CLE Urban Winery is Best New Business

Deanna Bremer Fisher

In the 2017 Best of the Heights Awards contest, readers of the Heights Observer honored outstanding businesses in Cleveland Heights and University Heights by voting, Jan. 15 through Feb. 12, for their favorites in 15 categories. In all, 195 businesses were nominated. FutureHeights announced the winners on its website on Feb. 18.

CLE Urban Winery (2180B Lee Road), producer and retailer of handcrafted wines, edged out finalists Greedy Girl and Zoma Ethiopian Restaurant to win Best New Business. Owner Destiny Burns said that winning the award was exciting, humbling and validating. "I feel like we are connecting with the community. My vision for this place was a community space, and that is really what it is becoming and it’s wonderful to see," she said.

CLE Urban Winery hosts a variety of events, such as yoga and tango classes, and features local musicians and the work of local artists. The space also attracts groups, both formal and informal. "The other day one of our Wine Club members, who is a teacher in the Heights, asked if we could stay open a little later one night so that she and a few of her friends could stop over after a movie to discuss it. I said, ‘Sure, I’d be happy to do that for a Wine Club member,’ and about 70 people came—all ages, races. It was awesome." Burns said her secrets to success are her mottos, "good wine made fun" and "drink wine, do good." She said she strives to produce a quality product, has a fantastic staff, celebrates Cleveland—not just with the wine labels and names, but by featuring local music and art, and partnering with local businesses—and she emphasizes community by giving back to local causes.

The business opened in summer and about 70 people came—all ages, races. It was awesome.”

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The business opened in summer

Taylor Road ceramic shop opens

James Henke

In December, Asya Palotova, a designer and ceramist, opened a unique new store and studio at 2114 South Taylor Road in Cleveland Heights.

Called Gleena Ceramics, the store features tableware, including cups, plates, saucepans and vases, designed and produced by the store’s owner, Palotova, a former art director at Martha Stewart Living magazine.

"Gleena" is a Russian word for clay, and Palotova makes all of her items from porcelain—a clay-based material—in her Taylor Road studio. Prices range from $20 to $100.

Palotova’s products are available in stores in 16 states, and online, and have been featured in Better Homes and Garden, Southern Living, House Beautiful, Food & Wine, Bon Appetit, InStyle and Martha Stewart Weddings, among other magazines.

"Gleena“ is a Russian word for clay, and Palotova makes all of her items from porcelain—a clay-based material—in her Taylor Road studio. Prices range from $20 to $100.

FutureHeights to host vacant and abandoned properties forum

Deanna Bremer Fisher

FutureHeights will host a public forum, Vacant and Abandoned Properties in Cleveland Heights and University Heights, at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, March 7, at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church, 3031 Monticello Blvd.

As Northeast Ohio climbs out of the housing crisis, many Cuyahoga County communities are still dealing with issues of property abandonment. This panel presentation and discussion aims to help attendees understand the basics about vacant and abandoned properties, help translate applicable laws and policies, and discuss existing options and solutions. The discussion will focus on answers to the following questions:

• What is a vacant and abandoned property, from a legal perspective?
• What are the legal pathways to remedying an abandoned property?
• What community actors have tools to remedy abandoned or nuisance properties? What are these tools? How do they work?
• How do community actors know when a property is vacant or abandoned?

Presenters include April Urban, a research associate at Case Western Reserve University’s Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development; Kermit Lind, clinical professor emeritus at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law at Cleveland State University (CSU); and Mark Wiseman, University Heights City Council member and principal of Wiseman Consulting.

Urban specializes in property research and consultation, focusing on code enforcement, foreclosure and REO (lender-owned) properties, and works closely with the community—continued on page 2

Lutheran churches consolidate to form new congregation

Donald King

On Feb. 4, the congregations of Hope Lutheran and Bethlehem Lutheran churches voted to consolidate their ministries to form a new congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) later this year.

Bethlehem became a congregation in 1885 and Hope in 1909, but neither congregation was located in Cleveland Heights until the early 1970s. By the early 2000s, four Evangelical Lutheran congregations existed in Cleveland Heights, each having its roots in a different predecessor body, and merged into the ELCA in 1888.

These congregations shared different ministry covenants for 20 years, looking toward the day when they might consolidate into one. Along the way, First English and Grace Lutheran churches closed in 2002 and 2005, respectively.

In the last two years, the congregations of Hope and Bethlehem worked to determine what their future should hold, including building use and purpose, combined finances, and a shared vision for ministry.

It was decided that the Bethlehem site would offer the better location, based on size, condition, accessibility (once a limited-use elevator is added) and visibility. The new congregation will be located at 3740 Mayfield Road, near Severance

continued on page 11
Top of the Hill is a tre­men­dous op­por­tu­nity of dis­cus­sion

To the Editor:
By now, most of us who live, work, or recre­ate in the City of Cleveland Heights are prob­a­bly aware of the rede­vel­op­ment prop­os­al for the Top of the Hill (ToH) site in the Cedar Fair­view Dis­trict. A de­velop­er has been se­lec­tion­ed, nego­ti­a­tions are un­der­way, and high­ly ant­i­cip­ated plan­ning and eco­no­mic de­vel­op­ment de­tails should soon be avail­able for pub­lic view.

FutureHeights sup­ports a mixed-use de­vel­op­ment pro­ject at Top of the Hill. De­vel­op­ment of un­der­utilized prop­er­ties in Clev­e­land Heights will in­crease pop­u­la­tion, add to the tax base, and de­crease the tax bur­den among cur­rent res­i­dents. A high­qual­ity mixed-use de­vel­op­ment at the ToH site will also en­hance the rep­u­ta­tion of the city, ap­proach­ingly in­crease de­pendency to sup­port ex­ist­ing bus­ines­ses, and im­prove the qual­ity of life for ex­ist­ing res­i­dents by pro­vid­ing goods and ser­vices that they need, in­clud­ing the ad­di­tion of new re­sort and for­sale hous­ing op­tions.

I had the op­por­tu­nity to at­tend an in­form­al meet­ing on Jan. 17 at Night­town, at which Fair­mount Pro­p­er­ties (it­self a non­profit or­ga­ni­za­tion pro­vided by the Cyrus Eaton Foun­da­tion, the Dol­li­cur­dis Foun­da­tion, and the Kate­rin­er The­o­dor Foun­da­tion. POW­ered by the 99th Est­ate.

About the Observer
The Heights Observer is not an or­di­nary news­paper; it is a non­profit pub­li­ca­tion for res­i­dents of Clev­e­land Heights and Uni­versity Heights.
The Observer has no writ­ing staff; it is writ­ten by its 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 con­tri­bu­tion reg­u­larly, occa­sion­ally or even just once.

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

If you’re writ­ing a news­story, it’s 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 safe to send.

To make a sub­mis­sion of any kind, go to www.heightsobserver.org and click on “Member Center” at the top. For in­for­ma­tion about writ­ing style, art­i­cles, let­ters, etc., click on “Con­tribute to Observer” at the left.

For ques­tions that aren’t an­swered there, call the FutureHeights office at 216-401-9342 or e-mail info@futureheights.org.

About the Author
Sruti Basu, chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee, is 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. He is on the board of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

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www.heightsobserver.org

Letters Policy
The Heights Observer welcomes letters to the editor. They must be sub­mit­ted elec­tronic­ally, along with the writer’s name, phone num­ber and e-mail address, to info@futureheights.org.

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Top of the Hill is a tremen­dous op­por­tu­nity of dis­cus­sion

To the Editor:
Several years ago we first ate at the Bodega restaurant on Coventry to take advantage of the Tuesday night half-price taps, a variety of small plate dishes. We discovered outstanding cuisine.

We also liked the hidden gem on Coventry

To the Editor:
I was both entertained and in­formed by the Democracy Day at CH City Hall on Jan. 25. Under­ly­ing this event are the mod­ern, free­speaking move­ments of Amer­i­ca, Citizens United (itself a non­profit orga­ni­za­tion), and for­mer­ly the media­light Ford Motor Com­pany, for exam­ple.

Democracy Day hear­ing was entertaining and informative

To the Editor:
I was both entertained and informed by the Democracy Day at CH City Hall on Jan. 25. Underlying this event are the modern, free-speaking movements of America, Citizens United (itself a nonprofit organization), and formerly the media-light Ford Motor Company, for example.

There was universal concern at the meeting, and the startling revelation that there is too much money in politics. Yes, and pool parties, right here in River City.

Anyway, most speeches were well-prepared and limited to five minutes, which was plenty of time for some of the assorted cranks, crackpots and (from a narrow capitalist viewpoint) losers (you know who you are) who shared one common theme—government taxes. These are not folks you want tooying around with your First Amendment.

I did take away some food for thought: The co-owner of a Coventry bookstore talked about how unfair it is to compete with Amazon, which has largely escaped local taxes, and the impact on our neighborhoods of losing local business.

I don’t shop online unless I would have to drive a long distance to find it. Furthermore, for every extra $20 I spend online, I am happy to know a local person. If my neighbors don’t keep raising my taxes, I would be happy to spread around a few more dollars.

I also had a thoughtful comment about rent-seeking crony businesses, and how certification is used to limit competition and drive up prices. Plenty of proof around of that.

Also, I thought a comment about how parts of the education system is run, or lack of good care of itself had some merit.

Robert Shwab
Cleveland Heights

Bodega restaurant on Coventry

To the Editor:
Bodega is a hidden gem on Coventry

To the Editor:
Several years ago we first ate at the Bodega restaurant on Coventry to take advantage of the Tuesday night half-price taps, a variety of small plate dishes. We discovered outstanding cuisine.

Evidence that Bodega falls into the category of “best kept secrets” for fine dining in Cleveland Heights to share our experience in hopes that it will no longer remain a secret.

David and Judie Perelman
Cleveland Heights

/heightsobserver.org/CATM31+contoured+page+1

around $300 for some vases.
The store also offers tea towels, metal letters, cards, tea and candle made by Palatova’s friends.

Palatova was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, and lived there until she was 11. Her family moved to Kansas City, and then Lyndhurst, when Palatova’s father got a job in Cleveland. Palatova graduated from Brush High School, and then earned a degree in graphic design at the University of Cincinnati.

After working as a graphic designer in New York City, Palatova earned a master of fine arts degree, with a concentration in ceramics, from the Rhode Island School of Design. She started Glenna Ceramics in 2002, and moved back to Cleveland in November to open her studio.

“I always wanted a store,” she said. “And it seemed like the right time, and I really like this neighborhood.”

Palatova, who lives near Fairmount Boulevard in Cleveland Heights, said she loves the beautiful architecture in the Heights. “I love the historical quality of the houses here,” she said. “There are also so many great restaurants and coffee shops and galleries here. But it’s mostly the architectural quality of the neighborhoods and the history behind it all that I really love.”

Nature has always been an inspiration for her work, and she said she also likes the wooded areas in the Heights. “I like walking in the woods, or going to a beach,” she said.

She added that she is very happy to finally have a store, and that business is doing very, very well.

For more information, visit www.glenna.com.

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, used to own a local business, but in 2004 he and his wife opened a e-newsletter each Tuesday. We also publish an e-newsletter each online as they come in—and still consider them for the next print issue. We also publish an e-newsletter each Tuesday. 
It’s hard to recommend teaching as a profession

Ari Klein

My holiday tradition for several years was to go backpacking over-night between Christmas and New Year’s with Boy Scout alums from my days as scoutmaster. For the last several years, we seem to get a better turnout if I host a party at my house instead. This year, one of the young men, who is in his mid-20s, and I discussed whether he should go into teaching. This would have been an easy discussion years ago, but now it is not so simple.

I told him that when I first start- teaching in Cleveland Heights in the late 1980s, there was an unwritten social contract that does not exist anymore. I knew that I would have to wait a long while before I was paid as much as classmates going into other fields with similar educa-tion. The trade-offs were good health care, security after earning tenure, predictability in pay, a decent retire-ment after 30 years, and a chance to work with young people. Additionally, I could not count on 9 or 10 weeks off in the summer to go to school, paint houses, or take trips (but would not have the ability to vacation outside of school-designated holidays). Being a teacher at that time was a good and respected profession.

I have known this particular young man since he was a toddler. His older brothers were all Scouts in troop, and I taught him and one of his brothers at Heights High. He is bright and energetic, spent one of his brothers at Heights High. He is bright and energetic, spent time working with inner-city youths, knows how to relate and join young- sters, and would be a great teacher. I had to tell him that most of the ben-efts of teaching don’t exist anymore.

Teaching salaries here and around the country have stagnated and are hard to justify working with [those] students achievement, making it difficult to satisfy requirements that have little to do with students and learning. It is hard work that keeps getting tougher.

So, it is hard to recommend that young people consider going into teaching today. We are just starting to see teacher shortages around the state. I imagine many teachers are having conversations like mine with former students.

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

LUTHERANS (continued from page 1)
Cuyahoga County consistently overvalues Heights properties

J. Alex Morton and Ruth Morton Fazio

Has the county valued your home accurately for property tax purposes? In other words, does the value compare with other properties that have sold on your street? Do you think that your home would sell for the amount at which the county has valued it? If the county’s appraised value seems out of line to you, you are not alone. There seems to be a pattern of overvaluing homes for property tax purposes in Cuyahoga County, and this miscalculation by the county could be costing [homeowners] thousands of dollars.

As an example, there were two properties on Desota Avenue that the county valued at $137,000 and $126,000, respectively—values that were grossly out of line with other properties that sold on that street. The property owners appealed to the Board of Tax Appeals, which also upheld the decision was appealed to the State board of revision, which upheld the property owner/taxpayer will end up paying an amount in taxation that is grossly out of line with the value of his or her home, a grave injustice, in our opinion.

This injustice seems to be peculiar to Cuyahoga County and is widely recognized, but nothing much is being done about it. Upon investigation into the cause of the rampant overvaluation, it was discovered that the county is unique in the state, in that it developed its own in-house method to appraise property. All other counties in the state contract with outside appraisers. No one else accepts the original overvaluation. The property owner is at a disadvantage if no one knows how the property was valued at which the county has valued it? If you know how the property was revalued at $30,000.

Most property owners would find appealing to so many boards and courts a daunting task, would thus be discouraged from doing so, and would therefore accept the original overvaluation. The property owner/taxpayer will end up paying an amount in taxation that is grossly out of line with the value of his or her home, a grave injustice, in our opinion.

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We are challenging this injustice.

J. Alex Morton and Ruth Morton Fazio are attorneys.

Short messages work

One placard used children’s literature to communicate: “Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you see? I see senators failing me.” Another beauty: “Don’t Devostate our schools.” Sustaining the energy to resist is going to be hard, but when I need an infusion of energy I’m going to review some of these handwritten messages from the Women’s March.

• Justice is what love looks like in public.
• Respect existence or expect resistance.
• Quality men are not afraid of equality.
• Our rights are not up for grabs. Neither are we.
• Regulations are protections.
• I am no longer accepting things I can’t change. I am changing things I can’t accept.
• Be vigilant but not afraid.
• Freedom is equality.
• Black lives matter.
• You can’t repeal physics.
• Science is not fake news.
• Hate does not make America great.
• A just America is a great America.
• My body, my business.
• Make America think again.
• President Tweety Bird doesn’t sing for me.
• Tweet others as you would like to be tweeted.
• Donald Trump has made the tweet a new-technology bumper sticker. He uses this short message media to stir up despair, spread falsehoods and control the narrative. He goes to his constituents and dodges scrutiny. It is a propaganda tool.

I’m not ready to tweet but I keep formulating my bumper sticker. Last night I came up with this one: Don’t Devostate our schools.

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.
Corporate personhood and Ohio

Carla Rautenberg and Deborah Van Kleeff

Corporate personhood is the legal fiction that corporate entities are “persons,” entitled to the constitutional rights originally intended solely for human beings. On Jan. 24, Cleveland Heights held its fourth annual Democracy Day public hearing, created by the 2013 ballot initiative that called for a U.S. constitutional amendment stating, “Corporations are not people and money is not speech.”

With efforts underway to put a similar Move to Amend issue on the University Heights ballot, we decided to take a look at some Ohio history to see how corporations have influenced the governance of cities like ours. It turns out tension between corporate interests and the public good has been a feature of civic life in Ohio for a long time.

Ohio’s first Constitution, dated 1802, was sent to Congress that year and signed by President Jefferson, making ours the 17th state to join the Union. It vested all power except that conferred upon the people through legislation, and the people should be as free to withhold as to give, public interest and not private advantage being the end in view.”

Bryan was responding in part to precedents being set by the U.S. Supreme Court granting constitutional “rights” to corporate “persons.” Sadly, for the past 100 years, Ohio citizens’ groups, unions, and organizations representing farmers, consumers, environmentalists, public schools and human rights advocates have all been excluded from participation in corporate code revisions, which have been the purview of the Ohio Bar Association’s Committee on Corporations. As we reported last month, since 1973 the corporate-led American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) has chimed in as well, aggressively providing model legislation leading to many Ohio laws that serve corporate interests, regardless of the public good.

Carla Rautenberg is an activist and a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident. Deborah Van Kleeff is a musician and writer, who grew up in Cleveland Heights and has lived here as an adult for over 30 years. Contact them at heightsdemocracy@gmail.com.
I earned my first degree at Tri-C.

After graduating from Garfield Heights High School, Madison Wynder enrolled at Tri-C for an affordable start to her college education. Madison earned an associate degree in December 2016 and transferred to Cleveland State University, where she is studying marketing.

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Name new park for first UH mayor

By now, many know that University Heights has a new neighborhood community park, located near City Hall, bordering Fernwick Road on the west. But how many know the history of our city or the names of its founders?

What better way to honor our city’s first mayor, John J. Howard, and celebrate our history than to name this new park the John J. Howard Park. This name has significant historical value and merit to our community.

Mayor Howard served for 22 years, from 1916 to 1941. Did you know University Heights was originally the Village of Idlewood, in 1907? In 1909, the name changed to Idlewood Township. In 1912, Howard signed the resolution to change, officially, the name of Idlewood to University Heights.

If we go back in time to before 1907, even the Village of Idlewood did not exist. Legend has it that the Silsbys brothers were not too happy living in the Village of Cleveland Heights, and decided to break away and form their own village. When the main roads were laid, the Silsbys were honored by having a major street connecting the two cities named after them.

University Heights commemorated Boyd Purvis, a special educator, by naming Purvis Park after him. We commemorate another beloved former mayor, Beryl E. Rothschild, who served our city from 1978 to 2009, by naming the municipal pool after her.

We honored a long-serving member of council, Adele Zucker, by naming Purvis Park after her. We commemorate the city’s first mayor, John Carroll University to relocate administration that the city attracted new park the John J. Howard Park—the simple name enriches our pride as residents and contributes to building a greater sense of community. Honoring our first mayor with the naming of this park would capture and celebrate that history. The John J. Howard Park is the name University Heights City Council is respectfully requested to consider and implement in time for our city’s 2017 Memorial Day Parade.

This little six-plus acre park is home to a gazebo expected to become the new home for the city’s summer music programs. The park has picnic tables, benches, restrooms, children’s playgrounds and plenty of parking for those not living in the neighborhood.

One resident addressed UH City Council last year. He said he enjoys the park with his dog companion, as do many others. He requested that council consider installing a supply of plastic bags for dog walkers to use to clean up after their pets. He also suggested the park around the park have mileage marks, for those who like keeping track of their mileage—fitness, fitness, fitness! A longtime resident recalls the 1970s, when what is now the main parking lot was a simple paved surface. The city created a makeshift pond and filled it with water for ice skating. It wasn’t the best skating around, but it was fun. I drove past the park many times this winter; rare was the time when I saw anyone using it other than a dog walker or two. Who knows, a makeshift rink (not expensive and easy to assemble/dismantle) in the park may be just the ticket to get kids outdoors, engaging in active recreation.

Howard Park—the simple name by which the park would likely be known—can be where new experiences of picnics, sports, playgrounds, walking, snowshoeing, ice-skating, bird watching, painting, photography and experiencing the outdoors—alone or with others—will become the history of tomorrow.

Anita Kazarian, a 31-year resident of University Heights, has been active in many of the city’s volunteer organizations. She wants to hear your thoughts; write to her at anitakazarian@gmail.com.
University Heights City Council Meeting highlights

JANUARY 17, 2017
Mayor Susan Infeld and council members Susan Paradee (vice mayor), Pamela Cameron, Phillip Ertel, John Rach, Steven Sims and Mark Wisman were present. Councilman Michele Weiss was absent. Also present was Kelly Thomas, clerk of council.

Judge reports on bail reform
Shaker Heights Judge K. J. Montgomery gave a presentation on bail reform in Cleveland’s east side suburbs. The judge reported that the suburbs are struggling with determining appropriate penalties for those who can’t pay fines for petty crimes. She expressed frustration that the suburbs, unlike the City of Cleveland, do not have the resources for services like mental health counseling. GPS tracking and house arrest. Montgomery said that, while she agrees that people should not languish in jail over minor offenses, suburbs are ill-equipped to shoulder the financial burden of those who can’t pay their fines.

Update on 3505 Tullamore Road
Mayor Infeld reported that the Cuyahoga Land Bank is determining if 3505 Tullamore Road will be demolished or re-habilitated. Councilman Sims asked if a date had been set to assess the property’s fate. The mayor shared Law Director Luke McConnell’s report that the property is at the top of the land bank’s list but that no date had been set. Councilman Wiseman expressed concern that the land bank process is not moving forward quickly enough.

Building Commissioner Larry Brown reported that he has received four quotes for demolition of the property, per the council’s motion to demolish the property within 60 days if the land bank is unable to resolve the property’s fate within that time frame. The quotes are for $22,338, $17,800, $14,680 and $12,530. The mayor reiterated hope that the city would not have to demolish the property, as the land bank has acquired the title and has pledged to move quickly.

Advertising for bids amendment
Council heard a first reading of an amendment to an ordinance for advertising for bids. Councilman Sims asked that council ensure that advertising for bids is placed in publications that attract women and minorities. The ordinance will be presented on second reading at the Feb. 6 meeting.

Finance director search
Mayor Infeld announced that she is currently interviewing a replacement for Finance Director Larry Heiser, who is currently interviewing a replacement to fill the position. Heiser pledged to move quickly.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

FEBRUARY 6, 2017
Mayor Susan Infeld and council members Susan Paradee (vice mayor), Pamela Cameron, Phillip Ertel, John Rach, Steven Sims, Mark Wiseman and Michele Weiss were present. Also present were Luke McConnell, law director, and Kelly Thomas, clerk of council.

Public comments
Secretary city: Several UH residents, including a Dysart Road resident whose family emigrated from Chile in the 1970s, asked council to declare University Heights (UH) a sanctuary city. This would allow sponsors to help immigrants find jobs and housing. She noted that her father was sponsored by a Cleveland family and has operated a dental lab in UH for 28 years. Other community members said the police department should not be tasked with enforcing federal immigration laws. Later in the meeting, council declared it would discuss the issue as a committee of the whole.

LCU student council: A John Carroll University (JCU) student council member said that the student council is invested in building a relationship with the UH community and looks forward to attending upcoming city council meetings.

Mayor’s report
Premier Smiles will open above the CVS on Cedar Road, and a new laundromat will open on South Taylor Road. The city is also examining proposals for businesses on Cedar Green.

Mikvah on South Green Road
Council approved the planning commission’s recommendation to approve the Cleveland Community Mikvah’s application to build a mikvah at 2588 South Green Road.

3505 Tullamore Road demolition
The Cuyahoga Land Bank has determined that the property will be demolished. The land bank expects to demolish the home by Feb. 10, and will restore the land with grass seed.

Home address signs
Council tabled an ordinance to update and correlate the height of home address signs. The ordinance will be revisited after UH updates its building codes in an upcoming building committee meeting.

Advertising for bids amendment
Council amended an ordinance for advertising for bidding on, for second reading. Councilwoman Weiss praised the ordinance, saying it was equitable and inclusive.

MOUs for EPA services
Council authorized the mayor to enter two memorandums of understanding (MOU). The first is for a small municipal storm-water discharge permit with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. The second is for a small municipal storm-water discharge permit with the Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District. Both services are required by the EPA and come at no cost.

LWV Observer: Siobhan Leftwich.

These reports contain member observations online at www.heightsobserver.org. The meeting summaries are abstracted from LWV observers’ written reports. These summaries have been edited and prepared by Anne McFarland, Charlene Morse and Maryann Barnes. To receive e-mail postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org.

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The police department should not be tasked with enforcing federal immigration laws.

Mayor Infeld announced that she is currently interviewing a replacement for Finance Director Larry Heiser, who is currently interviewing a replacement to fill the position. Heiser pledged to move quickly.

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Located near John Carroll
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Lanphear-Callender Sears House

3402 Ormond Road

Margaret Lann

Constructed in 1924, the home at 3402 Ormond Road is a fine example of a Sears Catalog Home known as the Ardara model. The Ardara was one of approximately 400 different styles of homes that Sears offered between 1908 and 1940. The Ardara was a five-room bungalow, though the Ormond version is larger. The model appeared by 1915, and was a very early design to feature a front-facing attached garage. The new homeowners often constructed their own road car. The new homeowners typically arrived by rail, and the special hardware that accompanied each model.

The Sears home at 3402 Ormond Road but never lived in it. Instead, Beth Lanphear’s mother, Helen Callender, and Beth’s sister, Withermina Callander, lived there, though just for six years. After 1930, the house became a rental, and then changed hands several times before the current owners purchased it in 2007. The current homeowners have lovingly maintained this landmarked home, keeping its history in mind when doing repairs and updates.

The author, Margaret Lann, is a member of the Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, which preserves and protects buildings, works of art and other objects of historical or architectural value to the community. The seven members are appointed to three-year terms by Cleveland Heights City Council.

Cleveland Heights City Council

Meeting highlights

JANUARY 17, 2017

Council members Cheryl L. Stephens (mayor), Jason Stein (vice mayor), Mary Dunbar, Carol Roe, Kahlil Senn and Melissa Yasinow were present. Michael N. Ungar was absent.

Public comments

Energy conservation: Mark Havens, representing Gardner Energy Group of Solon, expressed his company’s concerns about the possible expansion of Evans Energy of Dayton to provide contracting services for an energy conservation project currently under consideration by the city. He requested that the city delay any action on the project.

Candidates for Cleveland Heights Municipal Court: James Costello and Darrell Grose both announced intentions to run in November for the seat currently held by Judge A. Deana Buchanan, who is retiring this year.

Citizen appointment

Douglas Dykes was appointed to the Civil Service Commission, replacing James Costello, whose term expires in 2019.

Recognition for Tom Raguz

Tom Raguz, who has served since 2012 as the city’s finance director/clerk of council, was accepted into position with RTA. Mayor Stephens and other members of council thanked him for his service to the city.

County sewer maintenance services

Council authorized an agreement with Cuyahoga County for services to maintain the city’s sanitary and storm sewers and catch basins at a price less than that charged by a private company. The agreement will expire Dec. 31, and the total amount to be paid by the city shall not exceed $160,000.

Energy conservation project

By a five-to-one vote, council authorized contract negotiations with Evans Energy of Dayton for an energy conservation project aimed at achieving savings in the city’s energy costs. Council Member Senn opposed the measure, expressing concern that the process has been moving too quickly and that residents need time to provide input. Council members Yasinow and Dunbar noted that the project has been thoroughly studied and analyzed by city staff for many months. Yasinow cited a figure of $2.7 million in savings that the city will achieve from the energy efficiencies arising from modernization of facilities and infrastructure. Recognizing that residents should be well informed about a project representing about 10 percent of the city’s general fund budget, Mayor Stephens requested that information about the goals of the project and the process of selecting a contractor be posted on the city’s website as soon as possible. (See http://leyou.com/lechide.)

HB Observer: Kathanna Solender

FEBRUARY 6, 2017

All council members were present: Cheryl L. Stephens (mayor), Jason Stein (vice mayor), Mary Dunbar, Carol Roe, Kahlil Senn, Michael N. Ungar and Melissa Yasinow.

Sanctuary city or welcoming city

Prior to council convening, there was a demonstration with signs and chants in the atrium of City Hall. The last 32 minutes of the meeting were taken up with personal communications from 18 citizens, most spoke for or against the establishment of sanctuary or welcoming city status for Cleveland Heights in response to the recent presidential executive order.

One speaker talked about the bill currently being presented in the Ohio legislature to block sanctuary cities by charging city officials with any act that may be deemed condoned by undocumented immigrants, and urged citizens to contact their Ohio representatives and senators to oppose the bill.

Welcoming city resolution

Vice Mayor Stein introduced a resolution “strongly objecting to the recent Presidential Executive Order temporarily banning entry... and in joining all Americans who believe [the order] is unlawful and un-American, declaring the City of Cleveland Heights to be a “welcoming city” and calling upon the people... to join together to build a strong united community.” The full text may be found at www.clevelandheights.com, type “Resolution 15-2017” into the search line.

The resolution passed with Council Member Dunbar voting no.

Interim finance director/clerk of council appointed

Mike Miles was appointed interim director of finance and clerk of council by a unanimous vote.

Support of public education

Council passed a resolution declaring support [for] and understanding of the importance of public education and strong community school boards to one passed in other cities and was originally brought to Council Member Siniberi by members of Heights Community Congress.

Boss Dog Brewing Company

The Boss Dog Brewing Company LLC was granted a commercial revolving loan of $200,000 for five years at 2 percent interest. The agreement will expire Dec. 31, and the total amount to be paid by the city shall not exceed $160,000.

Zoning code amendments

Council heard, on first-reading, amendments to sections of part 11 of the zoning code. There will be a public hearing about these adjustments on March 13 at 6:30 p.m. A second hearing and vote will take place after that time.

HB Observer: Blanche Valtiery
City of Cleveland Heights proposes zoning code update

Robert Brown

Gas stations, car washes, auto sales and auto repair businesses could no longer be built along some segments of Taylor, Cedar, Mayfield, Lee and Noble roads, and Euclid Heights Boulevard under one of a series of proposed zoning code amendments being considered in Cleveland Heights.

Specifically, these auto-oriented businesses would no longer be permitted uses in the city’s C-2 Local Retail Business Districts and S-2 Mixed Use Districts. The businesses would still be permitted uses, with conditions, in the city’s other main commercial district, the C-3 General Commercial District.

This approach is consistent with the zoning regulations in many other local communities, where gas stations and similar uses are permitted only on heavily traveled roads, separated as much as possible from single-family houses.

The Cleveland Heights Planning Commission will review the proposed amendments at its regular public meeting on Wednesday, March 8 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers at CH City Hall. The commission will make a recommendations to CH City Council, which will hold a public hearing on the proposed amendments on Monday, March 13 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers.

“You will find a common theme in the amendments,” said Planning Director Richard Wong. “It is to actively encourage beneficial development and to simplify frequently requested approvals.”

Although many of the proposed amendments are relatively minor and technical, several of them may be of general interest to residents. These include:

- Fences: The maximum permitted height for fences in front yards and corner side yards would be increased to 4 feet from the current 3-foot maximum height, for one- and two-family houses and apartment buildings. Approval by the Architectural Review Board would still be required.
- Chicken coops: These would be permitted through administrative approval, no longer requiring action by the Planning Commission.

A proposed zoning code change would prevent development of additional gas stations and car washes on lesser traveled streets in proximity to houses, such as this gas station on Taylor Road.

Further Heights has advocated for the adoption of a demolition ordinance that would require a public process before a historic building could be demolished. Such an ordinance is not part of the proposed changes.

Robert Brown is a city planner with 40 years experience, including nine as Cleveland's City Planning Director. A resident of Cleveland Heights for more than 40 years, he recently joined the board of FutureHeights.

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Lind worked as a community organizer and director of nonprofit fair housing advocacy and civic organizations before starting the practice of law in 1987. His clinical law practice at CSU serves mostly inner-city housing and neighborhood-development clients.

Wiseman has held several public service positions, including director of the Cuyahoga County Foreclosure Prevention Program, assistant attorney general in the Consumer Protection Section and member of the Federal Reserve Board’s Consumer Advisory Council. Clients of his firm have included Cleveland’s Neighborhood Progress Inc. and Neighborhood Housing Services.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights and publisher of the Heights Observer.
Cleveland Heights doctor helps people regain movement

James Henke

Cleveland Heights resident Ronald Triolo has spent much of his life trying to help people regain their ability to move around and walk. Triolo, 58, is executive director of the Advanced Platform Technology (APT) Center at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He is also a professor of orthopedics and biomedical engineering at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU).

The APT Center is a national center for the development of all kinds of devices, primarily for disabled military veterans. Its employees focus on prosthetics and orthotics, neural interfacing (which involves technology for recording from the brain or nerves and injecting into the nervous system), wireless health monitoring and maintenance, and emerging enabling technologies.

Triolo and his co-workers have developed numerous medical devices to help people who have sensorimotor impairment or limb loss.

Last fall, Triolo took part in the Torrance Impairment or Limb Loss. To help people who have sensorimotor impairment or limb loss, Triolo and his co-workers have developed numerous medical devices.

Triolo has spent much of his life trying to help people regain their ability to move around and walk. Triolo, 58, is executive director of the Advanced Platform Technology (APT) Center at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). He is also a professor of orthopedics and biomedical engineering at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU).

Triolo and his co-workers have developed numerous medical devices to help people who have sensorimotor impairment or limb loss.

Last fall, Triolo took part in the Torrance Impairment or Limb Loss demonstration event in Cleveland Heights. It was the second year the event was held.

Triolo's work at the center played a major role at the Cybathlon. "I'd say it was the key to our success," said Triolo. "It set us apart from the other 10 teams since we were the only one to use implantable neural stimulation technology." The next Cybathlon will take place in 2020. Team Cleveland is looking into hosting a preparatory demonstration event in Cleveland sometime in 2019.

The APT Center is a partnership between the VA and CWRU. "It's a really powerful combination," Triolo said. "It creates opportunities for clinicians and scientists to get together so they can address real-world problems. And it's one of only 13 centers for rehabilitation, research and development in this country."

"I try to solve anything that affects the ability to stand and walk," he said. "I focus on four main areas: people who are paralyzed by an injury, stroke or muscular dystrophy; controlling balance so people can stand longer and not worry about falling; seated functions for people in wheelchair chairs, and amputees."

Triolo grew up near Philadelphia. He earned a bachelor's degree from Villanova University in 1980, then earned two masters of science degrees, in biomedical and electrical engineering, at Drexel University. After earning his doctorate degree in biomedical engineering from Drexel, he got some post-doctorate training at CWRU. From 1986 to 1994, he was director of research at the Shriners Hospital in Philadelphia. He has lived in Greater Cleveland since 1994, when he took a faculty position at CWRU, and has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1996, with his wife and two children.

Triolo said he loves the energy and diversity of Cleveland Heights. “Orchestra members, physicians and people from all walks of life live on the same block,” he said.

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a writer and editor at Rolling Stone magazine for 15 years and is the author of several books. He is on the board of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

Volunteer Match

Heights Observer's Volunteer Match column lists opportunities for residents to lend their time and talent to worthy organizations and causes around the Heights.

Submit your organization's volunteer needs by e-mailing Sruti Basu at sbasu@futureheights.org or calling the FutureHeights office at 216-330-1423.

Items submitted on or before the Heights Observer print issue's monthly story deadline will be considered for the next column. (To see past columns, visit www.heightsobserver.org, and search "volunteer match").

Cumberland Children's Garden: Volunteers are needed on Friday mornings this summer to help children with planting, tending and preparing food from their garden, as well as crafts and educational activities. If interested, contact Joanne Westin, joanne.westin@case.edu.

Heights Observer: FutureHeights publishes the Heights Observer and delivers it throughout Cleveland Heights and University Heights on or around the first of every month. Volunteers are needed to assist with deliveries to local businesses and institutions. More Information, contact FutureHeights at 216-330-1423 or info@futureheights.org.

The Mayor's Forum on Workforce Readiness A Four-Part Series Part One: Advanced Manufacturing Industry and Building Trades Monday, March 20, 2017 • 4 pm - 7 pm Tri-C Mandel Humanities Center 4250 Richmond Road Jump-start Your Career! These top industry leaders will share their expertise on employment and the many opportunities in the field of manufacturing:

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March 5 forum to focus on refugees
Robin Kozlar

Are you wondering what you can do to help those impacted by the agenda the 47th president is imposing? Would you like to know more about refugees—they are from, how they arrived here and, most importantly, how you can help?

On March 5, at 10:30 a.m., Beth El - The Heights Synagogue (3466 Desota Road) will host a program about the refugees in our community and the organization, US House Together, that is in charge of their orientation to the United States.

Danielle Drake from US House Together will present information and answer questions. Beth El invites all who are interested in learning more about refugees— their vetting, their life in refugee camps, and how to welcome them to our community—to attend.

Robin Kozlar is a mom, grandma, retired teacher and Heights resident who “wants the world to be better than it is.”

HCC’s PechaKucha Night is “Inspired by Art”

Heights Community Congress (HCC) joined the PechaKucha phenomenon last October, when dozens attended its Telling Your Story event. A group of speakers—professionals in a variety of fields—shared diverse stories in presentations that lasted just six minutes and 40 seconds apiece. Between presentations, audience members asked lots of questions, engaged in conversations and made connections.

Building on the success of that event, HCC will host its second PechaKucha Night, Inspired by Art, on Friday, March 10, at 7 p.m., at the Lee Road Library, 2347 Lee Road. Three local speakers will make use of this informative and entertaining approach to explore the ways art brings us together.

PechaKucha is a style of presentation in which a speaker uses 20 slides, each one on screen for 20 seconds, to illustrate a talk. The format was created in 2003 by two Tokyo architects who had grown weary of sitting through long and boring presentations. It caught on, and there are now hundreds of PechaKucha Nights held around the world every year. Regardless of whether they’ve attended a PechaKucha event in the past, those attending the March 10 event will pick up interesting information from the speakers—and maybe even learn the correct pronunciation of “PechaKucha”!

HCC is hosting these PechaKucha Nights to build community. The format provides a vehicle for community members to get to know one another, discover common interests and learn something new, share perspectives and gain a deeper appreciation of our community’s diversity.

The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be provided. Prospective attendees are asked to register by calling 216-321-6775, sending a message to info@heightsobserver.org or visiting www.heightsobserver.org or www.heightscommunitycongress.org.

Pam Wetherill

Pam Wetherill is a volunteer for Heights Community Congress and serves on its fair housing committee. She is a resident of University Heights.

COmmUNITY NEWS

New book recalls a ’magical’ Heights childhood

James Henke

In The South Overlook Gang, Rick Karges, who grew up in Cleveland Heights, tells the story of his childhood here, in the 1950s and ’60s. The South Overlook Gang is Karg- es’ first book. He decided to write it after thinking about how wonderful that era was, and how different it is from today’s world. The book’s title comes from the name of a group of kids that Karges hung out with until he went to college.

He’ll be signing copies of his book, next Sunday, March 12, 2-4 p.m., in an event presented by AppleTree Books.

Karges, 67, was born in Cleve- land and moved to South Overlook Road when he was 5. “For many years I have thought about how great it was to grow up in that neighborhood,” he said. “The families were all very close, and it was a very special time.”

“As I began to put together old stories, I reached out to old neighbors,” Karges said. “They shared the same affection for that time and it was a very different time. Today, kids are inside using their electronic equipment. You don’t see kids outside playing with each other anymore. And back then, our parents would be outside talking to the neighbors.”

Karges characterized his childhood as “a very special kind of magical time.” He said that, back then, everyone developed “friend- ships and relationships that were strong bonds.” Many of the mothers did not work back in that time. Instead, they would raise the children. “They would network and socialize with their neighbors,” Karges said. “Now people don’t know who their neighbors are.”

Karges has not lived in Cleve- land Heights since he left for college in 1968. Yet he stills loves how great the neighborhood was back then. But, he said, it has changed a lot since those days. “I recently went to a garage sale on South Overlook,” he said. “And nobody was there. It was like a ghost town. But it’s just a different time.”

Karges earned both a bachel- or’s and master’s degree in social work from The Ohio State Uni- versity, and is currently executive director and CEO of Hopewell. A Therapeutic Farm Community, located in Mesopotamia, Ohio. It is one of only five such mental-health centers in the United States.

“We treat people who are serio- usly mentally ill,” Karges said. “We look at their mind, body and spirit as a way of addressing their illness. And many of the residents work on the farm.” Karges has been at Hopewell for nine and a half years. Prior to that, he ran a mental-health organization in Maryland for about nine months.

Karges currently lives in Mid- field, Ohio, in Geauga County. He has been married to his current wife, Gia, for 16 years. He has a second marriage, and he is the father of three children, Matthew, 42; Julie, 40; and Ricky, 25, and grandfather of four.

His book is available at Apple- tree books and other local bookstores, as well as online.

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, and has served on the board of UnitedHeights.org, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

“PeachaKucha is a style of presentation in which a speaker uses 20 slides, each one on screen for 20 seconds, to illustrate a talk.”
Heights Observer March 1, 2017

The shop may have a small storefront, but it has continued to be a Heights favorite since it opened in 1973.

The Wine Spot, Tommy’s Marketplace, The BottleHouse Brewery, The Wine Spot, Tommy’s

Best Place to Take an Out-of-Towner
Winner: Tommy’s
Finalists: Gigi’s on Fairmount, Nighttown

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The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center, located in the CH Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers a wide variety of programming for Cleveland Heights residents 60 and older, and is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. A complete schedule of programs is published in the community center’s newsletter, which is available at Cleveland Heights City Hall, local libraries, the community center and online at www.clevelandheights.com.

New this spring is CARE (Communities Assisting Residential Elderly), a collaborative effort of representatives from Cleveland Heights, Highland Heights, Lindenhurst, Maple Heights, Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Solon and South Euclid. CARE was awarded a second round of funding through the Senior Center Innovation Grant awarded by the Cuyahoga County Division of Senior and Adult Services through the Health & Human Services Levy, which provided the initial planning funds.

Older residents of the participating communities will be able to apply for membership in this program, which emphasizes safety and independence for older adults within their home.

The program is designed to improve the safety of older adults by providing access to interior and exterior home maintenance, minor home repairs, and home safety guidance. In April, Radio Hour will mix drama, storytelling, creative writing and sound effects, with the goal of recreating a one-hour radio show, featuring local vocalists from the Cleveland Institute of Music. All of this is made possible through a collaboration and empowerment in our community—has conducted the Best of the Heights awards to recognize the unique attributes of locally owned Heights businesses, and their contributions to the local economy. A complete list of 2017 Best of the Heights winners and finalists, as well as a list of businesses that voters said they would like to see in the Heights, is online at www.futureheights.org.

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

Senior Citizen Happenings

Senior Citizen Happenings, sponsored by the City of University Heights, are open to all senior citizens. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. in Council Chambers at University Heights City Hall. To receive the monthly schedule by e-mail, call 216-932-7800, ext. 205, or send an e-mail to info@universityheights.com.

March 21: Ronna Kaplan is chair of the Center for Music Therapy at The Music Settlement, the first community-based music therapy program in the country. She’ll present a program at the center’s November 2016 50th anniversary: Celebrating 50 years of impacting lives through music.

March 9: Eddie Chezyfritz, who retired after 28 years in sales for Nestle Corp., founded Believe in Dreams, a nonprofit agency to help underprivileged children who have suffered nonmedical hardships. He’ll discuss the work of the agency, which operates on the premise that the world is an incredible place and every child should have access to unique experiences, that the community cares about them, and that there is hope for their future.

March 16: Longtime University Heights resident Jerome (Jerry) Jacobson, honored by Mayor Susan Infeld as the 2016 UH Citizen of the Year, will discuss his colorful history; including his 40 years’ service with the city’s police auxiliary; his role as medical supply specialist in Okinawa during the Vietnam War; his professional accomplishments in the entertainment industry; traveling with various circuses; and his role as an Army Radio Hour volunteer. At Jan Bruml and Drinda Kiner, lifelong participants in the dramatic arts, on Wednesdays, 1:30-3 p.m., beginning April 12.

Amy Jenkins is supervisor at the CH Office on Aging and Senior Activity Center. She can be reached at 216-691-7375 or by e-mail at ajenkins@chohb.org.
Swim Cadets to perform annual show March 9–11

Mary Pat Jolivette, Kara Hamley O’Donnell

The Cleveland Heights High School Swim Cadets, a 20-member synchronized swim team and the school’s oldest extracurricular club, established in 1939, will hold its annual performances on March 9, 10 and 11, at 7 p.m.

The year’s theme, Swim Cadets Break Your Heart, is set to break-up songs, and is the culmination of five months of practice.

The shows will be held at the Warrensville Heights High School pool, 4270 Northfield Road in Warrensville Heights. Tickets are $8 and are available from team members and at the door.

The 2017 Swim Cadets are: seniors Lilli Cruz, Aubrey Fort (president), Maeve Hackman (sergeant-at-arms), Sophie Levan (vice president); juniors Ally Boyd, Jenna Dent, Lily Kerr-Jang, Isabella Marotta, Clare Pepperl, Emma Routh, Hannah Thellian (treasurer); sophomores

Emma Hennings, Georgie Jolivette, Judita Lowe, Julia O’Donnell, Brynn Pierce, Olivia Sormaz; freshmen Sydney Ball, Emma Hubbard, Charlotte Pizel. The team’s coach is Esther Bergson, a Heights High graduate and former Swim Cadet.

“My freshman year I joined Swim Cadets in hopes of finding and meeting new people,” said Fort. “When I joined the team, I joined part of a family. They made me feel welcome and involved, and while I was able to have fun and experience the joys and traditions of the historical team, I was able to become close to a great group of girls each year. We lift each other up. We fight, we laugh and we cry together, and at the end of the day, we are able put on a stellar show with people that we’ve come to love.”

It is not uncommon for the girls to be second- or even third-generation Swim Cadets. “My mom and cousin were previous Swim Cadets and I wanted to carry on the tradition,” said Hackman. “Ever since I joined, the team has been a large part of my life. There are so many things that make this club stand out.”

Thellian concurred: “The traditions that I experienced for the first time my freshman year are something I’ll never forget. Now, as a junior, my favorite part is getting to know the new members of our team at the beginning of the season! I love to be a part of the traditions and surprises that help make the new girls’ experiences magical.”

“Swim Cadets is so much more than just a club. Sharing the exciting traditions that go back years builds the experience and keeps its legacy alive. It’s not only a great physical activity, but it also creates lifelong friendships with amazing girls,” said Cruz.

Levan said, “Swim Cadets has taught me to handle a great amount of responsibility while still having so much fun every day with a great group of girls. It’s great to see the progress we make as a team throughout the season and how dedicated girls become to making our performance the best it can be.”

Mary Pat Jolivette and Kara Hamley O’Donnell are parents to Cleveland Heights High School Swim Cadets.
RoxEl builds community by reading together

Krisy Dietrich Gallagher

For three weeks in January and February, every member of the Roxboro Elementary School community—faculty, staff and students—read the same book.

The initiative started last spring, when first-grade teacher Liz McKinley, who sits on the Nordonia Hills Board of Education, listened to a presentation about One School, One Book (OSOB), a program spearheaded by the national Read to Them organization. She was so impressed, she brought the idea to Michael Jenkins, Roxboro’s principal.

At the same time, Clare Taft, Roxboro’s PTA president, who was searching for ways to build community at the school, read an article about One School, One Book. She brought the idea to Jenkins the next day. Jenkins formed a committee of parents and teachers to lead the effort.

“Over the summer, the group, consisting of McKinley, Jenkins, Candace Summers (Title I literacy teacher), and parents Taft, Mary Pat Jolivette and Katie Plessar, chose the fantasy Kenny and the Dragon by Tony DiTerlizzi, about a rabbit trying to protect his friend Grahame, a dragon widely believed to be a danger to their village. “We chose that book because it was so accessible,” said Summers. “Most of our second- through fifth-graders can read it independently, and the story of friendship is universal enough for all ages to appreciate.”

Using Title I funds, the school purchased enough books for every student, teacher and staff member to have a copy. Roxboro kicked off the project with an assembly on Jan. 23, at which Mayor Cheryl Stephens spoke about the importance of reading and announced the book title. A giant dragon puppet joined the mayor on stage following the announcement. Fifth-graders read the first chapter aloud to the assembled school, while parent volunteers quickly placed a brand new book on every child’s desk.

The focus on reading aloud distinguishes OSOB from other reading initiatives. According to its website, “Studies have shown that reading to children helps them to listen better and longer, to build bigger vocabularies, to understand concepts better, to feel positive about both books and learning—and much more.”

Roxboro promoted that idea by inviting guest readers, including Superintendent Talissa Dixon, Mayor Stephens, Police Chief Annette Mecklenberg, and CH-UH School Board President Ron Register to read chapters aloud in classrooms. Leon Napier, school security officer, read aloud to a second-grade class, using what he called his “grandpa voice.”

“We already love books as a family,” said parent Molly Jones, “but this is pretty special.” Her third-grade son was won over that even his gym teacher read the book. The OSOB team hosted a Literacy Night on Jan. 26, with dinner, activities, crafts and the distribution of OSOB passports for students to take to local businesses. Jolivette and Taft arranged with Bud’s, Zoss or Luna bakery, to give a free cookie at Zoss or Luna bakeries when first-grade teacher Liz McKinley, Roxboro’s principal.

The project culminated with another assembly on Feb. 9, where guest readers were given free decorations. Lara Troyer, local musician and Roxboro parent, wrote a song about the book, which students performed.

Jenkins said he worked to stay at least one chapter ahead of his students. “That way, when I see them in the hallway, I can ask for their thoughts. It connects us all around the act of reading.”

Kerry Howard agreed. He attended Literacy Night with his first-grade son, Kerrion. “This brings everyone in the community together,” he said.

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education Meeting highlights

January 17, 2017

All board members were present. Ron Register (president), Kat Zucker (vice president), Jim Pusch, Eric Silverman and Beverly Wright also present were Talissa Dixon, superintendent, and Scott Gozser, treasurer.

Career and technical education

Brad Callender, director of career and technical education (CTE), presented an update on the CTE program and its alignment with the district’s strategic plan goals. As part of the Three Heights consortium with Shaker Heights and Warrensville Heights districts, Heights High students can choose from among 14 career or technical programs. Maplev Heights and Bedford Heights districts are the only districts to be one of OSOB’s members and will bring more offerings, all of which are pathways to careers. Of Heights students, 21 percent are involved in CTE, and 73 percent have taken at least one course as an elective. Like all Ohio students, CTE students must earn 18 credits to graduate, and 98 percent of Heights High’s current CTE students graduate in four years. Within the program, Project Search can bring developmentally disabled students to career readiness. Jeff Porter, CTE instructor, explained that, in order to be prepared for immediate employment, the automotive program also provides incentives to attend college to students who display a strong plan on. Post-secondary connections are made through partnerships with local industries, seminars and competitions. He added that local art and science students are very willing to hire Heights graduates.

Gifted education

Tina Robinson, coordinator of gifted and fine arts education, made a presentation on the gifted program. Students are identified as gifted through assessments designed to show superior cognitive ability, academic ability, creative thinking, or ability in visual or performing arts. Currently, 16 percent of the district’s students are identified as gifted, 37 percent of those are students of color. Of those identified, only 43 percent receive gifted services, largely because not all grade levels offer gifted services. Currently, the district offers gifted programs in fourth through seventh grades. Heights High students receive no gifted services because advanced placement classes are not categorized as a gifted service. Gifted programs must adhere to state guidelines and, in grades where service is provided, must offer a certain number of hours in each area in which a student is identified.

Districts are evaluated based on the percentage of students identified as gifted, percentage served, and percentage identified and served as economically disadvantaged, disabled students, and minority students. The district had an A on the state report card for the previous four years, but earned an F this year when report card methods changed.

January 27, 2017

All board members were present. Superintendent Talissa Dixon and Treasurer Scott Gozser were also present. This was a joint meeting with Cleveland Heights-University Heights and Warrensville Heights districts. Cleveland Heights Mayor Cheryl Stephens spoke to Roxboro students about reading.
Heights artist receives Gold Key Award for portfolio

Joy Henderson

In the 2017 Cuyahoga County Scholastic Art Competition, Heights High senior Shannon Berr won a Gold Key award for his eight-piece portfolio, as well as five Silver Key and four Honorable Mention awards.

Six other Heights High student artists also won awards. Linnea Co-vault won a Gold Key and an Honor-able Mention, Jenna Dent won a Sil-ver Key and an Honorable Mention, and David Matia, Tylar McDowell, Lisa Ware and Gilda Weinstock won Honorable Mentions.

“Shannon’s Gold Key award for an entire portfolio is a fantastic ac-complishment,” said his art teacher Nancy Eisenberg. “This is a signifi-cant award and we are very proud of him.”

Berr enjoys working on large-format multimedia pieces as well as three-dimensional sculptures, using wood and other materials.

In addition to receiving one of the region’s highest art awards, Berr also completed his high school course work with a 3.8 GPA.

“I attended the Options pro-gram this year to finish my courses,” said Berr. “I developed techniques to focus on the work, basically zoning out of everything else and getting it done.” He worked closely with Eisenberg during first semester to complete his portfolio.

Berr has two “disabilities,” dyslexia and dysgraphia, that make a traditional classroom challenging for him.

“In school these are learning disabilities but in the real world, they are learning differences,” he said. “Everything that I have done is because I am dyslexic.”

Berr said he is grateful to the school and to Eisenberg for guiding him through his high school courses and the creation of his portfolio.

“As a sophomore, he began the process of being identified as gifted in the fine arts, an Ohio Depart-ment of Education (ODE) designa-tion. The process involved an initial screening by his art teacher, Eisen berg, followed by a team review of a portfolio, approval by district administrators and final approval by the ODE.

This spring Berr is interning with local artists at A Piece of Cleve-land (APOC), a wood shop that uses old-growth timber from Cleveland neighborhoods to create one-of-a-kind pieces of furniture. He will design and build a dining room set for sale in APOCs shop.

Berr hopes to attend an art col-lege, and major in fashion accessories design, contemporary crafts or fine arts. He has applied to the Cleveland Institute of Art and is very interested in the Detroit College for Creative Studies’ Fashion Accessories Design program.

The 2017 annual Scholastic Art Competition had nearly 3,000 entries. Students who receive Gold Key awards for individual works or portfolios continue on to the national competition held in the spring in New York City.

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

Beaumont is first Cleveland-area all-girls school to earn IB status

Rick Haase

Beaumont School has been officially authorized as an International Bac-calaureate (IB) Programme World School by the IB organization in Geneva.

Beaumont is the only all-girls school, and only the second Catho-lic school, in Cleveland to earn this international distinction.

“The program will be offered to students beginning in fall 2017. Beaumont will offer the IB Diploma Programme (DP), which is specifi-cally for students in grades 11 and 12.

IB aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. It encourages students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

“We decided to pursue the International Baccalaureate Pro-gramme for our students because the IB mission was so closely aligned with the mission of Beaumont School,” explained President Sis-ter Gretchen Rodenfels. “The IB Programme enhances the advanced level of academic coursework of fevered at Beaumont School. It joins the school’s long tradition of excellence in offering college preparatory classes and academic support that allows us to educate young women for life, leadership and service.”

The distinction comes after an intense three-year application pro cess, during which time Beaumont’s faculty underwent hundreds of hours of professional development.

“I am enormously excited for our school to receive this significant distinction,” said Nick Beyer, dean of academics. “As an IB World School, Beaumont will be able to offer a prin-ciple, internationally recognized curriculum that is student-centered, rigorous and rewarding.

“The journey to reach IB World School status is neither brief nor easy. For the past three years, our faculty and administration have worked tirelessly to write course curriculums and have collaborated regularly with each other and educa-tors around the globe. This program, as with all that Beaumont offers, puts our students at the center, giving them opportunities for success in high school and beyond.”

Rick Haase is director of public relations and marketing at Beaumont School in Cleveland Heights, a Catholic School in the Ursuline tradition.
Library receives grant for digital media lab for teens

Sheryl Banks

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System received a Library Science and Technology Act (LSTA) STEM grant from the State Library of Ohio to create a Teen Digital Media Lab in the teen room at the Lee Road Library.

With $7,593 provided by the grant, Heights Libraries will build a sound isolation booth equipped with professional recording equipment and software that will allow local teens to learn sound- and music-related skills, including recording, mixing, editing and producing. The library will purchase and install the booth and equipment in the spring and summer.

This fall, the library will offer a formal program for up to 12 teen students, ages 15 to 18, to teach them how to use the equipment and software, produce a student album and learn about the music industry.

“The library is in a unique position to help our teen customers learn technological skills that will advance their burgeoning musical interests and provide connection and support to help them succeed in a fun and collaborative environment,” said Jessica Robinson, youth services librarian who will coordinate the project.

Robinson and Matt Mancini, IT technician, who has extensive experience with both music and sound recording technology, will teach the eight-week program. The program will also receive support from library partners Lake Erie Ink and Cleveland Heights High School. Teen participants will have the opportunity to work with the library, which will be selected based on need and interest level. They must be residents of Cleveland Heights or University Heights.

The library will also hire two teen interns to serve as mentors to help instruct their peers, for which they will be compensated $15/hour.

Over the course of the program, teens will complete eight hours of formal instruction time and at least 12 hours of free lab time. Additional programming and open lab time for teens not in the formal program will be announced at a later date.

The inspiration for the program came from the library’s 2016 strategic plan process, where library staff members engaged in a community-wide dialogue that involved surveys and interviews with community members, including many teens.

“Through these surveys and conversations, we discovered that many of our youth are extremely interested in music,” said Robinson. “They want to pursue careers as singers, rappers and song writers. This program was designed to address those desires while also teaching kids 21st-century technology skills.”

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

Cleveland Heights-University Heights Library Board Meeting highlights

JANUARY 23, 2017

Board members Ron Holland, Susan Beatty, Max Gerboc, Chris Mentrek, Suzann Moskowitz and Jim Rosco were present at the board meeting.

Fiscal officer’s report

The library has used progressive investing practices that reflected that 2.2 percent of the library’s total funds were not invested at year-end. The general fund unencumbered balance at the end of the year was $765,880.03 and the building and repair fund has $622,597.96 unencumbered. It is projected that the library will not need another levy until 2024.

Organizational updates

New board member Max Gerboc took an oath of office. The slate of officers and committee assignments was affirmed, with the new president of the library board being Ron Holland. Abby Botnick will be vice president and Chris Mentrek, secretary. The three committees of the board are operations, planning and external relations, and personnel. Committee chairs are Abby Botnick, Chris Mentrek, and James Rossa, respectively. Susan Beatty and Max Gerboc are assigned to the operations committee, Susan Beatty and Suzann Moskowitz, to the planning and external relations committee, and Max Gerboc and Suzann Moskowitz, to the personnel committee.

In addition to the slate of officers and committee assignments, Deborah Herrmann was reappointed fiscal officer with a bond in the amount of $300,000. Herrmann took an oath of office for this appointment. Amy Gerson will reappoint a deputy fiscal officer with a bond in the amount of $100,000. A bond in the amount of $100,000 was also approved for Library Director Nancy Levin.

Security issues

Kevin Echols, security supervisor, provided an annual update of the incident reports for security at the libraries. He reported that the number of incidents before 3 p.m. increased this year, comprising 21 percent of all incidents. There were 316 incidents in 2016, 600,000 people visited the library last year. Echols indicated that library security has a working relationship with school security and, on days of early dismissal, University Heights and Coventry Village libraries will have additional security officers.
Noble library continues to welcome Nepalese refugees

Kara Whaley

For close to a decade, Bhutanese and Nepalese refugees have been arriving in the Greater Cleveland area. Last year, ASIA Inc. estimated 400-500 Bhutanese families have resettled in Cleveland Heights.

As these refugees bring hope, optimism and a desire to learn, they contribute to making Cleveland Heights a better place. Noble Neighborhood Library sees this during its Welcome Hub hours.

“The Welcome Hub is this idea of having space that people can go to and acquire resources,” said Jessica Markowitz, a youth services associate at Noble Neighborhood Library. “If there is anyone in the community that does speak English as their native language but wants to connect to the non-native English-speaking community, they are more than welcome to join.”

Noble Neighborhood Library currently partners with ASIA Inc. and ABLE (Adult Basic Literacy and Education) to provide language and citizenship classes to all community members. ABLE’s programs, in all 88 Ohio counties, provide free adult basic education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses.

English language classes are a staple of the refugee programs and services offered at the library. These classes are different from many English language classes in that the volunteers who run the classes often tailor classes to student needs. For example, because a significant portion of the students are working to attain their temporary driver’s licenses, instructors are intentionally incorporating driving-related vocabulary into the lessons.

The Welcome Hub is not limited to classes. “Our group on Saturday, which is one of our informal English classes, also functions as a community space,” said Markowitz. “Not too long ago we had a celebration; we had a potluck and dancing.”

The community space that the Welcome Hub provides allows refugee families to gather, celebrate and meet new people. All community members are encouraged to join these gatherings.

Noble Neighborhood Library, in an effort to provide programming for Nepalese and Bhutanese children, offers a Nepali language class. According to a Noble Elementary School representative, refugee children make up almost 10 percent of its student population. The school works to improve English and literacy skills in children. The Nepali language classes, which were started by a Nepalese refugee volunteer, seek to help children learn and retain the Nepali language.

The volunteer who began the program thought it was culturally important for refugee children to learn and retain their native language. However, the class is not limited to the Nepalese or refugees; all children with a desire to learn Nepali are welcome to attend.

Heights Libraries, in cooperation with ASIA Inc. and ABLE, hopes to serve all refugees, immigrants and nonnative English speakers for years to come. For more information, visit www.heightslibrary.org or call 216-291-5665.

Kara Whaley is the communications coordinator at the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.

What’s going on at your library?

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

Wednesday, March 8, 7–9 p.m.

Inspired by Art: A Heights Community PechaKucha Event. A book launch and signing for National Book Award finalist Dan Chaon. In his new novel, Ill Will, two sensational unsolved crimes—one in the past, another in the present—are linked by one man’s memory and self-deception. Registration opened Feb. 22. (This series, celebrating local authors, is presented in partnership with Mac’s Backs Books and Appletree Books.)

Lee Road Library
2345 Lee Road, 216-932-9600

Friday, March 10, 7–9 p.m.

Cedar-Covington Author Series: A book launch and signing for National Book Award finalist Dan Chaon. In his new novel, Ill Will, two sensational unsolved crimes—one in the past, another in the present—are linked by one man’s memory and self-deception. Registration opened Feb. 22. (This series, celebrating local authors, is presented in partnership with Mac’s Backs Books and Appletree Books.)

Noble Neighborhood Library
2800 Noble Road, 216-291-5665

Saturday, March 4 through May 27, 3 p.m.

Welcome Hub: The Welcome Hub provides education, resources, information and community space to local refugees and immigrants. Programs are structured to address the needs of the community and are focused on ESOL instruction.

Come experience the Assisted Living neighborhoods at Judson Park!

Judson Park offers a variety of assisted living options. From light assistance to full support services and 24-hour nurse oversight, residents receive personalized care in a warm and inviting setting.

• No entry fee and no community fee
• Consistently ranked 95% Overall Resident Satisfaction according to the State of Ohio
• On site rehabilitation, therapy, home care and hospice
• Access to all signature amenities on campus including educational, cultural and wellness programs

Located in the quiet neighborhood of Chestnut Hills in Cleveland Heights, Judson Park is just minutes away from world-class healthcare at the Cleveland Clinic and University Hospitals.

To learn more about the assisted living neighborhoods at Judson Park, please call (216) 791-2004.

For more information, visit www.judsonsmartliving.org

HEIGHTS LIBRARY
Storefront barber Giammaria retires after 57 years

Joseph Marx in the Cedar-Taylor
the old Cleveland Barber College in
old, he pursued a certificate in Bar-

in ninth grade at Observation School
experience. Just after he completed
He has 72 years of hair cutting
Lee Road.
this past Dec. 31 from cutting hair
Dominic Giammaria, 87, who retired
"The barber school thought I was 16
Lee Batdorff
Storefront barber Giammaria retires after 57 years

Dominic started cutting my
hair in 1960," said artist Bill Hoose,
70, a resident of Cleveland Heights.
House was going to the previous
barber in the Lee Road location when
Domingo took over. "I don't buy a
newspaper," he said. "I get all the
news from Dominic.

Giammaria's great-grandson, Francis (maid-
en name Iorio), died in 2002, after
more than 70 years of marriage.
They had two children. Giammaria
now also has eight grandchildren, and
eight great-grandchildren. He
showed a visitor a photograph of

his great-granddaughter Angelina-
Marie, eight months old, and said,
"I sing to her.

A few of Giammaria's clients thought he was wasting his talents with
haircutting. Danny Green, a
notorious gangster, attempted to
smooth-talk him into joining the
mob. "You'd do better," Green told
Giammaria. But Giammaria consis-
tently declined. "I'll stay in barbering,
the legal way," he told Green. Green
died when his car blew up in 1957.
Recently, Giammaria summed up that
situation: "He was killed and I'm still
alive!"

Lee Batdorff has been a Cleveland
Heights resident since 1966.

Heights company helps local
businesses thrive in digital age

Two Cleveland Heights residents op-
erate Local Biz Guru, a company that
helps small businesses improve their
online presence, to thrive at a time
when online shopping has surpassed
in-store shopping.

"Our entire business is predi-
cated on helping local businesses be
found online," said Nachum Langs-
nor, who owns the company along
with Aaron Garfunkel. Langsner
and Garfunkel started the business in
August 2016. Prior to that, both
men worked for a dental-supply com-
pany. In 2008, the company asked
Langsner to build a website. "I had to
very quickly learn how to do that," he
said. "But it turned out to be a great
hands-on learning experience, and
the project went very well."

Since founding Local Biz Guru,
Garfunkel and Langsner have fo-
cused on helping local firms.

They will hold two seminars this
month at the Small Business Develop-
ment Center at the Lee Road Library,
covering practical tactics and tips to
improve a company's online visibility.
The seminars, attracting Local Cus-
tomers in the Digital Age, will take
place March 7 and 21, 9–11 a.m.

Garfunkel said Cleveland Heights is a
"warm, vibrant community. The
ethics and quality of life are nice here."
Langsner added that he "loves the
diversity of the community, and I feel
that we, as a community, can benefit
from more businesses thriving."

“We are really trying to help
small businesses,” Garfunkel said.
Langsner added, "We want to let
people know about the uniqueness of
so many Cleveland Heights busi-
nesses. We really want to get the
word out. We really just need to
follow the evolution of this industry.
Everything is constantly changing,
especially digital marketing."

James Henke, a Cleveland Heights resi-
dent, 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 Len-
non and Bob Marley. He is on the board
of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the
Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

James Henke

Nachum Langsner (left) and Aaron Garfunkel,
the owners of Local Biz Guru.
New owner takes over Coventry Road Panini’s

The Panini’s restaurant franchise on Coventry Road in Cleveland Heights has a new owner, Michael Mercer, who purchased the restaurant last November.

Mercer, 58, lived in Cleveland Heights for much of his life; as a child, he lived on Demington Drive for many years. His father, Robert Mercer, started the children’s hospital at the Cleveland Clinic.

Mike Mercer attended Roxboro Elementary and Junior High schools, and Heights High. At Kent State University, he majored in business and law enforcement, then worked for the Department of Safety and Security in the Cleveland Public Schools for eight years.

During that time, Mercer met Jeffrey Jacobs, who was developing the West Bank of the Flats. Jacobs opened Club Coconut, and Mercer became the club’s general manager. Mercer then opened the Howl at the Moon Saloon, which he ran for eight years. It was one of many restaurants, bars and entertainment venues in the Cleveland area with which Mercer has been involved. In addition to the aforementioned businesses, Mercer has been the owner and operator of other businesses in the Flats, including Power Play Gameroom and Club 148.

In May of 1986, the first Panini’s restaurant opened on the East Bank of the Flats. Panini’s then opened a restaurant in Lakewood, and Mercer became the restaurant’s first franchise operator there.

“Panini’s was originally set up to be a sandwich and pizza place,” Mercer said. “Then, about 10 years ago, they re-did the menu, and it became a casual-dining menu.” In 2006, a Panini’s opened in Brunswick, and Mercer and Tim Swan ran the restaurant. Swan is now the general manager of the Coventry Panini’s. “He’s deep into the food service, and he really understands customer service,” Mercer said.

The Coventry restaurant opened about eight years ago. Prior to that, the location had housed the Hyde Park Steakhouse.

Since taking over the Coventry restaurant, Mercer has been making changes. He has enhanced the daily specials, and he has been adding more craft beers from Northeast Ohio breweries. He has also started a fundraising program for school groups and other non-profit organizations. If one of those groups books a fundraising event at the restaurant, it can get 10 percent of the money brought in that night. “I really want to give back to this community,” Mercer said.

He has also made a deal with Big Fun, the store that is across the street from Panini’s. If someone takes a Panini’s receipt to Big Fun, that person can get a 10-percent discount on a purchase at the store.

One of the things Mercer said he really likes about the Coventry location is the outdoor patio. “We are fortunate to have such a nice patio, and we have nine TVs out there,” he said. Guests are now permitted to bring their dogs onto the patio.

In 1995, Mercer moved to Lakewood. Even so, he still loves Cleveland Heights. “I feel very comfortable in Cleveland Heights,” he said. “It’s a very friendly area, and it’s easy to get around the city.”

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. He is in the board of FutureHeights, and is co-chair of the Heights Observer Advisory Committee.

Cleveland Heights resident Jon Holmes received a free furnace from Verne & Ellsworth Hann Inc. as part of the company’s Helping Hann Free Furnace contest.

An Army veteran, Holmes was nominated by his sister and brother-in-law, Jean and Don Lash of South Euclid.

Holmes lives in the Forest Hill neighborhood, in a house that’s been in the family since 1942. The old furnace was installed in 1951 and had to be oiled every day—a difficult task for Holmes, who suffers from a nerve disability.

The Helping Hann contest was created to assist someone in such a situation, according to Chris Hann, co-owner of the Cleveland Heights-based heating and cooling business. The company solicited nominations through December and January, and announced the winner on Jan. 31.

“We want to share our good fortune by giving something back to the community that’s been so good to our family all these years,” Hann said.

The total value of the furnace and installation is about $3,500. Holmes said it’s the only thing he’s ever won, except for a pair of shoes a long time ago—and they didn’t fit.

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

James Henke inside the Coventry Panini’s.

Michael Mercer inside the Coventry Panini’s.

Cleveland Heights resident Jon Holmes (left) with Chris Hann, co-owner of Verne & Ellsworth Hann Inc., located at 2026 Lee Road.

V&E Hann selects homeowner as free furnace contest winner

Bob Rosenbaum

Cleveland Heights resident Jon Holmes received a free furnace from Verne & Ellsworth Hann Inc. as part of the company’s Helping Hann Free Furnace contest.

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Heights Arts goes ‘Public’ with March exhibition

Mary Ryan

Design and illustration continue to expand beyond their traditional roles in publishing and advertising. Influenced by graffiti and new technologies in animation and gaming, illustrators create stories about world issues, popular culture, even trends in daily life. Artists take issues out of context and reexamine them in previously unconsidered perspectives, challenging viewers to assess their own part in the whole.

PUBLIC CONSCIENCE through graphics and illustration, which opens Friday, March 3, 6–9 p.m., in the Heights Arts main gallery, examines these trends among Northeast Ohio artists. Co-curated by artists Leslye Arian and Dave King, the group exhibition showcases the work of Laura and Gary Dunn, Derek Hess, Brian Jasinski, Nancy Schwartz Katz, Milan Kecman, Jake Kelly, George Kocar, Joe Lanzilotta, Angela Oster, Josh Usmani, Justin Michael Will, and Sean Higgins and Nicholas Rezabek of the Bubble Process.

Co-curator King noted, “People see the work of illustrators and graphic artists in print form but they don’t see the original work. Because of this disconnect, illustrators and graphic designers are frequently not viewed as artists. An opportunity to have these works in a gallery show allows the public to see them in a different light.”

The unique Heights Arts event Ekphrastacy, where artists discuss their work and poets read pieces composed in response to the exhibition, will take place on Thursday, March 30, at 7 p.m., for this show.

Opening Friday, March 17 in the spotlight gallery, Kate Snow’s Grid Series: Communities seeks to explore and celebrate not only the physical community that makes up Cleveland Heights, but also the seemingly disparate communities of fine art and digital media—by providing a platform for engagement and interaction. The interactive exhibition includes a collection of framed gouache and graphite paintings on handmade paper, as well as an integrated digital piece. A short panel discussion on April 6 at 7 p.m. with Kate Snow, Eagan Rackley (game developer), Ian Faleer (musician) and Stephanie Frankiewicz (graphic designer) will examine how the digital medium is transforming the way viewers experience art.

For more information on community arts programs, including music and literary events, visit www.heightsarts.org or call the nonprofit arts organization at 216-372-3477.

Mary Ryan is on staff at Heights Arts.
March in Cleveland can bring some of the worst winter weather of the year. But March also offers some major harbingers of spring.

Like the Cleveland International Film Festival, the festival itself has nothing to do with spring—I mean, it’s not like they screen 150 movies about nice weather—but it takes place at what is supposed to be the end of winter, and sometimes is the end of winter, but sometimes isn’t. A few years ago, the biggest snowstorm of the year took place on a Saturday in the middle of the film festival.

I decided to chance it—I had tickets to three CIFF films that day—so I drove down to Tower City from the top of Cedar Hill. I kept to the major roads all the way there, but none had been plowed. Luckily, I was able to follow a big truck and drove in its tracks. I didn’t see any other cars along the way, and I figured I was going to be the only one there. I thought they might give me a prize—maybe a pass for the rest of the festival—for being so loyal.

But when I reached the film festival, the usual crowd was present. You still had to wait in the lines to get into your movies. Because it’s Cleveland and everybody knows that if you want to do something during the winter, you just go and do it.

Actually, this year, the film festival begins on March 29 and runs through April 9. But the first week of April in Cleveland is usually just like an extra week of March, weather-wise. Which is why I never go to Cleveland Indians opening days.

But I do participate in Cleveland Indians spring training—in a way. That activity does not take place in Cleveland; it happens in Phoenix, Arizona, where it’s never sunny.

But spring training is immediately followed by the actual baseball season, and that is in the spring, so spring training puts baseball fans into virtual spring, psychologically, even though some opening-day games of the real baseball season are halted by snow. Like the one they tried to play here a few years ago and couldn’t finish; and then wound up moving the whole opening series to Milwaukee.

But, still, baseball means spring and summer. And Indians spring training games are broadcast over the radio, with a few on TV, so you can listen to them or watch them, and regardless of the weather in Cleveland, it feels like spring. For three hours. If you don’t look outside.

And then there’s Purim/Passover/Easter. Purim is a Jewish holiday that celebrates... well, I’ll simplify it: It’s one of many Jewish holidays that may be summed up by: “They tried to kill us. We won. Let’s eat.” (In the case of Purim, the big food thing is hamantaschen, a triangular, filled pastry.) Purim always comes in March.

Passover and Easter sometimes come in March, but more often in April. Passover is another one of those Jewish holidays described above. There are a lot of things that Jews can’t eat during the week of Passover, but there are lot of other things they can, that they don’t during the rest of the year, a trade-off. And it begins with a big feast, the Seder, which also includes a long service before you get to eat that big feast; another trade-off. We Jews invented the trade-off.

Easter falls on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox. The spring equinox is normally March 21, so it’s possible for Easter to come as early as March 22. Sometimes there is deep snow on Easter and sometimes, like two years ago, it’s 75 degrees.

But my main point here—and maybe I haven’t made it totally clear—is that if there’s a big snowfall in late March or early April, and your car gets stuck in a snowbank in your driveway, don’t shovel it out, don’t call AAA, don’t get people to push it out, don’t do anything. Because you know that in a few days, it’s going to warm up and the snow will melt.

And when you see my car stuck in a snowbank in my driveway in late March/early April, you’ll thank me for the reminder.

David Budin is a freelance writer for national and local publications, the former editor of Cleveland Magazine and Northern Ohio Live, an author, and a professional musician and comedian. His writing focuses on the arts and, especially, pop-music history.
Dobama presents Pulitzer Prize-winner ‘The Flick’

Jonathan Wilhelm

Kernels of stale buttered popcorn, sticky soda spills, and the occasional sandwich wrapper keep three under-paid employees of a run-down movie theater busy in “The Flick” by Annie Baker. Its regional premiere runs March 3-26 at Dobama Theatre, and is directed by Nathan Motta, Dobama’s artistic director.

In awarding “The Flick” the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, the Pulitzer committee cited it as “a thoughtful drama with well-crafted characters . . . rendering lives rarely seen on the stage.”

The play’s unconventional setting situates the audience where the screen would be in a movie theater, facing rows of seats and aisles with a projection booth above.

Baker is renowned for expertly crafting realistic characters by casting a light on the way people exist in between the nuances of human conversation—including awkward silences and the bumbling of everyday speech—as they perform the mundane but necessary tasks of their jobs.

Dobama’s production features Christopher Bohan, Gordon Hinchen, Paige Klopfenstein and Nate Miller.

A preview performance will be held on Thursday, March 2 at 7:30 p.m. Preview tickets are $10, general admission. A pay-as-you-can ($5 or more per ticket) performance is scheduled for Sunday, March 1 at 7:30 p.m. Advance reservations for that performance can be made by agreeing to pay $5 or more per ticket.

For more information and to purchase tickets visit www.dobama.org or call the box office at 216-932-3366.

Dobama Theatre is located at 2140 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights.

Barbershoppers earn award of excellence

Joy Henderson

The 13-member Heights High Boys Barbershoppers earned an Excellent rating and the prestigious Presenter’s Award at the Barbershop Harmony Society’s International Youth Chorus Competition in San Antonio, Jan. 19-22.

At the conference, students attended master classes, joined other vocalists in a chorus rehearsal and performance, attended performances by groups of youth and senior citizen singers, and performed for audiences and judges. They also received instruction from renowned musician Francisco J. Núñez, founder of the Young People’s Chorus of New York City, international guest conductor and founder of the Social Change Barbershop Singers.

Barbershoppers William Aiken, Rangana Bartlett, Tedd Byers, Will Davis, Michael Garrett Jr., Remi Klimaszewski, Daniel Kurth, Gordon Hinchen, Dave Mooney, Christopher Bohan, Grant Hanehan, Barbara Phillips, Gerald Bzatek, James Smith and Garrett Vandall, with Vocal Music Director Jesse Lange.

WRC’s 25th-anniversary season continues

David Gilson

Western Reserve Chorale (WRC) will present a double billing of Haydn’s Mass in Time of War (Missa in tempore bell) and Requiem for the Living by Daniel Forrest. Concerts will take place Sunday, March 12, at 4 p.m., at Mary Queen of Peace Church, at 8423 Pearl Road, in Cleveland; and Sunday, March 19, at 3:30 p.m., at Church of the Gesu, 2470 Miramar Blvd., in University Heights.

The five movements of Dan Forrest’s Requiem for the Living (2013), however, form a narrative for the living, and their struggle with pain and sorrow, as well as for the dead. Forrest made use of different Latin texts than most requiems include, and created sound textures that reflect a more modern take on “light eternal,” inspired by images from the Hubble telescope and the International Space Station.

WRC will be joined by professional orchestral musicians and will feature soloists Marian Vogel, Sandra Ross, Timothy Culver, Brian Keith Johnson, and soprano Henry Dyck.

These concerts are presented with the support of Cayahoga Arts & Culture and the AHS Foundation. They are free and open to the public, though a free-will offering will be taken.

David Gilson, artistic director of the Western Reserve Chorale, resides in Cleveland Heights with his wife, Suzanne, and twin daughters, Sophie and Hannah.
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The Salon artists comprise spring show at St. Paul's gallery

Mary Cushing

The Nicholson B. White Gallery at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. . announces its spring show, The Salon Shows at St. Paul's. The exhibition opens with an artists’ reception on Friday, March 10, 5–7 p.m., where participating artists will greet guests and discuss their creative processes. The show runs through June 4.

Featured artists are Bonnie Dolin (oils and pastels), Jennifer Leach (woodcut prints), Leslye Discont Arian (mixed media and clay) and Tom Roese (acrylics and graphite).

Last year, these four artists formed an art group called “the Salon” for the purpose of sharing new work, giving and receiving critiques and encouragement, and enjoying the company of other artists. While the work of each artist is unique, the struggles are universal, and the monthly input the members of the Salon receive from one another creates a sense of renewal, connection and determination to continue making art. This is the Salon’s first show as a group.

Bonnie Dolin works in pastel and oil. Many of her paintings are based on photographs and then greatly altered as she shapes the work. Some paintings are not realistic images of a real place, but are an expressionistic vision of the idea of landscape. Her main concern in those works is how to use color to good effect and to create a mood. Jennifer Leach works primarily in woodblock and linoleum relief techniques. Printmaking has been integral to her career in graphic design, illustration and K-12 art education, and she is currently focusing on printmaking as art. An interest in people, motivations, interactions, identity and emotional conditions are the inspiration for the images Leach creates. She makes prints to distill the complex mix of emotion, social pressures, and conflicting messages people experience every day into a manageable visual object. The expressiveness of the cut wood and texture of the wood grain on paper match and enhance the mood she is looking to create.

Leslye Discont Arian draws with paint, pastel, charcoal and ges-so. Her surfaces are sometimes layered with recycled drawings and the media are layered. “My tools are my fingers, the back of a brush or sandpaper,” she said. “I work in a gestural and post-modernist style. Trained as a ceramicist, being hands-on with material allows me complete freedom from the material world. My clay bowls pay homage to the Japanese Edo period and the figures honor the wish to mother.”

Tom Roese is known for his architectural paintings of industrial Cleveland in which he realistically details rust and grit. In contrast, his Santa Fe series, started after a trip there in November, eliminates detail to create the scene and uses natural colors—a completely different palette from his Cleveland works. Roese’s art starts with his true love: drawing with pencil. “The musical sounds I hear of a pencil traveling over a paper surface are, to me, like a symphonic rhapsody,” he said. After using light or colored pencil to highlight or find the path to a temperature, he applies localized color with thinned acrylic paint to translate his black-and-white drawing to a color image.

Everyone is welcome at the opening reception. The gallery is open weekdays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on weekends, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The artists receive all proceeds from the sale of their work.

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

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