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FutureHeights  
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Cleveland Heights, OH 44118

## Mayor-elect Brennan sets forth his plans for University Heights

James Outman

A day after he defeated University Heights' two-term incumbent, Mayor-elect Michael D. Brennan put forward a vision of an innovative entertainment and nightlife scene where the moribund University Square shopping center stands at the intersection of Cedar and Warrensville Center roads.

A lawyer in private practice, for whom the mayoral election was a first step into politics, Brennan will take office on Jan. 2, having won a close election with an unofficial winning margin of less than 60 votes (1,546 to 1,492) in a city of approximately 13,000 residents.

Brennan said he did not see a common thread in the decision by University Heights voters to replace an incumbent (UH Mayor Susan Infeld ran without opposition for reelection four years ago) and the election loss by six-term incumbent Mayor Merle Gordon, in neighboring Beachwood. "I think each city has its



UH Mayor-elect Michael Dylan Brennan.

unique issues," commented Brennan. "For University Heights, our election was about the power of good ideas and the power of collaboration as a way of going about government."

### Proactive economic development to help cut taxes

Brennan said that he expected to take an active, hands-on approach on pitching University Heights to prospective real estate investors and entrepreneurs. University Square, now reduced to three tenants (Macy's and Target, which own their stores, and

an Applebee's restaurant) and deep in tax arrears, will be a major initial target, he said.

Brennan rejected suggestions of replacing stores with apartments on the site, saying that what the city needs is a more active entertainment scene to attract both residents and visitors. He observed that he was unable to find a suitable place within the city for his campaign launch party, as he did not want to impinge on the pizzeria used by his opponent, Mayor Infeld.

One of Brennan's consistent themes was the need for the city to be more proactive in solving problems, and especially promoting economic development. He said he thought the city should have an economic development director who, with the mayor, would seek out investors in, for example, new entertainment sites. The city plan and zoning regulations were tools that could be used to attract some investments and discourage others—such as proposed housing units

*continued on page 7*

## Heights libraries and Noble barbers seek to boost literacy rates in young readers

Sheryl Banks

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System regularly engages in community outreach. Storytimes at preschools and daycares, delivery of materials to home-bound customers, book discussions and computer classes at senior living communities and the Cleveland Heights Community Center, and free book distribution at community events utilizing the Book Bike are just a few examples of Heights Libraries outreach activities.

Monica Wilson, youth services associate at the Noble Neighborhood branch, has found yet another way to reach customers outside of the library building, and encourage teens and kids to read: bringing library books for young readers to local barbershops.



Patrick Freed has welcomed Heights Libraries' into his Freestyles Barbershop on Noble Road.

"Every six weeks, I bring a variety of books to two of the barbershops on Noble Road for customers to read while they get their hair cut, or wait for a cut," said Wilson.

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## Local election results in new mayor, BOE members and judge

Deanna Bremer Fisher

On Nov. 7, Michael Dylan Brennan defeated incumbent Susan Infeld in a closely contested race to become mayor of University Heights. In unofficial election results posted on the Cuyahoga County Board of Election website, Brennan received 1,546 votes, 50.9 percent of the total, giving him a narrow win over Infeld, who received 1,492 votes.

In addition, Cleveland Heights and University Heights voters elected three new members to the CH-UH Board of Education: Dan Heintz, Jodi L. Sourini and Malia Lewis. Cleveland Heights voters elected James Costello to be their next municipal judge with 5,075 votes, representing 49.1 percent of the total.

Voters in both cities retained incumbents in their city council races. Cleveland Heights reelected Cheryl Stephens, Jason Stein, Mike Ungar and Melissa Yasinow for its city council, while University Heights voted to retain Phillip Ertel, Susan D. Pardee, John Rach and Mark Wiseman.

"I'm elated and ecstatic, but it is tempered with a sense of solemn responsibility," said Brennan, when asked how he felt about the election. "The people of University Heights have entrusted me to move the city forward. I am anxious to get started."

Brennan said he has already started to prepare for the position by meeting with community lead-

*continued on page 8*

## Noble Road lights will complement Nela Park displays

Brenda H. May

Noble Road residents, businesses and institutions are being encouraged to "Light Up Noble!" again this year. Noble Neighbors ([www.nobleneighbors.com](http://www.nobleneighbors.com)) is inviting everyone with Noble Road frontage to illuminate their windows, creating a corridor of lights along one of the neighborhood's main streets.

Each holiday season, thousands of visitors drive through the neighborhood to see the lighting display at General Electric's Nela Park, 1975



GE Lighting's annual lighting ceremony in 2016.

Noble Road. Lighting the two-mile stretch of Noble between Mayfield Road and Nela Park will provide a welcome to these visitors and give them another way to discover the

neighborhood.

This year's Nela Park holiday lighting has a "melodies and memories" theme. The display, which will

*continued on page 7*



## Letters Policy

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

## HEIGHTS OBSERVER

The *Heights Observer* is a citizen-based news source published monthly by FutureHeights, a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to civic engagement and quality of life.

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## What the *Heights Observer* is—and isn't



OPENING  
THE OBSERVER

Bob Rosenbaum

When you're involved with running a newspaper you learn there are some things that can never be said enough.

Such as: The *Heights Observer* is not an ordinary newspaper. In fact, if there were another word to use for it, I wouldn't describe it as a newspaper at all. Here's why:

- No reporters. Every word we publish is submitted by volunteers in the community. If you call me with a great story idea, I'll tell you the only way that story is likely to get written is if you do it yourself.
- Contributors are encouraged to write about people they know and organizations they work for. A traditional newspaper would view this as a conflict of interest. We believe it's useful, as long as any relationship between the author and the subject of an article is disclosed.
- We're not good at certain things newspapers traditionally do, such as routine coverage of public meetings. We're grateful for our partnership with the League of Women Voters—which sends volunteers to observe and report on school board, library board and city council meetings. But that effort only scratches the surface of what deserves to be covered, and

as long as we're volunteer-based, it's likely to stay that way.

- The *Observer* is not a profit-seeking entity. It's published by nonprofit FutureHeights, and is supported entirely through advertising. We're grateful to our advertisers—mostly local, independent businesses and organizations that pay for what they perceive to be the two-part benefit of reaching *Observer* readers and supporting the *Observer* project itself. Other than occasional ads for things such as Cain Park programming, neither Cleveland Heights nor University Heights has ever provided financial support to the *Observer*.

If the *Observer* is not an ordinary newspaper, what is it?

I see it as plumbing: Something that has little value on its own, but becomes vital when filled with water—or, in this case, information. Any community member is welcome to use the *Observer* to inform or persuade others about events, activities and issues relevant to Cleveland Heights and University Heights. So far about 1,000 different people have accepted that offer, with a few more coming in every month.

Whatever the *Observer* means to you, to me it's a representation of the community itself.

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

## About the *Observer*

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

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

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

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

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

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

Articles to be considered for the January issue must be submitted by Dec. 6. We publish some articles online as they come in—and still consider them for the next print issue. We also publish an e-newsletter each Tuesday.

## HRRC looks ahead to 2018 programs

To the Editor:

As we come to the end of another year at Home Repair Resource Center (HRRC), and prepare for our 47th one, I wanted to give our neighbors a report on what we've been doing, and what we're planning for 2018.

HRRC just concluded a series of classes in Old Brooklyn as we teamed with Old Brooklyn Community Development.

Suffice it to say that all the participants were jealous of what we do here at our Noble Road offices.

For December, we'll be doing a couple of classes on painting in Shaker Heights and concluding our first-ever remodeling series. Instead of just focusing on repairs, this series will give participants a chance to envision—and create—a new kitchen.

So, even after four decades in existence, we're still coming up with new ways to help residents enhance their homes.

After the first of the year we also plan to continue creating new and exciting opportunities for our friends in the Heights area as we all try to improve the way our homes look and function.

We'll have more gardening classes in 2018, more of our immensely popular Women's Home How-To Series, a continuation of our remodeling series, carpet installation classes, Free First Mondays and much more.

If you haven't been here for one of our workshops yet, the winter months are the perfect time to come.

You'll get a chance to plan all those interior projects you've been thinking about and learn the best ways to finish them from our expert instructors.

If you have been here, then we'd love to see you again.

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David Brock  
Home Repair Resource Center  
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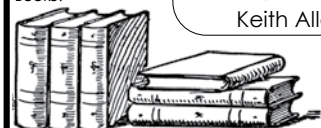
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## Excerpts from *Observer* blogs

Read the whole story at [blogs.heightsobserver.org](http://blogs.heightsobserver.org)

### Learning from Trick or Treating

In our Cleveland Heights neighborhoods, most of us live fairly close together. And when we live close together, we will, for better or worse, be affected by the actions of our neighbors!

So in Cleveland Heights, it's particularly important that our neighborhoods function as communal places, where neighbors communicate and

socialize and work together to make the neighborhood a better place. For people who choose to live on a secluded lot in, let's say, Geauga County, this kind of "community" may not be as important or necessary a value.

Not every neighborhood is a community. A neighborhood may be merely a collections of houses—more a physical place than a communal place.

Many of us who live in Cleveland Heights and nearby cities want our

neighborhoods to function as communal places, not just out of the necessity caused by living so close together, but because we truly value the sense of community that comes from living in a place where neighbors are . . . "neighborly." Some of us may even hope that our neighborhoods can be laboratories for more communal behavior in our nation and our world! . . .

—Robert Brown



## Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus vision closer to reality after recent developments

Frank Lewis

The members of the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus team are pleased to report that all relevant parties are engaged in active discussions over the immediate future of the Coventry site and our proposal to build on its success as a center for arts, education and community gatherings.

On Nov. 20, the Heights Libraries Board of Trustees authorized Executive Director Nancy Levin to enter into negotiations with the P.E.A.C.E. Campus group about partnering to take possession of the Coventry property from the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District. School districts are limited by law in how they can dispose of unused buildings and land; cities and libraries are two entities to which districts can transfer ownership. But this is not just a legal maneuver—the library's formal involvement is a welcome and promising development.

The trustees' vote followed a Nov. 6 meeting between P.E.A.C.E. Campus representatives and members of Cleveland Heights City Council. The city had been planning to take control of the property and issue a request for qualifications/request for proposals (RFQ/RFP) to private developers for redevelopment plans, until the current Coventry tenants put forth the campus proposal. At the meeting, the campus team proposed that the city forgo the RFQ/RFP process,



This rendering shows what a dedicated entrance and marquee could look like for Ensemble Theatre as part of an improved and welcoming arts, culture and education center.

extend the tenants' leases through June 2019, and begin working on a plan to transfer the property to tenant control. (At present, we have only verbal commitments to remain through June 2018.)

This would allow the school district and the city to move quickly on a plan with broad and longstanding community support. The idea to turn the former Coventry school into an arts center can be traced back to an extensive reuse study in 2008. Proceeding with an RFP would take much longer and would not ensure the future of the arts center and playground.

On Nov. 21, Ron Register, president of the CH-UH Board of Education; Dr. Talisa Dixon, superintendent of Heights schools; and Scott Gainer, school district CFO, sat down with campus representa-

tives for a presentation and discussion. The meeting was productive; Register and Dixon took notes and asked several pertinent questions. The following week, Register and another BOE member met with CH City Council in executive session to discuss an agreement on a transfer of the property. We have not yet learned any specifics from that conversation.

The CH-UH Board of Education met in executive session on Nov. 28. Afterward, a school district spokesman told Cleveland.com that there are "outstanding issues" to review with the city, but added, "Hopefully these ongoing discussions of late will be productive in coming up with a resolution for a path forward."

In light of these developments, the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus team is encouraged. All key stake-

holders have been briefed on our redevelopment vision, are talking to each other, and seem committed to announcing a plan before the end of the year. We are grateful to them, and to the many residents who have remained engaged in this issue since the school district announced plans to sell the building in May. The holiday season is a time to look back at accomplishments, and forward to possibilities, and we hope you are as excited as we are about how far we've come together, and how much farther we could go.

The Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus team comprises Ensemble Theatre, Lake Erie Ink, Family Connections, FutureHeights, Reaching Heights, ARTFUL and Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Inc., the organization that built and maintains the playground. The campus vision includes an improved and welcoming arts, culture and education center; a revitalized playground; extensive landscaping of the green space; additional parking for the arts center and nearby Coventry Village Library; and, possibly, village-style private housing.

More information—including events at or near the campus through the holiday season—is available at [www.coventrypeacecampus.org](http://www.coventrypeacecampus.org). Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for updates.

*Frank Lewis is a Coventry neighborhood resident and Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus volunteer.*

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# What it's like to teach in the new high school



**A TEACHER'S VOICE**

Ari Klein

I knew my way around the old high school extremely well. I grew up a few streets away and remember hitting tennis balls against one of the gym walls, which then led to climbing all over the roof of the building to retrieve the balls. One time I got stuck while exploring the roof of the high school and ended up climbing in an open window to a room on the third floor. My other exploits included the times my sister and I went through lockers after school was out for the summer to collect supplies for the following year. It was like a treasure hunt.

I spent three years as a student in the high school, so I became even more familiar with the building, including the stage area, tunnels and more. So, when I started teaching at the high school it was easy for me to navigate the odd-numbered side versus the even-numbered side of the building that confused most new teachers, new students and visitors.

I already knew the science rooms were in their own wing, and the GO2 and GO3 were rooms over different gyms. The GO rooms were then changed to 282 and 283 to make it more confusing for everyone who figured they would be on the second floor even though there was no way to get to them from the second floor.

This school year I am getting a lot of questions about what it is like being in the new high school. Frankly, it is like a

completely different building except that the old auditorium and fourth floor are intact. Literally everything else is new except for the red tiles and two stairwells. From the classrooms to the mini-auditorium and offices, it is not the building I knew.

For many reasons this is a good thing. There is a lot of natural light in the new building. The layout is simple. The rooms are comfortable and the heating/air conditioning works without having to use an Allen wrench to tamper with the mechanism. The rooms where I teach are on a carpeted side hallway that dampens the noise. Teacher workrooms are now on both sides of the building on both the second and third floors, which is convenient for many teachers.

We are into the second quarter at the point I am writing this article, and I believe the students are more respectful and calm this year. I don't know if that is due to being in a new building or perhaps the great leadership shown by our interim administrative principal, Dr. Williams. The students seem to be respectful of the new space that our community has provided them. Even the lunch periods seem to be easygoing, which has not always been the case.

There are still a lot of issues to be solved in this new building—things are not perfect. There were a lot of details ignored or overlooked. I am pretty sure that this is the way all new construction goes. I look forward to the time when we put up familiar mementos on the walls, decorated in a way that will make everyone feel at home, and for me to remember how to get to my room from the parking lot without having to think about how to navigate stairs and halls.

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



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## Are civil rights a matter of policy or of law?



**HEIGHTS OF  
DEMOCRACY**

Carla Rautenberg and Deborah Van Kleef

Kathy Flora, a Cleveland Heights resident and immigration activist, shared these stories at the Nov. 1 meeting of Cleveland Heights City Council's Public Safety and Health Committee:

"Beatriz did not give a wide enough berth to a patrol car that was stopping someone else. She was . . . rapidly deported, leaving behind her grieving husband and four children. She was dumped over the Mexican border . . . in a notoriously dangerous city that preys on these vulnerable United States throwaways. She was robbed twice.

"Mario's neighbors were terrorized when ICE was on the block to arrest him from his home. He was on dialysis, dying from kidney failure. His crime? A misdemeanor committed in all the way back in 1994 . . .

"Narciso was still being treated for head injuries after being rear-ended in a traffic accident, when he was deported and dumped [over] the border in the middle of the night. He was kidnapped almost immediately . . . His life was threatened until his family here paid a ransom.

"On and on and on it goes. It is impossible to keep up."

These are just three stories of undocumented immigrants apprehended, held and deported without due process in Northeast Ohio. Similar incidents occur daily throughout the United States. Acting without warrants or hearings, federal agents wrench people from their families, jobs and communities, and deport them into situations where their safety and even their lives are at risk. Many deportees have been law-abiding U.S. residents for years or even decades, with children born in this country.

These practices are unjust, inhumane and unconstitutional. The Bill of Rights refers not to citizens, or immigrants with green cards or other documentation, but to people. It doesn't matter who you are or how you got here; you are entitled to constitutional protection.

Under the Fourth Amendment, undocumented immigrants have rights to due process, freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, and freedom from discrimination based on race, ethnicity and national origin. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) routinely violate these rights. Many of those arrested without warrants are deported without hearings. Of those who do go through immigration court proceedings, more than half have no legal representation, according to the American Civil

Liberties Union.

Many undocumented immigrants come into contact with local or state police through traffic stops. They are questioned about their immigration status, even if it is irrelevant to the reason they were stopped, then arrested and turned over to ICE.

Another way local officials are complicit with an unjust system is through ICE detainers. When someone is in jail on a charge unrelated to their immigration status, ICE issues a request that the police hold them for an additional 48 hours, allowing further time to investigate them. An ICE detainer does not have the legitimacy of a judge-issued warrant, however, local officials often cooperate.

No such incidents have occurred in Cleveland Heights or University Heights, but as the federal program of mass deportation continues, local officials will be under increased pressure to participate.

Cleveland Heights City Council Member Kahlil Seren has introduced legislation that would help prevent abuses like those above from occurring in Cleveland Heights. Under this ordinance, police and other city employees could not:

- Arrest or hold anyone solely on the basis of a request from ICE or CBP, without a warrant from a judge.
- Ask about an individual's immigration status, or release that information to ICE or CBP, "unless for a law enforcement purpose other than enforcement of a civil immigration law."
- Take action against anyone based on their perceived race, national origin, religion, language or immigration status.

If passed, these provisions would become part of the city's legal code. The ordinance would not violate state or federal laws.

It is not clear how many city council members support the legislation, but City Manager Tanisha Briley and Police Chief Annette Mecklenburg have weighed in against it. They would prefer to develop a "flexible" internal policy, which would set standards but not be written into law. In other words, they want the discretion to choose when and whether to protect the rights of undocumented immigrants.

In a democracy, should the protection of civil rights be a matter of discretion or should it have the force of law?

We encourage readers to let city council and the city manager know their thoughts about this by e-mailing [clevelandheightscouncil@clvhts.com](mailto:clevelandheightscouncil@clvhts.com).

*Carla Rautenberg is an activist and a lifelong Cleveland Heights resident. Deborah Van Kleef is a musician and writer, who has lived in Cleveland Heights for most of her life. Contact them at [heightsdemocracy@gmail.com](mailto:heightsdemocracy@gmail.com).*

## Join us for Christmas Worship!

### Sunday, December 24: Christmas Eve

- 2:00 p.m. The Christmas Story for the Young with Eucharist
- 3:15 p.m. Organ Noëls and Carol Sing-a-long
- 4:00 p.m. Pageant with Live Animals, Eucharist (ASL)
- 8:00 p.m. Music of the Season
- 9:00 p.m. A Choral Service of Lessons and Carols
- 10:30 p.m. Festival Eucharist

### Monday, December 25: Christmas Day

- 10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist with organ and vocal solos

### Sunday, December 31: The First Sunday after Christmas Day

- 10:00 a.m. Christmas Lessons & Carols with Eucharist



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## Public education: essential but not invincible



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

Drip, drip, drip.

Canyons, bluffs and barren hill-sides attest to the power of slow, persistent attacks by the elements. Seemingly impenetrable spaces are shaped and reshaped subtly over time.

I think public education and democracy are like mammoth landforms. When you look at them, they appear to be strong and enduring. They are a given. They define our reality and provide sources of security and comfort.

In the last 30 years, however, as power and wealth have shifted in our society, once-unthinkable fissures are now visible in our most essential institutions. Schools and democracy itself are being eroded.

Anti-government, anti-tax, anti-equality, anti-civil rights ideology has taken aim at public education. Rather than being embraced as essential to the common good, public schools are dismissed as “government schools.” Individual choice becomes more important than protecting the public’s need for an educated citizenry. Who cares about protecting equal access for all children or the separation of church and state? Inject some competition and everyone will work harder.

Values are turned upside down. In the name of serving poor children, policies punish school districts that serve children living in poverty by labeling them as failed, belittling their teachers, raising barriers and taking away precious public funds and pouring them into unregulated charter schools or vouchers.

Instead of treating each child as unique and embracing human development, test-based judgments require all children to be the same and to perform exactly the same at exactly the same moment using an unreliable system for measuring that uniformity. This system rejects education as a human development journey and incentivizes leaving the public system to avoid high-stakes testing.

Drip, drip, drip.

At first it seemed that public schools could weather the demeaning and damaging impact of testing and privatization. Educators could find a way to hold on to what mattered most in teaching, put up with the tests and stay motivated. At report card time, school leaders promise to do better and sadly validate the system they know to be invalid. What else can they do?

Three decades of judgment based on a rigged system that punishes

teachers and schools that serve children living in poverty takes its toll. Good teachers are discouraged, with more retiring early and fewer entering the profession. For sanity’s sake, some great teachers take refuge in other districts. How does that help the neediest students?

In my October column I quoted a hero of public education in Ohio, Bill Phillis, who is outraged by the lack of outrage about what has happened to our public school system. I am outraged but at times feel paralyzed about what to do about it.

I think some of the inaction stems from our basic belief that public schools are bedrock institutions that will survive and somehow not be harmed. Oddly, this confidence makes us passive.

The assault on this foundational institution isn’t just a spring rain. Public education is being buffeted by a hurricane! This is the moment when the sleeping giant of public education supporters needs to wake up and stop the erosion that is now visible and dangerous.

I am grateful that the treasurer, superintendent and board of education of the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District are no longer mum about how these policies are affecting our community. They have become willing to share this information in public and work with other districts to rally opposition. Because our district serves many children living in poverty and is home to a large population that welcomes vouchers to support its use of religious schools, we are a bellwether for the damage brought by privatization. Our children are being punished for low test performance. Our schools are losing significant funds to vouchers, making it harder to serve the district’s students. Our needy students are being punished for being needy.

Public education deserves our advocacy. The many Ohio voters who have been educated in our public schools and value their role in our democracy need to face our collective vulnerability and speak up.

Those close to schools know exactly how these policies harm our children. We need to free our educators to tell the truth, and each of us needs to help our neighbors and friends face the truth. We need to challenge every candidate running for the Ohio legislature.

Protesters took to the streets and burned their draft cards to resist the Vietnam War. Is it time for us to sit in at the legislature and burn our state report cards?

*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.*



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BRENNAN continued from page 1

on the site of University Square.

"I do believe University Heights has historically taken too passive a role in economic development. Re-development of University Square is a much bigger idea than just renting out spaces that currently exist," he said, noting that some spaces in University Square "have never had stores in them" since the center opened in 2003.

"We heard during this campaign from the incumbent that we don't have a choice as to what developers want to put in commercial districts. I don't agree," said Brennan. "With a city master plan and zoning, we're in a position not only to approve projects, but to solicit projects."

"The thing about a site like University Square is that we should be taking public comment to see what there's public demand for, to tell a market story to show bond holders and potential developers. We need more attractions for people to move to University Heights. More apartments is not the best way forward."

Among other ideas, Brennan cited "axe throwing" game sites, which he compared to miniature golf venues when that game was new. "It may sound silly, but then people try it and find that it's fun." He also mentioned the newly opened Boss Dog Brewing Co. on Lee Road in Cleveland Heights as an example of the sort of nightspot that could thrive in University Heights.

"We have a college in our borders, with young people who look for things to do," noted Brennan. "University Square could be a place where you have bowling, a winery, a brewpub, even axe throwing—things that promote an active lifestyle. A study should be done."

Brennan cited the success of Cleveland's University Circle neighborhood in being revitalized as a result of a master plan drafted in 1993, perhaps suggesting that reviving University Heights could take several years.

#### **\$2 million annual surplus is too much**

"One of the chief things I ran on was economic redevelopment, and with that growing our tax base so we can moderate our taxes. There's no reason to tax as much as we do just to generate surpluses," Brennan said. "I'm looking to give some of that money back, going forward, but also investing in the community to enhance our tax base, building on something to make the city sustainable economically."

Brennan was critical of the city's \$2 million annual revenue surplus—he said the city has about \$8 million in cash in the bank—that helped make University Heights' property tax rate the second highest in Cuyahoga County. High taxes discourage people from moving into the city, or cause them to leave, Brennan said, declaring economic development to be the best means of replacing revenues lost by lowering city property taxes. (Real estate taxes also include separate levies by the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District and Cuyahoga County.)

#### **A "cultural change" at city hall**

While Brennan emphasized his belief in a proactive government that attracts real estate investment to revitalize the city's commercial areas, he also said he intended to make city government more user-friendly for citizens. As an example, he cited his intention to accept credit or debit cards for city services such as special trash carting (removing unwanted large objects too big for regular trash collection), rather than insisting that citizens take time off work to bring a check or cash to city hall.

His administration would bring about a "cultural change," he said, "a more user-friendly attitude on how you go about governance. City hall should be a resource for solving problems, trying to resolve the issue without punishing the resident for needing assistance."

Brennan also advocated a more activist role by the city in preserving at least the exteriors of houses that go into foreclosure, citing as an example a house on Tullamore Road that deteriorated while in prolonged foreclosure and eventually had to be demolished. Some owners may need the city's help to maintain outward appearances in order to protect the neighborhood. In the case of the Tullamore house, he said, "Bottom line: a once-beautiful house became irredeemable and unsalvageable. We need a more proactive approach to abandoned and foreclosed houses. That house could have been a valuable home."

Another change, said Brennan, would be a more cooperative attitude toward the city council (six of its seven members endorsed Brennan). He cited the case of the city jail, currently in UH police headquarters. Last February, Brennan said, the state informed the city it would have to upgrade or replace its jail. This notice was not shared with city council until October, when Mayor Infeld asked for approval of a contract negotiated with the city of Solon, a 40-minute, 26-mile roundtrip drive away. Brennan said the state's demand for an improved jail should have been shared with city council much earlier, and vowed to be more collaborative as part of a "cultural change" in city government.

During his campaign, Brennan criticized the city's fire chief, Douglas Zook, who was the target of a no-confidence vote by firefighters. After first saying he would review Zook's contract in his new role as the city's safety director, Brennan then said that he stood by his earlier statements on the fire chief's future. "My position on [the] fire chief to date is well understood and I'm not changing that." When he first announced that he was running for mayor, in September 2016, the *Plain Dealer's* website quoted Brennan as saying: "I have been open in my intention to replace the fire chief as a first order of business as mayor and safety director."

Brennan said he would also look at two other mayoral appointees, the police chief and building inspector, whose roles touch on his safety director title. "I'm interested in keeping a

strong base of institutional knowledge in University Heights," said Brennan. "One of the problems we've had is difficulty keeping good people. I'm not looking to sweeping people out just for the sake of sweeping people out. There are a lot of great people who work for the city who are interested in the same things I'm interested in. I'm not wishing to be unduly disruptive."

On an issue that roiled the campaign in its closing days—a city laborer's union flier that accused Mayor Infeld of jeopardizing resident safety by hiring a subcontractor to collect leaves who used jail inmates as workers, which in turn caused Infeld to complain that she was the victim of a "campaign smear"—Brennan said it was "premature for me to say" how a labor grievance filed by a city union should be resolved. He said Infeld was "right to be upset, I didn't blame her for being angry and upset" by the flier, which he described as "very unfair." "As a matter of core belief, all of us should be able to earn a living wage, including people who have made mistakes," Brennan stated. "There have to be jobs for people who have . . . (been) run through [the] criminal justice system as a matter of bad luck or of the systemic way certain people are targeted for prosecution, and then render[ed] unemployable."

#### **Optimism regarding UH residents on the school board**

On the perceived weaknesses of Cleveland Heights-University Heights public schools (attended by only 51 percent of the city's children), Brennan expressed optimism that having University Heights residents on the joint school board, after a prolonged absence, could "lead to programs and things for students within our district where we have students who can still get a great education over the long term, irrespective of some problems." He also observed that within the joint district "we have certain socio-economic is-

ues that not all districts have" that have to be taken into account when analyzing the "overall performance" of public schools.

*James Outman is a former journalist for international news organizations and author of volumes on a variety of historical topics including the War on Terror. He has been a resident of University Heights since 2013.*

LIGHTS continued from page 1

span six blocks along Noble Road, will be visible from Dec. 1 to Jan. 1., and, for the first time in almost 60 years, some displays will be publicly accessible inside the gates of the campus during limited hours. Non-commercial passenger vehicle traffic will be guided through the interior grounds on three Friday evenings—Dec. 8, 15 and 22—from 6–9 p.m. Lights inside the campus will draw inspiration from Nela's 93 years of holiday lighting.

While the displays along Noble Road may be viewed by pedestrians or people riding in any kind of vehicle, visitors may only view the displays inside the gates from a car, not by walking. Heavier vehicles, such as buses or trolleys, cannot be accommodated by some of the bridges within the campus, and the no-pedestrian rule is for safety reasons.

On Dec. 1, Nela Park will host its annual lighting ceremony. Families of employees and their guests will gather around a replica of the National Christmas Tree on the lawn. GE Lighting has been designing and lighting the tree in Washington for more than 50 years. Greater Clevelanders won't need to travel to the Ellipse to see it, though. A replica will be in our own front yard.

*Brenda H. May is one of the leaders of Noble Neighbors.*

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ELECTION continued from page 1

ers and department heads. “I value institutional knowledge. I don’t plan to change out people merely for the sake of change,” he said.

Brennan said that his very first order of business will be to install video cameras in council chambers. “It may sound like a small thing, but money for this is already budgeted and is a crucial first step toward transparency of our process. With that in place, everything that follows should

be recorded and readily available. Then we’re going to dive into the finances and the budget, because this is a critical prerequisite to the community investments and tax credit adjustment I ran on. And I’m going to begin the search for a new fire chief.”

He pledged to approach working with members of city council with openness and respect, even when they disagree with him. “I respect the deliberative role of council and the legislative process. We’re going

## University Heights City Council Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 16, 2017

Present were Mayor Susan Infeld, Vice Mayor Susan Pardee, and council members Philip Ertell, Steven Sims, Michele Weiss and Mark Wiseman. Councilman John Rach was absent, and Councilman Phillip Ertel arrived just after roll call. Also present were Law Director Luke McConville, Finance Director William Sheehan, and Clerk of Council Kelly Thomas. The meeting was held from 7 p.m. to approximately 8:20 p.m.

### Prisoner housing services with Solon

Police Chief Hammett reported that in the most recent change in ratings (February 2017) the University Heights jail went from being considered a 12-day facility to [being designated] only a holding cell until new placement can be found for prisoners. The city jails for Euclid, Maple Heights, and Bedford Heights are all in the same quandary, so Hammett moved quickly to secure a contract with Solon. The new rules require more space per prisoner, full medical exams, and natural light. Solon is able to take over the University Heights prisoners for an annual cost of \$81,600 (versus \$83,622 for University Heights to house them).

The motion to approve the contract with Solon was tabled until the next meeting to give council time to review the details. Council members objected that this ruling was made in February and they were only now hearing about it.

### Regulations of rental properties

Legislation (Ordinance 2017-38) changing city code regarding rental of one- and two-family homes was presented on first reading. Councilman Ertel asked if the problems addressed by the changes were a bigger issue for rental properties than for owner-occupied homes. Development Director Patrick Grogan-Myers said that the issues were comparable, but if non-income generating properties were expected to pay taxes, then rental properties certainly should pay. The problem is with ghost properties, in which a person buys a property and rents it without paying taxes or doing any property maintenance. Councilman Wiseman asked to table the ordinance until it can be discussed by the building committee of council. [Details of the legislation were not presented to the audience.]

### Medical marijuana dispensaries

Councilwoman Weiss has continued to follow the medical marijuana legislation. She reported that medical marijuana dispensary licenses would be issued in November. Some communities are passing legislation placing moratoria or banning them outright. She urged council to develop some rules in the near future.

LWV Observer: Wendy S. Deuring.

NOVEMBER 6, 2017

Present were Mayor Susan Infeld, Vice Mayor Susan Pardee, and council members Pamela Cameron, Phillip Ertel, John Rach, Steven Sims, Michele Weiss and Mark Wiseman. Also present were Law Director Luke McConville, Finance Director William Sheehan, and Clerk of Council Kelly Thomas. The meeting was held from 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

### Election mailer

Mayor Infeld shared a prepared statement denouncing the pre-election mailer sent by Local 860, the service workers union, which



accused the mayor of putting the community at risk by hiring temporary workers for leaf pickup. She said these same issues were raised during union negotiations and suggested that the union was airing its grievances publicly, which it legally cannot do. The mayor also stated that she believes the union wants to be handed a blank check. Councilmen Wiseman and Rach denounced her statement, and Wiseman moved to add an item to the agenda to discuss the hiring, and background checks, of these workers. The mayor said the issue could only be discussed in an executive session, so council moved into executive session for this discussion and completed the public meeting afterward.

### Prisoner housing

Council approved an \$81,600 prisoner housing services contract with the city of Solon. Councilman Wiseman, who voted against the approval, said that council had only heard about the contract two weeks ago, and questions about protocol had yet to be answered. The mayor said the only other option was to pay police officers overtime or send prisoners to the county jail, which would be expensive. Both she and Police Chief Hammett emphasized that University Heights doesn’t have the manpower, or human resources, to house prisoners.

### Cuyahoga County project grant

A resolution supporting application for a \$50,000 grant from the Cuyahoga County Community Development Supplemental Grant Program was presented on emergency. Community Development Coordinator Patrick Grogan-Myers said the grant would be for the 2017–18 fiscal year and must be submitted by Dec. 31. More details about the grant will be presented on second reading. On Nov. 6, the city held a public meeting requesting feedback on how the grant should be used. Suggestions ranged from improving pedestrian crosswalks to redoing the storefronts facing South Taylor Road.

### Pocket park on Silsby Road

The city was recently awarded a \$105,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to develop a pocket park at 3578 Silsby Road. Grogan-Myers reported that the project, which will include community input, will begin soon.

LWV Observer: Siobhan Leftwich.

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

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

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



New CH-UH school board members Dan Heintz, Malia Lewis and Jodi Sourini.

to brainstorm and make priorities together,” he said. “I imagine everyone has a pet project, something they’ve wanted to accomplish. We are at a time of great unity, and I want to see us maximize this opportunity to accomplish great things for our city.”

The decision by three seasoned board of education members not to seek reelection in 2017 assured voters that there would be three new members elected on Nov. 7. This hadn’t happened since 1993.

Dan Heintz said that it is an exciting time and that he and the other school board candidates became quite close during the long haul of the campaign. “I can’t imagine a more positive and mutually supportive campaign. Tiera [Briggs] came up a few votes shy this time, but knowing how committed she is, I’m confident that she’ll continue to find ways to contribute,” he said.

Heintz said that his neighbors have “entrusted him with an enormous task,” and that he has “a great deal to learn.” He is meeting with school officials and current board members to help him prepare, as well as visiting the district’s schools to hear teachers and students share their vision for the district. “I hope that my experience as a teacher will help inform the decisions which impact our classrooms,” he said.

Jodi Sourini said that she is “excited, honored and humbled that our community has entrusted me with this opportunity to serve.” She said she is reading everything she can about Heights schools and about serving on a school board: “I’m reaching out to individuals who have served on school boards, and I’m benchmarking other districts [who] I believe are doing great things. In addition, I’m listening to people in our community who want to talk about our schools.”

In addition to establishing a good working relationship with her fellow board members, Sourini said that she wants to initially focus on two critical issues facing the district: attracting and retaining families and improving communications. “I think we can make significant progress in these areas by focusing on: reviving the Kindernet program, which provided outreach to young families, and establishing a formal communications policy which outlines guidelines and media for communicating specific types of information to identified audiences within specific time frames,” she said.

She also said that she wants to establish positive working relationships with other elected officials. “I believe it’s in all of our best interests if our school board and our city govern-

ments work together for the betterment of our collective communities,” she said

The new school board members will be sworn in at the first CH-UH Board of Education meeting of the new year, on Jan. 9.

James Costello

said that he learned a lot about himself and the city of Cleveland Heights while campaigning for James Costello municipal judge. “While walking all the streets in Cleveland Heights and meeting so many new people, it really hit home how great our city is,” he said. “It was so encouraging to hear how passionate people are about this city.”

“I very much look forward to serving as judge, and the first thing I want to accomplish is to make sure there is a smooth transition from Judge Buchanan to me,” he said. Costello said he has already stopped into the court informally and will have more formal meetings with a number of people in the court and the city in the coming days and weeks. “I am lucky that there are already a number of talented people serving in our court. The magistrate, bailiffs, and clerks, will all be a great asset to me and will make transitioning to my new position so much easier,” he said.

Costello said that he will work to improve the efficiency, technology, and accountability of the court; focus on the housing docket; find ways for the court to play a more active role and interact with the youth in our community; and address inequities in the justice system. “Some of these improvements can happen right away,” he said. “For example, I will consolidate what are now separate housing violation dockets (presently, some are heard by the magistrate and some are heard by the judge) to a single docket that I will oversee exclusively. I will also take advantage of some underutilized technology in our court to do some of the initial appearances remotely, making the court safer and reducing the need to have our police officers transport individuals up into the courtroom.” Other changes will be more gradual. “I look forward to working with and collaborating with others to make those improvements,” he added.

See a compilation of all CH-UH election results at [http://media.heightsobserver.org/media/docs\\_1510175907.pdf](http://media.heightsobserver.org/media/docs_1510175907.pdf).

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



## Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights

OCTOBER 16, 2017

All council members were present: Mayor Cheryl Stephens, Vice Mayor Jason Stein, Mary Dunbar, Carol Roe, Kahlil Seren, Michael Ungar and Melissa Yasinow. The meeting lasted from 7:41 p.m. to 8:23 p.m.

### Public comments

Civil immigration enforcement: Resident Luke Gould voiced support for Ordinance 106-17, which would prevent the city from contacting federal immigration authorities regarding possible undocumented immigrants. The measure was presented on first reading at council's Oct. 2 meeting. Council Member Seren noted that there will be a public hearing on this legislation on Oct. 17, 7 p.m.

### ODOT

Council authorized the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to complete a project improving traffic signals and pedestrian-crossing facilities within Cleveland Heights. This will involve upgrading the intersection at Noble and Quilliams roads. The project is funded through the city's Safe Routes to Schools infrastructure grant.

### CDBG (first reading)

Upon passage, this legislation will authorize application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for \$1,587,209 through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. If the request is successful, this would mark the city's 44th year of participation.

### Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative

Council authorized an application to the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency for \$50,000 through the Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative Planning Grant program. Prepared by FutureHeights, the grant requests funding support for a study of the Coventry Village Business District and surrounding neighborhood, including the Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus. The study would focus on improvements to pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit, and would also evaluate redevelopment opportunities on vacant or underutilized land. If the grant is awarded, the city will provide \$4,000 as an 8 percent match, with the \$4,000 being reimbursed to the city by FutureHeights.

### Charter review commission

Council appointed 15 members to a commission that will formally review the city's charter for the first time in 34 years. Selected from a pool of 57 applicants, the commission members are: Patryca Ajdukiewicz, Jessica Cohen, Craig Cobb, Michael Gaynier, C. Randolph Keller, Howard Maier, John Newman Jr., David Perelman, Carla Rautenberg, Vince Reddy, Maia Rucker, Allosious Snodgrass, Katherine Solender, James Vail and Sarah West. The facilitator for the review process will be Lawrence Keller of the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University. All of the commission's meetings will be public and recorded.

LWV Observer: Katherine Solender.



NOVEMBER 6, 2017

Council members present were Mayor Cheryl L. Stephens, Vice Mayor Jason Stein, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren, Carol Roe and Michael N. Ungar. Melissa Yasinow was absent. The meeting lasted from 8:02 p.m. to 8:34 p.m.

### Public comments

Cleveland Heights gas aggregation: Bill Brum of Middlehurst Road spoke about the non-renewal of the city's gas aggregation plan ending Oct. 31, stating it is difficult to reach anyone at Dominion Energy to find out who the supplier will be. City Manager Tanisha Briley said the aggregation was underperforming the market and was allowed to expire so that residents could take advantage of lower prices available from other suppliers. She said that the city will make a new agreement early in 2018. Council Member Ungar suggested that residents check PUCO's "Apples to Apples" site at [www.energychoice.ohio.gov/](http://www.energychoice.ohio.gov/) and offered to post a number for Dominion on NextDoor.com and the city website.

### Budget reserve

City Manager Briley stated that, for the second year in a row, the city projects spending less than it brings in, after eight years of deficit. She pointed out that this represents one month of operating expenses in reserve, rather than an actual surplus, and that ideally the city should have a two-month reserve.

### Sale of K-9 officer

K-9 Officer Rocky, who has served since early 2012, will be sold to his handler, Lieutenant Robert Butler, for the traditional sum of one dollar.

### Civil immigration enforcement

Council Member Seren announced he is putting together a substitute ordinance to replace Ordinance 106-2017, which he had presented on first reading on Oct. 2. This legislation pertains to local law enforcement response to immigration agents.

### Charter review commission

Council Member Roe announced the charter review commission will have its first meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 16, 7-9 p.m. The facilitator, Larry Keller, will give an overview of the charter review process and answer questions. The meeting will be at the CH Community Center to allow for public attendance. Future meetings will be in council chambers and all will be televised.

### In memoriam, Robert Dunbar

Mayor Stephens requested a moment of silence to remember Robert Dunbar, recently deceased husband of Council Member Mary Dunbar. She mentioned among his many qualities that he was a supportive spouse to Ms. Dunbar in her service to the community.

LWV Observer: Blanche Valancy.

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# Cleveland Heights crime statistics for the first half of 2017

Bob Rosenbaum

The adjacent charts present a year-to-year comparison of serious crimes reported in Cleveland Heights during the first six months of each year, 2011 through 2017.

Full-year data will be reported here when it becomes available through the Cleveland Heights Police Department's (CHPD) data-management process—typically around April.

These crime reports are not subjective. Since 2011, the CHPD has emphasized consistency with the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) guidelines—a regimented, clearly defined set of rules for classifying and reporting crime that has been updated continually since being introduced in 1930.

The purpose of the UCR codes is to create a barometer to identify whether crime is trending up or down.

The FBI's UCR website cautions that the information is not reliable for comparing the crime rate of one city with another, due to important differences between locales, such as population density and distance from an urban center.

Further, though the FBI doesn't come out and say it, not all agencies are consistent in the care they take when reporting crime data.

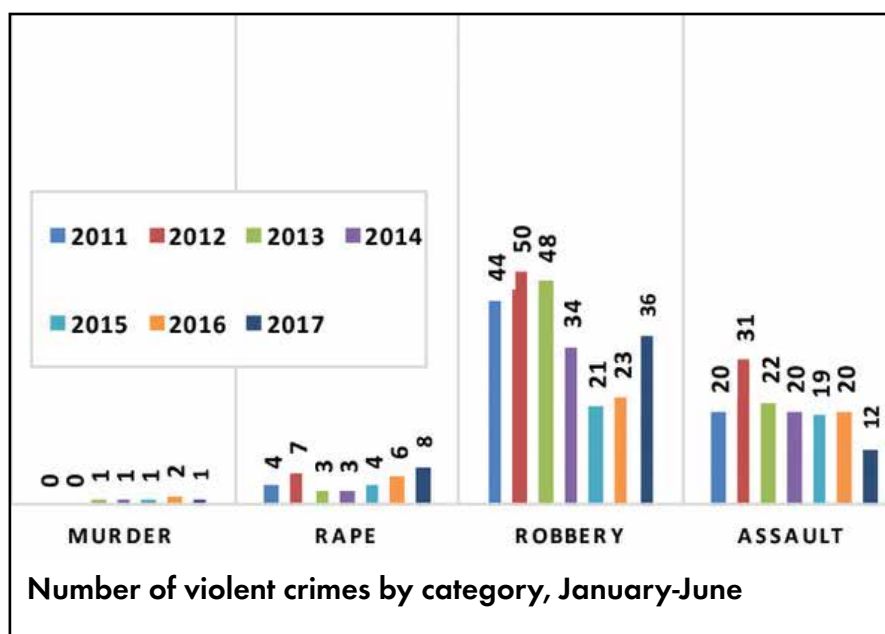
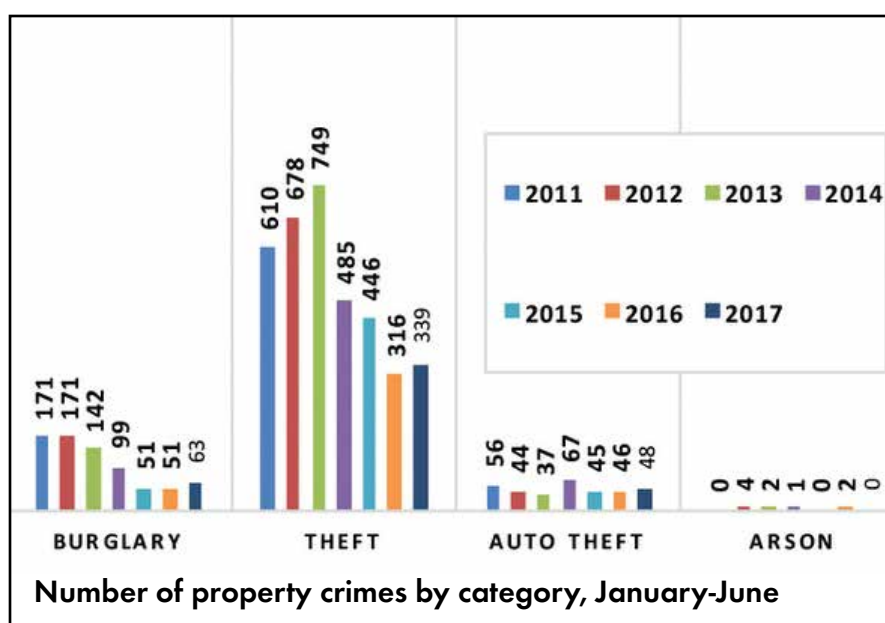
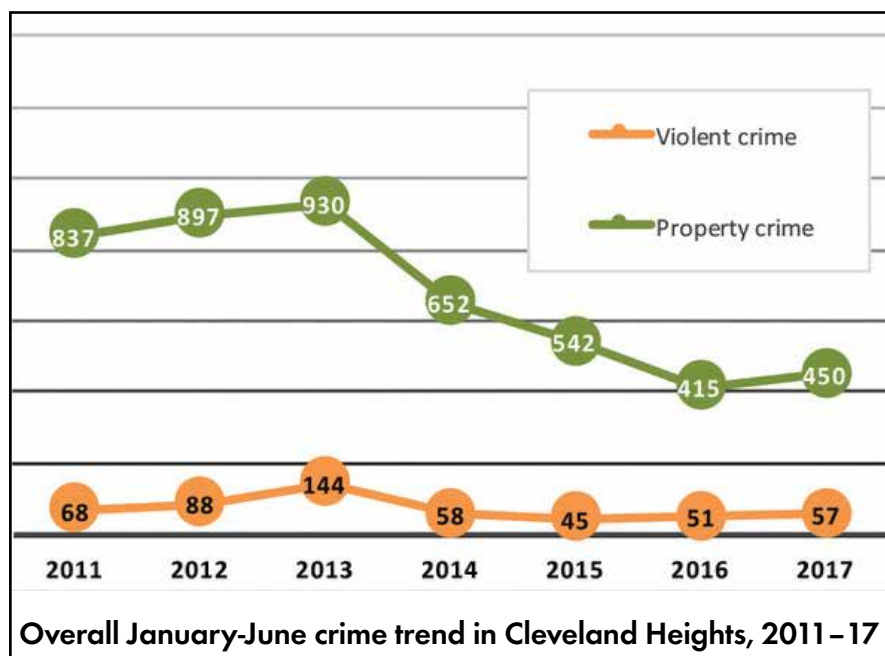
The data reported here don't account for every crime that takes place in the city.

Rather, they represent serious crimes as defined in Part I of the UCR guidelines: violent crimes against people—murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault; and serious crimes against property—burglary, theft, auto theft and arson.

The FBI does not collect data on the more numerous Part II crimes—such as trespassing, disorderly conduct, sexual imposition, public intoxication, drunk driving—because the rigorous classification process would be too costly for municipal police departments to apply to these lesser offenses.

For more information about how the CHPD collects and validates crime statistics, and why the *Observer* publishes them, see the original article in this series by scanning the QR code above, or visiting <http://bit.ly/chpcrimestats>.

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



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# Reaching Heights connects school and community groups

Krista Hawthorne

On Oct. 25, Reaching Heights brought together 58 people representing 38 community groups to discuss working more closely together on the common goal of public school success. The event, Improving School-Community Communication, took place in the cafeteria of the newly renovated Cleveland Heights High School.

The program began with the construction of a communications map. On the map were large circles labeled School District, Religious Institutions, City Governments, Heights Libraries, Non-Profits and Advocacy Groups, and Community Organizations. Participants wrote their group's name on paper circles and placed them on the map. Then they strung yarn from their circle to the groups that they serve and the groups that are resources to them. The result was an impressive visual demonstration of the interconnectivity and interdependence of the groups at the event with the schools and the city governments, and with one another.

Next, participants gathered in groups of 4-7, to introduce themselves and share ideas. They started by responding to a prompt question and gave each person at the table a few minutes to speak and then answer questions. After 20 minutes, everyone got up and moved to another table and started the introduction and discussion process again, with a new prompt question.

At the end of three rounds, each participant had the opportunity to interact with 9-18 different people while discussing the following questions:

- Question 1: Who does your group serve? How do you invite people to participate? Do you reach everyone you hope to reach?
- Question 2: Which groups do you rely on as resources and how do you find new resources?
- Question 3: How do you seek information from the people you serve to inform any changes to your programming or services?

After an hour of talking it was time for action. Participants grouped by table were asked to generate three action steps to improve communication with the community, with each



This colorful map represents the interconnectivity of 38 Heights school-community groups.

other, or with the school district.

The combined list of 31 action steps included suggestions to combat misperceptions of our schools with video tours of each building, finding volunteer reporters to write more articles for the *Heights Observer*, and identifying and regularly using three non-school methods of outreach.

Participants suggested more open houses for the full community, PTA Parent Pamper Day, and an annual Taxpayer Day Carnival at Heights High to increase community engagement.

To improve understanding of school district decision-making, one suggestion was to hold commu-

nity dialogue sessions prior to formal board of education meetings, and another suggestion was that PTAs send a parent to serve as a board of education meeting representative.

On the event evaluation survey, attendees commented about the small group discussions. "I made contacts that will be useful and I understand better the relationships/dynamic between organizations and agencies," said one attendee. Another wrote, "[I] was able to connect in a way that allowed my organization to support another organization while getting our name out into the community."

Asked how this event will benefit their organization, an attendee noted, "I connected with parent

groups which I had not thought of doing before and that has already helped." A different attendee commented, "I made connections with people/organizations that could be potential partners."

Reaching Heights works to connect the community to CH-UH public schools with information, programs, and events that enrich students and support teachers. Visit [www.reachingheights.org](http://www.reachingheights.org) for more information, to sign-up for the e-newsletter, to volunteer, or to make a donation to support the organization's work.

*Krista Hawthorne is the executive director of Reaching Heights.*

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Milestones team member Haley Dunn with Kevin, Cory and Steph Irwin, and Debbie Yasinow from the Jewish Federation of Cleveland.

## Milestones benefits local autism community

Hannah Harp

On Oct. 28, Milestones Autism Resources hosted more than 250 guests at its 2017 annual benefit. The nonprofit raised more than \$250,000 to fund its autism helpdesk, a free resource for families and professionals looking to connect with valuable, regional services.

John Carroll University student

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Cory Irwin, an individual on the autism spectrum, captivated attendees.

"My mom will say the only person who understands me more than she or my father does is probably Miss Haley at Milestones," Irwin said. "She has been working with me so I can learn how to talk to my co-workers, advocate for myself and build a career in the field I love. While I am a work in progress, I can tell you my confidence is growing at a steady pace daily."

With the help of Milestones, Irwin is now the Cleveland Israel Arts Connection Intern with the Jewish Federation of Cleveland—a position that enables him to utilize his passion for museum studies.

Milestones, based in Warrensville Heights, improves the lives of individuals on the autism spectrum at all ages, stages and abilities by educating, coaching and connecting the community with evidence-based information.

For information, visit [www.milestones.org](http://www.milestones.org).

*Hannah Harp is the communications and digital content coordinator at Milestones Autism Resources.*

LIBRARIES continued from page 1

Wilson found inspiration for the idea in an article she read about a nonprofit in Harlem, Barbershop Books, whose mission is to boost literacy for African-American boys ages 4–8 by creating kid-friendly reading spaces in barbershops.

She reached out to Patrick Freed, who has operated Freestyles Barbershop, 2853 Noble Road, for 16 years. Freed, whose shop is within walking distance of the library's Noble Neighborhood branch, said he didn't hesitate to partner with the library.

"I'm an educator, my license areas are in ELA [English Language Arts] and social studies, so reading is incredibly important to me," said Freed, who teaches at Lake Erie Preparatory School, a K–8 charter school in Cleveland's South Collinwood neighborhood. "The minute Monica mentioned it to me, I knew it was a good idea. It's right up my alley."

Freed said customers are enjoying the book collection: "They are very pleased with it. It gives them the opportunity to read something besides the magazines here, and the selection Monica brings is good—she makes sure we have the right books for our culture."

"Most of what I bring is for youth—children and teens," said Wilson. "But I also check out some adult books for the shop. Since they're reading while waiting for a cut, I don't bring novels or anything with dense text. I bring over things that can be skimmed or read piecemeal based on time and interest. I also try to bring over nonfiction that is helpful for guiding teens toward their future and succeeding in the present. For the younger children, I bring over board books, picture books, and first-readers featuring diverse characters."

"Kids are really attracted to the books," said Freed, adding that he often sees parents helping his young customers pick out books. Comic books are "a real draw," noted Freed. "The little bitty kids are really drawn to the colors and the titles."

Wilson also works with Antonio Stewart, who runs Premier Barber Lounge, 2187 Noble Road.



Heights Libraries Youth Services Associate Monica Wilson at Premier Barber Lounge with her book collection.

"What I like about having a library inside of my barbershop is that it gives children, adults, and even the barbers a chance to be entertained by something besides technology," said Stewart. "And the children always come back looking forward to finishing the book they read when they were in the shop last."

"I love working with Patrick and Antonio," said Wilson. "They're good partners for outreach because they're community-minded and want to be an enriching influence in our community—to meet kids where they're at—which is what I think the library does well, too."

Barbershops and libraries also offer what people in the public library world call a "third place"—a place besides home and work (or school for kids) where they can go to feel welcome, connect with others, and enrich their lives.

"It's my hope that having a tiny rotating library in the barbershops is an extension of the 'third place' phenomenon," said Wilson. "Sharing our books so people have a chance to read something outside of the context of work or school helps to present reading as a choice and not a chore."

*Sheryl Banks is the communications manager for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.*

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# Then and now: Superior and Lee roads

Korbi Roberts

Shown here are 1909 and 2017 photographs of the same view in Cleveland Heights looking eastward on Superior Road toward Lee Road, with Forest View Drive coming off to the right.

Today, the intersection of Lee and Superior roads is home to a Sunoco gas station, an Uptown Mart, and the main entrance of Cain Park. Off to the right of the 2017 picture are two homes in the historic Grant Deming’s Forest Hill neighborhood (not to be confused with the other nearby Forest Hill that the Rockefellers created in the 1920s and 1930s.). Grant Wilson Deming created this “first” Forest Hill neighborhood in 1909, and it was added to the National Register of Historic places in 2010, thanks to the work of local historian J. Mark Souther.

As shown in the 1909 photograph, most Heights roads at the time were still dirt and mud; later, Lee and Superior roads would be brick while most others would be macadam. In the photo, Deming and a business associate are heading westward on Superior Road in a chauffeur-driven REO touring car. They were on a mission to advertise the newly laid-out Forest Hill Allotment to middle-upper class families searching for the American dream home away from the city, with



A 1909 photo of Superior and Lee roads.

“pure air and fine views.” The newly built sales office can be seen behind them, on Lee Road, and a sign for the planned Forest View Drive is just outside of the photo’s right frame.

House lots started at just \$600. Attractive and architecturally eclectic homes were built on each lot—most of which are still standing.

Grant W. Deming was one of several brothers who developed many residential neighborhoods in Cleveland and Cleveland Heights. He planned his Forest Hill neighborhood over old farmland and meadows, and divided it into upwards of 700 lots. Within decades, the lots were filled with homes as the Heights’ population increased almost exponentially.

The outer boundaries of Deming’s Forest Hill neighborhood are roughly Lee Road, Cedar Road, Coventry Road, Euclid Heights Bou-



A 2017 photo of the same intersection.

levard, Lincoln Boulevard, and Superior Road, with major inner streets Edgehill, E. Overlook, Berkshire and Yorkshire roads, and Washington Boulevard.

The allotment boasted a unique feature. In 1915, to facilitate the sale of the properties, a “dinky” street car line was built with one “Toonerville trolley” in service. Its tracks were laid along the median of Washington Boulevard, from Coventry Road to Lee Road. It was the shortest streetcar line in the Cleveland area. By 1922, declining profits and an incident in which a bunch of boys derailed it after a joy ride in the dark sealed the trolley line’s fate.

In the early 1800s, the area around the Superior and Lee intersection was still untouched forest, owned by Henry Champion of Connecticut (Moses Cleaveland’s brother-in-law). The land was divided up into smaller

parcels and sold to pioneers who hand built cabins and shooed away wolves, bears and snakes (or added them to the stewpot).

Robert Young, an early resident and farmer, set up a water-powered sawmill in the ravine of Dugway Brook (to the left in the pictures). The stream now runs underground in pipes under Lee Road and through Cain Park.

As the farming era progressed, families with names like Welch (farmers) and Duty (brickmakers) farmed the neighborhood. In the mid- to late-1800s, Dr. Worthy Streater owned a large section and had most of the remaining forest chopped down for sale as railroad ties. Streater turned his land near Coventry Road into meadowland and ran a celebrated stock farm with thoroughbred cattle and sheep. The Lee Road side was the farm of James Haycox, who ran a dairy and also a quarry on Dugway Brook, just east of Lee Road (now filled over, with Cain Park built on top). Part of the Haycox farm can be seen in the 1909 photo, in the distance.

Deming died in 1935, at his last home in Chagrin Falls. He is buried in an unmarked grave in Lake View Cemetery.

*Korbi Roberts is a trustee of the Cleveland Heights Historical Society and invites you to become a member or volunteer.*

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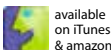
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## HBC plans Dec. 3 holiday gathering

Joy Henderson

The annual Heights Bicycle Coalition's (HBC) Holiday Party, on Dec. 3, 6-8 p.m., will be a celebration of cycling, offering attendees a chance to meet other cyclists and learn about a specific aspect of the sport.

All interested bicycle riders are invited. The party will be held at The Fairmount Bar and Restaurant, 2448 Fairmount Blvd.

The event will be held in the side room, where light appetizers will be provided. Other menu and bar items will be available for purchase.

In addition to social time with other cyclists, the program will fea-

ture a guest speaker and an update on HBC's recent work.

HBC formed in 2010 to make the Heights area more bicycle friendly. The group's mission is to educate and encourage residents to use bicycles as a sustainable and healthy form of transportation and recreation.

For more information, contact HBC at [chbikecoalition@gmail.com](mailto:chbikecoalition@gmail.com).

*Joy Henderson is a founding member of the Heights Bicycle Coalition and serves on its board.*



## LEI has 'The Write Stuff' for December

Maya Watkins

Lake Erie Ink (LEI), the local writing space for youth in the former Coventry School building, is offering several opportunities for creative expression in December. On Dec. 4, LEI is holding a college essay workshop for interested teens. Evening Ink workshops will be held on Dec. 6 and Dec. 13, and there will be an Open Mic Night on Dec. 15. Over winter break, LEI will host Creative Play Days for students in grades 2-5.

Jill Levin, LEI's program director, believes that creative expression outside academic work "provides a chance [for youngsters] to make something entirely apart from the context of grades or adult approval, allowing kids to explore more about themselves." She thinks school breaks are a great time for writing.

As a way to inspire young people who love to tell stories, LEI provides a few writing prompts to help get creativity flowing during winter break:

*It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single Dragon in possession of a good board, must be in want of a mate.* This prompt comes from [writing-prompt-s.tumblr.com/](http://writing-prompt-s.tumblr.com/), a veritable gold mine of funny and strange writing prompts.

If historical fiction interests the young writer in your house, LEI suggests the following prompt: *Write a scene in which a favorite historical figure*



Creative juices flow at Lake Erie Ink.

*is guided to greatness by an imp residing behind his or her ear.*

*Roots and Branches* is the theme for this year's Lake Erie Ink teen book project. Greater Cleveland teens in grades 6-12 are welcome to submit any writing or art based on this theme. Organized and edited by a teen board, the book will be published in the spring.

For more information on LEI's December events and writing programs for youth, go to [www.lakeerie-ink.org](http://www.lakeerie-ink.org).

*Maya Watkins is a staff member at Lake Erie Ink.*

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# Coventry plans Holiday Fest Dec. 9



Coventry Claus poses with a canine visitor.

COURTESY ANGELA HETRICK

Angela Hetrick

The Coventry Village neighborhood encourages everyone to shop local and get in the holiday spirit with a full day of free holiday events.

The 5th annual Coventry Village Holiday Festival will take place on Saturday, Dec. 9, noon to 11 p.m.

Among the many festivities scheduled are:

- Photos with Santa, Rudolph, Frosty and The Grinch;
- Ice-carving demonstrations;
- Coventry Holiday Cash coupon machine;

- Coventry merchant holiday window contest—take a stroll down Coventry Road and vote for your favorite;
- Lolly the Trolley Holiday Light Tour (proceeds to benefit Heights Emergency Food Center);
- Winter storytime, holiday crafts, live music and karaoke;
- Outdoor fire with community caroling, complimentary hot chocolate and coffee;
- Holiday storytellers and poets roaming through the shops and sidewalks;
- Ugly-sweater bar crawl, led by Coventry Claus; and
- Instagram Scavenger Hunt—win prizes from your favorite Coventry spots.

In addition to the festival events, the Coventry Village merchants are joining in the fun and will host a variety of unique sales and special events in their stores. Free parking will be available at metered spaces on the day of the festival.

For a full list of special events, times and other details, visit [www.coventryvillage.org](http://www.coventryvillage.org).

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

## Support district's businesses and earn Coventry Cash

Angela Hetrick

This holiday season, shoppers can earn a \$10 Coventry Cash Coupon for every \$50 they spend on a single receipt at participating Coventry Village locations. The coupons can be used at participating locations in January.

The promotion will be offered on select weekend dates through the end of the year. Simply look for the Coventry Cash Coupon signs posted outside the parking garage on Coventry Road.

Valid day-of-purchase receipts can be redeemed for Coventry

Cash Coupons from noon to 6 p.m. with the Coventry Village Holiday Ambassadors, who will be stationed outside the main parking garage. (Please note, a limited number of Coventry Cash Coupons will be distributed.)

The Coventry Village ambassadors will also be available to help shoppers find the perfect gift, make dining and shopping suggestions, and share information about special events and sales happening throughout the district.

Learn more at [www.coventryvillage.org](http://www.coventryvillage.org).

## Baby Gym reopens at Peace Lutheran

Jessica Shields

Peace Lutheran Church will reopen its Baby Gym on Saturday, Dec. 2. The gym offers a place where parents can play with their children and connect with other parents in a relaxed atmosphere.

The gym is free and open to the public on Saturday mornings, 10 a.m. to noon. Children must be 6 or younger and accompanied by a parent or caregiver.

The gym offers slides, climbers and tunnels for the development of gross motor skills. A separate playroom features a kitchen set, tool bench, dress-up clothes, and other age-appropriate toys for dramatic play.

Over the years, families from various neighborhoods in and around the Heights have utilized

the Baby Gym.

Peace Lutheran Church also has a Baby Shop, which offers—free of charge—gently used toys, baby items and children's clothing, sizes newborn to 6X. The shop is open on Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to noon.

The Baby Shop welcomes donations of new or gently used baby items and clothing Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., or when Baby Gym is open. (No mattresses or large furniture will be accepted.)

Peace Lutheran Church is located at 3740 Mayfield Road in Cleveland Heights. For more information, call 216-382-4545.

*Jessica Shields is a pastor at Peace Lutheran Church. She has lived in Cleveland Heights since moving to this region in 2007.*

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### CHRISTMAS DAY

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### NEW YEARS DAY

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# Forest Hill Presbyterian presents Christmas opera

Peg Weissbrod

The classic Christmas opera *Amahl and the Night Visitors* will be performed at Forest Hill Presbyterian Church on Saturday, Dec. 9, at 7 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 10, at 4 p.m. Admission is free.

Gian-Carlo Menotti's Christmas opera tells the story of Amahl, a disabled boy with a habit of telling imaginative tales. When Amahl and his impoverished mother are visited by three kings, faith and forgiveness lead to an emotional miracle.

In keeping with Menotti's request that Amahl always be played by a boy, not a young adult, 10-year-old



Henry Dyck as Amahl.



Henry Dyck as Amahl, Jack Lentz as The Page, and Lara Troyer as Amahl's mother.

Henry Dyck again will sing the role of Amahl, alongside his own mother, soprano Lara Troyer, as Amahl's mother.

Troyer, a former associate artist with Cleveland Opera, is on the voice faculty at Kent State University, and her recent roles include solos with the Akron Symphony.

Forest Hill Church Music Director Anne Wilson describes Dyck as having perfect pitch and uncommon skill in jazz improvisation. "The duets he sings with his mother will bring a tear to the eye of every listener," she said.

Other *Amahl* performers include Cleveland Heights residents Carl Jenks and Jack Lentz, along with Mist'a Craig, Frank Ward and accompanying oboist Cynthia Watson. Dyck's younger sister, 8-year-old Margaret, plays a shepherd in the opera.

Forest Hill Church is located at 3031 Monticello Blvd. For additional information, call 216-321-2660 or visit [www.fhcpresb.org](http://www.fhcpresb.org).

*Peg Weissbrod is a freelance writer and publicity coordinator for Forest Hill Church in Cleveland Heights.*

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## Beth El hosts Hanukkah mystery and dinner Dec. 17

Carol Bruml

Latkes and . . . larceny? This is not your usual Hanukkah dinner.

On Sunday, Dec. 17, beginning at 4:30 p.m., Beth El – The Heights Synagogue invites you to eat, shmooze and solve the "Mystery of the Missing Menorah," as it hosts a unique Hanukkah mystery and dinner.

Throughout the dinner—a four-course kosher vegetarian meal, including latkes and other traditional Hanukkah foods—guests will work in groups to solve the mystery. Those gathered will light Hanukkah menorahs as a group, between courses.

According to event chair, Scott Wachter, "There are many Hanukkah parties in Cleveland. There are also mystery and dinner events. We believe that ours is the first Jewish mystery and dinner in the

city. Participants will have a unique opportunity to celebrate the holiday while using their problem-solving skills to figure out who stole a special Hanukkah menorah."

The entire community is invited. The cost is \$20 for adults, and \$5 for children 6–12 (children under 6 attend free of charge) if you register by Dec. 7. The cost for walk-ins is \$30. For more information, and to register, e-mail [info@bethelheights.org](mailto:info@bethelheights.org) or call 216-320-9667.

Beth El – The Heights Synagogue is an independent minyan that is participatory, traditional and egalitarian in worship and in learning. The synagogue is located at 3246 Desota Ave., in Cleveland Heights.

*Carol Bruml is the communications chair and newsletter editor for Beth El - The Heights Synagogue.*

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## District hosts national conference on minority achievement



Jaylin Coleman, Jaylen Chesney and Christine Roberts (from left) were part of the MSAN conference's planning team.

Joy Henderson

Heights High seniors Jaylin Coleman, Jaylen Chesney and Christine Roberts were part of the 15-member Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) student leadership team that planned MSAN's national conference. Hosted by the Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, the conference took place Oct. 18-21 at a Beachwood hotel.

The leadership team worked with Heights High's three MSAN advisors, O'Dasha Blue, Shawn Washington and Nate Williams; the district's Educational Services

Department; and MSAN national staff, based in Madison, Wis. They selected keynote speakers, outlined the action planning process and icebreaker activities, and organized the talent show and college visits to Cleveland State University, Case Western Reserve University, and Kent State University.

There are 70 students in the Heights High MSAN club. Approximately 260 elementary, middle and high schools students attended the conference, from 21 school districts, including Cambridge, Mass., and Princeton, N.J.

Conference attendees discussed

the barriers that students of color face in their schools and districts, networked with students from across the country to craft solutions, shared ideas about how to motivate students and staff to meet their potential, and developed action plans to implement their ideas when they return home.

MSAN is a national coalition of multiracial, suburban-urban school districts that works to eliminate the achievement opportunity gaps in schools. The CH-UH City School District is a founding member of the organization, and hosted its first national conference in 2000.

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

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## Canterbury students send care packages to wildfire victims



Canterbury fourth-graders with a care package that they sent to a California school.

Cathan Cavanaugh

Fourth-grade students at Canterbury Elementary School were saddened to hear about the wildfires in California, and were shocked when their teachers told them 70 percent of the teachers and children at a fellow IB (International Baccalaureate) school in Napa, Calif., were now without homes. The students thought it would be nice to send them personal care packages, so they brought in toothbrushes, tissues, wipes, toilet paper, hand towels and other comfort items.

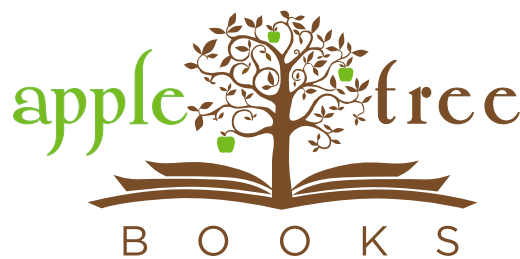
The students sent handwritten notes of encouragement and two gift cards to the children at Bel Aire

Park Elementary School. Students also brought in canned food and toys, which were donated to a local food drive and a women's shelter.

"Parents in CH-UH should be proud of the caring students we are all raising!" said Melissa Garcar, IB coordinator for the district.

The IB program encourages students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners. Canterbury Elementary School was named an authorized IB school in July 2016.

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



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HOMES OF DISTINCTION



# Heights High hosts Dec. 21 open house and concert



The restored, historic Heights High will be open to the community on Dec. 21.

Joy Henderson

The Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District invites community members and alumni to visit the renovated Cleveland Heights High School on Dec. 21, 6–7 p.m., for a self-guided, open house tour.

Visitors will receive a map, and friendly docents will be stationed throughout the building to help guide the guests.

At 7 p.m., visitors are invited to

attend a concert by Heights High’s Gospel Choir—an extracurricular club that performs traditional and modern gospel music at school and in the community.

Tickets for the concert, which will take place in the school’s auditorium, are \$6.

The open house tour is free. Hot cocoa and cookies will be served.

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

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

OCTOBER 17, 2017

President Ron Register, Vice President Kal Zucker, Jim Posch, Eric Silverman and Beverly Wright were present, as were Superintendent Talisa Dixon, Treasurer Scott Gainer, and Allison Byrd of educational services.

### State report card data analysis: part two

[Part one of the report card data was presented at the Sept. 19 board meeting.]

Allison Byrd, director of data, research and assessment, gave a slide presentation on the final three components of the state report card data. The Cleveland Heights-University Heights district has internal grade and classroom assessments that include working with the “whole” student in academics and arts. External assessments are state testing and the report cards, which don’t assess the whole student. The state report card, released Sept. 14, has six components: gap closing, progress, K–3 literacy, achievement, graduation rate, and prepared for success. Each component has 10 measures. Byrd discussed the achievement, graduation rate, and prepared-for-success components, and compared district results to state, Cuyahoga County, and first-ring school districts (Bedford, Berea, Brooklyn, Cleveland Heights-University Heights, Cuyahoga Heights, East Cleveland, Euclid, Fairview Park, Garfield Heights, Lakewood, Maple Heights, Parma, Richmond Heights, Shaker Heights, South Euclid-Lyndhurst, and Warrensville Heights).

The district received a “D” for achievement, as did 51 percent of districts in the state and 50 percent of first-ring districts. The district has addressed this grade by adopting proper materials, having more grade-level meetings, and having school visits with education service teams.

Based on the graduation class cohort model, which describes how many ninth-graders enter the system and graduate, the district was rated as “F” in the “prepared for success” component, as [were] 15 percent of state districts and 50 percent of first-ring districts. The criteria for success are honors diplomas, remediation-free scores on ACT or SAT, advanced placement, dual enrollment and International Baccalaureate program, and industry credentials such as career tech. The district is addressing this grade by encouraging students to earn high school and college credit through many career tech options and taking courses at colleges such as John Carroll University.

The district earned a “C” on the graduation rate component, as [did] 10 percent of districts in the state and 31 percent of first-ring districts. To address this deficiency, the district has developed a five-year strategic plan to collect data and identify strategies of feedback, focusing resources, and exploring college readiness. [It is] monitoring key data points, such as credits earned, test performance and attendance.

[A PDF of this work session presentation can be found on the Board Docs page of the district website: [www.chuh.org/boardofeducation](http://www.chuh.org/boardofeducation); click on BoardDocs, the meeting date, and then on “View the agenda.”]

LWV Observer: Lillian Houser.

NOVEMBER 6, 2017

President Ron Register, Vice President Kal Zucker, Jim Posch, Eric Silverman and Beverly Wright were present, as were Superintendent Talisa Dixon and Treasurer Scott Gainer.

### Authorization to use consent agenda

To more efficiently use meeting time, the board authorized the use of a consent agenda that follows parliamentary procedure and Robert’s Rules of Order. This agenda bundles several items for board approval by a single motion and includes personnel, education services, and business services. Documentation concerning these items is provided to all board members and the public in advance, and items may be removed at the request of any board member.

### Consent agenda

At this meeting, the board used the consent agenda to approve personnel matters, two student field trips, seven donations, the 2017–18 activity budget and purpose statements, and the resolution of payment of purchase orders exceeding \$3,000.

[There was no discussion of any of these items, but all can be accessed through the district’s website, [www.chuh.org/boardofeducation](http://www.chuh.org/boardofeducation); click on BoardDocs.]

### Jon Peterson scholarships

Director of Student Services Karen Liddell discussed the Jon Peterson special needs and autism scholarships, an Ohio voucher program. She discussed local district dollars going to providers outside the district. These scholarships cover various disability areas, such as speech, language, hearing and vision impairments, brain injury, autism, and multiple handicaps. They can be applied for throughout the year, and state dollars for the 2017–18 school year total \$1.8 million, with 168 Heights students receiving these scholarships. In the 2012–13 school year, only 27 students applied. The Ohio Board of Education works with 53 providers in Cuyahoga County that encourage eligible students to apply. However, the school district already provides many of these services. Other counties have far fewer providers. So far this year, 31 students have applied for an autism scholarship.

### District calendars

District calendars for the 2018–19 and 2019–20 school years were discussed. The board asked questions about in-service days, three-day weekends, closing of the school on Election Day, and Christian holidays. The community can give input on the calendars on the district website [through the website’s Infinite Campus link].

LWV Observer: Lillian Houser.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org). See disclaimer on page 8.

Heights Observer December 1, 2017

18

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# Sherlock Holmes inspires play and exhibit

Jay Rosen

This December, Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System and Dobama Theatre have joined forces to honor Sherlock Holmes, the legendary detective first penned by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in 1887.

Through Dec. 30, Dobama will host the regional premiere of “Sherlock Holmes: The Baker Street Irregulars,” a show that focuses on “a gang of street kids” employed by Holmes to scout out missions and help solve cases. When Holmes mysteriously disappears and a young girl’s grandmother is abducted, the Irregulars work to track down the detective and settle an urgent mystery from their past.

“We’re thrilled for the debut of this show,” said Nathan Motta, director of “The Baker Street Irregulars” and artistic director at Dobama. “It has classic elements from older Sherlock Holmes tales, but will still appeal to folks who are less familiar with the series. It also uses lights, projections and motorized elements in a unique and exciting way.”

Although the play deals with serious social issues—family conflict and class struggle are central to the narrative—folks of all ages and backgrounds are encouraged to attend the performance. “We try and produce a show like this around the holidays, so families can do something together at the theater,” said Motta.

The play is based on two graphic novels by Tony Lee and Dan Boulton, and adapted by acclaimed Cleveland Heights playwright Eric Coble, whose award-winning plays have been produced across the country, including on Broadway.

“It’s a real treat to be working with Eric, particularly on a show that features so many young and bright actors who are newer to the craft. Everyone’s brought a level of focus and commitment that’s truly impressive,” commented Motta.

While “The Baker Street Irregulars” runs at Dobama, Heights Libraries will offer a Sherlock



The author of this article, Jay Rosen, uses the library’s display to pose as Sherlock Holmes.

Holmes-themed interactive display in the Lee Road branch’s art gallery.

Included in the display is a life-sized vignette of a Victorian parlor featuring cutouts of Holmes and his sidekick, Dr. Watson, and notable quotes from past Holmes stories and films. In an effort to make the cutouts as authentic as possible, Heights Libraries staff visited Great Lakes Theater’s costume shop and photographed Victorian-style clothes.

Library

and theater customers are encouraged to pose for selfies in the cutouts, and “become Sherlock and Watson for a few minutes,” said Victor Cimperman, a graphic designer at Heights Libraries who created the pieces in the exhibit.

The gallery display also features an interactive touch screen highlighting different portrayals over the years of Holmes and Watson, on television and in film.

“We’re hoping this display will encourage our customers to interact with Sherlock Holmes,” said Cimperman, “whether they grew up watching Basil Rathbone in the 1940s or are just now getting into the series.”

To purchase tickets for the play, go to [www.dobama.org/sherlock](http://www.dobama.org/sherlock) or call 216-932-3396. To experience Heights Libraries’ Sherlock Holmes display, visit the Lee Road branch’s art gallery whenever the library is open.

Jay Rosen is communications coordinator at Heights Libraries.



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# FFHL inducts two to honor roll



Fund for the Future of Heights Libraries Honor Roll class of 2017 inductees Marilyn McLaughlin and John Jarvey at the Nov. 5 banquet in their honor.

Matthew Ginn

One has reached thousands of students in the classroom. The other has handled thousands of books in the library basement. Both were inducted into the newly created Fund for the Future of Heights Libraries (FFHL) Honor Roll on Nov. 5 at John Carroll University.

Marilyn McLaughlin was inducted as a “mind opener” for her long service teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in the Heights, and John Jarvey’s countless hours of volunteering and leadership with the Friends of Heights Libraries earned him recognition as a “door opener.”

FFHL created the honor roll to recognize those who have made sustained, outstanding contributions to the community by enabling access to literacy or by educating through literacy. About 50 people braved the stormy weather to attend the inaugural FFHL banquet, which featured entertainment by violinist Ariel Clayton Karas.

Rob Fischer, FFHL president, welcomed those in attendance, and Louisa Oliver, a volunteer and former president of the Friends of Heights Libraries, introduced Jarvey. She described the hours Jarvey, a retired teacher, spends sorting books for the Friends and distributing surplus materials to local hospitals, while also making time for other volunteer work.

Jarvey spoke about how popular the Friends’ book donations are at local medical centers and how important they are to children. Speaking of the other Friends volunteers he helps organize, he cited the well-known phrase that “volunteers are unpaid, not because

they are worthless, but because they are priceless.”

McLaughlin was introduced by Hana Voris, who worked alongside McLaughlin at Aspire Greater Cleveland. She spoke of McLaughlin’s long service in teaching ESOL, starting with Soviet refuseniks in the 1970s, and how she made a real difference in her students’ lives by helping them to understand American ways and culture.

In her speech, McLaughlin recalled her time as the president of the Teachers of ESOL’s adult education section, which began just before the Sept. 11 attacks. Her first newsletter message to that group, published just after the attacks, warned that it would be a difficult year to be an ESOL teacher, and extolled her readers to “keep up the good work.” She reflected that integrating into American life has only become more difficult for immigrants since.

Fischer rounded out the evening by speaking about FFHL and its mission, which is to raise funds for the long-term capital needs of the library system. He distinguished FFHL from the Friends of Heights Libraries by comparing them to two pockets: The Friends pocket has money for the library’s day-to-day operating needs, while the FFHL pocket has the savings for capital projects.

Nancy Levin, Heights Libraries director, made closing remarks and invited guests to visit the system’s newly renovated University Heights branch.

*Matthew Ginn is a photographer, writer and analyst living in Cleveland Heights since 2013. He is on the board of the Fund for the Future of Heights Libraries.*

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

OCTOBER 16, 2017

Present were President Ron Holland, Vice President Abby Botnick, Secretary Chris Mentrek, Jim Roosa and Max Gerboc. Susan Beatty and Suzann Mozkowitz were absent.

### Financial report

The estimated 2018 Public Library Fund entitlement for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System is \$2,513,007.04, which reflects an increase of \$7,444.77 from 2017. This amount reflects a decrease of \$30,458.92 from 2015.

The fiscal officer reviewed, and the board accepted, the September financial statement. The total of cash balances across the operating, Bauer Fund, and investment accounts at the end of September was \$14,052,141.05.

### Staffing

Laurie Marotta updated staffing changes, which includes filling five vacancies since the September board meeting. Four vacancies remain. University Heights Library staff has returned to the renovated branch. Gloria Nobles, full-time circulation assistant, retired at the end of October. A resolution honoring her years of service was presented.

### Flu shots for employees

The library will be providing flu shots to employees and their spouses on Oct. 19 at the Lee Road building. If the employee doesn’t have coverage for the vaccination, the library will cover the cost (\$25 per shot).

### Web and social media activity

Sheryl Banks, communications manager, provided a quarterly update (July through September) of the libraries’ Web and social media statistics:

- Unique website visitors are up by 3 percent from the last quarter.
- Overall website visits are also up more



than 3 percent (21,943) from last quarter’s average of 21,237.

- Facebook fans rose by a little more than 3 percent, from 2,596 to 2,684.
- Twitter followers were up by 1 percent, to 1,481; favorites and retweets continue.
- Instagram followers were up by 12 percent, from 224 at the end of June to 255 at the end of September.

### One Community Reads

Heights Libraries will participate in One Community Reads from Jan. 15 through March 15. This collaboration among the City Club of Cleveland, Playhouse Square, and nine public library systems will create a shared reading experience based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond. Heights Libraries will participate with a food drive, book discussions, a fair housing discussion, and the appearance of Desmond, by streaming, on March 15. Heights Libraries is also partnering with Heights Emergency Food Bank, Lake Erie Ink, Bellefaire JCB, Mac’s Backs and Heights Community Congress on these programs.

### University Heights Library grand re-opening celebration

A grand re-opening of the University Heights Library branch will be held and open to the community on Nov. 12. Whole Foods will sponsor food for the event.

LWV Observer: Khaliah Fisher-Grace.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at [www.heightsobserver.org](http://www.heightsobserver.org). See disclaimer on page 8.

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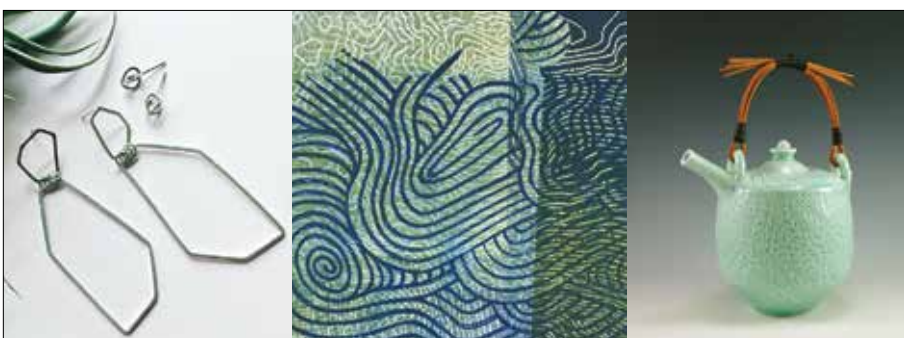
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# Transportation assistance is available to help local seniors

Judith Eugene

With inclement weather upon us, this can be a time of worry for seniors, who might be struggling to keep up with the cognitive and physical demands of driving, and their families.

According to the U. S. Department of Transportation's recently released statistics, fatal accidents involving senior drivers over the age of 65 increased by 8.2 percent in 2016.

Residents of Cleveland Heights and University Heights are fortunate to live in a walkable community. But when bad weather or physical limitations make that too difficult, there are several transportation alternatives available.

The city of Cleveland Heights has a medical van that runs Monday through Friday, 8:45 a.m. to 4:20 p.m., and transports residents ages 60

and older to medical appointments, shopping trips and errands. Call 216-691-7377 for more information.

The city of University Heights partners with Senior Transportation Connection to provide subsidized rides for residents to medical, social and personal appointments. Rides are available during the day, as well as evenings and weekends. Call 216-265-1489 for more information.

RTA offers discounted bus and train fares for passengers who are 65 and older. RTA also offers its Paratransit service for individuals unable to travel on public transit without assistance. For more information, visit [www.riderta.com/seniors](http://www.riderta.com/seniors).

GoGo Grandparent, a national transportation service, makes it possible to order on-demand transportation—Uber and Lyft—by telephone, without needing a smart phone app or computer. For more information,

call 855-GOGO-USA (855-464-6872).

When seniors and their families need help deciding if it is time to retire from driving, help is available. Keeping Us Safe is a program developed by a retired Ohio State trooper, dedicated to "saving lives . . . one family at a time." Its Beyond Driving with Dignity program is a three-hour, one-on-one driving self-assessment exercise, conducted in the comfort of the senior's residence. It includes several pen-and-paper cognitive and memory-related exercises, an actual on-road driving exercise in the senior's vehicle (assuming it is safe to do so) and an in-depth "learning conversation."

Colleen Beard, a Cleveland Heights resident and the owner of CareSpotlight, is a senior advocate and certified Beyond Driving

with Dignity professional. "It is an honor to work with senior drivers and their families, in the Heights community and beyond," said Beard. "This can be an extremely difficult and emotional conversation for many families to have with their loved one. Sometimes professional intervention and support is necessary."

Learn more at [www.carespotlight.com](http://www.carespotlight.com) or contact Beard at 216-659-5519 or [colleen@carespotlight.com](mailto:colleen@carespotlight.com). For more information on Keeping Us Safe, visit [www.keepingussafe.org](http://www.keepingussafe.org).

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

## CH Senior Center News

Amy Jenkins

A recent article in *The New York Times* spoke to the benefits of dance for exercise, especially as one ages. The demands of learning new steps, the benefits of the movement, and the social engagement that occurs while dancing all contribute to increased health.

The Cleveland Heights Senior Activity Center (SAC) offers a variety of opportunities to dance. Among them is a class on Argentine tango, a social dance based on natural walk that can be enjoyed and danced by adults well into their 90s. Ann Dobyns and Charles Scillia teach the basics of the tango, and a bit about its history and the culture in which it developed.

Wes Senseman teaches English Country Dance—traditional dance and music from the British Isles.

Line Dance, taught by Gladys McGlothlin, promotes physical fitness through dance exercise and contemporary music.

In Dance 101, Leslie Keller leads the group in an exploration of movement, expression and improvisation.

No partners are needed for any of these dance classes. Some are free; some charge a small fee. Call, e-mail or check SAC's online calendar for

further information about these and other senior center classes, and please let us know if there is a dance form not offered that interests you. We hope to see you dancing in 2018!

SAC, located in the Cleveland Heights Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers a variety of programming for those 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](http://www.clevelandheights.com).

SAC membership is \$5 for Cleveland Heights residents 60 and older. To sign up, bring a recent piece of mail (such as a bill) and a photo ID.

University Heights residents who would like to join SAC must first register with Patrick Grogan-Myers, University Heights community development coordinator, at 216-932-7800, ext. 203, or [pgrogan@universityheights.com](mailto:pgrogan@universityheights.com). Membership is \$10 for University Heights seniors.

*Amy Jenkins is supervisor at the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging and the Senior Activity Center. She can be reached at 216-691-7379 or by e-mail at [ajenkins@clvhts.com](mailto:ajenkins@clvhts.com).*

## UH Senior Happenings

Senior Happenings, sponsored by the city of University Heights, are open to all senior citizens. Events take place on Thursdays at 2 p.m. at the University Heights Library. To receive the monthly schedule by e-mail, call 216-932-7800, ext. 205, or send an e-mail to [info@universityheights.com](mailto:info@universityheights.com).

**Dec. 2:** Christopher Dawson, senior prospect researcher for University Hospitals, will highlight the 150-year history of this Northeast Ohio health care institution. It provides vital health care services, an academic medical center for advanced treat-

ment options, and ground-breaking research and education for the next generation of clinicians.

**Dec. 14:** Matthew Clarboreau, chair of the Center for Music at The Music Settlement, will perform with Linda Allen and Cathleen Bohn. Their recital will feature "Music Gems from Past Eras," a nostalgia-filled musical journey complete with the old "chestnuts" from the turn of the century and early 1900s.

With the approach of the holidays, there will be no Senior Happenings on Dec. 21 and Dec. 28. Best wishes for the holidays and New Year!

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## Boss Dog brewery opens on Lee



Brothers Jason (with scissors) and Josh (holding child near top) Sweet were joined by family and close supporters as they cut the ribbon on Nov. 3 to officially open their Boss Dog Brewing Co. in the Lee Road Business District, at 2179 Lee Road. Construction of the brewery and restaurant took 18 months.



Brewer Josh Hustek checks the process temperature in the brewing area of the new Boss Dog Brewing Co.

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- Ice skating, music, and Santa on The Rink at Wade Oval
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- Visit many of University Circle's museums, churches, schools, and cultural institutions for FREE (1-5:30 p.m.)
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## Creatures and Clay opens at St. Paul's gallery

Robin Outcalt

On Friday, Dec. 1, St. Paul's Episcopal Church hosts an opening reception for a new show by four Cleveland artists, on view through Feb. 25 in the church's Nicholson B. White Gallery. *Creatures and Clay* features the work of Maggie Denk-Leigh, Sarah Johnston Knoblauch, Julie Friedman and Greg Aliberti. The artists will be on hand at the opening, 5-7 p.m.

Maggie Denk-Leigh is an associate professor at the Cleveland Institute of Art. She works in the printmaking department there, and with the Morgan Conservatory. The processes she uses currently are lithography and screen-printing. In this show, Denk-Leigh presents new works on paper depicting animals inhabiting simple backgrounds, or in artistic décor around us. Some of her unique pieces draw from details within the space at St. Paul's.

Sarah Johnston Knoblauch, a Cleveland Heights resident and a member of St. Paul's, works in watercolor. Knoblauch has put together



Family Photos, by Julie Friedman.

an exquisite selection of paintings in which animals, and the places they inhabit, come together in a natural and peaceful way. Her travels and love of animals have inspired her. A former middle school art teacher, Knoblauch continues to teach watercolor painting to children and adults in the community.

Julie Friedman, an artist from Medina, brings to the show a different kind of view of animals in our world. Cats, dogs, fish and birds are depicted inside homes and interior places. This coexistence sometimes appears peaceful, but often not. Her canvases convey a sense of disarray and discord. Creatures are seen as intruders. An adjunct professor of art at three colleges, Friedman works with multiple media in her artwork. In this show, viewers will see her recent acrylic paintings on canvas.

Ceramist Greg Aliberti, a resident of Shaker Heights, produces ceramic works for residential, commercial and public spaces. His designs in clay are attractive and distinctive, and his use of color is rich and vibrant. This show will feature a range of creations that includes handmade planters, a fountain, decorative tiles and functional tables. His works are suitable for use inside and out, standing up to all elements of nature.

The artwork is for sale, and the artists receive all proceeds from the sale of their work.

*Creatures and Clay* runs through Feb. 25 at the Nicholson B. White Gallery at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 2747 Fairmount Blvd. The gallery is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on weekends, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Robin Outcalt is co-director of the Nicholson B. White Gallery.

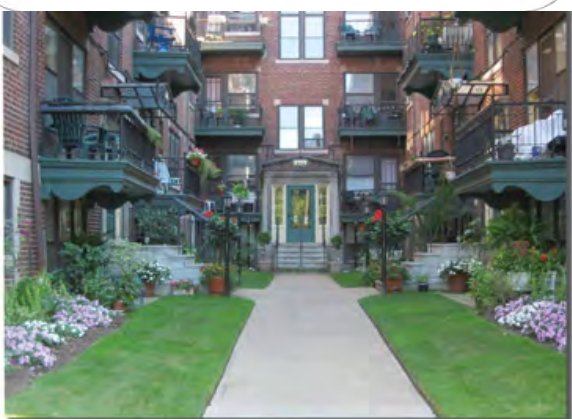
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# Next Manly Monday shopping night is Dec. 11 at Heights Arts



Perry Zeigler and granddaughter Olive Young shop at the 16th-annual holiday store.

Mary Ryan

Ever wish you could create a list of special things made by local artists so that people would know what to

give you for the holidays? Heights Arts has it figured out—with personal gift wish lists and some special shopping nights planned for its 16th-annual holiday store.

On Manly Mondays, idea-challenged shoppers (of all ages and genders) are invited to join Heights Arts to sip some local artisan brew and shop from their friends' wish lists, or go beyond the lists and make their own creative shopping choices. The first Manly Monday was held in November, with an encore night planned for Monday, Dec. 11, from 6 to 9 p.m.

Complimentary gift wrapping is available to complete each package, so you may never again need to tape over a box from Amazon.

Shoppers should be sure to visit Heights Arts to fill out or update holiday store wish lists in advance of Manly Monday, so the lists are on file for your gift-giving friends and relatives.

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

## Apollo's Fire presents *Christmas on Sugarloaf Mountain* program



Apollo's Fire performs its Christmas program.

Melanie Emig

To ring in the holiday season, Apollo's Fire presents the world premier Christmas rendition of its popular countryside program. *Christmas on Sugarloaf Mountain* celebrates the Celtic roots of an Appalachian Christmas, with shape note hymns, folk carols, Gregorian chant of old Scotland, and lively dance tunes. It expands upon the original concept, with a larger cast of characters, additional instruments and a chorus and children's voices.

Artistic Director Jeannette Sorrell will lead a familiar cast, including Amanda Powell and Ross Hauck, as they evoke the journey of the Irish and Scottish immigrants who built new lives in the Appalachian hills.

The concert will be performed locally on Dec. 8 at the Cleveland Museum of Art and Dec. 9 at the

First Baptist Church in Shaker Heights. The Shaker Heights performance will be followed by a free Afterglow reception with the artists. Additional performances include Dec. 2 in Akron, Dec. 3 in Willoughby Hills, and Dec. 10 in Bay Village.

As a part of its Community Access Initiative, the group is offering reduced price "presto" seats at \$12. Apollo's Fire will also be offering free student rush tickets to all performances, depending upon availability. Tickets and more information are available at [www.apollofire.org](http://www.apollofire.org).

Melanie Emig, Apollo's Fire's patron services associate, holds a bachelor's degree in vocal performance and a master's degree in opera theater from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. She currently maintains a Suzuki piano studio at The Music Settlement.

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# Ensemble brings 'The Little Prince' to its stage

Tyler Whidden

Any parent with Netflix can probably attest to the positive effect the film version of *The Little Prince* has on children. Engaging storytelling, beautiful animation, and the powerful message mesmerizes kids without the use of superheroes or extravagant special effects.



COURTESY ENSEMBLE THEATRE

Ensemble Theatre, continuing its 38th season, is bringing the staged version of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's seminal 1943 novella to Cleveland Heights when "The Little Prince" opens in its Playground Theatre on Dec. 1.

Following the success of last year's "The Phantom Toll Booth," Ensemble has brought back director Brittni Shambaugh Addison for its production of "The Little Prince."

"Before moving to Cleveland I worked as a member of the professional acting company at the Honolulu Theatre for Youth," Addison said. "The thing about performing or directing for young audiences is they will let you know how they are feeling about the production in the moment. If they are invested, you'll know. If they are disengaged, you will absolutely know. There is something really beautiful about that honesty."

"Some people are of the mindset that when doing TYA [theater for youth audiences] you have to 'talk down' to the audience or 'camp it up.' I strongly disagree," she said. "Children are brilliant. If you give them a piece of theatrical art that they can relate to and connect with, they will go on the

journey with you."

Written by Rick Cummins and John Scoullar, "The Little Prince" tells the story of a world-weary and disenchanted Aviator, whose sputtering plane strands him in the Sahara Desert where he meets a mysterious, regal "little man."

During their two weeks together in the desert, the Little Prince tells the Aviator about his adventures through the galaxy, and all the characters he's met and lessons he learned from each.

"Ultimately, it is a story of enduring friendship—of looking out for one another and being willing to learn from one another—things that are so important today," Addison explained. "It is about child-like innocence. It is about hope. It is about the belief that one person really can change the world, just by believing that they can."

"The Little Prince" runs Dec. 1-10 at Ensemble Theatre, 2843 Washington Blvd. in Cleveland Heights.

For tickets or information, call the box office at 216-321-2930, or visit [www.ensembletheatrecl.org](http://www.ensembletheatrecl.org).

Tyler Whidden is a playwright and associate artistic director at Ensemble Theatre.

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# Guns, records and charities



## SONGS AND STORIES

David Budin

I got a gun. It was holiday present. It was plastic. And it was pink. And it shot rubber bands. I was 7 years old. The gun came with a target and I had fun shooting at it. Neither the gun nor the act of shooting it reminded me of the dozens of cowboy TV shows and films that had taken over the airwaves and the movie theaters at that time, the mid-1950s.

Many people who grew up back then are fond of saying, “Well, our generation played with toy guns and we didn’t grow up to be murderers.” Except for a couple of things they seem to have missed: Number one, yes we did, a lot of us; and number two, unlike today, until we were much older, there weren’t real guns everywhere and easily accessible to us.

But this isn’t about guns. It’s about Christmas and Hanukkah presents.

In this column one year ago, which was not about presents, I mentioned my favorite present ever, from Hanukkah 1957—a stack of about 35 records, the big hit singles of that time. I’m going to name some of them again, because (a) you

wouldn’t remember what I wrote last year, (b) it was one of the best eras in early rock and these were great records, (c) if you were listening to pop music at that time, you’ll like this list, and (d) this column is called Songs and Stories, so these are the songs.

Here are 20 of the records: “Peggy Sue,” “Oh Boy” and “That’ll Be the Day” by Buddy Holly; “Wake Up Little Susie” and “Bye, Bye, Love” by the Everly Brothers; “Jailhouse Rock” and “Teddy Bear” by Elvis Presley; “Keep A-Knockin’” by Little Richard; “Great Balls of Fire” and “Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin On” by Jerry Lee Lewis; “Rock and Roll Music” by Chuck Berry; “Be Bop Baby” by Ricky Nelson; “Searchin’” by the Coasters; “You Send Me” by Sam Cooke; “At the Hop” by Danny and the Juniors; “Honeycomb” and “Kisses Sweeter Than Wine” by Jimmie Rodgers; “Silhouettes” by the Rays; “Diana” by Paul Anka; and “Chances Are” by Johnny Mathis.

But, to paraphrase what I said above, this is not about records. It’s about Christmas and Hanukkah presents.

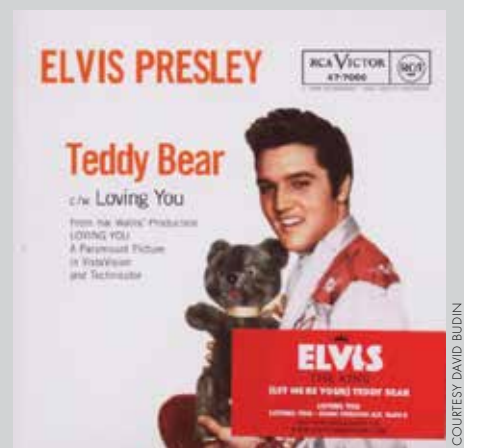
My wife and I are both non-practicing members of the religions of the families in which we were raised. When our children were young, as Christmas and Hanukkah (or Easter and Passover) approached, some of their friends’ parents, knowing our situation, would ask me, “So, what do you do for the holidays?” And I would

answer, “A little of neither.”

What that actually meant was that we participated, for the most part, in the cultural, but not the religious, aspects of the holidays—a Hanukkah latke party with the extended family, and also a Christmas Day brunch with the immediate family, plus my Jewish mother (hey—what else does she have to do that day?). Both a Christmas tree and a menorah in the living room. A couple of presents, for the kids, for each holiday. And a Christmas Eve service at whichever church had the best music (we’ve pretty much settled on Church of the Covenant in University Circle).

The kids always kind of liked their gifts, and we kind of liked the ones they gave us, especially the hand-made ones. But then someone in the extended family got a better idea. We would gather for a Hanukkah party, divide into a few groups of adults and kids, and pool our money in each group. A few adults would then make a little presentation about a favorite charity and then the kids would vote on which one to donate that money to.

The person who brought that idea to us, from a similar program at her synagogue, recently explained, “At temple, it was also an exploration of Hillel’s questions: ‘If I am not for myself, who will be for me? [But] if I am only for myself, what am I?’ And ‘If not now, when?’ It got us to grapple with how to choose charities based on the dilemma that if Jews didn’t



Elvis’s record “Teddy Bear,” one of the singles in my best present ever. Now I buy actual teddy bears for my grandchildren.

support Jewish charities, who would? But, if we only supported Jewish ones, how could we call ourselves citizens of the larger society?”

It was a good idea. We did that for a few years, until the kids started going off to college or leaving home for other things. Those kids are all adults now. Some of them have kids of their own. I’m not buying my grandkids guns, plastic or otherwise. I don’t need to buy them music, because that’s obtained differently now. They’ll grow out of the toy stage, which will make me sad, in some ways. But I’m hoping the charity idea returns, which, of course, will make me happy.

*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.*



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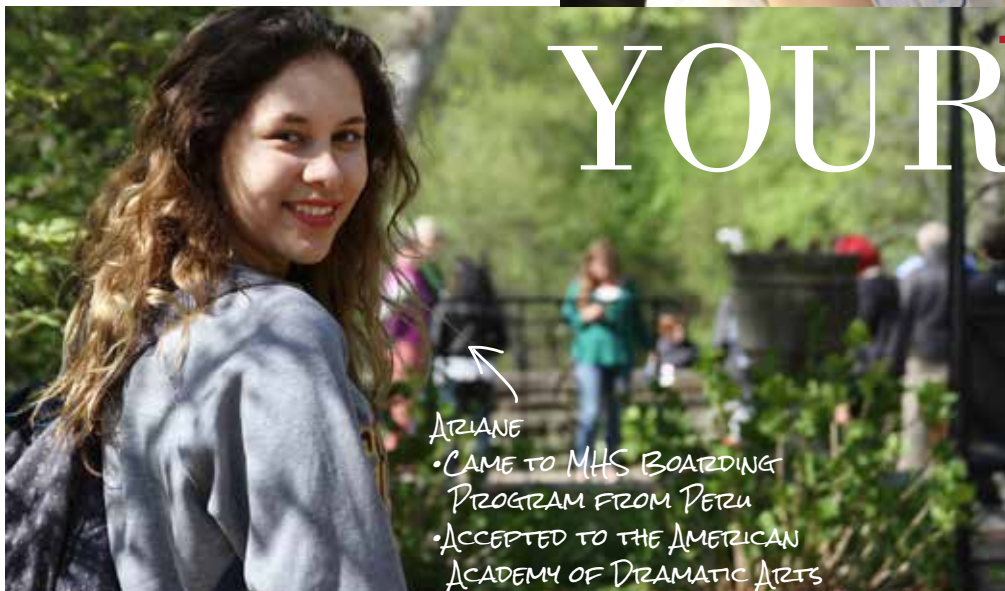
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