Planning commission approves adaptive reuse for Grace Lutheran Church

Vince Raddy

At its October meeting, the Cleveland Heights Planning Commission conditionally approved the adaptive reuse of the landmark Grace Lutheran Church, 13001 Cedar Road, as an office for Horizon Health Services, a home health care provider, which plans to move from smaller quarters near Shaker Square. Grace Lutheran, which moved to Cleveland Heights from East 55th Street in Cleveland in 1927, had been searching for a buyer for its property.

The landmark Grace Lutheran Church.

...and love. We love this community and everyone in it, and we will continue to grow, serve and be a great part of the blazing food scene in Cleveland Heights.”

The awards for Best Cleveland Heights Business continued on page 8

Matt and Chuck Gile of Motorcars holding the award for Best Cleveland Heights Business.

Black Box Fix and Motorcars are among the Best of the Heights

James Henke

On Oct. 7, at its 11th annual Best of the Heights Awards, FutureHeights honored outstanding businesses in Cleveland Heights and University Heights. From May to August, readers of the Heights Observer voted for their favorite businesses in 19 categories, and 241 businesses were nominated. Finalists and winners were announced at the event, which was held in Tucker Hall at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

Black Box Fix edged out finalists Motorcars Mobility and Momo’s Kebab to win Best New Business. The gourmet sandwich shop, at 2307 Lee Road, occupies the corner storefront previously occupied by Sweetie Fry, and is owned by Eric and LaToya Rogers.

Black Box Fix also named Best African-American-Owned Business, Naturally Gifted Fitness Center, located in the Heights Masonic Building at 1635 Lee Road, and Mama Joyce’s Soul Food Café, at 2338 Lee Road, were finalists in the category. “We are honored and blessed to be recognized for these two awards,” said Eric Rogers, owner of Black Box Fix. “The Cleveland Heights community and Northeast Ohio have embraced us with tremendous support.

Young artists fight childhood cancer

Shari Nacson

On Oct. 6, a nontraditional art show opened at Phoenix Coffee on Lee Road. It drew a special crowd of artists, surrounded by family, friends, and customers eager to purchase pieces. Of the 20 pieces in the collection, 11 sold during the exhibit’s opening night.

The Big Feelings exhibit is the creation of the We Hate Cancer Club, which was founded this past summer by a group of Cleveland Heights kids ranging in age from 3 to 7.

Devin Johnson, 3, Nuelle Johnson, 5, and Ruthie McFarland, 7 (from left), creating art for the Big Feelings show.

The design we’ve selected seeks to best accommodate the wishes of our residents and patrons, such as more parking, a rear door off the parking lot, a fully functioning elevator, first floor bathrooms, and designated areas for children and teens,” said Rob Fischer, Heights Libraries board president. “The University Heights branch is the library’s second-most heavily used building, after Lee Road, and these changes and additions will make it an even more functional resource for the Heights community.”

At a Sept. 8 Heights Libraries board committee meeting, CBLH presented three design concepts for the University Heights Library. The meeting included a detailed presentation by Cleveland-based architecture firm CBLH Design Inc., which included conceptual renderings of the interior and exterior of the proposed design. Residents and library staff had opportunity during the meeting to examine the drawings, ask questions of the board and architects, and offer feedback.

The Design We’ve Selected

Sheryl Banks

At its Sept. 28 meeting, the Heights Libraries Board of Trustees announced the direction and scope for the 2016 renovation of the University Heights Library.

The meeting included a detailed presentation by Cleveland-based architecture firm CBLH Design Inc., which included conceptual renderings of the interior and exterior of the proposed design. Residents and library staff had opportunity during the meeting to examine the drawings, ask questions of the board and architects, and offer feedback.

“The design we’ve selected seeks to best accommodate the wishes of our residents and patrons, such as more parking, a rear door off the parking lot, a fully functioning elevator, first floor bathrooms, and designated areas for children and teens,” said Rob Fischer, Heights Libraries board president. “The University Heights branch is the library’s second-most heavily used building, after Lee Road, and these changes and additions will make it an even more functional resource for the Heights community.”

At a Sept. 8 Heights Libraries board committee meeting, CBLH presented three design concepts for the University Heights Library. The designs represented price points between $1 million and $4.5 million, and the selected design’s price will be approximately $4.5 million.
About the Observer

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

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

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

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

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

To make a submission of any kind, go to www.heightsobserver.org 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 216-352-1423 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

Articles to be considered for the December issue must be submitted by Nov. 9. 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.

How voting and holiday shopping are alike

Bob Rosenbaum

By the first week of November, elections will be over. You’re smart enough to make your own decisions—and the community is too diverse for the small group of us who work on the Heights Observer to have any business telling you what to think.

That’s why it’s a core principle of the Observer to facilitate discussion of public issues without taking sides. The Observer doesn’t endorse candidates or issues, and we don’t filter out ideas we dislike.

We know participation in the Observer is stronger from some parts of the community than others—and this alone skews the opinions we receive and publish. It’s a concern we’re trying to address, and it’s going to take awhile.

But every opinion expressed in the buildup to this month’s local election—and in the eight years since the Observer was founded—has been that of the individual whose name is on the article.

The Observer is like plumbing; a home without it would be inhabitable, but the water it carries is what really matters.

Thank you for your strong, well-stated opinions about our community. Please keep them coming.

Here’s one place the Observer does take a stand: Our community is increasingly noteworthy for the number of unique, independently owned businesses that serve it. The owners of these small companies have invested their entire lives in serving this community, and they work every day to earn our business.

More often than not, they also live here; the money we spend with them comes right back to us. If you live here by choice, their very existence is part of what makes this area more desirable than those subdivision suburbs where everything seems to come more easily.

I do almost all of my holiday shopping with local merchants, and I urge you to join me. You’ll find unique, affordable, exotic, craft-made gifts within an easy walk or drive.

When you shop locally you support the community’s character and charm. When you shop online or at a big box, you support impersonal, large scale, foreign-sourced commerce.

You’re smart enough to make your own decisions. Before you do, just recognize that the future of where you shop is formed by the money you spend today. If you like what we have here, think of each dollar as a ballot. Then vote early and vote often.

CH resident Bob Rosenbaum is co-chairman of the Heights Observer Committee, and is responsible for its advertising sales and market development.
of lower taxes, decided to see for themselves who this woman really is and what she stands for. As more and more residents visited her site and then expressed their shock and concern on Facebook and Twitter, Ms. Love began slowly removing her most controversial posts, hiding her words from the public instead of owning up to them.

Fortunately, for the concerned voter, those words are still available on www.eaglerising.com/author/love, a Tea Party-sponsored site, and on http://facebook.com/LWVShakerHeights, billed as “Liberalism’s worst nightmare.”

One eye-opening example is Ms. Love’s take on Muslims: “This enemy hates bacon. Seriously. It makes me sad just thinking about it. Muslim cab drivers won’t pick up American riders if they have just been shopping and have pork products in their bags. This enemy hates America and all of our freedoms. And, they are coming for you, you and me.”

In other posts, she refers to public education as a “socialist think tank,” to AR-15s (cousin to the AK-47) as “popular sports rifles,” and to President Obama as an “idiot” and “a Fascist kingpin.”

We encourage every voter in this city to take the time to read through Ms. Love’s articles and decide for yourselves if this is the type of person you want representing you and your community. If your views align, then by all means vote for her. But if some of her opinions make you feel uncomfortable, think twice. Look beyond the simple messaging. Decide whether these fringe views—for they are indeed fringe no matter where you stand on a simple issue like tax increases—truly represent Cleveland Heights and what we hope is its future.


**Citizens share concerns about council candidate Julie Love**

To the Editor:

The voters of Cleveland Heights tend to be an educated bunch. We like to move beyond political slogans and yard signs, dig deeper, and find out what a candidate really stands for. Over the past week, the blog of city council hopeful Julie Love was circulated widely over social media. Residents were initially taken aback by both its provocative name, “Redneck Rants: A country girl with two children shares her views on life in the inner-city,” and its equally provocative domain address: redneckmtnminimumbod.blogspot.com.

Voters, hoping to move past Ms. Love’s broadly appealing message
keeping a larger and larger share of those funds in state coffers, forcing cities and towns to cut services or find other ways to pay for them. Cleveland Heights has met this challenge admirably. For example, [its] service employees (the people who pick up trash and leaves, and plow streets) have added to their workloads to accomplish the same tasks with fewer workers. Administrative positions have been combined or left unfilled. Employees have gone without raises. The city can cut no more without residents noticing a decline in services.

In a residential community like Cleveland Heights, there is no industry and almost no space for new development; thus a tax base with little opportunity for growth. This places the tax burden squarely on us, the residents. If we want to keep our city a place [in which] we all choose to live, it is up to us to pay for it. In recognition of these realities, your local League of Women Voters urges you to vote yes, with us, for the Cleveland Heights tax increase.

Adele Cohn and Blanche Valancy, co-chairs of the CH-UH chapter of the LWV of Greater Cleveland

Cleveland Heights

To the Editor:

I’ve been a Cleveland Heights resident for over 35 years, and this year is the first time that I’ve noticed such general interest in a city council race. I would like to thank all of the candidates who are offering to serve our city. I’ve attended several events where candidates offered their views on how to advance Cleveland Heights. We are indeed fortunate to have so many candidates devoted to our city.

I conclude that candidate Julie Love more than deserves our serious consideration. She analyzed CH financial statements and recommended a different choice for voters. Using her training as a certified public accountant, she offers us a viewpoint that is unique. Unlike all of the other candidates (or existing council members), she opposes an income tax increase at this time. She has taken a courageous stand, since it will be CH voters who will make the final decision in November, not city council. I agree with her that a tax increase will not be effective at “protecting” the city, as some people have argued. Our population is steadily declining, and payroll taxes will be declining too, until that trend can be reversed. A tax increase will not attract new businesses or residents. In fact, it could make our community less attractive than other Greater Cleveland locations that have held the line at 2 percent. We can cut expenses by reducing our reliance on outside consultants. We really do need to focus on economic development, as a number of candidates have wisely suggested.

I like how Julie Love is unafraid to give citizens her thoughtful reasons to hold the line on raising taxes. I think our city will be better off electing new council members with a variety of experiences, so that our beautiful city can be restored. I think she would challenge the status quo, and give us the fiscal experience that we really need.

Joe Barmann

Cleveland Heights

Mayor Wilcox urges Cleveland Heights residents to vote for Issue 53

Dennis Wilcox

Over the past four years, the state of Ohio has slashed the state’s local government funds and eliminated the inheritance tax that resulted in $5 million in cuts to the City of Cleveland Heights budget, leaving the city with a significant financial hole. We currently face a $6.4 million deficit for our 2016 budget.

We have done our best to offset these losses through belt tightening, staffing cuts and regional cooperation. In the past decade we have reduced our staff by about 19 percent and since 2007 by 15 percent—or about 100 employees in total. In 2014 and 2015 we have taken many actions to cut our budget—and find efficiencies.

We have also worked regionally to try to save money and be more efficient, including joining the Region II Income Tax Agency, becoming the largest city in the county to become part of the Cuyahoga County Health Care Consortium, helping to stabilize our health insurance costs. We actively seek grants from various sources, including from the federal government. In addition, we also have been a part of a regional fire dispatch for many years and are looking to expand such regional dispatch.

We continue to aggressively pursue partnerships and grants to realize even more efficiencies. However, we cannot continue to keep cutting our way to success.

Moving forward, we cannot overcome the continuing annual loss of revenues without additional revenue or deep cuts in services. We have a great community with great services and neighborhoods, and we need to continue our legacy of excellence unless we maintain the services that have made it great.

City council has proposed a 0.25 percent income tax increase, for the Nov. 3 ballot; the first tax increase in 36 years. This will cost about $11 per month on wages of $50,000 a year. The Independent Financial Task Force also recommended that the city pursue the tax increase, Issue 53.

Retired residents with income from pensions, investments and social security will pay nothing.

Raising taxes is not easy, but the alternative is worse. Our community will choose between debilitating cuts in every department and maintaining quality services. Without Issue 53:

• 12 firefighters (16 percent of the Fire Department) and 8 police officers will be eliminated and response times will increase.
• The number of ambulances, fire and police vehicles will be reduced.
• There will be a reduction in snow removal, leaf collection and road maintenance.

On behalf of city council, I urge Cleveland Heights voters to vote FOR Issue 53, to protect Cleveland Heights, for us and generations to come.

Dennis Wilcox is mayor of Cleveland Heights. He is not running for re-election.
City council takes step in the right direction for water in Cleveland Heights

Justin Gould and Deborah Van Kleef

On Sept. 21, Cleveland Heights City Council authorized City Manager Tanisha Briley to negotiate an agreement with the Cleveland Water Division. The vote was unanimous among the six council members present. (Melissa Yasinow was absent.)

The City of Cleveland Heights has taken a significant and potentially historic step.

For the past 110 years, since the introduction of piped water and indoor plumbing, Cleveland Heights has been a master meter community. This means the city has purchased water from Cleveland and resold it at a marked-up rate to residents and businesses. Unlike tax increases, which must be approved by voters and service fees, which are authorized by city council, water rates can be raised at the discretion of the city manager and her staff.

Because it is Cleveland Heights, voters who elect the members of council will, in turn appoint and oversee the city manager and her staff, some 700 University Heights households that are part of the Cleveland Heights water system have no representation.

Briley’s charge is to bring back an agreement for council’s approval, under which Cleveland Heights will give up master meter status and become a direct service community. If all goes well, as of Jan. 1, 2017, we will no longer pay marked-up water rates, increased further to cover losses due to decaying pipes and mains. In fact, during a seven-year transitional period, our water bills will be 15 percent lower than they are now. At the end of seven years, rates will go down again, this time by 33 percent. Cleveland Heights’s debt rates will go down again, this time by 70 percent. At the end of seven years, voters will be asked to approve a badly needed income tax increase, to offset cuts in state funding. If it passes, according to Cleveland.com, a resident earning $50,000 per year will pay $125 more per year in city taxes. Under a direct service agreement with Cleveland Water, beginning in 13 months, the average household will pay about $115 less per year for water.

In other words, for most of us, lower water bills will offset the increase in taxes.

Cleveland Heights should join 67 other longtime direct service communities and 1.4 million people in our region, including our close neighbors, Shaker Heights, South Euclid, Beachwood, and most of University Heights. There is strength in numbers. It is important to note that not one of these municipalities has asked to give up direct service and become a master meter community.

The best short- and long-term solution for both residents and the city is to change from master meter to direct service status, and set a new course for the next century.

Justin Gould is an attorney living in University Heights. Deborah Van Kleef is a musician and writer from Cleveland Heights. Both are members of Cleveland Heights Citizens for Safe, Affordable Water.

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Excerpts from Observer blogs

Read the whole story at blogs.heightsobserver.org

In celebration of Donut Day Saturday, Oct. 10 is the 2015 edition of Donut Day—a Scarborough Road tradition, founded and sustained for the past 12 years by the Sperl family.

I’ve been head down in work and it didn’t occur to me until now to post this video from last year’s event. It’s a bit too late if I’m alerting you to the event for the first time.

But even if you couldn’t make it—if you did—watch the video for a reminder why so many of us choose to live in this community. . .

—Bob Rosenbaum

Tussie-Mussie . . . Tussie-Mussies are given as gifts with the term tussie-mussie coming from the time of Queen Victoria’s reign (1837–1901) when the little bouquets became fashion accessories with ‘meaning’ where the flowers in the bouquet had special symbolism.

After the fair, I tried my hand at making my own tussie-mussie from items in my garden and a few flowers left over from a previous arrangement. While not at all fluent in the symbolism of my flowers chosen (that will come later with a great deal more research), I felt fairly pleased with my first small bouquet. Parsley, rosemary, a red rose, goldenrod, mint and pink tick weed. Success! . . .

—Tiffany Lafer

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End remote-control education

Susie Kaeser

My friend has a remote control for her gas fireplace—the epitome of luxury. Curl up on the couch, pick up a good book, click the remote, and you have instant fire and comfort. Clickers are great for making instant and inconsequential decisions, such as whether to watch TV, listen to music or enjoy a fire.

Politicians, though, have decided that to be educated now means to pass an unreliable standardized test and, through a program of education reform that focuses on testing to make serious decisions about children, teachers, schools and money, are using a remote-control approach to improving schools.

By using quick and dirty measures of achievement to make life-changing judgments, a faceless bureaucracy has intruded into decisions that are complex and should be made by people who are close to the situation.

The classroom teacher, not a test, should decide who should advance to fourth grade. Teachers, not tests, should determine if their students have earned their diplomas. Principals who work closely with their staff and know their day-in- and day-out contributions should assess who is competent. Test results should never be a basis for doing out public money from teachers. The test as decision-maker is nothing more than education by remote control.

Each fall, if I resume tutor ing kindergartners at Boulevard Elementary School, I am reminded of how special these children are. There is nothing standard about them. Neither their identities nor potential can ever be captured by a number, but that’s exactly what test-based decision-making tries to do. A machine grades tests and then makes consequential decisions.

Ohio education policy now intrudes into decisions which are best made by those close to the human beings who are teaching and learning, and who are part of the school communities that are raising children. Issues and decisions that can only be given proper attention within the context of individual children and their needs, within the daily lesson and the complex responses of individual learners, or within the aspirations of a community and its investment in education, are now being defined by—click, presto—remote-control decisions. The human process of education has been reduced to a number.

Growth—or as it is now described, performance—should not be limited to mastering a specific, testable skill; it should also include an awakening of passion and curiosity, a desire to know more, think deeply, and build meaning around individual identity and reality. When it is reduced to something testable, it is automatic—inauthentic—and it does not serve anyone well.

Perhaps one of the most disturbing aspects of this reliance on test scores and report cards is the focus on grading education rather than improving opportunity. This focus on the school as the only relevant factor ignores, as Jelani Cobb wrote recently in The New Yorker, that history and social inequality have been ignored in the test-and-blame culture.

Remote-control education sanctifies history and absolves policymakers of responsibility to address structural inequality, an underlying cause of achievement gaps. They claim that their goal is success for all but refuse to address any of the fundamental barriers that create social inequality and perpetuate educational inequality. Grading schools does not create equity.

The historic exclusion from the rights of full citizenship of whole groups of people over generations created deep-seated social inequality. This inequality led to the civil rights movement, school desegregation and now the movement to proclaim that black lives matter. You can’t sweep this reality under the rug and deny that unequal access to opportunity doesn’t affect education outcomes.

The current system claims that the only thing that matters is what the school does. That is wrong. Persistent achievement gaps cannot be blamed on teachers and will not be solved by fine-tuning the curriculum, focusing on the bubble kids, beseeching teachers to work harder or hammering communities that seek to be inclusive.

No matter how willing our learners are, test scores are not going to move in a significant way without a fundamental commitment to improving the lives and life chances of those who have been left out over many generations.

I believe in education as a great equalizer and I believe that every child comes into life with the curiosity and ability—regardless of their economic status—required for learning. I see it every time I tutor.

Measuring and judging education will neither create an equitable society nor universal success. It is more likely to marginalize a critical public resource and further marginalize those who depend on it.

Susie Kaeser is a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights and former director of Reaching Heights. She serves on the national board of Parents for Public Schools.
Making Ohio a Right to Work state would weaken Cleveland Heights Teachers Union

Ari Klein

Think about these three scenarios regarding buying an ice cream sundae:

• The first person gets a sundae with a cherry on top and pays full price.
• The second gets a sundae, doesn’t want the cherry, and pays full price. In fairness, the ice cream clerk rebates five cents for not taking a cherry.
• The third gets a sundae, doesn’t want the cherry, and refuses to pay anything.

These three situations exemplify the laws in different states pertaining to collective bargaining agreements. Paying full price are union members. They pay dues and are represented in their relationship with their employer, and with their state and national parent organizations.

The second scenario relates to the law we have in Ohio, and in the CHU City School District, called “Fair Share,” where the cherry represents a union’s political activity. When a union represents a group of employees, there may be some who do or cannot join the union based on political, religious or other personal beliefs. In the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union, there are two such individuals, out of about 600. They are not required to join the union, but are considered Fair Share payers because they get a rebate on the portion of dues that the local determines is spent on political activity. These Fair Share payers benefit from contracts negotiated on their behalf and are entitled to union representation in grievances and employee discipline matters. As the name implies, it is fair.

The free sundae scenario is what Ohio has a Right to Work state for the private sector. This would weaken unions all over the state and, by default, all workers. Where unions are weaker, wages are lower and safety in workplaces is challenged as much, if not more.

The larger threat for unions nationwide is under consideration in the U.S. Supreme Court. A ruling in the spring on Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association might allow employers to opt out of union membership in both public and private sectors.

In our community, there are many public and private sector union households that would be affected. It is hard to know the overall negative economic impact such a law would have in the Heights.

The CH Teachers Union has good relations with school administration and the community. We work through issues together, knowing that we have the same interests and goals for our students. If legislation restricting union activity passes, it would force us to put the majority of our effort on protecting what we have, not working toward solving problems collaboratively. Our efforts would have to concentrate on how to survive. Not being able to adequately represent our members would lead to division in our ranks that would force us to become either more compliant or more militant—neither of which is healthy for the operations of a school district. Our efforts to work in the community to educate citizens about current issues in education would probably also come to a halt, as time and resources become sparse.

Our local would probably have to shutter our office. We work jointly with the school district to subsidize professional development for our members. If they got right what we would suffer, robbing our teachers of high-quality, researched-based information to take back to their classrooms. None of our current operations would be impossible under Right to Work restrictions but, over time, membership in the union would deteriorate.

The fundamental question should be, do you think it is fair to get a sundae for free because you don’t want the cherry?

Ari Klein is a lifelong community member, math teacher at Cleveland Heights High School, and president of the Cleveland Heights Teachers Union.
Meeting highlights

SEPTEMBER 21, 2015

Councilman Phil Enel was absent.

New park

Construction of the new park has begun with the building of a security fence around the edge of the parcel and the securing of the adjoining properties.

City’s website

The city’s website has been redesigned, making steady improvements in its appearance and functionality.

Backyard camps

Councilman Steven Sima reported that a meeting has been scheduled for the building inspectors to discuss the issue of backyard day camps and how they differ from day-care facilities.

Council seat

Vice Mayor Susan Pardee announced that the city will be accepting resumes and letters of interest for the council seat between Nov. 5 and 19. Letters should be sent to city hall.

Dwv Observer: Wendy Deuring

For looker, and often expanded, post-meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. These reports contain member observation, extracts from minutes, and are not official statements of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters. University Heights Division does not keep any record of such reports.

University Heights News

Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 7, 2015

Councilman Phil Enel was excused.

Jcu food drive

Mayor Johnson reported that John Carroll University (JCU) will be conducting its annual Thanksgiving Food Drive. She encouraged residents to consider donating bags of groceries and support the drive.

Norma insurance partnership

Councilman Johnson announced a partnership of $149,000 with the Northern Ohio Risk Management Self-Insurance Fund Inc. (NORMA), an insurance partnership of 11 neighboring cities. The city has participated for new years and the cost has remained almost unchanged. The franchise directors meet quarterly with local counsel to ensure the fund is being managed effectively and legally.

Payroll process outsourced

Council agreed on an agreement with ADP for payroll processing. The city has processed its own payroll until now, but with the increased reporting required by the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Finance Director Larry Heiser recommended hiring a payroll company. ADP might also take over benefits administration, as benefits details must be provided to accurate for process ACA reporting. Heiser is still talking to various payroll companies and working to negotiate a contract. He added that he needed to lock in terms with ADP now as the company needs three to four weeks to set up records for the city. The city decided to look at contracts that would have no contract and the city could back out of the agreement at any time. The cost will be offset by the elimination of a position and in-house software expenses.

Tennis court rehab

Council approved the bid from Infinity Paving Company to rehabili ate four tennis courts at Perry Park in the amount of $27,065, 772. The four tennis courts will be completely replaced and drainage added. The nets and winders will be kept for possible future use on the remaining three courts. The work must be completed by June 2016 at the latest, and access to the other three courts must be maintained at all times. A grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources will pay approximately half of the cost.

Tree services

Council approved the bid from VanCuren Services for the 2015 tree pruning and removal program in an amount not to exceed $71,638, which will be completed by March 2016. The pruning and removal work will focus on the north, west section of the city bordered by Sibby, Cedar, Warrensville Center and Taylor roads. The work will involve approximately 700 trees, based on a coding system determined by the city’s arborist. Only three firms bid for the work, but the second bid was almost double VanCuren’s rate and other cities recommend VanCuren. This is still a significant cost increase from 2014, but clearly the vendor in 2014 underbid and had difficulty completing the work.

Council also accepted the bid from Lake Johnson’s Landscape Inc. of Mentor for the 2015 fall tree-planting program in an amount not to exceed $33,213. This is to replace removed trees and for requested new trees. Lake Johnson has done the work the past two years and has done an adequate job. The range of bid prices was very narrow.

Heights Observer November 15, 2015

University Heights City Council

BEST OF THE HEIGHTS continued from page 1

Businesses

Heights Business and Best University Heights Business went to Motorcars and Whole Foods, respectively. Motorcars continued its strong showing by winning Best Automotive Business and Best Longstanding Heights Business.

"We put our money into this community," said Chuck Gile, president of Motorcars. "It’s all about grassroots marketing. We’re not trying to drive people in from Strongsville or Parma. We want people from the Heights. We love the support of this community, and we’re very happy to be here and to have won these awards."

Alex Quintana, who owns Quintana’s Barber Shop with his wife, Dawn, was recognized as Best Barber.

"These awards have always been a big recognition from this community," he said. "It’s very hard to be part of this fabric of these ‘entrepreneur’ citizens. And all the while, we are helping to build a better village. I am very happy."

Shawn Paul Gustin, owner of Shawn Paul Salon, was named Best Hairstylist.

Big Fun, the quirky toy store in Coventry Village, won Best Place to Buy a Gift and Best Interior Decor. "I’m happy and proud to have won two awards," said Steve Presser, Big Fun owner. "It’s always nice to be recognized by the wonderful community I live in and do business in."

The City of Cleveland Heights was recognized twice, winning awards for Best Place to Enjoy a Family Outing (Cain Park), and Best Place For Health & Fitness (Coventry Heights Community Center). Nighttown was honored for Best Date Night Venue; Tommy’s for Best Restaurant; Brennan’s Colony for Best Bar, Pub or Tavern; and Tavern Company for Best Burger.

Rounding out the categories, The Lusty Wench won for Best Customer Service; Verne & Ellsworth Hann won for Best Home Repair or Maintenance Business; and Jamie Bevin, a realtor with Howard Hanna, won for Best Professional Service.

Deanna Bremer Fisher, executive director of FutureHeights, said, "The Best of the Heights Awards is a fun way that residents can show their appreciation for our local business owners, many of whom are also residents. They invest in our local businesses and sweat equity in our community, and provide needed goods and services. Each of these is unique, and it’s the concentration of these diverse businesses in our walkable, neighborhood-serving business districts that enable us to enjoy a high quality of life in the Heights."

The following is a complete list of winners and finalists in this year’s Best of the Heights Awards. Voters also suggested businesses that they would like to see in the Heights. See a story about those suggestions on page 23.

Best New Business

WINNER: Black Box Fix FINALISTS: Motorcars Mobility Momo’s Kebab

Best University Heights Business

WINNER: Whole Foods FINALISTS: Pizza on the Circle Geraci’s Restaurant

Best Cleveland Heights Business

WINNER: Motorcars FINALISTS: Tommy’s The Wine Spot

Best Date Night Venue

WINNER: Nighttown FINALISTS: Cedar Lee Theatre Gigi’s On Fairmount The Fairmount

Best Customer Service

WINNER: The Lusty Wench FINALISTS: Washington & Lee Service Motorcars

Best Burger

WINNER: The Tavern Company FINALISTS: Winking Lizard Brennan’s Colony

Best Bar, Pub or Tavern

WINNER: Brennan’s Colony FINALISTS: Nighttown The Tavern Company

Best Automotive Business

WINNER: Motorcars FINALISTS: Washington & Lee Service The Lusty Wench

Best Home/Repair/Maintenance Business

WINNER: Verne & Ellsworth Hann FINALISTS: Home Depot Skeeter Electric

Best Professional Services

WINNER: Jamie Bevin, Realtor, Howard Hanna FINALISTS: continued on page 9

Looking for winter and other event information? Find it online at www.heightsobserver.org. These meeting summaries are abstracted from Hawk observer written reports. The summaries have been edited and prepared by Anise McFarland. Cherie Morse Washington Brown. To receive email notifications of new “hawk observer” reports as a watchable report, these reports contain member observation, extracts from minutes, and are not official statements of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters. University Heights Division does not keep any record of such reports.

UNIVERSIT Y HEIGHTS NEWS
Mayfield Heights becomes 12th national historic district in Cleveland Heights

Mark Souther and Charles Owen

On Sept. 17, the National Park Service added the Mayfield Heights Historic District in Cleveland Heights as one of the newest historic resources listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Not to be confused with the suburb of the same name farther east, this much older Mayfield Heights covers an irregular area mostly bounded by Mayfield Road on the north, Euclid Heights Boulevard on the south, Camberland Park on the east, and Coventry Road on the west. It includes a wide range of architectural styles, notably Queen Anne, Neoclassical, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Spanish Revival, Craftsman and Prairie.

Mayfield Heights is the 12th National Register district in Cleveland Heights, which has more such districts than any other city in Ohio, outside of Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, Toledo and Dayton. Mayfield Heights has 324 major buildings, comprising mostly single-family houses, but also a number of two-family houses and apartment buildings. Other resources included in the district are the Cleveland Heights Tennis Club, the city’s oldest church (Christ Our Redeemer (C.O.R.) Church), its oldest school (Superior Schoolhouse), and its oldest home (the Preyer House).

Much of the land that became Mayfield Heights was the site of John Peter Preyer’s Vine Wine Farm from the 1860s to the 1890s. Preyer’s stone house, the oldest in Cleveland Heights, was already about 40 years old when the Preyers bought it. In the 1890s, Marcus M. Brown purchased the Preyer farm and some adjacent parcels. Brown moved from Chicago in 1896 to a house he built for himself on the bluff overlooking Mayfield Road just east of Coventry Road. He laid out the Mayfield Heights allotment on his newly acquired land, and soon built a much larger Queen Anne-style house for his family at the corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Wilton Road. It is now the home of Simply Charming.

Originally, the streets in Mayfield Heights were all paved with brick. Today, only two of these brick streets remain: Middlehurst and Radnor roads.

Brown marketed the allotment himself through his Mayfield Heights

Bier is featured speaker at annual meeting of Forest Hill homeowners

Les Jones

Thomas Bier, senior fellow at Cleveland State University’s Maxim Goodman Levin Center of Urban Affairs, will be the keynote speaker at the annual meeting of the Forest Hill Home Owners Association (FHHO) on Tuesday, Nov. 10. The meeting will take place at McGregor Home, 14900 Private Drive.

This meeting is free and open to all residents of the Forest Hill subdivision. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.; light refreshments will be served. The meeting will be called to order at 7:30 p.m. and will include a review of FHHO business, Bier’s keynote address, and open discussion on current FHHO initiatives and future plans for Forest Hill.

Bier is routinely featured in articles on inner-city suburbs in the Plain Dealer. His research has focused on regional housing dynamics, population movement, and the effects of government policies on cities. He will speak to Forest Hill residents about many of the housing issues currently facing Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland, and will explain why he is optimistic about opportunities for growth in both cities.

Bier and his wife, Dorothy, have lived in Cleveland Heights for 40 years. Their four children graduated from Heights High.

Forest Hill Home Owners Inc., a 527 nonprofit organization founded in 1950, is charged with the preservation of the original deed covenants and enforcement of housing standards for the 1,000 homes in the Forest Hill subdivision as established by John D. Rockfeller Jr. when donating this area to the cities of Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland.

Les Jones is a retired marketing director for Rockwell Automation and a 38-year resident of Cleveland Heights. He has been the marketing chair for FHHO, serves as a board trustee for Heights Community Congress, and is a past president of Reaching Heights.
Cleveland Heights City Council

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

SEPTEMBER 21, 2015

Council member Melissa Yasinow was absent.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

With regard to Council Client, Deborah Van Klahf, speaking for Heights Citizens for Safe, Affordable Water, thanked the city manager and staff for their work and response to concerns about the water department. Citing lower water rates and costs, she favored a change from the master meter system to direct service from the Cleveland Water Department, rather that the alternate proposal with Energy Service Group (ESG). She claimed that under the latter proposal, rates would go up and a loan would be necessary in order to join. Two other Cleveland Heights residents and a resident of University Heights also spoke in favor of the direct service from the Cleveland Water Department.

Finance award

Director of Finance Tom Raguz received an Auditor of State Award with Distinction. This is the second consecutive year Raguz has earned this distinction.

Water negotiations

Council resolved negotiations with the City of Cleveland for transitioning from a master meter city to a direct service city, and tabled a resolution authorizing negotiations with ESG. As a master meter city, Cleveland Heights buys water from the City of Cleveland and then sells it to Cleveland Heights customers. As a direct service city, occupants would purchase water directly from the City of Cleveland. Three council members, Jason Stein, Kahil Sayen and Mary Dunbar, expressed their preference for the direct service proposal with Cleveland over the ESG option. Mayor Dennis Wilcox noted that the negotiations would clearly detail concerns costing, service and infrastructure. Also, there will be more anticipated project costs. Heights Libraries will pay for the renovation through money already budgeted in its building and repair fund—no new funds will be used for the renovation.

In preparation for the renovation, Heights Libraries has purchased two houses directly to the south of the library (2175 and 2179 Fenwick Drive) and will have closed on a third house (2177 Fenwick Drive) by November. The houses will be demolished in the fall, and the additional space will allow Heights Libraries to expand the building and the parking lot.

“We will be working closely with the City of University Heights to ensure that the new building’s design makes the best use of the existing space and meets the needs of the city and its citizens,” said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries Director. Heights Libraries will submit designs to the City of University Heights for review while CBLIH begins work on detailed plans. “It is possible that the library may change as the project moves forward in the chosen schematic, Marc Birtringer, CBLIH principal, describes the design as “a rectilinear glass shape, clad in wood, which promotes visibility both in and out to Cedar Road and creates a landmark yet contemporary aesthetic.” The new addition also promotes the original architecture by continuing its architectural lines, forms, and massing throughout the project while allowing the existing building to engage the addition to highlight some of the building’s original features.”

John Rach, CBLIH project manager, added, “We design each library to capture the unique character of its community and believe this building will further reinforce its place in University Heights. We are very excited to be working on a project that is so important to its community.”

Many of the features of the new design schematic are a direct result of public meetings that Heights Library has held in the winter of 2014, where residents were invited to share their hopes for the future of the University Heights Library.

Heights Libraries hopes to break ground in June 2016, and anticipates the project will take eight to 12 months.

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

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CHURCH continued from page 1

apparent it would be necessary to demolish the church to make the project feasible.

Horizon Health Services employs more than 600, most of whom work off-site in clients’ homes. The company now has 18 office workers in its current location, and expects to eventually have 50 at the new location. Except for changes to the sign, there will be no changes to the building’s exterior.

Interior changes will be minor: for example, the pews will be removed so that what is now the sanctuary can become open office space. No clients will come to the site, nor will medical equipment be stored there.

Kara Hamley O’Donnell, Cleveland Heights city planner, presented the case and noted that the reuse of a nonresidential building for limited commercial purposes can be conditionally permitted in a residential zoning district (in this case, ‘A’ single-family) under the terms of a 2012 amendment to the zoning code. The amendment opens former churches, synagogues, and schools to new uses not normally permitted in residential districts.

O’Donnell, who is also the city’s historic preservation planner, stated that Grace Lutheran is a city landmark, listed as an individual structure and as a contributor to the national historic district known as Grant Deming’s Forest Hill.

Holsten Troutman, who operates Homez with his wife, said he is a former general contractor who will make repairs to the building but will make no significant changes. “Part of what attracts us to the property,” he said, “is the building’s architectural splendor.”

Two neighbors expressed concerns about the project, including the street’s driveways being replaced by a commercial business. O’Donnell and Troutman responded to the concerns and questions brought forth by the neighbors. O’Donnell noted that, at the city’s urging, the Troutmans had held a neighborhood meeting a week and a half before the planning commission meeting, attended by 15 neighbors, to inform them of plans for the site and answer questions.

Lynn McClelland, who has been a member of Grace Lutheran for nearly 40 years, said she did not apply to social security or annuities relied upon by senior citizens.

“One of the reasons we were excited when Mr. Troutman approached us,” she said, “was that he seemed willing to continue helping those in need. If he went on to say that she thought the Troutmans would have the resources to be better neighbors than the numerically diminished congregation has been able to be, during the past 10 years or so.”

Vince Reddy is a FutureHeights board member and an 18-year resident of Cleveland Heights. Roger Bliss contributed to this article.
Candidates address Noble neighborhood concerns at meet the candidates event

Vince Reddy

More than 100 people attended the Noble Neighbors candidates forum on Oct. 6 at Noble Road Presbyterian Church. Neighborhood leader Brenda May moderated the discussion, which focused on issues affecting the Noble quadrant of Cleveland Heights—the parts of the city north and east of Taylor and Mayfield roads. The six candidates running for three seats on Cleveland Heights City Council and the three candidates running for two seats on the Cleveland Heights-University Heights School board all participated.

May opened the discussion by noting that, while the candidates were being asked to focus on issues affecting the northern part of the city, the challenges facing Noble have an impact on the entire community. She then set out the format for the evening, in which candidates would make brief opening and closing statements and address, in one- or two-minute time frames, questions they had been given in advance. Audience members were asked to listen politely and, although there was no opportunity for the audience to ask questions during the formal part of the event, all of the candidates were available afterward for one-on-one conversations.

The school board candidates spoke first. Candidates James Posch, Katura Simmons and Beverly Wright talked about their involvement with, and enthusiasm for, the school system. When asked to address the likely closing of Noble Elementary School and its effect on the neighborhood, both Posch and Simmons noted that the closing has not definitely been decided upon but acknowledged that it may be upon but acknowledged that it may be.

The city council candidates spoke next. Candidate Julie Love said her home was located near Noble Elementary School and that she was concerned about falling property values. Candidate James Posch spoke of his family’s home near Noble Neighbors and his interest in maintaining a sense of community in the neighborhood.

When asked to address the topic of economic development, Nadia cited the importance of municipal broadband, which would be faster than what is now available in the city, both as a tool of access for citizens and a resource for drawing modern tech businesses to town. Rose said the city should hire an economic development director and named businesses—a restaurant, coffee shop, and dry cleaner—who would like to see in the neighborhood. Seren said the city should get back to basics in its economic development efforts and hire a director who was aware of programs available to support businesses and who understood Cleveland Heights specifically. In a follow-up conversation, he said he would support establishment of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) that could work with the city to foster development.

Sylva said hiring a skilled economic development director who would not be too strictly controlled by city government would be important, and Dunbar mentioned the city’s current master planning process and opportunities for public participation that would accompany it. She thought a CDC or something like it may be a good idea.

Love said the problems of the Noble area were “creeping south” toward other parts of town, and cited high taxes as the main barrier to development. She said the city had turned down an offer by celebrity chef Michael Symon to open a restaurant, and had said no to a developer who wanted to develop a $6 million project in the city. When asked later for more information about these claims, she did not offer any. Noble Neighbors holds meetings at 7 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at various locations in the neighborhood. Visit www.nobleneighbors.com for more information.

Vince Reddy is a FutureHeights board member and an 18-year resident of Cleveland Heights.
Growing Heights is working for the monarch

Chris Hanson

Growing Heights, in partnership with a local AmeriCorps program, made some sweeping changes to the butterfly gardens on the corners of Cedar Hill and Euclid Heights Boulevard. The group set to work to beautify and benefit green space, and to save the butterflies.

The collaboration is meant to impact AmeriCorps members’ nearby neighborhoods through environmental service and educational opportunities. The Cleveland Heights cohort of GLISTEN AmeriCorps members is coordinated by Augustina Odenbrett, and all Cleveland Heights AmeriCorps members are CH-UH high school students. GLISTEN stands for Great Lakes Innovative Stewardship Through Education Network.

During the month of September, Odenbrett, Sinclair Massey, DJ Holsey, Taron Wright and David Mackenzie worked tirelessly on the initial cleanup of the southeast site. Their service included harvesting Russian coneflowers, cutting down invasive plants, and exposing the stone trail running through the garden. They collected seeds from plants that, as part of a winter project, will be prepared for distribution to other sites in the Heights in the spring. Across the road, running between Harcourt Drive and Cedar Hill, members cut down numerous ragweed and invasive strangler fig, that was choking out milkweed, a plant necessary to the monarch butterfly. Female monarchs search for milkweed plants on which to lay their eggs. Monarch larvae (caterpillars) only feed on milkweed and cannot survive without it. Many sites on the migratory path of the monarch have been lost to development, making this site extremely important.

The partnership also cleaned up dead growth on trees and hardy hisbiscus, removed trash, exposed hostas being held hostage by weeds, and identified insects, including the large milkweed bug, which was found on multiple milkweed plants, and was new to all the AmeriCorps members. GLISTEN AmeriCorps members are looking for additional spaces where they can perform environmental service before winter, as well as next spring and summer. The sites must be on public land, or have a direct public benefit. They would like to spread their work all over Cleveland Heights and University Heights, including Forest Hill Park. Interested residents and community organizations should contact Augustina Odenbrett at augustinao448@gmail.com.

Chris Hanson is coordinator of Growing Heights (www.growingheights.com), and holds a B.A. in urban studies from Cleveland State University.

New program offers yoga for disabled adults

James Henke

The Loving Hands Group, a life-enrichment business based in Cleveland Heights, and Anytime Fitness, a University Heights fitness club, have teamed up to offer yoga classes for disabled adults. The yoga classes, which are free, begin in August, and are held every Friday, from noon to 1 p.m.

“I call this ‘gentle yoga,’” said Judith Eugene, who runs both the Loving Hands Group and Loving Hands Yoga and Reiki, based at her house on Hampshire Road in Cleveland Heights. “We usually have about 10 people attend these classes, and members of Anytime Fitness can also attend.”

“The purpose is to get disabled people to exercise and to get them to participate in the community,” said Sohail Ahmad, who has owned University Heights’s Anytime Fitness for the past four years. “We keep the groups small and Judith connects with every person.”

The program came about, in part, as a result of the work being done by the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities. “There was a federal mandate to get disabled people more involved in the community,” said Eugene. “We are developing a series of community-integration programs, and I thought it would be great to offer a yoga program.”

Attendees have ranged in age from people in their 20s to people in their late 50s. Eugene said that participants should be at least “a little mobile.” She is able to adapt the class for nearly all conditions. “Many have mental disabilities,” she said. “And some have autism. But pretty much all of the people are able to participate and we encourage them to do their best.”

The Board of Developmental Disabilities has eight adult activity centers around the county, and many of the participants in this new program come from those centers.

“Our main goal is to help disabled people be more healthy, make them feel empowered, and focus on their abilities, rather than their disabilities,” said Eugene. “We want them to participate in the general community as much as possible.”

Anyone interested in participating in the program should contact Eugene at 216-408-5578 or www.lovinghandsgroup.com.

James Hooks, 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.
Heights family establishes nonprofit to help bereaved families reconnect

Shari Nacson

The number of families who deal with the death of a child every year is staggering. In 2012, the Make-A-Wish Foundation fulfilled 14,000 wishes for kids with life-threatening illnesses. That same year, 9,000 kids (ages 2-14) died from illness. For many, “there is a grieving family with siblings on the other end,” said Kat Meyer, Cleveland Heights resident and co-founder of Rebecca’s Gift.

Despite meaningful grief services for surviving parents and siblings, families often remain overwhelmed by the financial and logistical impacts of illness and loss. Just managing day-to-day, many are not able to see the potential benefits of taking a break, together. Mindy Stewart, LPC, pediatric bereavement specialist at Hospice of the Western Reserve, said, “Planning your first family vacation away while living in this season of grief, may feel just as daunting or heart-wrenching as planning a funeral.”

It is through this lens that Kat Meyer and Karla Winans, a close friend, founded Rebecca’s Gift (www.rebeccasgift.org). A nonprofit that focuses specifically on the surviving siblings, a critical service gap previously undressed, Rebecca’s Gift will provide family vacations 6 to 24 months after the death of a child, giving the family the opportunity to reconnect, rebuild and relax together. According to Stewart, from a clinical perspective, “A fully funded family trip can be a part of a family’s grief journey, helping them regain strength for today and welcome a new normal for tomorrow.”

The nonprofit plans to start small, sending two or three bereaved local families on vacation to Cedar Point in the summer of 2016. The board of Rebecca’s Gift aims to grow and service more families, sending them to destinations of their choosing within five years.

Meyer and her husband, Eric, talk openly about how much their first vacation helped in their process as they grieved the loss of their daughter, Rebecca, who died from brain cancer in June 2014. The following December, Kat insisted that the family take a true vacation—to a place that would be new to all of them—for respite and to get over the hurdle of the first adventure as a family of four, not five. Their eldest child, Carolyn, age 12, chose the destination based on her interests. Four year-old Joshua got to choose specific outings. “That trip,” said Kat Meyer, “brought the focus back onto Carolyn and Josh.” On vacation, she explained, families connect differently because of “shared rooms, shared meals, and late night falling asleep conversations.”

“If really helped me to go on this first vacation,” said Carolyn Meyer, a sixth-grader at Roxboro Middle School. “I felt free. I didn’t have to worry about things. I could be myself.” Carolyn and her mom both stress the importance of the first vacation being at least six months into the bereavement process, after some of the initial fog lifts, so parents are able to truly connect with the siblings. “My mom could hear me more,” said Carolyn, because some time had passed and because they were away from home. “We still remembered Rebecca, and we still had a good time.”

Rebecca’s Gift’s inaugural fundraiser is quintessentially Rebecca-inspired. A family-friendly carnival, Rebecca’s Boardwalk will bring the Jersey Shore to Cleveland. Rebecca loved everything about the boardwalk—games, crafts, food, mini golf, bounce houses, face paint, prizes. Even the event logo, donated by local graphic designer Audrey Busta-Peck of Bustafeltz Designs, has a distinct Jersey Shore feel.

Rebecca’s Boardwalk will take place on Sunday, Nov. 15, 2-5 p.m. at Fairmount Temple, 23737 Fairmount Blvd. Event tickets (partially tax deductible) can be purchased at www.rebeccasgift.org/events. Contact donations@rebeccasgift.org to become a sponsor or to contribute services or goods, including items for the silent auction, Chinese auction, gift card pull and duck pull for kids.

Mostly a mom, Shari Nacson, LISW-S, is a freelance editor and child development specialist who makes her home in Cleveland Heights. More than anything, Nacson is inspired by kids and adults who build connection through kindness.

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Danay Johnson is a whirlwind of energy

When Keith Johnson of Cleveland Heights checked into the Golden Temple Hotel in Siem Reap, Cambodia, in 2007, he had no idea that his life was about to change, nor did the manager of the boutique hotel, Danay Sophieakdey. Two years later, Danay and Keith got married in a traditional Cambodian ceremony, and she moved to Cleveland Heights.

“When you come here, you start from the beginning, like a baby,” said Danay Johnson. “You don’t know about the simple things.” It took two years for her to improve her English and begin to feel comfortable living in America.

Johnson was born in a village in Kampong Cham province, Cambodia. When she was six years old her parents divorced and her father left the family of five to fend for themselves. Both of her parents’ families suffered losses during the reign of the Khmer Rouge. Her father served in the military and her mother suffered from depression and PTSD from the war years. Initially, her two older siblings supported the family, but by the age of 16 she had to stop her education and find work to support her mother and two younger siblings. She often worked seven days a week, 16 hours a day, to earn enough money.

In Cambodia, some people do not believe in educating girls “as they just get married,” Johnson said. “I strongly believe in education. Because of it, I was able to support myself and my family.”

Over a period of 10 years, and while pursuing her education part time, she was promoted from the position of server to hotel manager. When her future husband proposed marriage, Johnson’s family encouraged her to start her new life, as they were now able to support themselves.

Johnson demonstrates a remarkable sense of “giving back” to all those who helped her and her family. She started a business, called Khmer Designs, which imports and sells silk accessories, handmade by the residents of her village. These products are sold exclusively in Galeria Quetzal in Little Italy. Some of the proceeds are used to fund her Scholarship for Excellence, for other Cambodians who are new to the U.S. The first two scholarships were awarded this year. Johnson is acutely aware that “without other people helping me, I would not be successful either.”

Johnson enrolled in Tri-C’s Metro Campus in 2011, and was accepted into the Threive student entrepreneur business incubator. She emphasizes her desire to always be “growing,” to learn new things and constantly challenge herself. She took advantage of all the extracurricular activities and workshops Tri-C offers, and graduated in 2013. She then enrolled in Cleveland State University for her bachelor’s degree in international business. She also finds time to volunteer at Heights Arts, the Cleveland Botanical Garden, North Union Farmers Market, Little Sisters of the Poor, St. Malachi Church and the Phi Kappa Theta Honor Society. Johnson recently completed an internship in the sales department at Mayfran International, a conveyor manufacturer. “I told the two acquirers,” she said, “I can do anything.”

Johnson loves living in Cleveland Heights because of its diversity, peacefulness and friendly people. She loves the trees and the changing seasons, which she prefers to the wet and dry seasons in Cambodia. She values family above all. She believes in treating people the way she wants to be treated. She reminds her siblings never to forget where they came from and to appreciate all the opportunities that come their way. “I always want to learn and I always want to grow”—that, said Johnson, is the motto of her life.

Baby Gym begins season at Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Jessica Shields

Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Cleveland Heights will begin its fourth year of Baby Gym on Nov. 14, with an added feature. Along with its indoor playroom, the church will have a Baby Shop, offering gently used baby items and children’s clothing, sizes newborn to 6X. All goods and activities are free.

Baby Gym is a place where parents can play with their children (up to age 3) in a relaxed atmosphere—especially useful during harsh Cleveland winter weather when outdoor activities are impractical or impossible.

Baby Gym has slides, climbers and tunnels for the development of motor skills. There is also a separate playroom with a kitchen set, tool bench, dress-up clothes, and other age-appropriate toys.

The gym and shop will be open Nov. 14 through April 30. The shop will be open on Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon. The gym will be open on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon.

The church will be open to receive Baby Shop donations Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., when the Baby Gym is open. No toys, stuffed animals or furniture will be accepted.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is located at 1540 Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights. For more information, call 216-582-4545.

Jessica Shields is the pastor at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.
Oct. 10 was a beautiful day to be working outside—very sunny, but cool. Energetic volunteers who came to the biannual Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park clean-up included participants from Heights High’s swim team, Roxboro Middle School’s honor society, Heights High’s National Honor Society, AFS, Minority Students Achievement Network, and Coventry’s Ultimate Frisbee Club.

Volunteers pulled weeds, spread mulch, repaired playground equipment, and raked the wood chips around it. Thanks to them, the playground is ready for winter.

Volunteers worked from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and enjoyed lunch and snacks generously provided by Heights businesses.

Zoss the Swiss Baker and Phoenix Coffee on Coventry Road provided breakfast and coffee, Tommy’s restaurant provided lunch, Guy’s Pizza sent over some pizzas, and Zagara’s Marketplace donated apples.

When Coventry School closed, a group of Coventry parents (and a grandparent) formed the P.E.A.C.E. Park committee. They are still working together to keep the park looking good, and the equipment safe.

Erick Kauffman is the president; he sets the clean-up dates, calls around for volunteers, and decides what equipment needs to be repaired.

Kara O’Donnell loads the tables, tent and supplies for the food in her van and delivers it. Sue Datta organizes the food setup and oversees its serving. Ray Gonzalez fetches the food and Tommy’s food. Scott Jackson, from The Wood Trapper, helps with equipment repair supplies and the repairing. Krista Hawthorne, Pam Bertand and LucieneWisniewski are the garden organizers who direct weed pulling, mulch distribution and garden cleanup, along with the rest of the committee.

All are welcome to join in the fun and work day! There will be another clean-up in the spring, so watch for a date to be posted on the fence along Euclid Heights Boulevard.

Joanne Campbell, a Cleveland Heights resident for more than 40 years, has been involved with Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park for more than 20 years. She arranges for the food and snacks on clean-up day.

Finish your holiday shopping early—Christmas is not far away. The Shop with a Conscience Fair Trade Festival on Sunday, Nov. 22, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church is the place to go for truly fair trade gifts. For nearly a decade, Forest Hill Church has hosted Cleveland Heights’s Ten Thousand Villages shop for an annual day of fair trade shopping. Three years ago, it added additional fair trade vendors and opened the event to the public. This year, local artists and craftspeople will be featured as well.

Many people associate fair trade products with coffee and chocolate, but the Shop with a Conscience festival comprises a much wider variety of goods. Ten Thousand Villages offers an assortment of jewelry, scarves, purses, decorations and treasures from around the world. The products are made by artisans in South and East Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and adapted to appeal to American consumers.

Another international fair trade company at the festival—Canaan Fair Trade—will offer organic olive oil and other food items produced by more than 1,700 small farmer cooperatives. Its website, www.canaanfairtrade.com, explains how the company’s micro-loans, scholarships, and Trees for Life programs benefit women and small farmers in Palestine.

Handmade ceramic beads and pottery from the Kenyan fair trade company Kazuri will be sold by the Amani Children’s Foundation, which raises money to support abandoned infants in Kenya. More information can be found at www.amanichildren.org and www.kazuri.com.

Local businesses and artists will include Golden Goddess Cosmetics, a line of sustainable, organic cosmetics produced and sold by Cleveland Heights resident Ajah Hales.

“Fair trade gifts benefit not only the recipient, but also the people who created the items,” said Rachel Martinez-Finn, a volunteer at Ten Thousand Villages and member of Forest Hill Church. “By paying a fair wage, we help provide a better quality of life for people who otherwise could not bring their goods to market.”

Fair trade is not just about breaking the chains of poverty in economically disadvantaged regions. Fair trade also means that no child labor or forced labor is used, and that the goods are produced in safe working conditions using environmentally sustainable resources and practices.

All festival proceeds go directly to the vendors and their fair trade partners. Forest Hill Church is located at 1031 Monticello Blvd., across from Forest Hill Park. For more information, call 216-321-2660, or visit www.fsheights.org.

Pag Weissbrod is the outreach director for Forest Hill Presbyterian Church in Cleveland Heights.

Joanne Campbell
Volunteers clean up Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park

Some of the many volunteers who helped with the fall cleanup on Oct. 10.
Church of the Saviour welcomes new leaders

Richard Hiles

In the United Methodist Church (UMC), when candidates for the ministry are ordained as elders, they agree to become itinerant pastors. This means they follow in the footsteps of John Wesley and are moved from one congregation to another, at the discretion of the conference bishop. So, when Reverend Dr. Charles Yoost announced he would retire as the senior pastor of Church of the Saviour, effective June 30 of this year, Bishop John Hopkins, resident bishop of the UMC’s East Ohio Conference, began a search for his replacement.

The result of this search was that Reverends Judy Wismar Claycomb and Andy Call were introduced to the staff.

Call was serving as pastor of Oberlin First UMC at the time of his appointment, and previously had been the associate for music and worship at Westlake UMC. His wife, Jennifer, and he have three children.

“Judy Claycomb is unflappable and spiritually centered,” said Hopkins. “She is a truth-teller, compassionate about the marginalized, pastoral and prophetic. Judy is a vessel of God’s grace. She seeks beauty and harmony in the midst of questions and discord. Her experience in parish ministry and supervision of pastors has equipped her to lead Church of the Saviour.”

With regard to Call, he noted, “Andy is a gifted worship leader who communicates his faith with passion and intellectual integrity. He is articulate, compassionate, visionary and astute. His winsome manner engages people to put their faith into action.”

Like John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, Andy knows people to put their faith into action. With regard to Call, he noted, “The retirement of Dr. Yoost presented a need for seasoned, creative and inspiring leadership at Church of the Saviour. Judy Claycomb has displayed these qualities in her leadership of the Firelands District and during her service at Westlake and other congregations. Andy Call is widely recognized as one of our brightest and best young pastors, and he provided transformative leadership at Oberlin UMC.”

Claycomb said that she and Call were excited to return to the creative, diverse and eclectic Heights community. “Church of the Saviour embodies our high values of social holiness.”

Reverend Dr. Steve Bailey, who assisted in the search process, noted, “The retirement of Dr. Yoost presented a need for seasoned, creative and inspiring leadership at Church of the Saviour. Judy Claycomb has displayed these qualities in her leadership of the Firelands District and during her service at Westlake and other congregations. Andy Call is widely recognized as one of our brightest and best young pastors, and he provided transformative leadership at Oberlin UMC.”

Claycomb recently completed a six-year term as Firelands District superintendent and had previously served as pastor of Westlake UMC, the Medina County chaplain of hospice and a graduate-level instructor at Methodist Theological School of Ohio. She is a native of Cleveland Heights and is married to retired autoworker Michael Claycomb.

Richard Hiles is a member of church of the savior’s staff-parish relations committee. Richard Hiles is a member of church of the savior’s staff-parish relations committee.
Heights High Options Program hosts community summit

Joy Henderson

The Options Program, Cleveland Heights High School’s alternative high school program, hosted a community summit on Oct. 8, with local law enforcement and 60 Options Program students participating. Police chiefs, detectives and officers from Cleveland Heights, University Heights, South Euclid, Shaker Heights and Lyndhurst attended the event.

Brian Williams, Options Program coordinator, explained the purpose of the event. “The community summit was designed to provide local law enforcement and our students a space to talk about community, respect and communication,” he said. “Our students had the opportunity to understand what it is like to walk in the shoes of a police officer and the officers were exposed to the success and resiliency of our students.”

The summit began with a brief welcome and introduction of all law enforcement officials, community partners, and school district central office administrators in attendance. Students and guests then attended one of three discussion sessions that were facilitated by Options Program staff, which focused on characteristics of a healthy community, respect and positive communication.

Participants compiled lists of the characteristics of a healthy community, including: civility, litter-free, activities for citizens of all ages, order and beauty. The importance of giving respect in an effort to receive respect was a central theme throughout the sessions. Participants also discussed the healthy impact that positive communication has on a community.

The summit concluded with a handshake line, with students and law enforcement representatives exchanging handshakes. One Options student said, “This is a day that I will always remember.”

Cleveland Heights Police Chief Jeffrey Robertson said he thought that the event helped build community relationships. “I look forward to future opportunities to work with the Options students, and expanding the relationship between the police department and the Options Program,” said Robertson.

After the event was over, Williams reflected on the discussions and interactions that took place during the summit. “Our goal was to humanize the discussion and continue to build a stronger community together,” said Williams. “Our mission was accomplished today.”

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

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Heights High students to perform ‘Grease’

Joy Henderson

Heights High will produce the musical “Grease” Nov. 7-9, at 7:30 p.m., and Nov. 8, at 4 p.m., in the auditorium of the temporary Heights High in University Heights. The show features a love story between two teenagers in the 1950s and will showcase student singing, acting and dancing.

More than 130 Heights High students will perform in leading roles and as members of the chorus. The lead male role, Danny, is played by senior Maurice Powers, and the lead female role, Sandy, is played by senior Flannery Jewell and junior Callie Swaim-Fox.

“I have been impressed with the students’ talent and work ethic,” said Jesse Lange, director and vocal music teacher. “And I have seen so many of the experienced students step up to mentor the less experienced students. Their leadership has been invaluable.”

The Heights High Instrumental Music Department prepared a small rock band to accompany the show.

Keith Newman leads the 20-student stage crew, who designed some of the sets, operates and designed lights, and operates the sound board.

“The show is a collaborative effort. “I really appreciate the support of the administration, Instrumental Music Department, the stage crew and director, and the vocal music parent organization,” said Lange. “Our parents are amazing. They send us great students and are wonderfully supportive of our work.”

This year’s performance comes after the high school’s major move to the temporary Heights High. With a smaller auditorium, at 2813 Miramar Blvd. in University Heights. With the move logistics and a different facility, this year’s show features high school students only. In the past, shows also included elementary and middle school students.

Tickets are $6 and $10, and information is available at 216-370-7105 or www.cbuh.org/vocalmusic.aspx.

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

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District has named Scott Wortman its new coordinator of communications. Wortman joined the district staff on Sept. 18, replacing Angee Shaker, director of communications and community engagement for the district, who left in August for a position with the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

“I am very excited to join such an exceptional team serving this wonderful school district,” said Wortman. “I’ve learned already that this community is remarkably vibrant, amazingly diverse and committed to its children. It’s clearly a special place, and I can’t wait to be a part of it. I am committed to making sure parents and community members are fully informed about our schools, and that CH-UH schools are recognized for the excellent education they provide to all students.”

Most recently, Wortman served as the director of athletic communications at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C. He spent nine years at Wake Forest, serving as the primary media spokesperson for the nationally recognized men’s basketball program while also overseeing social media and digital communications for the athletic department.

“Open, effective communication with our parents and community stakeholders is crucial, so we are very happy to have a talented professional like Scott joining our team as leader of our communications department,” said Superintendent Talisa Dixon. “Scott brings exactly the type of enthusiasm and experience that this position demands, and I know that he will be an asset, not only to our administration, but also to our community.”

During his time at Wake Forest, Wortman implemented a branding strategy across the athletic department’s social media channels, increasing engagement among the school’s fans and followers. He also spearheaded a redesign of the official athletics website and helped launch its mobile application.

Wortman served as chief editor and designer of many of the school’s publications, including football and basketball game programs and media guides, and was honored nationally for his work by the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA).

A native of Van Wert, Ohio, Wortman graduated from Ohio Northern University in 2006 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in professional writing and a minor in business administration. He earned his Master of Education degree from Bowling Green State University in 2006.

Cathan Bricker is the communications administrative assistant for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights
Board of Education
Meeting highlights
SEPTEMBER 15, 2015
All board members were present.

CTE program
Duane Callander, director of Career Tech Education (CTE), presented statistics about the career tech program. The graduation rate is 91 percent, and job placement is 98.6 percent. Students leave the program prepared to work or attend college. Cleveland Heights is in a consortium with Shaker Heights and Warrensville Heights.

Callander is starting a marketing program to encourage students and parents to see the value of CTE. He will work with staff to help them see the positives. He would like to increase the number of businesses that work with CTE students.

The board passed a resolution, required by the state of Ohio, to waive career/technical training for seventh- and eighth-grade students for the 2015-16 school year. The district does not currently have, and has not previously had, seventh- or eighth-grade programs, but there are plans for such programs next year.

LWV Observer: Adele Cohn.

OCTOBER 6, 2015
All board members were present.

Awards and recognitions
The board recognized Vietnam Veteran Lloyd Granaas for issuing an honorary diploma. Granaas served three years in Vietnam after leaving Heights High. The board recognized Monticello Middle School student Maple Buscasser, who has been named a kid reporter for Time for Kids magazine.

New communications coordinator
Superintendent Talisa Dixon introduced Scott Wortman as the new communications coordinator, replacing Angee Shaker.

Wiley enabling change order
The board approved a change order for the Wiley enabling projects with a total value of $239,641. This is one of the final change orders.

Obsolete IT items
The board approved the removal of obsolete IT inventory items for Jan. 1, 1991 through Dec. 20, 2005. Many of these items had been disposed of, but they are still on the inventory list.

Donations
The board accepted donations of iPads for Boulevard Elementary School, $75 for Canterbury Elementary School, $1,525 for Noble Elementary School, $72 for Rockside Middle School, $1,790 for DeSales Options Center, $700 for the athletic department, and clothing for Heights High.

Wiley transition
Board President Nancy Pepper reported positive comments about the transition of the high school to Wiley. RITA has added two additional bus services, and the winter sidewalk-clearing plan is in place.

Fall musical
The fall musical, “Grease,” will be performed Nov. 5-8. Elementary and middle school students will not participate this year because of the changes at Heights High.

LWV Observer: Lillian Houser.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.
Heights girls soccer co-captain leads team in regular-season scoring

Bernard is backed by senior classmates Allegra Steiger, Kelly Moore, Anna Crowley, Kaila Mathis and Francesca Hadden.

The Heights team maintained a solid defense throughout the season, allowing opponents less than a goal and a half per game. The defense is anchored by juniors Emily Benson, Soli Collins, Jossa Lammert, and sophomore Lauren Iott. Sophomores Ally Boyd and Gwen Wright complete the team’s stingy back line.

The team has been bolstered by freshmen newcomers Jayden Weaver, Julia O’Donnell, Mary Smith, Scenna Perelman, Ella Fleischer and Ryan Benson. Substitutes Faith Morris and Alyssa Moore complete the varsity team’s roster.

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

Heights High fall concert features high school and middle school students

Cynthia Larsen

The Cleveland Heights High School Instrumental Music Department will present its first concert of the school year on Friday, Nov. 20, at 7:30 p.m., in the auditorium of the Wiley campus of Cleveland Heights High School, at 2811 Miramar Blvd. in University Heights.

The performance features the Heights High Symphony, Concert Orchestra, and Heights High Symphonic Winds, as well as students in Roxboro and Monticello middle schools’ string departments.

Before the concert, students in the high school’s chamber and ensemble program will perform from 6:30 to 7 p.m. After the concert, the Heights High Jazz Ensembles will perform, for a full evening of exciting music.

Tickets, available the day of the show, are $3 for students and $5 for adults. Parking is available in the school parking lot as well as on the other side of Miramar Boulevard (acessible from the University Square shopping area).

The evening will open with the Concert Orchestra performing Fantasies and Fiddles by Mark Williams, Rodeo Rhythm by Richard Meyer, and Jurassic by Doug Spata, with Daniel Heim conducting. The Concert Orchestra, combined with seventh- and eighth-grade strings from Monticello and Roxboro schools, will also perform Cebina by Brian Balmages.

The Heights High Symphony, also conducted by Daniel Heim, will perform all four movements of the Symphony B flat in A (KV 201), by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. They will also perform “Hoe-Down” from Aaron Copland’s ballet Rodeo. “Hoe-Down” was inspired by the traditional tune “Bonaparte’s Racket.” Bill Stepp played the traditional tune “Bonaparte’s Racket.” Bill Stepp was recognized during the 2013 Grammys for this recording’s “lasting significance.” Symphonic Winds, directed by Brett Baker, will perform Gallant Zouave March by Karl King, a classic military-style march composed during his early days as a circus bandmaster, and Crossroads to the Future by Patrick Rossell, written to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the composer’s home town, Oxford, Ala.

They will also perform Spoon River by Percy Aldridge Grainger, which was inspired both by the eponymous fiddle tune and The Spoon River Anthology by Edgar Lee Masters. Spoon River will be directed by guest conductor Jesse Leyva from Kent State University.

Heights High’s instrumental music program is considered one of the premier programs in the state. Founded in the 1920s, the program is considered one of the premier programs in the state. Founded in the 1920s, the program has enjoyed extraordinary music directors and a supportive community and school board. The Heights High Chamber Music Program provides opportunities for students to play in small groups, instilling a lifelong love for music, building musical skills as well as leadership and responsibility, and teaching students how to play better music together. Chamber groups select their own repertoire (sometimes arranging their own music), and are coached by professional musicians throughout the school year.

Many Heights High students are also members of the Cleveland Heights Youth Orchestra, the Contemporary Youth Orchestra, the Cleveland Youth Wind Symphony, and other highly regarded performance groups.

For more information, call 216-330-3120 or e-mail president@heightssimld.org.

Cynthia Larsen teaches writing at Lake Erie Ink: a writing space for youth and is the parent of a Heights High instrumentalist.
Three Heights seniors are National Merit commended scholars

Joy Henderson

Heights High seniors Graham Ball, Aviva Klein and Hannah Smith have been named National Merit Commended Scholars, placing among the top 5 percent of more than 1.5 million students who took the 2014 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). About 34,000 commended students are recognized nationwide for their exceptional academic promise.

Graham Ball is active in the vocal music program. He'll perform in the upcoming musical, "Grease," and has had leading roles in three past school musicals. He is a member of the Barbershoppers and A Capella Choir, along with the National Honor Society and Tri-M Music Honor Society.

Outside of school, he is a member of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra Choir and a church choir. Aviva Klein is the principal bassoon player in the Heights Symphony and the Symphonic Winds, and plays the trumpet in the Marching Band and the Jazz Band. She is taking English and Spanish classes at John Carroll University (JCU), and is a member of the National Honor Society and Tri-M Music Honor Society. She is principal bassoonist in the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra and the Contemporary Youth Orchestra.

Hanna Smith is taking all of her classes at JCU, where her favorite class is women and gender studies. She is a member of the National Honor Society, AFS and ski club. In her junior year, she won a Gold Key art award. Outside of school, she is a member of Social Advocates for Youth.

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

Three Beaumont students recognized by National Merit Scholarship program

Anna Beyerle

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) has recognized the academic success of three members of Beaumont School’s class of 2016, two of whom are Heights residents. Anna Zipp (Cleveland Heights) has been named a National Merit semifinalist, and Alena Prcela (Mayfield Heights) and Josie Zucca (University Heights) have been named commended students.

Altogether, the extracurricular involvement of these three students encompasses membership in five varsity sports teams, and 11 clubs and honor societies, including student council, Academic Scholars, and the National Honor Society.

NMSC officials announced the names of approximately 16,000 semifinalists—less than 1 percent of U.S. high school seniors—and 34,000 commended students in the 60th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. Semifinalists have an opportunity to compete for National Merit Scholarships worth $35 million.

Commended students placed among the top 5 percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2016 competition by taking the 2014 Preliminary SAT.

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

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15th Annual Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation Cocktail Party

Join alumni, friends and partygoers at The Wine Spot for cheese and crackers plus desserts from The Stone Oven and Luna Bakery. Proceeds from the event fund scholarships, grants and the operations of the Cleveland Heights High School Alumni Foundation.

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Meeting highlights

SEPTEMBER 28, 2015
All board members were present

University Heights Library renovation design

The architects displayed the University Heights Library renovation design, which is 5 to 10 percent complete at this point. This board meeting was held at the University Heights Library so that neighbors could participate. All of the changes desired by patrons who attended the envisioning meeting have been included: enlarged parking lot (12 more spaces), rear entrance, restrooms on first floor, and an elevator to the basement. The front entrance will be moved to the west side of the building, facing Fenwick Road. There was a break in the presentation so that attendees could examine the slides and models.

Comments followed. A patron asked why the library hadn’t purchased the lot to the east, now occupied by Dunkin’ Donuts. Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director, replied that there was an asbestos removal issue with the prior building there, and that the lot had been sold before the library was looking. Some Fenwick Road residents felt that the atmosphere on Fenwick Road would face the ex-

University Heights Library Board of Trustees

University Heights Library Board members will elect a new president and vice president at this meeting. The board’s president, Rob Fischer, whose term ends in December, is ineligible to run again, and therefore the new president will become the interim manager.

The board will conduct an external search to find a new full-time youth services librarian at the Lee Road Library.

A balanced scorecard highlights

Kim DeNero-Ackroyd, Heights Libraries deputy director, pointed out two new library card types: the Teen 3 for Me card, which allows teens to take out three items without parental consent, and the eMedia card, which allows Ohio residents outside our service area to access certain electronic holdings. Any Ohioan can have access to any Ohio public library. She also mentioned the arcade/pinball game at the Grog Shop’s B-Side, aimed at attracting “emerging adults,” ages 19-26, to library programs.

Participants at the program numbered 35.

August public service report highlights

• In partnership with the Home Repair Resource Center, the library presented two programs in the Heroic Home Ownership series.
• This summer’s Adult Reading Program surpassed last year’s by 90.3 percent (1,349 to 709), while the teen and elementary programs declined in readership. Last year, teens were required by the schools to participate, which was not the case this summer.
• At Coventry Village Library, children in the summer reading program could perform a heroic deed by providing food for the Heights Emergency Food Center.

Kathy Franzinger, youth services associate, took 24 pounds of collected food to the center.

• University Heights Library staff participated in various activities for Heights High students at the former Wiley Middle School. Youth services associates attended orientation sessions to tell students about the library and its Teen Spot. Aurora Martinez, library manager, attended a traffic and safety program at University Heights City Hall, dealing with new traffic patterns and safety concerns near the school. She also attended a tour and open house for the renovated Wiley building.

• Librarians Sam Lapides, Becky Katzenmeyer, and Lauren Saeger met with representatives from the Monarch Adult Autism program to explore ways the library might provide services.
• A special guest, the Wild Thing, joined librarians to form a heroic deed by providing food for the summer reading program could perform a heroic deed by providing food for the Heights Emergency Food Center.

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www.heightsobserver.org

Heights Libraries seeks new board member

Sheryl Banks

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library will be accepting applications for a new board member beginning Nov. 2, with applications due Nov. 17. The new board member will replace current president Rob Fischer, whose term ends in December.

Library board members serve seven-year terms, and any Cleveland Heights or University Heights resident is eligible to apply.

“Our library is such an integral part of our community,” said Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director.

“Serving on the library board is one of the best ways a citizen can serve the Heights community, by helping guide the vision of the public library.”

Applications will be available Nov. 2–17 at the Lee Road Library, 2347 Lee Road, in Cleveland Heights. Applications must be returned to the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District Board of Education office (2555 Miramar Blvd., University Heights) by no later than noon on Tuesday, Nov. 17.

For more information, call the library at 216-932-3600, ext. 1200.

Sheryl Banks is the marketing and community relations manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.
Cross-promote and your business can have its cake—and eat it, too

Jindia Doba

Cross-promotion is probably one of the most cost-effective and accessible marketing tools. When done right, it can yield lasting benefits.

Luckily, it seems that the Heights offers a nearly unending buffet of opportunities for businesses, organizations, brands and events, so all can eat well from the cross-promotion table.

What is cross-promotion and how does it work?

The widely accepted definition of cross-promotion is “the cooperative marketing by two or more companies or institutions of one another’s products.” For the Heights, I’d take that definition a little further and say that cross-promotion is “the use of existing events to earn more from what’s already here.”

Some crucial components of an effective cross-promotion are: borrowed interest; fit; mutual benefit; equally proportioned/equitable resources; and execution, execution, execution.

I’ve seen recent examples to illustrate effective application of the above components of successful cross-promotions in our community.

Let’s take the recent Happy 5K race in Cleveland Heights: Several businesses—such as B Side, Black Box Fix, the BottleHouse Brewery, Tavern Company and Revive—offered participants specials and discounts on race day.

In addition to promotions that piggyback on the day of events, such as the 5K or Heights Music Hop, promotions can be built to take advantage of events before, during and after the centerpiece event.

The existing event should have an audience that is valuable to your business, but also one that you don’t or can’t normally reach. This helps you earn visits from new customers.

An example of successful borrowed interest from an ongoing event can be found in the Zagara’s Tiger Snack Pack fundraiser. Zagara’s Marketplace (a client of Dorney & Company) created the Tiger Snack Pack to support the high school athletics department during the football season.

New Heights Grill participated in the fundraiser by including a coupon in each pack which, when redeemed, directed to percent of meal purchases to Heights High athletics.

Promotional partners should have sufficient similarity in target audience, image and ability to execute their side of the promotion. All partners need to be able to see clear benefits. This requires attention to all steps in the offer, not just those that pertain to you. If the promotion calls for you to distribute something to customers in your store, don’t fall down on this step just because you’ve already gotten the benefit you sought.

Some think small businesses should avoid partnering with large ones. Not true. The crucial element is capacity to execute.

For example, a three-person dog-walking service should never distribute $1 off tickets to the local movie theater, which in turn will offer a free trial dog walk during the showing of “101 Dalmatians.” The dog-walkers could easily be overwhelmed by the response, disappointing theater customers, and both businesses would suffer. Proportionality could be achieved by offering a free week of dog walking when a customer buys a first month of service. Here, the purchase requirement reduces the number who will redeem the offer. The theater and the dog-walker will both be able to exploit the “101 Dalmatians” awareness, and give the customers a great value.

Execution starts at the beginning of the cross-promotion planning process. All parties take an inventory of their strengths and weaknesses, resources (human, capital and other) and administrative support. I recommend that both parties agree on what will happen and what the respective customers will get; the respective tasks and roles of each partner; a designated point person for each partner; communication (what, when, where, addresses, phone numbers and web addresses); training, and ensuring every staff member has promotional details or can direct inquiries to the right person.

Finally, remember: NOTHING just happens. Even if it does, it won’t happen that way EVERY time unless you mutually agree on agreed-upon roles.

Increasing sales is hard enough to do alone. Why not recruit an ally in the effort with cross-promotions that feed all parties? Opportunities are ripe for the picking in the Heights.

Jindia Doba is an associate with Cleveland Heights-based Dorney & Company Strategic Consultants to Management. Doba has called Cleveland Heights home since 2010.
Cedar Center South shopping center gets a new look

James Henke

Cedar Center South is undergoing a face-lift. The University Heights shopping center, on the south side of Cedar Road, west of Warrensville Center Road, is owned by Inland Real Estate Corporation, which purchased it in the fall of 2015. Inland is renovating the exteriors of all of the stores, with the exception of Whole Foods and CVS.

The renovations began on July 20, and are expected to be complete by mid-November. Inland plans to hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony when all of the work is done, but no date had been set at press time.

“We are very excited to enhance the center, and we are very pleased with the cooperation from our tenants and from the city of University Heights,” said Kristi Rankin, senior vice president of Inland.

The renovations are being done by Veteran Development and Construction. Though the center has been in existence since the 1950s, no one could say what was last renovated.

University Heights Mayor Susan K. Infeld said she is happy with the changes. “It updates the look of the area, and it will have a sharp, modern, very clean look,” said Infeld. “It is making it very attractive, and it should draw the eye of any people driving down Cedar. And any beautification is good for the city.”

Stores in the section of the shopping center that is being renovated include Dollar Tree, the UPS Store, MotoPhoto, Georgia’s Oven-Fresh Pizza, Tuesday Morning, Third Federal Savings and Loan, O’Rielly’s Pub and First Watch. Construction is limited to the exteriors of the buildings, and encompasses the front and back of each store. According to papers filed with the city of University Heights, Inland is paying $842,000 to cover the cost of the renovation.

All of the stores and restaurants have remained open during construction. Even so, some of the store owners and managers say that construction has had a negative impact on their businesses.

C.J. Handley, of Family Dollar, said that the renovations have “made it look like everything was closed.” The stores have lost a lot of money,” said Sean Vogley, manager of MotoPhoto. “The construction has disrupted all of the businesses here, and, ultimately, I don’t think the changes are going to make a huge difference.” Once the changes are completed, said Vogley, “It’s going to make the area look good.”

Inland also owns Cedar Center North, on the north side of Cedar Road, across the street from Cedar Center South. Inland purchased the north shopping center this past spring for $18.4 million.

“We chose to upgrade and renovate this building to add value, enhance physical appearance and boost Cedar Center South’s attraction to customers and retailers alike,” said Rankin. “Cedar Center South is an attractive center for retailers, not just for its soon-to-be new look, but also the impressive tenant lineup and prime location along Cedar Road.”

Rankin said that some retail and office space is available in the shopping center. Anyone interested in leasing space should contact Don Gillis, assistant vice president and senior leasing manager for Inland, at 530-954-3596.

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.

Heights Observer readers suggest new businesses

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Each year when FutureHeights conducts its annual Best of the Heights Awards survey through the Heights Observer, the last question asks readers to suggest businesses that they would like to see open shop in the Heights. Because it is an open-ended question, the responses vary widely. Some suggest specific businesses by name, others suggest an idea for a particular vacant building or business district. Still others mention how much they miss a business that has closed that they would like to see return.

In this year’s survey, readers suggested several businesses for the Cedar Lee Business District: a breakfast place, a diner, a smoothie bar, a high-end restaurant, a pet store, pet grooming and doggie daycare, a farmers market and a craft-beer bar. Readers also suggested food trucks and music at the green space at Meadowbrook Boulevard and Lee Road.

Readers had ideas for what to do with the former Walmart space and other vacancies at Severance Town Center. Several readers suggested fitness facilities or places for family recreation—even though it is located just down the street from the Cleveland Heights Recreation Center. Readers suggested some specific activities that, perhaps, are not available at the rec center and would take advantage of the large space that exists at Severance. These include indoor sports facilities, such as a pool, running track, wrestling room, steam room, archery range, soccer fields, racquetball, tennis, rock climbing walls, roller rink, paintball, skateboard park, gymnastics, whirlpool and hot tub baths.

Other uses for large vacant spaces include indoor amusement parks, art galleries and studios, and crafts and antiques markets. Readers also suggested national chains, such as Ikea, Trader Joe’s or Half-Price Books to fill the vacancies, although the location’s lack of highway access would preclude many of them from considering it.

Likewise, readers suggested several large-scale businesses for vacancies at University Square, including a bowling alley or athletic facility. The Cedar Taylor Business District got a lot of attention as several participants had specific suggestions for what they would like to see there, including a doughnut shop, a coffee shop or a bakery. Readers suggested that the Noble Road corridor needed similar attractions, especially a coffee shop and restaurants. Arts and crafts were also suggested for this area.

Some specific businesses mentioned by name include the following national chains: FedEx, Kinko’s, CrossFit Gym, Jersey Mike’s Subs, Longhorn Steakhouse, Trader Joe’s, IKEA, Aldi, Golden Corral, Dave & Busters, Sky Zone Trampoline Park, In-N-Out Burger, Best Buy, Inom- nia Cookies, Hallmark, Half-Price Books, Funk n’ Waffles restaurant and Sweet Tomatoes restaurant.

Regional businesses for which the Heights might become an additional location include: The Mart Hunt in Tremont, Chinatown’s Szechuan Café, Heineen’s, Imaginary Worlds, Mitchell’s Ice Cream, L’Chateleine (a French restaurant in Columbus), Lost Nation Sports Park, Mahall’s 20 Lanes, The Corner Alley, Swing-N-Things Family Fun Park, The Side Quest (a “nerd bar” in Lakewood), and Sprinkles (a cupcake shop). We’re not sure if the Angela Mia one reader suggested meant the pizza place in East Cleveland or the specialty bakery located in Norwalk, Conn., that ships nationally.

In addition to storefront business ideas, readers also said they wanted a biotech or other technology company, and a corporate headquarters.

Businesses that residents would like to see reopened in the Heights include Miracles (potato pancakes), Setz-In, Earth By April (vegetarian), Sweetie Fry, Rockefeller’s, Chuck’s Diner and Simply Charming.

Although the Heights already has these types of businesses, readers said that they would like to see more: bookstores, coffee shops, bakeries, ice cream shops, pharmacies, florists, hardware stores, skate stores, breweries, photo studios and clothing stores. Types of restaurants requested included Indian, Cuban, French, Mexican, seafood, gluten-free, tacos, tapas and vegan. Several readers expressed the opinion that the Heights has enough hair and nail salons.

Out-of-the-box suggestions included a medical marijuana dispensary, a teen nightclub, a hot tub co-op or flotation-tank spa, a maker space, a motorcycle custom shop, a quilt shop, a women’s shoe store, a running gear store, a swap shop and a scooter retailer.

And several readers suggested that one of the Heights’ celebrity chefs—Doug Katz, Michael Symon or Jonathon Sawyer were mentioned by name—open a new restaurant in Cleveland Heights, with particular emphasis on Lee Road, that would “inject some fun and creativity into the ‘heart of the city’.”

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.
Plan ahead for stressful situations

Judith Eugene

Most of us understand the importance of planning ahead and researching options for things such as vacations, major purchases and retirement. However, not many of us plan ahead for the stressful situations that naturally come with aging.

Everyone faces the stress of aging, and most of the stress is caused by loss. As time goes on, spouses, friends and pets pass away. As our abilities decline, we lose mobility, independence and options. There is often a sense of being unable to cope with the stressful feelings of grief, loneliness, fear, resentment and isolation that have effects not only on the senior, but on the whole family.

Just as we plan ahead for other major life events, so should we plan ahead for the normal stresses of aging. “The key is purposeful planning and educating ourselves about the options before there is a crisis,” said Beth Shapiro, a clinical social worker with a private practice in Cleveland Heights.

Shapiro counsels seniors and family members who are struggling with the hardships of aging. She encourages people to seek assistance with these stresses as early as possible. “Without a plan,” she said, “families get into a crisis and need to make decisions at a time of intense emotion.”

This can, in turn, cause even more stress.

There is a delicate balance that children of senior adults need to achieve between supporting the senior’s desire for autonomy and independence, while also being concerned for their health and safety. Shapiro helps families talk through the needs, desires and expectations of all the parties involved, and work together to come up with solutions. Some of these issues can be difficult to talk about—for example, living arrangements, quality of life, and caring for pets. It can also be difficult to admit that aging and change are very hard to go through. We may feel embarrassed to ask for help, feeling that we have somehow failed.

Shapiro advocates looking aging straight in the eye. “We need to acknowledge what happens in the aging process,” she said. “Grief and loss are going to occur. We need to talk about ways to adapt and move forward so we’re ready when they do occur.”

Successful navigation of the aging process involves letting go of what you can’t change, and making a plan to change what you can. A quote on Shapiro’s website, from Jon Kabat-Zinn, sums it up: “You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”

Shapiro, a University Heights native, received her undergraduate degree from Cleveland State University, her master’s degree from Case Western Reserve University, and her Ph.D. in psychology from Saybrook University. You can contact her at 440-896-2730 or bshapiro@ohiohush.com.

Judith Eugene is a native of Cleveland Heights who provides life-enrichment classes and activities for senior adults and those with physical and mental challenges through www.lovinghandsgroup.com. She can be reached at 216-498-9578 or judith@lovinghandsgroup.com.

Seniors Citizen Happenings

Senior Citizen Happenings, sponsored by the City of University Heights, are open to all senior citizens. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. at the University Heights Library. To receive the monthly schedule by e-mail, call 216-931-7800, ext. 205, or send an e-mail to info@universityheights.com.

Nov. 5: Linda Miller recently retired after 28 years as a music specialist at The Music Settlement, and will share recollections of her work with students, most of whom were under the age of six. By her estimate, Miller influenced as many as 12,000 young lives with her teaching, singing, composing and playing, and she also spent 25 years teaching, singing, composing and performing. Miller influenced as many students, most of whom were under the age of six. By her estimate, Miller influenced as many as 12,000 young lives with her teaching, singing, composing and playing, and she also spent 25 years

CH Senior Center News

Amy Jenkins

The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center, located in the CH Community Center at Monticello Blvd., offers a wide variety of programming for CH residents 60 and older. The following programs are among the highlights for November:

Nov. 10 to Dec. 15, 9:30 a.m. to noon, “Diabetes Self-Management Workshop.” This free workshop for people living with type 1 or 2 diabetes covers techniques to deal with the symptoms of diabetes, appropriate exercise, information on healthy eating, appropriate use of medication, and tips on how to work more effectively with health care providers. Participants will make weekly action plans, share experiences, and help solve problems they encounter in creating and carrying out their self-management program. Space is limited and registration is required.

Nov. 10, 12:30 p.m., “We Honor Veterans” is an annual pinning ceremony to honor our senior veterans with a recognition ceremony and lunch. This program is open to non-CH residents, and registration is required. (Let us know the branch of the armed forces in which you served when you make your reservation.)

Remember that this is open enrollment time for 2016 Medicare plans. Schedule an appointment to meet with OSHIIP-trained (Ohio Senior Health Insurance Program) Medicare counselors any Wednesday morning, or participate in a day-long counseling event at the senior center on Tuesday, Nov. 17.

The senior center is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. A complete schedule of programs is published in the community center’s newsletter, which is available at CH City Hall, local libraries, the community center and online at www.clevelandheights.com. For more information and to register for any program, call 216-691-7377.

Amy Jenkins is supervisor at the CH Office on Aging and the Senior Activity Center. She can be reached at 216-691-7377 or by e-mail at ajenkins@clvhts.com.
Cleveland Heights resident John Brogan publishes his first book

In Reflection of Nature, which came recently published his first book.

Cleveland Heights resident John

John Brogan at the summit of Mount Marcy in New York.

James Henke

Nov 1, 2015

www.heightsobserver.org

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John Brogan at the summit of Mount Marcy in New York.
Matt Harmon’s life inspires second album Childhood Dreams

James Henke

Longtime University Heights resident Matt Harmon is about to release his second album, Childhood Dreams. The album tells the story of a man who meets the woman who becomes his wife, and they have a child. The man starts resenting the fact that his life isn’t what he imagined it would be. He drinks too much and becomes mean. His wife eventually leaves her husband, taking the child with her. The final three songs on the album are in the voice of the child, who has grown up and has become a musician and songwriter.

The album’s story is based on Harmon’s actual life. Now 40 years old, he was born on a U.S. Air Force base in Utah, where his father was in the military service. The family then moved to England, where Harmon was three, his parents divorced, and he and his mother came back to her home in University Heights.

“My dad and I would visit in the summer,” Harmon said. “But when I was 13, we stopped seeing each other. I didn’t get along with his new girl-friend, and she didn’t like me coming around. That was a pretty rough summer, and after that, I never really connected with my father again.”

“I always played around with the piano as a kid,” said Harmon. “I just loved harmony and playing basic chords by ear. But I was never a very good student, because I had a lack of tolerance for institutionalized academia. So structured piano lessons scared me away, and it wasn’t until I got my first guitar when I was 17 that I really found my musical ability.”

Harmon attended Heights schools, including Wiley Middle School and Heights High. While he was in high school, he became friends with Harry Bacharach, a piano player and songwriter who is still on the Cleveland music scene. “Our friendship was invaluable,” Harmon said. “It gave my confidence a big boost, and, as we evolved musically, we would share the stage with each other.”

After graduating from Heights High in 1983, Harmon attended Cleveland State University for a year, then transferred to the University of Oregon in Eugene, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in electronic media production. Bacharach also went to Oregon, and the two continued to play together. “We performed countless parties and gigs,” Harmon said. “And we wrote a folk opus called ‘The Green’s Blues.’ It was about a romantic relationship interrupted by the evacuation of planet Earth. We performed that show three times to packed houses, and it was very well-received.”

After college, Harmon moved to Los Angeles, where he hoped to be a sound designer on major films. He managed to land a job as a sound editor on television shows and made-for-TV movies. After a couple of years, he became frustrated with his inability to make ends meet, and he decided to move back to Cleveland.

After returning home, he landed a gig as the rhythm guitarist for the Jim Miller Band. Jim Miller is a guitarist whose group plays a mixture of blues, country, Cajun, bluegrass and jazz music. While playing with that band, Harmon got to open for Rusted Root at the House of Blues, and Little Feat at the House of Blues, and Rusted Root at the Tower City Am- phitheater. “I got a really good taste of what it takes to be a professional musician,” he said. “But after a great few years, I was still a bit restless. I wanted to be playing my own songs in the traditional folk-singer style.”

Harmon left the band and began doing more solo gigs. In 2012, he released his first CD, Cosmic Tender. The album comprises 11 songs, all of them written and performed by Harmon, with various backing musicians. He also took a job at Cuyahoga Community College’s eastern campus, where he is a classroom technology specialist.

In 2007, Harmon, who is single, bought a house on Ellison Road in South Euclid. His mother still lives in University Heights, and he loves the Heights. “There are so many great musicians in this area,” he said. “And the arts are so important. Even though I live in South Euclid, I still feel like I am a part of the Heights.”

Harmon hopes to have the Childhood Dreams album out by the end of 2015. He wrote all of the songs on the album, and plays guitar. Gary Neherny plays drums, and Kevin Johnson plays bass. On Nov. 29, Harmon will play a three-hour show at the Barking Spider in University Circle. “I’m going to play a mix of originals and covers in the first half of the show,” he said. “Then I’ll take a little break and come back up with some great musicians and play my new album live, in its entirety.”

In addition to performing, Harmon also teaches guitar. For more information on the album, or lessons, visit www.mattharmonmusic.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.

Matt Harmon
Levin—an associate professor of photography at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)—traveled to Israel in early 2015 to capture intimate images of Weinstein and his work, which conveys a story of creativity.

But taking his idea to fruition, and to do so to the degree that he has, is simply remarkable," Levin added. "We are all beneficiaries of Amnon's work's." The free exhibit will be open to the public on Nov. 8, 1-4 p.m., in the Roe Green Gallery of the Jewish Federation's Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Building. Appointments to view the exhibit on other days, and group tours, can be scheduled by e-mailing israelarts@jfccleve.org or calling 216-937-2556.

Amnon's Workshop is just one exhibit in Violins of Hope Cleveland, a landmark project among seven premier nonprofit organizations in Cleveland that will bring instruments restored by Weinstein to Northeast Ohio. For a complete list of events, visit www.violinsofhopecle.org.

Levin's photographs offer an insider's perspective into Weinstein's eclectic workshop and his forensic-like approach to the restoration process, and provide the backstory for other Violins of Hope Cleveland programming and events.

This exhibition of Levin's work is presented by the Cleveland Israel Arts Connection, a program of the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, and received support from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture.

As an artist, Levin's work often questions truth while exploring the post-modern tenet of the existence of multiple truths. He has curated and contributed to many documentary photo exhibits. Aside from his teaching and art practice, Levin accepts commissions to make environmental portraits—an endeavor that has taken him to 40 states and overseas—and has photographed world leaders and luminaries.

John Horton is media relations manager at Tri-C.

Photographs by CH’s Levin tell story behind Violins of Hope

John Horton

An exhibit of photographs by Cleveland Heights resident Daniel Levin documents an Israeli man's lifelong mission to preserve violins played by Jewish musicians during the Holocaust.

The exhibition—Amnon’s Workshop—features 75 large-scale prints and is on display at the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, 3701 Science Park Drive, in Beachwood.

The photographs detail the work of master violinmaker Amnon Weinstein, the man behind the Violins of Hope project. Weinstein lovingly restores and gives new voice to stringed instruments that survived the horrors of the Holocaust, even when their owners perished.

Levin—an associate professor of photography at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C)—traveled to Israel in early 2015 to capture intimate images of Weinstein and his work, which conveys a story of endurance and resilience through the power of music.

“I’ve always felt grateful to have access to people and places few have,” Levin said. "In the case of my time with Amnon, I am especially appreciative. He’s a wonderful man who had an idea that likely no one before him had even considered. That is creativity. "But taking his idea to fruition, and to do so to the degree that he has, is simply remarkable," Levin added. "We are all beneficiaries of Amnon's works."

The free exhibit will be open to the public on Nov. 8, 1-4 p.m., in the Roe Green Gallery of the Jewish Federation's Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Building. Appointments to view the exhibit on other days, and group tours, can be scheduled by e-mailing israelarts@jfccleve.org or calling 216-937-2556.

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John Horton is media relations manager at Tri-C.

Connecting with people is important to Dr. Louise Keating. The daughter of Italian immigrants and a retired physician, she lives with her daughter's family in Cleveland Heights, where she savors whipping up authentic Italian meals for her grandchildren.

“Living at home is important to me, but I want to have a plan in place so my family doesn’t have to scramble,” says Louise. “That’s why I decided to sign up for Judson Smart Living at Home. When the time comes, Judson will take care of everything with one phone call. In the meantime, I can access services whenever I need them.”

Indeed. When she’s not in the kitchen, Louise is working out at Judson. As a Smart Living at Home member, she takes advantage of Judson’s health and wellness classes which offer both physical and social benefits.

“Exercise keeps me nimble. I’m at Judson three times a week for yoga, strength training and water aerobics,” says Louise, who has had both hips replaced. “Plus, I’ve made many close friends.”

To learn more about how Judson can help you stay in your own home, please call (216) 791-3211.

Visit www.judsonsmartliving.org and click Smart Living at Home.

“It want to have a plan in place so my family doesn’t have to scramble.”

—Dr. Louise Keating, Judson Smart Living at Home member since 2013
Heights Arts annual holiday store opens Nov. 6

Friday, Nov. 6, 6–7 p.m., followed by a public reception 7–9 p.m. The store will be open for expanded evening and Sunday hours, through Dec. 30. For a complete list of artists participating in the Heights Arts Holiday Store, seasonal music programs and store hours, visit www.heightarts.org or call 216-771-3457.

Mary Ryan is on staff at Heights Arts, a nonprofit community arts organization.

A manoprint (detail), by Lisa Schoenberg.

Heights Arts is again shining a spotlight on the many accomplished artists who call Northeast Ohio home with its 14th annual Holiday Store, opening Nov. 6 and running through Dec. 30. A curated show of works by more than 80 artists and artisans, the holiday store fills the entire Heights Arts gallery on Lee Road with fine art prints, paintings, and photographs plus functional art in ceramics, glass, wood and fiber, as well as jewelry, clothing, music, handmade artist cards, books and distinctive holiday items.

“The Holiday Store offers a wonderful opportunity to shop a wider selection than we usually feature, with works by new, upcoming artists as well as new creations from Cleveland’s favorite artists,” noted gallery manager Courtney Young. “There’s always something special and unique coming in, and because the Holiday Store is open every day—not just one weekend—it’s easy and convenient for shoppers to find the perfect gift for everyone.”

This year’s windows will feature the bounty of Cleveland’s art glass scene, with works by award-winning glass artists Mark Sudduth, Michael Mikula and Robert Cuby. Other blown-glass items include colorful vases, paperweights and ornaments by Cleveland Heights artist Shayna Roth Pentecost, and glass works by Stephanie Miller-Davis, Brian Sarama and Mark Yasenchak.

For jewelry lovers, the holiday store carries all-handcrafted works in silver, semiprecious stones, polymer clay, glass and recycled materials by Blooming Enamels, Catherine Butler, Grace Chin, Sandra Curry, Emily R Studio, Patti Fields, John Gulyas and Marianne Posch, Catherine Davies Paetz, Pamela Pastoric, Michael Romanik, Faye Soleil, Valerie Tyler and Zenia Lis.

The gallery continues to present musical CDs by local favorites Les Delices, Blue Lunch, Quire, and individual musicians, as well as chapbooks by regional poets. Rounding out the selection are hand-painted, hand-woven, knit and felted scarves, baby apparel, pillows, purses, artist T-shirts, and sculptural works in paper and mixed media. Gift certificates are always available.

All of the artists volunteer their time to work in the gallery for the duration of the show, so shoppers have an opportunity to meet them, and talk about the works on view. The Heights Arts Holiday Store opens with a members’ preview on Friday, Nov. 6, 6–7 p.m., followed by a public reception 7–9 p.m. The store will be open for expanded evening and Sunday hours, through Dec. 30.
2015 Holiday Gift Guide

Find something for everyone on your list at the many independent merchants in the Heights. Most will gift wrap or ship your items, too. Here are some of our favorites:

STOCKING STUFFERS ($10 OR LESS)

How to Knit Socks that Fit by Donna Druchunas. The book title says it all. ($8.95, Mac’s Backs)

I Love You Around the World by Lisa Swerling and Ralph Lazar. This book teaches how to say “te amo” around the world. ($9.95, Mac’s Backs)

One “Baby & Me” session. This informal program is accompanied by staff members. ($5.00, Family Connections)

Note cards for the nature lover, from original charcoal drawings by Cleveland Heights artist Christopher Owen Smith. ($4.00 each, Heights Arts)

STOCKING STUFFERS ($10 OR LESS)

Handmade book pins by Cleveland’s Strong Connections

Portable Ping Pong Game. Do you love ping pong, but have no room for that big, cumbersome table in the house? With this version, you can enjoy the game wherever you go. Fits perfectly in a purse or backpack. ($8.50, Big Fun)

Gift cards. (Available in any amount. Bremec on the Heights Garden Center)

Youth Gardening Tools. (Bremec on the Heights Garden Center)

Malt gift cards. Perfect for stocking stuffers or staff-appreciation gifts for that special cheese and beer lover in your life. (Available in any amount, Malt Bar & Grilled)

Super Ball. This is the same Wham-O Super Ball that kids have been playing with for generations. This classic hard rubber ball turned 50 this year. Hours of fun! It’s lost down the sewer or in the brushes. The good news: it’s inexpensive to replace. ($2.50, Big Fun)

Grow-A-Buddha. We all need to grow spiritually. What better or cheaper way than dropping a pea on a magic Grow-A-Buddha? ($2.00, Big Fun)

GIFTS LESS THAN $50

One-year subscription to Funny Times. ($26.00 for 12 issues)

Fonsettas, amaryllis, potted succulents, Azalea crystals, fashion scarves, paper-white gift box, natural wreaths, Bohemian watches and starry night wraps. (Bremec on the Heights Garden Center)

Gift cards. (Available in any amount. Bremec on the Heights Garden Center)

Wine Sock Monkey. Next time you’re heading to a gala soirée or a neighborhood potluck, slip a wine monkey onto your bottle of red or white (or even champagne), and you’re covered! Wine monkey is made from all-American upcycled socks. Boy two and you can wear them anywhere! ($11.00, Big Fun)

Prayer For World Peace by Jane Goodall. A beautifully illustrated inspirational message from the beloved naturalist. ($16.95, Mac’s Backs)

Finding Home: Shelter Dogs and Their Stories by Scott Tracer. Stirring photographs, accompanied by moving stories. ($19.95, Mac’s Backs)

Paper calendar. Each month features one of Cleveland Heights artist Kate Snow’s original linoleum block designs. Printed on a 1950s Vandercook letterpress. ($24.00, Heights Arts)

Handprinted Ohio-themed adult cotton tees and baby onesies. Wear that hometown pride up front and center. ($15.00 to $28.00, Heights Arts)

Etch-A-Sketch. This hall of fame toy has been produced by our state’s own Ohio Art since 1960. Creative fun for the whole family. ($18.00, Big Fun)

Wine Bottle Finger Locators. And a special bonus: a 1950s Vandercook letterpress. ($24.95, Mac’s Backs)

Rummaging around the corner jewelry stores and antique shops, we came across a few that we think are worthy of note. Remember the Arases? They are in the Heights—near the Boy Scout camp—and make these great gifts for anyone:

Arrow’s End Earrings are reminiscent of mid-century modern design, with a nostalgic chevron shape. The material used to create these earrings may surprise you—brass from bomb casings is collected from the fields of Cambodia—and the artisans of the Rajana artisan group transform these bomb shells into jewelry. ($24.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

Bike Chain Wine Rack. In Moradabad, India, artisans transform ordinary bike chains into extraordinary pieces of art. The Noah’s Ark group works with more than 40 independently operating workshops and provides resources such as free education for children and water filtration services for artisans’ homes. Metalworking has been a tradition in the village, since the 16th century, and developed over time to include such innovative metals as recycled pieces of bicycles. ($49.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

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Curious to Know More About Montessori Education?

Ruffing Montessori School — the second oldest Montessori school in the country — is located right here in Cleveland Heights and has been serving children 18 months through 8th Grade for generations.

See for yourself why Northeast Ohio’s parents are choosing Ruffing. Contact our Admission Office to schedule a visit and learn how Ruffing Montessori will prepare your child for success!

216-321-7571 or info@ruffingmontessori.net
3380 Fairmount Boulevard, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

© 2015 Heights Observer
Browns candles, made by Colleen Smith, mixed media artist. ($13.50, In The 216) • CIE Print on wood, made by Colleen Smith, mixed media artist. ($45.00, In The 216) •

Items for the house or your favorite dogs or cats, including amazingly absorbent Soggy Doggy rags and placemats, dishes for dogs and cats, collars and leashes, challenging and rewarding interactive puzzles for dogs, and framed pet photos. ($21.99 to $50.00, Animal Zen) •

Usborne Fingerprint Activities book. This book is perfect for preschoolers to fill with inked fingerprints using the attached rainbow stamp pad. ($15.99, Pinwheel Kids)

Nostalgic Graphic Tees capture the spirit of Christmas, available in children’s sizes 2 to 8. ($28.00, Pinwheel Kids)

Dust and Grooves: Adventures in Record Collecting by Elion Paz. A gorgeously illustrated book profiling vinyl addicts. ($50.00, Mac’s Books)

Map: Exploring the World edited by Phaidon Press. More than 300 maps that span the centuries, including the newest generation of mapmakers. ($59.95, Mac’s Backs)

Sea Captain’s Compass. A compass work shop called Vertex evolved from a group of craftsmen who originally made surveying equipment for some of the earliest canals. Makers have adapted their designs to meet the needs of a changing market, but have held true to their craftmanship skills. ($59.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

Your Journey Wall Clock. Edmundo Contreras is the artisan behind this beautiful wall clock. Reverse-painted glass requires a unique skill, and starts first with small details and shading, then builds the image backwards. ($99.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

Gift certificates that can be used for dog and cat grooming; Tellington Touch consultations; pet sitting, all-natural dog and cat foods, treats and supplements, toys and active gear, or household supplies. ($50.00 to $100.00, Animal Zen)

Tree Top Adventure Toy. This interactive toy provides lots of line motor and imaginative play. ($115.00, Pinwheel Kids)

You’re getting warmer!

It’s getting cooler outside and Stone Oven has the fare to warm you up. Our delicious coffees, home-baked goods, hearty soups and sandwiches will keep you feeling toasty.

Cleveland is Magical! T-shirt in children’s track. ($18.00, Pinwheel Kids)

Music Mixdeck. Inspire a budding DJ with this toy that plays six different musical tracks. ($22.00, Pinwheel Kids)

Sea Captain’s Compass. A compass work shop called Vertex evolved from a group of craftsmen who originally made surveying equipment for some of the earliest canals. Makers have adapted their designs to meet the needs of a changing market, but have held true to their craftmanship skills. ($59.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

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Dust and Grooves: Adventures in Record Collecting by Elion Paz. A gorgeously illustrated book profiling vinyl addicts. ($50.00, Mac’s Books)

Map: Exploring the World edited by Phaidon Press. More than 300 maps that span the centuries, including the newest generation of mapmakers. ($59.95, Mac’s Backs)

Sea Captain’s Compass. A compass work shop called Vertex evolved from a group of craftsmen who originally made surveying equipment for some of the earliest canals. Makers have adapted their designs to meet the needs of a changing market, but have held true to their craftmanship skills. ($59.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

Your Journey Wall Clock. Edmundo Contreras is the artisan behind this beautiful wall clock. Reverse-painted glass requires a unique skill, and starts first with small details and shading, then builds the image backwards. ($99.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

Gift certificates that can be used for dog and cat grooming; Tellington Touch consultations; pet sitting, all-natural dog and cat foods, treats and supplements, toys and active gear, or household supplies. ($50.00 to $100.00, Animal Zen)

Tree Top Adventure Toy. This interactive toy provides lots of line motor and imaginative play. ($115.00, Pinwheel Kids)
HEIGHTS HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

GIFTS MORE THAN $150

Pair of Guardians by the Foundry Woodprints. Each is 14” by 36”. ($300.00, In The 216)  18

Funky-Shaped Bangle Set. A set of five hand-made bangles in Sterling Silver. ($248.00, Antrobus Designs)

Pink LOVE Pendant in 14K solid pink gold. ($320.00, Antrobus Designs)  19

Moon Song Necklace. Mother-of-pearl creates a luminous quality that seems to capture the beauty of moonlight. A single bird sits perched on a silver branch, silhouetted against the moon. From the artisans of Allpa, Peru. ($375.00, Ten Thousand Villages)

Blockprint Jungle Throw. Indira Bhawani Shankar is one of the artisans behind the creation of this blockprint blanket. ($195.00, Ten Thousand Villages)  16

Frost Glass’s special-edition glassware is hand blown in six distinctive patterns. A 2015 American Made Finalist. ($180.00/four or $370.00/six, Heights Arts)  18

Award-winning artist Jeanne Regan’s multi-layered images have found homes in regional and national collections. Her lush watercolor paintings make the perfect gift for a discerning art lover. ($650.00, Heights Arts)  17

GIFTS FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS IT ALL

The Bubble Ring in 14K yellow gold and sapphires. ($1,925.00, Antrobus Designs)

Cushion Diamond Pendant in 14K white gold and diamonds. ($15,000.00, Antrobus Designs)

Enjoy an entire season of Close Encounters. Hear Cleveland’s world-class musicians perform four intimate chamber music concerts in spectacular private homes and unique public venues. ($180.00 and up, Heights Arts)  20

A Heights Arts annual membership. Give the gift of membership and support the arts in our community. ($35.00 and up, Heights Arts)

Equal Exchange Gift Basket. Build your own fair trade coffee, tea and chocolate basket for the person who has it all. These items from Equal Exchange are sure to delight. (Prices start at $50.00 and sales associates will help build a custom basket, Ten Thousand Villages)  16

Gift certificates for custom framing. ($50.00 toward custom framing order valued at $100.00 or more, Wood Trader)  20

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