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Choice co-president for 2014; and Beverly R. Wright.

Pepper and Coble, residents of the Coventry Village neighborhood of Cleveland Heights, were elected to the board in 2007, following the contentious closing of Coventry Elementary School.

Part of why Nancy and I ran was to join the board,” he said. “As I’ve said before, this is not the last of our efforts. We were able to accomplish that through the Master Facilities Plan, which, while it does include closed schools (notably Wiley), provided a road map for how we want our district to look for the next 50 years, and dramatically improves all the remaining school buildings. We also leave a new five-year strategic plan and a widely supported new superintendent that I think will take our district to the next level in the coming years.”

The two also wanted to rebuild community trust. “I think faith in the board is better than when we were elected,” said Coble, “as witnessed by some hits along the way, as shown by the failure of the recent levy.”

Coble acknowledged that although test scores and other measures are up from when the two were elected, “there is still a long way to go to be where we all want to be.” He cited both his increased travel schedule and that fact that the last of his children will graduate from the district this spring as among his reasons for deciding not to run for reelection. “I think it’s good for fresh, enthusiastic voices to join the board,” he said.

“Overall I’m proud of what we’ve done, though it will never seem like enough,” added Coble. “I leave optimistic about our community, and eager to see what our district will look like in the near future.”

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of Eve’s Lights and publisher of the Heights Observer.
Assistant superintendent

Scott Gould, was appointed assistant su-

2015–16 school year. On May 10, positions

Levy

Scott Gainer, district treasurer, presented

New leadership course for

Heights High

The board approved the new course propos-

Portis

Military Base

Showers

Bronze Roofing

Metal detectors: Another community

Nancy Peppler commented that the build-

Ms. Peppler believes the salaries of the nursing staff

Nursing staff salaries: A community mem-

Public comments

Nursing staff

A community member

Cost-cutting ideas: A community member

gave suggestions to the board on cutting

costs. These included not paying superinten-

dents’ retirement, suspending some sports

activities if there are no pool and practice

courts, and covering all teachers for health

care under the Affordable Care Act.

Metal detectors: Another community

member asked why there were no metal
detectors in the buildings. Board President

Nancy Peppler commented that the build-

gings are safe and that the district does not

plan to install them.

New leadership course for Heights High

The board approved the new course propos-
el, leadership for Change for Heights High,

for the 2015-16 school year. This course is

being recommended to provide student lead-

ers the structure, opportunity, resources and

defined curriculum to develop leadership

skills. Enrolled in this one-credit, elective
course would work to implement

schoolwide service projects, orientation,

social events, and mentoring opportunities

with underclassmen. This course would help

build a more positive, student-led culture and

is needed to build the necessary skills in stu-
dent leaders to help them facilitate a positive

transition to Cleveland Heights High School

on the Wiley campus.

Five-year strategic plan

The board approved the five-year strategic

plan for the Cleveland Heights-University

Heights City School District after a presen-
tation by Sarayu Queen-Tabor, chairper-

son of the strategic planning committee,

and Superintendent Talisa Dixon. Goals

focusing on students, diversity, partnership,

and stewardship should be implemented by

2020. The strategic priorities include the

elements of effectiveness, alignment and

prioritization, feasibility and benefits, and

costs, and should be measurable.

The goals include:

• Student outcomes: 90 percent of students

would graduate in four years, and ninth-

grade retention would be reduced. To

achieve this there are many action steps includ-
ing online learning and access to grade-

level material.

• Educational approach: Strategies and

steps are designed to close the achieve-

ment gap, promote higher expectations,

provide staff development, ensure equity,

provide a multi-tiered system of support for

students, and provide early learning inter-

vention for mathematics and literacy.

• Parents and community engagement:

Strategies to strengthen connections be-

tween parent groups and community

groups would be established. Partnerships

should be expanded and community as-

sets explored with multiple communication

options.

• Valued professionals and culture of ex-

cellence: Strategies include an employee code

of conduct, which was read by Su-

perintendent Dixon at the meeting, efforts

to seek diversity in a highly qualified staff.

exit interviews for employees who depart

the system, a high level of accuracy in re-

porting data; provision of professional de-

velopment, performance standards, and

provision of equipment and technology

tools for the staff.

• Operational reserves: Strategies include

using non-school facilities, implementing

the present facilities plan, reducing the

district’s energy consumption and solid

waste, ensuring a healthy indoor air quali-

ty, evaluating non-instruction staff, increas-

ing technology with upgraded speeds, in-

creasing grants awarded, ensuring safety

and security, and being transparent with

the community on expenditures.

Ron Register, board vice president, added

that this strategic plan document have a glos-

sary.

Construction design changes

After meeting with staff, the facilities archi-

tects made modifications in the reconstruc-
tion project design phase document. Admin-

istration space will be on every floor. The

cosmetology space was modified for build-

ging access, and the music and business areas

were modified.

Board president’s comments

Nancy Peppler, board president, com-

mented on the decision to delay the levy

proposal. She said cuts would be painful,

but necessary. She is pleased with the stra-

etic planning committee proposal. She an-

nounced the Wiley open house on Aug. 20.

Look for earlier and often expanded

postings of meetings summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.

See disclaimer on page 8.
It’s not a story problem. But it’s a story about math—and a problem.

I went to elementary school—Coventry—during the 1950s, the Cold War era. We practiced the “duck-and-cover” technique of sitting on the floor with our backs to a wall, bringing our knees up, and putting our heads on our knees with our arms wrapped around our heads. Doing that would protect us from the atomic bomb they assured us would be coming.

My third-grade teacher, a simple and not very insightful person, who was born in the late-1880s (and who also, by some cruel twist of fate, became my fourth-grade teacher), told us how, when the Russians did start to drop bombs on Cleveland, we would be taken away in buses with glass tops (so we could watch for the planes) to some forest, somewhere, without our parents.

I spent most of my time in her class doing two things: either staring out the window or making up jokes. As I got older, the Superman fantasies were replaced by writing songs and creating chorale arrangements. Actually following the classes and their lessons never quite kicked in.

It was also during third grade when some man came in and, with the teacher, pulled each kid aside for a few minutes to pigeonhole us. This man—a skinny guy with a gray crew cut and glasses—said to me, “You’re good at math and science.” I thought that was a little odd, because I was fascinated by math and science, but I said, “Whatever,” and went back to my desk to stare out the window.

So, now armed with the knowledge that I wasn’t going to be good at math and science, I never bothered to try to learn or understand what was being taught about them and always got the lowest grades possible in those subjects.

Then, in the eighth grade, when I still thought there was a chance I might get college, I probably dropped a music class, if anything—I became a little concerned about my math scores. I knew that in the ninth grade was when you started something called algebra, which sounded frightening. So I told my parents, to their complete shock, that I wanted to take algebra in summer school, for no credit, so that when it came to the real thing, in ninth grade math class, I would understand it and get a better grade in it.

I attended summer school and I wound up loving algebra. It was the most fun I’d ever experienced in an academic setting. I found strong similarities between doing algebra and arranging music. And it was like doing puzzles, which I also loved.

I walked to Heights High from Coventry and Mayfield every morning that summer holding a tiny transistor radio with its little earphone, listening to songs like “Walk Like a Man” by the Four Seasons, “Fingertips” by 11-year-old Stevie Wonder, “It’s My Party” by Leslie Gore, “Surf City” by Jan and Dean, and “If You Wanna Be Happy” (“If you wanna be happy for the rest of your life, never make a pretty woman your wife . . .”) by Jimmy Soul. I’d come home after the class and listen to folk albums by Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, theLimelighters, and Tom Paxton.

So I was good at music and writing, but I was good at math and science. I never bothered to try to learn or understand what was being taught about them and always got the lowest grades possible in those subjects.

Then, in the eighth grade, when I still thought there was a chance I might get college, I probably dropped a music class, if anything—I became a little concerned about my math scores. I knew that in the ninth grade was when you started something called algebra, which sounded frightening. So I told my parents, to their complete shock, that I wanted to take algebra in summer school, for no credit, so that when it came to the real thing, in ninth grade math class, I would understand it and get a better grade in it.

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That summer the Baseball All-Star Game was played at Cleveland’s Municipal Stadium. All-Star games were still played during the daytime back then, so on July 9, I rushed home to watch it on our black-and-white TV, seeing all-time greats such as Willie Mays, Sandy Koufax, Hank Aaron, Al Kaline and Cleveland’s Jim “Mudcat” Grant. (The National League won, 5-3.)

It was a good summer. And I got an A in the algebra class—in summer school, for no credit.

Then ninth grade started and I could hardly wait for my first algebra class. But it turned out to be the year of the so-called “New Math,” which involved a whole new textbook with a brand-new method of teaching algebra. I didn’t understand one thing about it, all year, and I flunked the class and never thought about college again.

The Russians never did get around to dropping bombs on Cleveland Heights and Coventry School. The school system, however, did drop that “New Math” thing after a few years and went back to teaching algebra the way I’d learned it in summer school. Too late for me, though. But I was good at music and writing, so that’s what I did, and do. So I guess they were right.

David Budin is a freelance writer for national and local publications, the former editor of Cleveland Magazine and Northern Ohio Live, an author, and a professional musician and comedian. His writing focuses on the arts and, especially, pop-music history.
Students are inundated with after-sch school activities. More than just a feel-good choice, music instruction offers students an alternative means of expression, is a positive factor in the cognitive, social and physical development of children and teens, and is a terrific stress-reliever for people of all ages.

Cleveland Heights resident Susa Paik, 16, started learning violin 11 years ago at The Music Settlement (TMS) as part of its Suzuki program.

“I started playing violin when I was 4 years old. I didn’t know anything to solve multiple problems, but I also assisted with language development and spatial reasoning.

“By playing an instrument, I’m more fluent in music in general, and that’s helped with my social skills, too,” Paik said. “The first social experience I had was when I was enrolled in the preschool at The Music Settlement for two years. After that was over, I quit all of my lessons, but I lived in the same neighborhood and I ended up being part of a Suzuki program head.”

The Music Settlement, a 103-year-old nonprofit based in University Circle, provides a community where artistic expression belongs to everyone, and serves those who seek personal growth through the arts. Encouraging artistic expression through music can help kids and teens express what they’re feeling and thinking—especially when they don’t have words for those thoughts or feelings. A family struggling with communication issues can be helped by taking music lessons and playing together.

Even children and teens looking to improve in sports can benefit from music. Music helps to expand one’s vocabulary, improves memory and helps children and teens control their emotions and be aware of others feelings.

TMS offers lessons in all types of instruments and music genres, for students as young as age 4 through advanced adults. Interested parties may sort all offerings by age group on a computer or mobile device online at www.themusicsettlement.org/all-offerings.

TMS is encouraging extracurricular music education by offering a multiple-registration discount this year: 10 percent off the less-expensive registration when two people in a family enroll, or when one person enrolls in multiple offerings. This discount even applies to mothers and fathers who want to get in on the fun. (That is not applicable to preschool, day school, or kindergarten enrollments.) It’s never too late to learn music and reap the benefits of professional music instruction.

“Definitely hope that music is a part of my life and performing with other people even after I graduate high school,” Paik said. “I have considered going into a music program in college—it would be fun.”

Lynn B. Johnson, The Music Settlement’s director of marketing and communications, recently resumed piano lessons after a 32-year hiatus.

Heights Arts reopens gallery with two new shows

Mary Ryan

After being closed most of the summer for renovations, Heights Arts marks its gallery reopening with a grand public reception on Friday, Sept. 4, 6–9 p.m., for the new exhibitions: Emergent 2015 and Spotlight: Brenda Fuchs.

The first installation of what will be an annual show, Emergent 2015, showcases the finest “local produce” of Northeast Ohio colleges and universities.

“The idea behind the exhibition is to feature artists who graduated from area art programs in recent years and are now producing significant work. In this way, Heights Arts seeks to shine a light on the considerable strengths of studio art programs in this area,” noted Greg Donley, Heights Arts board president and gallery committee chair.

During recent decades, Northeast Ohio has produced a steady stream of accomplished visual artists trained at institutions that include the Cleveland Institute of Art, Kent State University, Cleveland State University, the University of Akron, Oberlin College, and other fine studio art programs.

Mary Ryan is a staff at Heights Arts, a nonprofit community arts organization.
Lake Erie Ink teen campers write about exploring Cleveland

Maya Watkins

College student and Heights High graduate Maya Watkins was a summer intern at Cleveland Heights-based Lake Erie Ink's writing program for young writers, with students who took part in LEI's Teen Camp led her to reflect on “what it was like to be a young kid, with limited mobility and busy parents who can’t always take you everywhere you’d like to go.” With LEI, the teens visited Terminal Tower's observation deck, rode the Rapid, and visited MOCA Cleveland. The experience inspired Watkins to share, below, first-person accounts of the interest and excitement the teens felt, traveling around Greater Cleveland with Lake Erie Ink: “It was a pleasure to work with these students, and see the art they created and the building being an art in itself, as other art I’ve seen in other previous museums. The art work was from modern day; the artist challenged the view point of anyone who saw it.”

“My name is Maya Watkins, a Heights High graduate, and I am definitely glad I was able to have this experience this summer.”

Lake Erie Ink campers at MOCA Cleveland.

James Henke

If you’re a fan of folk music or singer-songwriters, there is perhaps no better place to see a concert than Sue Hannibal's Cleveland Heights home. Hannibal has been presenting concerts at her house on Ardleigh Drive for the past 10 years.

“A friend of mine knew about a folk musician who was looking for a place to play in Cleveland, and she knew my house was quite accessible,” Hannibal said. “She asked me if she could use my house for a concert, and that’s how it got started. I had never been to a house concert before, and it was a new concept to me.”

Hannibal now presents four to six concerts in her living room every year. The shows are intimate, with attendance limited to 30 people. Hannibal usually charges about $5 for admission, and all of the money goes to the musicians. The artists usually perform a 45-minute set, take a break and then play another 45-minute set.

“If the performer is right there in front of you,” Hannibal said. “And you can have a conversation with them during the break or after the show.”

Many well-known folk singers have performed at Hannibal’s house over the years, including Ann Hills, Joe Crookston, Debra Cowan, Roy Zimmerman, the Squirrel Hillbillies, Steve Gillette and Cindy Mangson, the Berrymans, Matt Watroba, Emma's Revolution, John Roberts and Charlie King.

“I like doing house concerts because I love bringing live music into my home,” Hannibal said. “I love meeting the people who come here for the shows, and I love helping musicians who otherwise might not have any other venue to perform in.”

Hannibal said that most of the artists contact her about playing at her house. “I hear from them anywhere from a couple of months before they want to perform to a year before,” she said. “We then set the date, and about six weeks before the concert we figure out a time.” She then sends out an e-mail to her list of potential concertgoers. She also has the Case Western Reserve University radio station, WRUW-FM, promote the show, and she sometimes makes up flyers.

The performers usually arrive a few hours before the show, and she generally serves them dinner. Some of the artists also spend the night at her house. “I think house concerts are becoming the up-and-coming way for many musicians to perform,” she said. “Other venues expect you to bring in hundreds of people, and it’s getting harder to do that.”

Hannibal has been a music fan for most of her life. Her favorite artists include Joni Mitchell, Nanci Griffith and Pete Seeger. “I’ve always enjoyed going to folk festivals and concerts,” she said. Hannibal grew up in Lorain, then attended Kent State University, where she received a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s degree in education. She was a special-education teacher for about 35 years, and retired from teaching five years ago. Her husband, Jerry Hannibal, plays banjo, guitar and ukulele. They’ve been married for 39 years, and have two children: Elizabeth, 32, and David, 30. The Hannibals moved to Cleveland Heights a few years after getting married, and built their house on Ardleigh 24 years ago.

At press time, Hannibal did not have any concerts set for the near future, but anyone who would like to get on her invitation list can send an e-mail to her at suehannibal@gmail.com.

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 Bob Dylan, John Lennon and Bob Marley.
John Troxell has been “into art” since he was five years old. Now 55, Troxell, who lives on Euclid Heights Boulevard in Cleveland Heights, is a full-time artist whose work has been exhibited at galleries in Ohio and in several other states. Troxell grew up on the East Side of Cleveland near Euclid Avenue and Green Road. His uncle was also “into art,” and his father knew a lot about art. When they left him in a babysitter’s care, his parents would leave him with a sketchpad and a pencil, and he would make drawings. He also liked to do finger paintings.

When he was in seventh grade, Troxell left Cleveland to attend a military school in Texas. After graduating from that school, he returned to Cleveland and attended Case Western Reserve University. “I took art classes and played football,” he said. “But I really wanted to be a pre-med student.” At that point, Troxell was also creating a lot of artwork. He did not graduate from Case, and wound up taking a job as a bartender at the Hyde Park Grill on Coventry Road, a restaurant that was in the space currently occupied by Panini’s Bar and Grill.

“In the early 1980s, I started selling more of my artwork,” Troxell said. “I would do portraits of friends, winter scenes and other things.” In 1991, after 10 years, Troxell quit his job at Hyde Park and began focusing on art full time. “A lot of people would commission me to do paintings, and my bartending conflicted with my artwork,” he said.

Troxell paints a wide variety of subjects, including portraits and Greater Cleveland scenes. He has done paintings of the Cedar Fairmount neighborhood, downtown Cleveland, East 9th Street and the Shoreway and East 55th Street and Chester Avenue.

Troxell also creates large murals. One, measuring 40 feet by 100 feet, is the largest mural in Cleveland. Commissioned by Slavic Village Development, the mural is on view in Cleveland’s Slavic Village, at West 68th Street and Broadway. Another mural is on the wall at the Stone Oven Bakery and Café on Lee Road.

In 2006, Troxell’s work was exhibited at the Beck Center in Lake-Chester Avenue. Troxell also creates large murals. One, measuring 40 feet by 100 feet, is the largest mural in Cleveland. Commissioned by Slavic Village Development, the mural is on view in Cleveland’s Slavic Village, at West 68th Street and Broadway. Another mural is on the wall at the Stone Oven Bakery and Café on Lee Road.

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A John Troxell painting of downtown Cleveland.

“When a friend challenged Bill Jones to hike a portion of Spain’s Camino de Santiago last summer, he utilized his membership in Judson’s Smart Living at Home program to give him a leg up. Bill and his wife, Susan, became members because they needed home care support for Susan. Eventually she moved to Judson’s Bruening Health Center, where Bill visits her every day with their dog, Oliver.

With Susan’s healthcare needs taken care of, Bill focused on nurturing his own wellness. With the help of Judson wellness staff he developed a fitness program that simulated the trail in Spain. Bill left in August and spent several weeks on the trail—about 165 miles overall.

“Judson inspired me to take charge of my own health, with a focus on prevention. I have a plan in place to get the care I need when I need it.”

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CH’s John Troxell is thriving as a working artist!

James Henke

John Troxell in front of one of his paintings.

Troxell loves living in Cleveland Heights. “I love the walkability of this area,” he said. “And I like that it’s a mixed community. I also love all of the stores and shops, and I love the fact that it is near Little Italy and Case Western Reserve.”

Two of his favorite destinations are Tommy’s restaurant on Coventry and Nighttown on Cedar Road. “Troxell’s work can be seen online at www.flickr.com/troxellart. He said he is always looking for work, and can be contacted at troxellart@yahoo.com.

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.

"You’re never too young to begin planning for your future. Why wait for a crisis?"
—Bill Jones, Judson Smart Living at Home member since 2006
Ten Thousand Villages brings fair-trade rug event to the Alcazar

Sonal Dhiman

Ten Thousand Villages is bringing a fair-trade rug event to Cleveland Heights. Although these rugs from Pakistan are not literally made of magic, they seem enchanted for the people who made them, bringing these artisans good fortune and recognition.

Ten Thousand Villages, in the Cedar Fairmount Business District, is a local nonprofit fair trade retail store that, for the third consecutive year, will bring the popular Fair Trade Oriental Rug Event to the historic Alcazar Hotel. The event will offer more than 300 high quality hand-knotted Bunyaad rugs for sale.

The Fair Trade Oriental Rug Event is not an ordinary sale; it is an opportunity to give recognition to the artisans who spend their hours, days and weeks weaving and knotting these unique rugs. They are cut, shaped, threaded and knotted to perfection by adults—no child labor is involved—who receive fair wages for their work. Each rug purchase supports the education and livelihood of people in Pakistan, from widowed single mothers to unmarried family members working to support their families. Because of Ten Thousand Villages’ efforts selling products from authentic producers, the artisans now have lifelong support for the craft that has been their legacy.

Yousaf Chaman, director of the Bunyaad rug program, said “When artisans know they are paid for every knot they tie, they are empowered to focus on the fine details of intricate rugs that will last for generations.” Many of the rugs are made of hand-sheared wool that is hand spun and hand dyed with extracts from fruits and vegetables, then carefully crafted and woven by the artisans over a period of a few months.

“Many of the artisans work together with their looms and discuss village issues, environmental concerns, improvements for the schools, so Bunyaad goes beyond rug making,” Chaman added. “It also opens the door for equal opportunity for women, who earn the same wage for their work as their male counterparts.”

A special preview evening is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 24 at 6:30 p.m. for those who wish to view the collection before the sale, or learn more about how these rugs are made—their traditional designs and techniques and the stories of the people who make them. Reservations for the preview event can be made by calling 216-371-8600 x558.

Sonal Dhiman is a writer who lives in Elyria. She works in the marketing department at Ten Thousand Villages, Cleveland.

Cedar Taylor installs new street banners

Cedar Taylor Development Association installed new street banners and planters this summer to create a sense of place. Neat on the group’s list is to install new bike racks and benches.

Cartoon by Andy Singer | Reprinted from Funny Times.

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DEANNA BREMER FISHER
The Cedar Taylor Development Association installed new street banners and planters this summer to create a sense of place. Neat on the group’s list is to install new bike racks and benches.
Steve Presser leads life filled with toys, art and community

Christopher Tysh

Standing next to a seven-and-a-half-foot-long G.I. Joe aircraft carrier, flanked by a few dozen action figures, jets and hovercrafts, Steve Presser is a man who has found his calling.

Since leaving his job as a stockbroker 24 years ago and opening Big Fun, a toy store in the artsy Coventry Village neighborhood of Cleveland Heights, Presser, 57, has become a vocal business leader, community coordinator and activist for the arts.

Reflecting on how his life has changed since his days of selling commodities, Presser said, “Now my commodities are fake dog-doo and throw-up, and lots of collectible toys.”

Wearing a bowling shirt and sporting short gray hair and a soul patch, Presser walked into Tommy’s restaurant, a vegan-friendly diner a few doors down from his store. A Tommy’s staff member greeted him by name while Presser turned to acknowledge a family of four sitting nearby, whom he knows from the neighborhood.

As a child growing up in University Heights, Presser developed an enduring love of toys. “I grew up in the greatest era of toys and TV—the 1960s—so there were TV shows, and toy products were manufactured for them,” said Presser. “My generation was... ‘The Addams Family’, ‘Lost in Space’, ‘Batman.’ ”

As an adult, Presser started collecting rare toys, but saw it only as a hobby. Then, one day in 1982, Presser’s life changed forever. While in Chicago with his future wife, Debbie, fate led him to a store called Goodies. Presser was blown away. “If you ever saw ‘The Wizard of Oz’...the first time...it goes from black-and-white to color, that was what I felt,” he said.

After graduating from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Science in psychology, Presser returned to Cleveland to pursue his career as a stockbroker, but he was never able to shake that first experience at Goodies. Presser began visiting Goodies several times a year, befriending the store’s owner, Ted Frankel. “He’s been one of my best friends and truly one of my greatest mentors,” said Presser.

After working for seven years at Paine Webber in Beachwood, and with Frankel’s encouragement, Presser decided it was time to move on from dealing stocks.

“It just wasn’t me. I’m a very giving person,” he said. “There was just this pressure of making money and working hard and selling and buying. I just didn’t enjoy it.”

On April 1, 1991, Presser opened the original Big Fun, located across the street from its current location, on Coventry Road. Since then, he has become a vital member of the local community, sitting on several nonprofit boards and promoting Coventry Village as a place for businesses and families alike.

Presser is a founding member of the Coventry Village Special Improvement District and a founding board member of Heights Arts, an organization dedicated to promoting the arts through education, exhibitions and performances.

His love of music, the arts and the outdoors has influenced his involvement in his community. “I was heavily involved with the Coventry Street Fair,” said Presser. “I started the music series here, I started the movie series, I started the drum circle, I started the yoga. These are things that are really important.”

On top of helping to build a strong community, Presser does what he can to help other local businesses. “When we did our midnight release party for Harry Potter number seven, we had planned all these activities, and Steve just jumped right in to help us,” said Suzanne DeGuarino, owner of Mac’s Backs bookstore on Coventry Road.

“He found the Harry Potter round glasses, and he got those for us so that we could give them out that night.”

Despite becoming one of the most active and recognizable personalities in Coventry Village, Presser only recently realized the true motivator behind what drives him. “For years, people used to ask me what I do. I used to say, ‘I own this cool toy store,’ ” he said. “About nine months ago, I finally realized what I do—make people happy. That’s what I do—make people happy. And I’m good at that.”

Christopher Tysh is a 35-year-old mobile app developer. He lives in Cleveland Heights with his fiancée, Ashley, and their dog, Oscar.