



INSIDE

3 Opinions diverge on future of Painter Mansion

8 Popular UH Memorial Day parade is May 27

9 Craig Cobb appointed to CH City Council

11 Task force to determine future of refuge and recycling in CH

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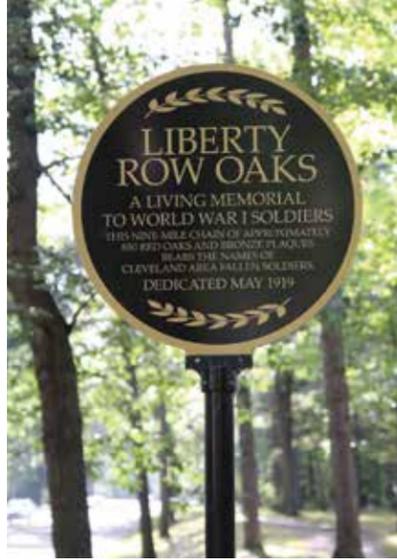
Living WWI memorial marks its centennial

Jamie Miles

This Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, marks the 100th anniversary of the dedication of the Liberty Row Trees—a significant, yet little known, living memorial.

Planted along Rockefeller Parkway in Cleveland, and winding nine miles southeast through Shaker Lakes in Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights, this stretch of red oak trees was dedicated in 1919 to honor World War I soldiers from the Cleveland area who lost their lives during the war.

Greater Cleveland was one of the first communities nationally to envision a multi-mile chain of trees as a memorial to fallen soldiers. This memorial followed the suggestion of American Forests Association Board Chairman Charles Lathrop Pack, who, in November 1918, called for “a new form of monument—a memorial that



Signs along North Park Boulevard in Cleveland Heights share the parkway's history with passersby.

lives.” American Legion posts, garden clubs, students, and families who lost loved ones promoted this concept of planting trees as a memorial.

In Cleveland, coordinated ef-

orts for the memorial began even before the Armistice to that ended the war was signed in November 1918. The project established reforestation as a conservation measure in a city that had been clear-cut throughout the Industrial Revolution and was in search of its original identity as the “Forest City.”

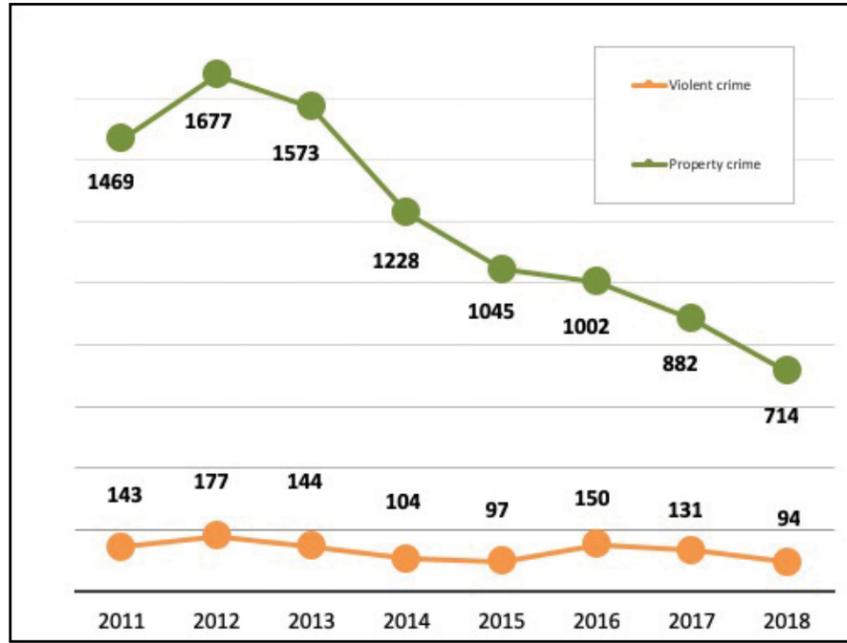
The parks selected for the memorial were some of the city's most beautiful, and deemed the perfect location. The memorial and the road were rededicated as Liberty Boulevard (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) on Memorial Day in 1919.

Between 1919 and 1924, more than 800 oak trees were planted—each with a bronze plaque at its base engraved with the name of a fallen soldier.

Over the past 100 years, many of the oaks have died and some of the plaques have been lost or damaged;

continued on page 14

CH crime continued to drop in 2018



Overall crime trend in Cleveland Heights, 2011–2018.

Bob Rosenbaum

Serious crime in Cleveland Heights hit its lowest level last year since 2011, when the Cleveland Heights Police Department (CHPD) began reporting reliable statistics.

The 94 violent crimes reported in 2018 represented a 28-percent

drop from the year before. Property crimes were down 19 percent, with 714 reported.

The biggest decrease in violent crime was in robberies. Rape and assault were down slightly, while there was one more murder in 2018 than in 2017.

continued on page 12

Coventry P.E.A.C.E. hosts Burning Man co-founder May 31

Deanna Bremer Fisher

Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus will host a discussion with one of the founders of the annual Burning Man festival, an event that draws more than 70,000 people to the Black Rock Desert in Nevada for a week of creative expression, at a fundraising event to benefit the campus on May 31. The event, “The Art of Community: A Discussion with Burning Man Co-Founder Michael Mikel,” is a unique opportunity to learn about the “10 Principles of Burning Man” and how they can apply to permanent communities and placemaking.



Michael Mikel (M2) is best known by his playa persona “Danger Ranger.” He is both an historian and futurist with an interest in technology and social communities. He serves Burning Man as director of advanced social systems, is an ambassador and speaker for the organization, and serves on its board of directors. M2 will speak on the 10 Principles (10P) of Burning Man, which were crafted as a reflection of the community's ethos and culture as it has organically developed since the event's inception in 1986.

In addition to the talk, Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus will offer tours of the building and a free screening of the film “Spark: a Burning Man Story” in Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park.

The event will benefit Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, which is embarking on a facilities planning process that members hope will lead to a land lease with Heights

continued on page 12

Noble weekend festival begins May 17

Brenda H. May

We Are Noble, the annual celebration of the neighborhoods along Noble Road, will take place Friday through Sunday, May 17–19.

Festivities will begin on Friday, May 17, with NobleFest, a family fun night hosted by the PTAs of Noble and Oxford elementary schools, 6–8 p.m. at Noble school. Turns in the bounce house, games, face-painting, Tiger Nation gear and food will be available for purchase. It will be a good place for patrons to buy their first funnel cake



A lemonade-stand entrepreneur during a previous We Are Noble festival.

of the summer carnival season. Free bicycle registration, a helmet giveaway and free photos will also be on offer.

Nearby, at 7 p.m., Noble Road Presbyterian Church will offer a free

continued on page 2

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.

HEIGHTS OBSERVER

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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 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.

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

Concerns about Top of the Hill

Eric Silverman

While the design and massing for Top of the Hill (TOH) are extremely disappointing, what irks me to no end is the math behind the project and the answers I receive from City Hall.

What no one has been able to explain to me is why—with land that is ostensibly "free" at the most developable site in the city, with a parking structure that makes the project viable, paid for with taxes that would otherwise go to the public schools—the developer is unable to secure financing and the city is covering a funding "gap."

No one at City Hall is able to tell me why there is a "gap," why the city is covering \$1.85 million of this "gap," or what \$1.85 million in public money is paying for. As the city does not have \$1.85 million sitting around, it is going to borrow this money, which means the cost will be around \$2 million with interest.

Based on the ONE-PAGE economic impact study that projects revenue from this project, it will take around 10 years for Cleveland Heights to recoup the \$2 million in PUBLIC money that is being spent to develop TOH.

If the rationale to commit \$2 million in public money for 10 years is as a catalyst for economic development, how will it create demand for the Cedar-Fairmount neighborhood? Where is the stand-alone report or addendum to the city's Master Plan that articulates future infill projects?

There is none, at least none I was allowed to see, despite making a direct request for these materials from City Hall.

Speaking of reports, when I ask for any type of analysis comparing TOH to comparable projects in Cleveland Heights, neighboring communities, downtown Cleveland, or the plethora of infill projects in an arc from Tremont to Lakewood—which are cropping up like mushrooms after the rain—I am told my request is not specific enough.

Really? I didn't realize City Hall was overflowing with so many market feasibility studies of TOH

from the last five years that I had to specify which one. Is City Hall like the warehouse at the end of "Raiders of the Lost Ark," filled with boxes and boxes of reports, drawings and analyses?

More likely, no study was conducted, OR the results were not flattering.

I am curious as to the demand only for 1- and 2-bedroom units geared for millennials at TOH, when that market appears to desire a higher-density, "grittier" urban locale.

I recall, during discussions on the city's Master Planning Committee, a need for units for current Cleveland Heights residents downsizing, where a 3-bedroom unit on one floor would be compelling. There are no 3-bedroom units planned for TOH.

At the same time, the current massing for TOH using a double-loaded corridor on the ten-story "apex" building means that for 30 units, the first five floors on the north side of the building, their view will be of a parking lot and the unadorned rear brick wall of the Buckingham Building. Where is the demand for this?

The city's approach to TOH appears to be get on board the train, as it has left the station and any critics or suggestions will be ignored and crushed under the weight of momentum.

It increasingly feels that City Hall waited too long to develop TOH after the Great Recession, was unable to cut a deal with a local developer with a history of attractive, successful infill projects in our region, and now feels compelled to push forward with ANYTHING from council's second choice, so council members can say "progress" even if they have to use \$2 million in PUBLIC money for a private, for-profit development in the city's wealthiest and least diverse neighborhood.

Eric J. Silverman, a Cleveland Heights resident, was a member of the CH-UH Board of Education 1994-2001 and 2014-2018, and a member of Heights Libraries Board of Directors, 2003-2009.

NOBLE continued from page 1

viewing of the movie, "Won't You Be My Neighbor?" The film is about Fred Rogers' impact on generations of young people, and a perfect theme for the weekend.

Noble Neighborhood Library will host a variety of events. It will conduct a book giveaway at Noble-Fest, which will be supplemented throughout the weekend with the library's "book bike;" the Heights Libraries' outreach van, which will circulate around the neighborhood; and, more free books at the library. Family games will take place on the library's lower level, and a special Bhutanese community showcase will be on display.

On Saturday, May 18, Denison Park will buzz with "let's-play-in-the-park" activities for both budding athletes and creative folk, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Supervised sporting activities will include soccer, basketball and baseball, hosted by Cleveland Heights Parks and Recreation staff, and families will have the opportunity to sign their kids up for summer activities. The Cleveland Heights Pickleball Club will demonstrate this fast-growing, intergenerational sport and will give visitors a chance to try it out. There will be sidewalk chalk art, a build-decorate-and-fly-your-own-kite event, and music and food.

Businesses, including Christopher's Pub, will offer specials on food and merchandise, and neighborhood churches will host activities. Noble Road Presbyterian Church will host rummage, plant and bake sales, and the Home Repair Resource Center will put on its annual tool sale from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visitors will have the opportunity to tour the center's facilities and learn about its programs.

The Cleveland Heights Police Department will open the doors of the Martin G. Lentz Police Academy, where visitors will be able to see the bomb squad, robots, and various kinds of safety equipment. The historic building, a former fire station, also houses a history museum. Citizens Police Academy graduates will be on hand to talk about their role in the city.

All Noble residents are invited to host a yard sale over the weekend. Those interested in being included on the event map should send a message to nobleneighbors@gmail.com, with their address, by May 10. Instructions on how to list high-demand items on free websites will be provided.

Real estate professionals will host open houses for Noble-area homes on Sunday, May 19. Potential buyers can walk through a variety of houses, including colonials, bungalows, ranches, and grand homes developed by the Van Sweringen brothers. Housing in Noble fits every need, from that of growing families to one- or two-person households, and those seeking homes where they can age in place. Home values have risen significantly since the first real estate fair in 2014.

For details about 2019 We Are Noble events and interactive and printable maps, visit www.nobleneighbors.com.

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

Correction

An article in the April issue of the *Heights Observer*, "CH-UH district loses 34 percent of state money to vouchers in 2019," erroneously reported EdChoice Expansion is one of the "two most used" programs for vouchers in the CH-UH City School District. This is incorrect. For the period measured, there were 880 EdChoice vouchers, 212 Peterson Scholarships for special

needs students, and 150 EdChoice Expansion scholarships, making EdChoice Expansion the third most-used program. EdChoice Expansion vouchers are funded by a line item in the state budget using lottery funds, and not from state school district allocations. All funding figures and statistics in the article were accurate. The *Heights Observer* regrets the error.

Advertise in the Observer

In opposition to Beaumont's plans to demolish the Painter Mansion

Colin Compton

Stewardship is defined in many ways. Environmentalists may classify it as actions taken to protect natural resources. In financial terms, it could mean prudent supervision. A religious person (a nun, for example) may interpret it as responsibility to care for the world in order to leave it better off than how one found it. In a broad sense, Merriam-Webster defines stewardship as "the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care."

Careful and responsible.

To these definitions, I'd add that stewardship is equally applicable to the ownership of historic buildings. The owner is a caretaker, not a sole beneficiary. This is why I oppose Beaumont School's proposed demolition of the Painter Mansion.

Built in 1905, the Painter Mansion is a striking example of Jacobean Tudor architecture and is significant not just for its design, but for its



A proposal to demolish the Painter Mansion, on the grounds of Beaumont School, went before the CH Planning Commission on April 10. The commission denied the application.

original owners and its contributing value to the Shaker Lakes landscape.

In a letter posted on its website, Beaumont states that "demolition of the Painter Mansion will allow us to move our current track and field facility to a larger, on-campus location . . ."

In lieu of demolition, perhaps Beaumont should end its time as steward of the Painter Mansion and cede it to a new owner for a fresh, better use.

I do not feel the assessments

presented to the city are adequate or impartial enough to justify demolition. Additionally, the structure's significant embodied energy, quality building materials, and surrounding mature tree canopy are assets too valuable to be lost to turf. With changes to the site, physical screening between the mansion and Beaumont School could result in a striking and simple solution that would allow a new owner to take over care for this historic resource. With the infusion of funds from the sale of the Painter

Mansion, Beaumont could explore alternate sites for its currently unfunded new sports facility.

Careful and responsible.

Not every building can be saved, and, sometimes, demolition for a new use brings added value to the community at large. But what is good for the whole community and what is good for one singular institution carry different weight to me. On a case-by-case basis, I believe it is essential to ask: is this action a trade up or a trade down?

In a letter to alumnae posted on its website, Beaumont notes that the Cleveland Heights campus is the school's third home since its founding. The school is a good neighbor and an asset to the community, but I hope [its leaders] will double down on their sense of stewardship in order to leave Cleveland Heights better off than how they found it.

Colin Compton is a first-time homeowner who is restoring a 1918 Craftsman. He has a degree in historic preservation.

Beaumont students need athletic fields

Wendy Hoke

It was with great interest that I read Colin Compton's opinion, "In opposition to Beaumont's plans to demolish the Painter Mansion." As the president of Beaumont School, I'd like to add additional perspective on this issue.

The Painter family sold the building in 1942 to the Ursuline Sisters, who found the house in severely deteriorated condition when they assumed ownership. Most of the interior had been stripped bare, including wood paneling, the electrical system and even the doorknobs. While the Ursulines invested heavily to try and restore the property, it was a structure that required significant expenditures simply to maintain in habitable condition as a convent. Even before Beaumont assumed ownership in 2009, outside experts provided the opinion that the cost to renovate the building and convert it back to an academic use would be cost-prohibitive. Indeed, two reputable firms with deep experience in preservation and adaptive reuse have each estimated the state of deterioration is such that it would cost \$7 million to \$8 million just to bring the building up to code, plus untold additional amounts for interior build outs and amenities were the building to be used for anything other than office space.

Yes, under ideal circumstances, all historic properties should be considered for preservation. That assumes they still have a purpose, they have not deteriorated beyond the point of rescue, that funds can be found to upgrade them to new uses, or benefactors come forward to maintain or transform them. For Beaumont, which has run out of land to serve its core mission, and

operates as a nonprofit with limited dollars for operations and a limited endowment, these are not viable options.

One option, of course, is to consider moving the mansion off of Beaumont's property. If we were approached with a sound plan that would absolve the school of all liabilities and costs, and guarantee that the removal would be completed by a deadline acceptable to us, we would consider that option. No one has come forward with such a proposal.

Students who attend Beaumont choose the school because it offers young women the opportunity for a well-rounded, global education that prepares them to be leaders.

Today, that preparation must include the ability for women to compete on state-of-the-art athletic fields. According to the Women in Sports Foundation, "61 percent of women executives held a belief that their personal involvement in sports contributed positively to their career success and advancement," and "sports participation was directly related to teens having a more positive attitude toward schoolwork, improved academic performance and higher grades, and higher aspirations for earning a college degree and post-college education specialization."

If we want to prepare women for leadership roles in today's very complex world, we must give them the facilities and experiences their male counterparts have enjoyed for decades, if not centuries.

Wendy Hoke is president of Beaumont School, an all-girls Catholic school in the Ursuline tradition, dedicated to educating young women for life, leadership and service.



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CH Branding Survey needs second round

Jessica Schantz

[The writer sent the following as a letter to Cleveland Heights City Council on April 17. City Manager Tanisha Briley responded promptly, and a possible meeting is in the works.]

The most recent issue of *Focus* magazine provided a synopsis of Cleveland Heights' self-appointed Brand Steering Committee's branding initiative findings, and the committee's plans for translating those findings into a new city logo and tagline.

While no one should fault the committee for its intentions, there are deeply concerning issues with its approach, most especially regarding how it sought respondents for its

online brand survey and subsequently reported those responses.

The survey was first publicized in July and August 2018 *Heights Observer* articles. Additionally, the survey was posted on the city's website, in its subscriber-based e-newsletter, on Facebook and Nextdoor, and in the fall-winter 2018 *Focus* magazine. While these outlets might seem sufficient for publicizing the survey, the approach presumes that most residents are actively tuned in to city media.

Not surprisingly, those who did respond selected Cleveland Heights' diversity—using the most encompassing sense of that word—as the city's number one asset (followed by its support of the arts and its aesthetic charm).

Indeed, our diversity is, as the *Focus* article put it, a treasure. But ironically, according to the committee's report, close to 80 percent of respondents were white, rendering the number of results from residents of color, given the study's variance and small pool, nearly negligible.

Over 60 percent of respondents live in households with only 1-2 people, and over 45 percent are also over the age of 45. Nearly 70 percent have bachelor's degrees or higher, over 40 percent have household incomes of over \$100,000 annually, and nearly 40 percent live south of Cedar Road.

While it's wonderful that this concentrated demographic values our community's diversity—and while a more representative variance might have resulted in a similar, if not identical outcome—there are real dangers in not reflecting on the disconnect between what a non-representative sample of us says we appreciate and how that appreciation manifests.

Cleveland Heights is more complicated and wrought—and in many ways more fluid and resilient—than

the survey reveals. While our community has an abundance of lovely, walkable residential and commercial districts, we must also acknowledge that we live in pockets overly defined by race and socioeconomics.

And if we tout our love of this community's diversity, we must work much harder to invite diverse voices to the proverbial table. There may be an impulse to question why a wider demographic didn't take the survey, but that's a scapegoat response.

Rather, the city must re-open the branding survey, and work harder to reach out to, and hear from, a more robust swath of this community. For example:

- Distribute fliers to all of the schools (public and private) for distribution at evening events and in student take-home folders.
- Put short plugs in the announcements of our religious institutions.
- Put up posters and signs in all the commercial districts with pull tabs listing the branding survey link.
- Ask members of the many civic engagement groups to go door-to-door to take survey results.
- Host tables at community events around town where residents can take the survey; offer qualitative interviews then and there.
- Ask for volunteers to staff tables at the community center and libraries during high-traffic times.
- Allow community organizations and religious institutions to conduct their own focus groups and report responses.

Again, while the outcome on paper may be the same, the opportunity to enfranchise more respondents, to increase civic engagement, and to send the message that every voice is valued in this process, will pay much higher, long-term community dividends in the forging of a better brand.

To not do so is to risk cynicism, as evidenced by the first-wave response to the proposed logo and tagline—a slogan that sadly and ironically highlights white privilege above diversity.

[The committee retracted the slogan after a negative response from the community.]

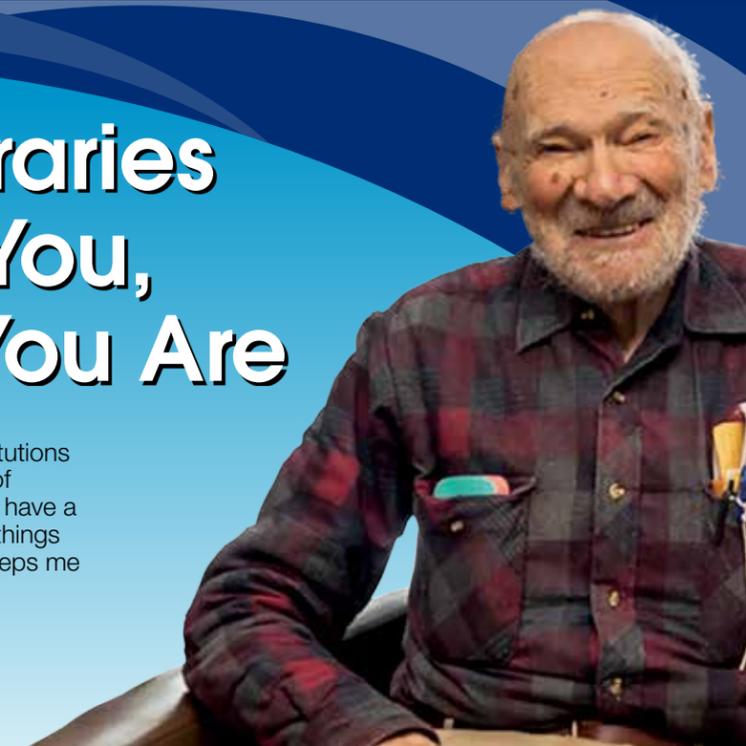
Jessica Schantz is the e-news manager at the Heights Observer and a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights. The opinions expressed in this article are hers alone.

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— Sarah & Sam Nemecek



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Why elect a mayor?



HEIGHTS OF DEMOCRACY

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

Last month, we wrote that we support the objective of Citizens for an Elected Mayor to change Cleveland Heights' form of government via charter amendment. Now, we want to explain why.

Our interest in the intricate workings of city government dates to 2015, when CH City Council and the city manager attempted to privatize our water service. Since then, between us we have attended well over 100 meetings of the committee of the whole—the weekly working sessions of city council—along with about 50 regular bi-weekly council meetings.

We have observed City Manager Tanisha Briley grappling with a host of problems created by her predecessor, Robert Downey, whose tenure lasted more than 25 years, until his sudden departure in 2012. Plainly speaking, he left behind a mess. We have seen our part-time city council members struggling to keep up with the legal and practical challenges of maintaining an economically and racially diverse inner-ring suburb in a period of state and federal funding cuts. Most of our council members hold full-time jobs, in addition to juggling the demands of running a city of 45,000 souls. Frankly, we don't know how they do it.

Here is one consequence of Downey's inaction, of which council was unaware for some years: The city is now under a consent decree from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for violations of the Clean Water Act. We are spending \$12 million to study how our 100-year-old sewers can be brought into compliance. The cost of actually rebuilding the system is still unknown, but in addition to the final figure, we'll be on the hook for punitive EPA fines.

Our city needs an elected mayor, accountable to voters, working full time at City Hall. We also need a professionally qualified city administrator to assist the mayor with the day-to-day running of the city. Under this form, city council

would serve solely as a legislative body, without also overseeing the chief executive—a more reasonable role for part-time citizen legislators.

In an interview with the Charter Review Commission last year, Briley summed up her job since 2013: "I make the trains run on time." That's a vital function, but it falls far short of the leadership Cleveland Heights needs. (She has also lamented, more than once, having to answer to seven bosses, i.e., the members of city council.) What most residents may not understand is that, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, there is not a single elected official present at City Hall. Our council members may be intelligent and well-meaning, but how can they really know what's going on?

Cleveland Heights has suffered for decades from a lack of vision, leadership, and economic development—deficiencies that long pre-date Briley's tenure. Council has talked about Top of the Hill for—literally—five decades. Severance has been deteriorating for over 15 years. The Noble commercial strip is moribund, and Coventry has at least 14 commercial vacancies visible from the street. Eleven years after the 2008 financial crisis, the bulk of bank foreclosures are behind us for now, but a huge tax foreclosure crisis looms. Our neighborhoods still suffer from hundreds of vacant and abandoned properties.

Our problems are more than one full-time manager can handle, and management, however competent, is not enough. We need a full-time administrator reporting to a full-time elected mayor, balanced by a council of part-time legislators. That is what Shaker Heights has, as does Davenport, Iowa—where Briley was assistant city administrator before coming to Cleveland Heights.

No system—and no individual—is perfect. But we have seen ample evidence that the current system is not working. It's time for a change.

[See related article on page 9.]

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg are longtime residents of Cleveland Heights. Rautenberg served on the CRC. Contact them at heightsdemocracy@gmail.com.

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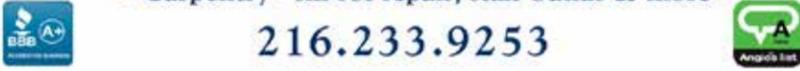
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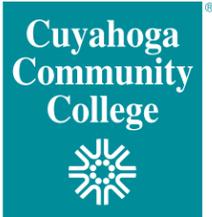
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There's no rhyme or reason in school testing and funding



A TEACHER'S VOICE

Ari Klein

I recently watched the Heights High Drama Club perform “The Phantom Tollbooth,” the story of a bored young boy who travels to a different realm with two imaginary kingdoms. After a disagreement, the kingdoms banish the two princesses, Rhyme and Reason. Without these two royals the whole realm is in chaos, as you might expect. This all strikes a little close to home in our current era of national and state politics.

In the play, one of the most interesting scenes is a banquet where the spoken word is taken literally, with “square meals” being some sort of square-shaped food. Students updated the “half-baked ideas” part of the dinner with their own reflections of current society. One pulled out a half-baked idea and read “the earth is flat,” which made everyone chuckle. Another picked “vaccines cause autism.” Clearly, our students are up-to-date with the current news. The last student’s half-baked idea was “standardized tests accurately measure student learning.” Our students know that the tests they are forced to take are a joke.

Half-baked ideas abound around standardized tests. How can real teaching go on when students are being tested for 90, 110 or 180 minutes, seven different days in April. This disruption leads to shortened periods two or three times per week, so teaching starts and stops constantly. It is difficult to teach new material in 30 minutes to students who have just concentrated intensely for 90 minutes on a high-stakes test that will determine if they will graduate high school. By the second week of this regimen our kids are exhausted, frustrated and angry. Similar testing schedules also occur in elementary and middle schools during April. Thanks to oppressive testing, April is the doldrums for learning; it is hard to get anything done.

One hopeful possibility in Ohio is that there seems to be some recognition by state

lawmakers that, in creating a new biennial budget, there is an opportunity to create a funding formula that works properly for more schools. Currently, more than 80 percent of school districts in Ohio are not funded by a formula because it would strip them of needed funds—they are on a “guarantee” of some random amount of money. Perhaps this makes our current funding formula a 20-percent baked idea, even less than half-baked. Representatives Bob Cupp (Republican) and John Patterson (Democrat) have been working together on creating a new formula that has promise. It still needs some work, but appears to try to address funding issues through a lens that takes into consideration multiple factors, such as poverty of students, property wealth of the district, and services needed.

Even though voucher and charter students are counted in the number of students enrolled, the amount of funding our district loses for these students is disproportionate to the money allocated on a per-student basis. Local property tax revenue is forced to subsidize students our district does not teach. This school year, CH-UH lost more than \$9 million through this flawed method—a number that will continue to grow unless there is change at the state level. The Cupp-Patterson plan would fund these parallel school systems so that public schools’ will not suffer a loss of funding for students they don’t serve.

I am often inspired by my students, especially through the arts. “The Phantom Tollbooth” was refreshing to see. I am proud that these kids take the time from schoolwork and do something real. The actors, stage crew, lighting and sound technicians all contributed in making this an amazingly entertaining production. I am also inspired by them for using this venue to slip in issues directly impacting their lives. Too bad standardized tests are not fiction or some joke from the past. Instead, students are still forced to suffer, since rhyme and reason in Ohio still seem to be banished.

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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School board rejects high-stakes testing



THE COMMON GOOD

Susie Kaeser

I am grateful to the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Board of Education for taking a stand on high-stakes testing. At its March 19 meeting, the board unanimously approved a resolution titled “Time to Teach, Time to Learn,” which rejects “the overuse and misuse of standardized testing.”

For too long, public schools in Ohio have been tethered to a destructive judgment system that legislators said would ensure that all children succeed in school. This approach uses standardized tests to make consequential decisions that are supposed to motivate high achievement. The goal is admirable, but the strategy is misguided. High-stakes testing is a misuse of standardized tests.

Rather than passively accept a policy that is counterproductive, the board expressed its opposition using the resolution process. That’s the way elected bodies can put their views on the record.

This resolution has many “whereas” and “therefore” statements that capture concerns and solutions. They are worth reading. The first statement sets the tone. It expresses a broad set of purposes for public education that cannot be measured on tests. The board wants our students to emerge as capable citizens and committed learners who can strengthen the nation’s social and economic well-being. How do you capture that on a multiple-choice test?

The best way to be prepared for our ever-changing world is to be open to learning. Being rigid about what all students must know in each grade seems both irrelevant to the purpose of education and contrary to the reality of human development. Making harsh judgments based on whether students know what the tests measure is destructive and contrary to good practice. One of the most damaging effects of test-driven education is that it simply kills excitement for learning, the core ingredient for a lifetime of growth.

Linking high-stakes decisions to

test results makes test performance the focus for the classroom. When passing the test becomes the focus of the education process, educators abandon the fundamentals of honoring each child’s unique qualities, interests, learning style and learning speed. The pressure to perform squelches creative teaching and engaged learning.

Real achievement, real thinking, real confidence, a desire to take risks and learn from failure—all these meaningful outcomes—become secondary to the test performance requirement that doesn’t tell anything authentic about how students or schools are doing their jobs.

Effective education needs to meet children where they are, find their strengths, ignite their inherent curiosity, and harness their lively minds and caring hearts. This is really challenging work. But that’s where our educators should be focusing their skills and expertise—not on raising test scores. The so-called accountability system gets in the way of the real work of education. Taking tests to prove that you have achieved some arbitrary level of knowledge and then using test results to define education quality is not worthwhile.

The board called their resolution “Time to Teach, Time to Learn,” because testing wastes precious time and subverts both teaching and learning. The resolution rejected the use of standardized tests to make high-stakes decisions that define children, teachers or schools as failures. Our local leaders propose a different approach that focuses on the classroom and relies on teacher-designed assessments to gather information about student learning and inform their teaching.

Our Board of Education wants more for our children and teachers than test scores. These elected representatives and guardians of our public schools want more for our community than a school system that conforms. They want more for our society than test takers.

I congratulate them for their leadership and for wanting more.

Susie Kaeser is a 40-year resident of Cleveland Heights and the former director of Reaching Heights. She is active with the Heights Coalition for Public Education and the League of Women Voters.

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UH Memorial Day parade honors and remembers those who sacrificed



The University Heights Memorial Day Parade kicks off on Monday, May 27, at 11 a.m.

Mike Cook

Summer kicks off in University Heights on May 27 with the annual Memorial Day Parade. The parade honors those who gave their lives in service to the United States, and also celebrates the sacrifices our veterans made.

“Memorial Day signals the beginning of summer. For many of us, it is so much more than that,” said Rachel Mullen, the new special projects coordinator for University Heights. “It is a time to reflect and honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.”

In July 1944, Mullen’s great-uncle was killed in France fighting the Nazis during World War II. “While my uncle died before I was even born, I was very aware of his sacrifice,” she said. “Like many Gold Star Families, this loss is one felt for generations.”

As a child, Mullen accompanied her grandparents to her great-uncle’s grave on the last Monday of every May. Her children now join her for

the annual visit. “We always have fun Memorial Day weekend, but we always pause to honor our uncle whose life ended protecting ours,” Mullen said.

As the city’s special projects coordinator, Mullen is the lead organizer of this year’s Memorial Day parade, which will feature the National Guard Band, the Northcoast Pipe Band, and the Dixieland Band. Henry and Adele Zucker will serve as Grand Marshals.

The parade starts at 11 a.m. on Memorial Day, at the intersection of Silsby and Ashurst roads. It will travel east on Silsby, then head south on South Belvoir Boulevard.

The parade will end at John Carroll University, where a post-parade memorial ceremony will be held, with Major Sergeant General Royce Achterberg as the featured speaker. After the ceremony, there will be fun activities for kids, including inflatables and pony rides.

Mike Cook is the communications and civic engagement coordinator for University Heights.

University Heights City Council Meeting highlights



MARCH 18, 2019

Present were Mayor Michael Dylan Brennan, Vice Mayor Susan Pardee, and council members Pamela Cameron, John Rach, Steven Sims, Michele Weiss and Mark Wiseman. Phil Ertel was absent. Also present were Luke McConville, law director; James Goffe, finance director; and Kelly Thomas, clerk of council. The meeting was held from 7 to 9:25 p.m.

Public comments

Nicotine ordinance: Michael Kupfer of Groveland Road agrees that the sale of nicotine products is a problem, but feels the proposed legislation is flawed. If sales are banned in University Heights, teens will simply cross the street to South Euclid. Smoking has been on the decline for many years due to improved education, and education on the dangers of vaping is what is needed now—not further restrictions on neighborhood businesses.

Cars and trash everywhere: Sherry Dewey of Washington Boulevard continued her pledge to speak at each council meeting within the time limit allowed. She once again asked council to either enforce or enact legislation regarding the number of cars per address, and also trash disposal at rental properties. She praised Patrick Grogan-Myers, who made phone calls to the owner of an apartment building, and [said] the problems were partially addressed.

Finances: Kate Uhlir of Fenwick Road noted that 18 new positions have been added to City Hall under Mayor Brennan’s tenure, and wondered how this was possible with the newly reported budgetary shortfalls. [She said that,] based on reports which she located on the finance page of the website, these expenditures are not sustainable.

Tobacco sales to minors

Council approved legislation to restrict sales of cigarettes and tobacco products to those 21 or older. Rick Novickis, of the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, praised council for proposing this legislation, noting that [sales are being restricted] in more and more communities, and research has shown that such restrictions do limit access and reduce the number of new smokers over time. Councilman Rach noted that John Carroll University and CVS had stopped selling nicotine products. Councilwoman Weiss had introduced the legislation.

2019 budget

Council approved the 2019 budget for the period commencing Jan. 1 and ending Dec. 31. The full document is available on the city’s website. The mayor and vice mayor gave credit to Finance Director Goffe for providing full transparency, noting that current council members have never seen this level of detail. Councilman Rach noted that campaign promises to reduce taxes were genuine, but based on false financial reporting by the previous administration. He

said he felt that the expenditures that have been made are making the city a better place to live, and addressing the needs of residents and businesses. He also noted that newly hired police and fire fighters would enable the city to reduce overtime hours paid at time and a half. Also, further savings come as new hires replace senior employees who were at the top of the pay grade.

UH City Beautiful Corporation

The former City Beautiful Commission has been removed and replaced by the UH City Beautiful Corporation. Prior legislation included many stipulated events that were no longer being held, and required a large commission. The new corporation is intended to signal change and codify new guidelines, but popular awards to homeowners and citizens will continue.

Grants received

Council accepted two grants. The Northeast Ohio Public Energy Council has awarded the city \$42,314 as part of its Energized Community Program, which the administration can use for any energy-reducing programs it chooses. There is also money remaining from last year, which is still available for use. The Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District awarded a grant of \$5,000 as part of its Community Recycling Awareness Program. The city will use the money to send a postcard and informational magnet to all households.

Cuyahoga County Employment Collaborative

Economic Development Director Susan Drucker has announced that the city will participate in the county’s Employment Collaborative. Businesses in University Heights will be able to report open positions to the collaborative, which will then send notices to more than 40 workforce agencies and assist in matching applicants to positions. The service is free to businesses.

LWV Observer: Wendy S. Deuring.

APRIL 1, 2019 - No LWV observer was available to cover the April 1 council meeting. The LWV needs need observers—if you are interested in helping the League of Women Voters cover University Heights City Council meetings, please contact Maryann Barnes at mbarnes@lwggreatercleveland.org.

To receive email postings of full reports, send an email to heights@lwggreatercleveland.org or join through Google groups using “lwgchuh 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 of Greater Cleveland. This disclaimer must accompany any redistribution of these reports.



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Campaign for elected mayor moves ahead

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg

Citizens for an Elected Mayor (CEM), the Cleveland Heights organization seeking to change the city's form of government, is finalizing its proposed charter amendment and the initiative language intended for this year's Nov. 5 ballot. CEM members would like to see their city government headed by a mayor elected directly by the voters.

"We have had hundreds of people express support [for an elected mayor] at our two public forums, as well as at half a dozen house meetings," said CEM secretary Michael Bennett.

Once the language is final, CEM will circulate petitions for signature by registered voters. State law requires a number of signatures equal to 10 percent of total voters in the last municipal election. Placing an initiative on the ballot for Cleveland Heights in 2019 will require 2,119 signatures, certified as valid by the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections. According to Bennett, CEM aims to obtain 3,200 signatures, knowing that some will be deemed invalid due to illegible signatures, incorrect addresses, and other problems.

CEM, an all-volunteer organization, is encouraging supporters to participate in its campaign. Those interested should visit www.citizensforanelectedmayor.com, to sign up for the mailing list, learn more about the issue, get involved, or donate funds.

Under Cleveland Heights' current council/manager structure, city council hires a professional administrator to serve as the city's chief executive, under the title of city manager. The city manager reports to all seven members of council, and they collectively supervise her work. The council members elect from among themselves a mayor and vice mayor, who serve as president and vice president of council and perform various ceremonial functions.

The council/manager form of government became popular in small- and medium-sized U.S. cities a century ago, during the Progressive Era, when it was seen as a way to prevent corruption. Also, accord-

ing to Richard C. Shragger, writing in the *Yale Law Journal*, "For early-twentieth-century reformers, the strong [directly elected] mayor was too democratic; reform-minded elites feared a municipal government that was too responsive to the urban and ethnic masses."

Ohio's voters gained the power to create ballot initiatives and referenda in 1912, through an amendment to the state constitution. These reforms gave citizens the ability to propose ordinances, overturn existing statutes, and amend their city and state charters by putting measures on the ballot that are passed into law if the voters approve. They are intended to overcome the limits of representative government.

Although the council/manager government is found in 55 percent of cities throughout the country, according to the International City/County Management Association, it never caught on in Cuyahoga County. Other than Cleveland Heights, Bedford is the only municipality in the county with a city manager. In Bedford, however, citizens directly elect their mayor, who is president of council and the only council member elected at large. The other 55 cities and villages in Cuyahoga County have mayor/council governments—also called the "strong mayor" form—with a separation of powers between the executive (mayor) and legislative (council) branches.

In recent years, some residents have expressed the view that Cleveland Heights' government could be more effective and accountable to citizens with a directly elected mayor, assisted by a professionally trained and experienced city administrator.

CEM formed last winter, after the city's Charter Review Commission (CRC) declined to recommend such a change. The CRC's recommendations, submitted to city council on March 18, include maintaining the council/manager form of government, with greater executive authority for the city manager.

Deborah Van Kleef and Carla Rautenberg are longtime residents of Cleveland Heights. Rautenberg served on the CRC. Contact them at heightsdemocracy@gmail.com.

CH council appoints Cobb as new member

Jessica Schantz

On April 2, Cleveland Heights Mayor Carol Roe announced that Cleveland Heights City Council had selected Craig Cobb to serve as the seventh city council member. Cobb, a longtime resident of the city, fills the vacancy created in November 2018, when Cheryl Stephens resigned from CH City Council after being elected to Cuyahoga County Council.

"We are thrilled to welcome Craig to the Council," stated Roe, "and believe he will be a great asset to us and to the city. Craig's knowledge and experience with city government will be immediately capitalized on as we go forward with a number of important issues."

Cobb, a branch legal office managing attorney for Farmers Insurance Exchange, served as chair of the city's Planning Commission and a member of the recent Charter Review Commission.

In accepting the position, Cobb said, "I am proud and honored to have been selected to serve the community of Cleveland Heights, a city I love and have called home for many years."

Council members vetted the more than 30 applicants with the help of members of the Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters, who conducted video interviews of the applicants, which were posted on the city's website.

Roe emphasized that council members worked diligently to choose the right candidate, stating, "In the

end it was Craig's experience with city government that directed our decision making. We welcome him aboard and look forward to his contribution."



Craig Cobb

COURTESY CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

Cobb was sworn in on April 15 during a council session. He was appointed to serve through the end of 2019. To serve out the remainder of Stephens' unexpired term (she was elected to her third four-year term in November 2017), Cobb would have to run in this November's general election.

Jessica Schantz is the e-news manager at the Heights Observer and a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights.

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Project is underway to improve safety at busy CH intersection

Robert Brown

Cyclists, pedestrians and motorists traveling between Cleveland Heights and University Circle will no longer need to navigate the daunting sea of asphalt and confusing traffic movements at the intersection of Edgemoor and Overlook roads.

Construction is now underway to transform the excessively wide intersection into one that is safer for all travelers.

“The official completion date of the project is July 1,” said project manager Joe Kickel. Access to properties will be maintained, with minimum impact to pedestrian and vehicular traffic anticipated.

According to Cleveland Heights Planning Director Richard Wong,



The current intersection at Edgemoor and Overlook roads.

by removing excess pavement the project will shorten crosswalks, add landscaping, create two bioretention areas (rain gardens that hold stormwater), and tighten turning radii to

improve traffic safety.

The project will also add a bus stop on Overlook Road, southbound.

The project is consistent with the “Complete and Green Streets” policy

that Cleveland Heights adopted in July 2018. Cleveland-based City Architecture designed the streetscape plan for the intersection.

Funding for the project comes from the city of Cleveland Heights and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency’s Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative.

The city advises travelers to use caution when driving through the work zone and to direct questions to the Office of Capital Projects at 216-291-2470.

Robert Brown is city planner with 40 years of experience, including nine years as Cleveland’s city planning director. A resident of Cleveland Heights for more than 40 years, Brown is a member of the FutureHeights Board of Directors.

FutureHeights awards mini-grants to three CH projects

Sruti Basu

FutureHeights completed the spring 2019 round of its Neighborhood Mini-Grants Program, approving \$2,415 in grants to support three neighborhood projects in Cleveland Heights. The grants are intended to spur small, grassroots projects to improve quality of life and build community.

FutureHeights awarded the Cleveland Heights Aging Well at Home Initiative \$720. Residents of

the Forest Hill neighborhood developed a guide of resources for Cleveland Heights residents who have chosen to age at home or who are living at home with disabilities. The group developed the guide to assist their neighbors in navigating service providers. To learn more and access the guide, visit www.futureheights.org/our-community/neighborhood-organizations/.

FutureHeights awarded Maple, Crest, Wood, & Parkhill Neighbors \$945 for the Millikin Playground

Enhancements project. Residents of Maple, Crest, Wood, and Parkhill roads began working together to strengthen their sense of community by identifying issues within their neighborhood that would benefit from coordinated efforts, activities and problem solving. As a result, the group has chosen to focus on improving the public space and playground at the former Millikin Elementary School building. The project will add enhancements to the space through public art and gardening. The group hopes to create a space that will build community by facilitating people meeting others from this diverse neighborhood with whom they might not otherwise interact.

FutureHeights awarded Heights Performing Arts Camp \$750 for its 2019 camp. Three years ago, a group of Cleveland Heights parents envisioned creating a performing arts camp to bring together kids from each elementary school in the CH-UH school district to help prepare them for middle school. The parents reached out to Ensemble Theatre, which has a commitment to non-traditional casting, culturally diverse programming, and educational/outreach activities impacting youth and underserved populations. As a result, Heights Performing Arts

Camp (HPAC) was born. What distinguishes HPAC from most other theater camps is that it is made available at no cost, thus removing possible barriers to participation. The camp emphasizes developing the creative abilities of learners while also strengthening literacy, teamwork, and problem solving. To learn more visit www.ensembletheatre.org/heightsperformingartscamp/.

To learn more about these and past mini-grant projects, visit www.futureheights.org/community-building-programs.

The FutureHeights Neighborhood Mini-Grants Program awards grants of up to \$1,000 to fund citizen-led neighborhood projects, events and activities that benefit Cleveland Heights. The program is guided by a grant-making committee comprising seven Cleveland Heights residents with a history of community involvement.

If you have an idea to improve your neighborhood, FutureHeights invites you to apply for a grant. The next application deadline is Sept. 15 at 5 p.m. For more information, e-mail sbasu@futureheights.org or call 216-320-1423.

Sruti Basu is the director of community-building programs at FutureHeights.

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New website considers 'great design' and current development projects in CH

Michael Knoblauch

Several Cleveland Heights residents have created the Citizens for Great Design website, www.citizensforgreatdesign.com.

In creating it, their intention is to raise community awareness about the design and architectural attributes of significant and important Cleveland Heights developments.

There are several development projects in the planning stage throughout the city. These are privately funded, or may involve city supported financing and/or tax support, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Each project requires city approval through the planning/zon-

ing and Architectural Board of Review process.

The Citizens for Great Design website contains links to articles and websites that explore and discuss current issues regarding urban design, planning and architecture. The website also includes a survey—and a link to the survey's results—where Cleveland Heights residents and non-residents are invited to comment on the current Top of the Hill project.

Michael Knoblauch is a sponsor of Citizens for Great Design. A 40-plus year resident of Cleveland Heights, he is a former Future-Heights board member.

Cleveland Heights City Council Meeting highlights



MARCH 18, 2019

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren and Jason Stein. Michael N. Ungar participated by telephone, but did not vote. The seventh seat is unoccupied. The meeting lasted from 7:36 to 10:14 p.m.

Charter Review Commission's final report

John (Jack) Newman, chair of the Charter Review Commission (CRC), spent one hour and 45 minutes of the meeting summarizing the final report, which recommends changes to make the charter "good, modern, and understandable." [The summary and final report can be found on the city's website: www.clevelandheights.com, under Government/Charter Review Commission.]

Mayor Roe praised the work of the commission, formed in 2017. She emphasized that the report, given to the council in February, is a proposal, and council must now decide what to adopt, what to send to the ballot, and any other actions.

Highlights of Newman's summary of the CRC's recommendations include:

- Maintain the current council/city manager form of government and strengthen the role of city manager, retitling the position Chief Executive Officer. Newman stated the city manager "is not a mechanic, but a leader." He noted this was not a unanimous opinion but that it gained [the support of] a significant majority of the commission.
- Council structure was recommended to remain seven members elected at large. This was not a unanimous decision, but was reached after looking very carefully at other options for structuring council.
- Nearly unanimously, the commission recommended removing the titles of Mayor and Vice Mayor and leaving President and Vice President of Council, titles that were already there. This would have the advantage of not inhibiting the robust leadership of the city manager/chief executive. (There was some discussion during [the council meeting,] questioning any perceived disadvantage this change would cause in relation to state government or bodies of mayors from around the state.)
- The report recommended modifying the current system for filling council vacancies by appointment to require that council fill them within 90 days of vacancy.
- An entirely new ethics provision is detailed.
- Require the convening of a CRC every 20 years. A commission could be considered every five years.
- Because of the interdependence and inter-relationship of the various provisions of the amended charter, the CRC suggested that its recommendations (assuming acceptance by council) be put before the voters as a single ballot issue, rather than a series of separate provisions.

Council discussed how the revised charter would be put to voters, including whether proposed charter changes should

be placed on the ballot individually or as a single unit, and the possibility that a citizen initiative measure may also be on the ballot. Perhaps some issues will be postponed until the 2020 spring primary.

Public comments

Citizens for an Elected Mayor: Tony Cuda and Michael Bennett, representing Citizens for an Elected Mayor, praised the CRC's work. Although they agree with most of the CRC's report, members of their group "reached a different conclusion"—that an elected mayor would be more accountable and effective. They want the voters to make this decision.

LWV Observer: *Blanche Valancy.*

APRIL 1, 2019

Council members present were Mayor Carol Roe, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, Mary Dunbar, Kahlil Seren and Jason Stein. Michael N. Ungar participated by telephone but did not vote. The seventh seat is unoccupied. The meeting lasted from 7:34 to 8:32 p.m.

Public comments

At council's request, Nancy Pepler, supervisor of community and school partnerships for Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, spoke about a new partnership between Heights High and MetroHealth. They have agreed to open a clinic at the high school, two days a month, to support the health needs of students. The clinic space, planned as part of the high school renovations, will be staffed by nurse practitioners and M.D.s. It will not replace school nurses. The pilot is intended to begin next fall and will hopefully expand to other schools.

Announcements from the city manager

Vice City Manager Susanna Niermann O'Neil offered issues of note:

- Notification has begun to those who overpaid parking tickets since 2013. The city is currently processing the \$5-per-ticket owed.
- The Opportunity Zone will now have a page on the city website: www.clevelandheights.com/1153/opportunity-zones.
- Additional information will be posted on the city's website concerning the Refuse and Recycling Task Force.

CRC final report receipt

Council passed a resolution acknowledging receipt of the CRC's proposed Amended Charter of the City of Cleveland Heights, final report, and recommendations.

Council vacancy filled

Craig Cobb was selected to fill the vacant council seat and will be sworn in at the April 15 meeting.

LWV Observers: *Jeannine Gury and Blanche Valancy.*

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.

Carts or bags? CH task force takes on trash

Fred D'Ambrosi

Blue bags or blue bins? Public or private trash collection? These are just two of the major questions the newly formed Refuse and Recycling Task Force has to answer for Cleveland Heights over the next six months.

At the first task force meeting on April 18, Director of Public Works Colette Clinkscale said the city's aging system is at a tipping point. "Equipment is at a point where we need to make an investment, and we don't want to make the wrong investment," she said. Clinkscale is one of three city staffers who will act as non-voting consultants to the volunteer committee.

The 10-member task force (eight attended the initial meeting) is a diverse group that includes John Blackwell, professor emeritus from Case Western Reserve University with expertise in plastics; Cathi Lehn, coordinator at Cleveland's Office of Sustainability; Jordan Davis, a music administrator with a commitment to recycling; Hope Wright, who described herself as a regular citizen with a background in communications; and realtor Susan Clement, who expressed concerns about trash issues and their effect on the community's image. Carin Miller talked about her life-long commitment to environmentalism, which includes graduating from the county's Master Recycler program. She said she picks up trash while she walks her dog. Kelly Menaker said she does the same on walks with her children, teaching them environmentalism while filling trash bags. The group chose Constance Johnson, an administrator at Central Bible Baptist Church, as its chair, and Miller as vice chair. The two other task force members are Susan Efrogmson and Davida Russell.

Joe Kickel, the city's manager of capital projects, is another staff consultant to the task force. He outlined the city's current collection method: Single-operator trucks pick up bags of trash and blue bags of recyclables from 15,000 residential units. The city uses single-stream recycling, meaning items are unsorted. Recyclables are compacted and sent to a county facility. The city has its own transfer station where trash from garbage trucks is moved into tractor trailers and hauled to the dump in Shiloh, Ohio.

The Updated Cuyahoga County Waste Management Plan, which the city unanimously adopted in March, pushes cities toward an automated system using specialized carts (64- and 96-gallon plastic cans with wheels). Bags can be thrown into the trash cart, but recycling goes loose into a separate blue cart. Residents wheel trash and recycling carts into the street along the curb, and a specialized truck with a side-lift, operated by the driver, grabs the cart and dumps the contents into the truck.

The county plan says, "One of the (Waste) District's goals has been to improve residential curbside recycling by increasing the number of communities using automated col-



A Cleveland Heights worker tosses recycling into a truck. Forty cities in Cuyahoga County have gone to automated collection systems.

lection with recycling carts. . . . communities that switched to recycling carts from blue bags . . . achieved a 77-percent increase in recycling collection." It says automation "increases collections speed and efficiency and reduces workman's compensation claims." According to the county, recycling centers don't like the blue bags because they must be cut open, and sometimes bags clog processing equipment.

In an e-mail and phone interview, Vice Mayor Melissa Yasinow, who chairs the Safety and Municipal Service Committee, said the anticipated cost to implement automation, more than \$4 million, is higher than what the city currently spends per year on refuse and recycling, about \$3.4 million. The task force hopes to schedule a meeting with an official from a Cuyahoga County city that made the transition to automation. The county plan says 40 area communities currently use automation, about half since 2012.

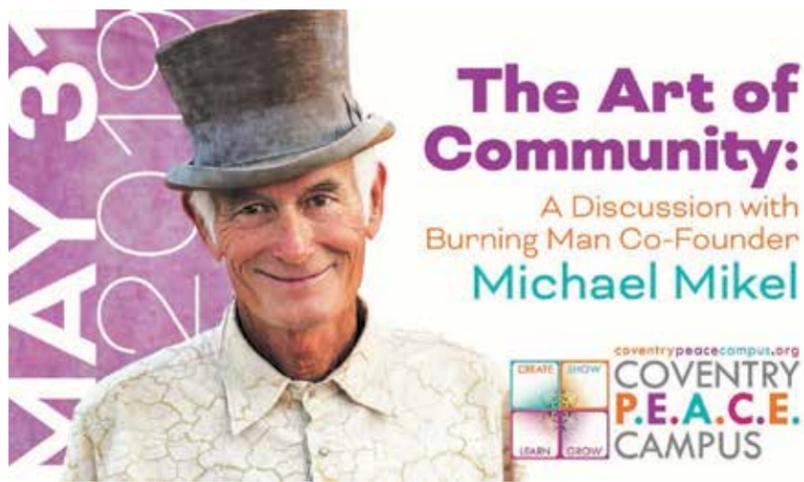
Going with a private trash hauler might eliminate capital costs but create other problems. Yasinow said the city needs to consider its transfer station. "Our transfer station is grandfathered in under federal regulations, and it helps us keep transportation costs low." She said if the city decides to contract with a private trash service, it could lose the transfer station and be unable to relicense it. That would make returning to public trash pick-up more expensive, limiting the city's options down the road.

The task force plans to meet twice a month, at 6 p.m. on Thursdays, in council chambers, but which weeks may vary according to members' schedules. Johnson said she plans to keep meetings to 90 minutes. The next meeting will be a tour of city facilities. Future topics will include current recycling methods, automated systems and a discussion with the executive director of the county waste district.

The task force's final report and non-binding recommendations are due in October. All meetings are open to the public. You can listen to audio of the meetings and track the task force's progress at <https://tinyurl.com/clebtrash>.

Fred D'Ambrosi has been an award-winning journalist for 40 years, mostly as a TV news director in Cleveland, D.C., San Diego and Milwaukee. He's enjoyed living in Cleveland Heights since 2015.

COVENTRY PEACE continued from page 1



Michael Mikel, co-founder of Burning Man.

Libraries, the renovation of the 1970s-era building, and its self-sustaining operation.

The building is a former elementary school in the CH-UH City School District, which closed it as a school in 2007, and subsequently rented space to a diverse group of arts and community nonprofit organizations. In 2018, the district sold the property, which includes the building, a playground and green space, to Heights Libraries. Its Coventry Village branch is immediately adjacent to the property, and it has given the tenants the bridge they needed to create a shared future.

The nonprofit members of Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus are Ensemble Theatre, ARTFUL, Family Connections, Lake Erie Ink, FutureHeights and Reaching Heights.

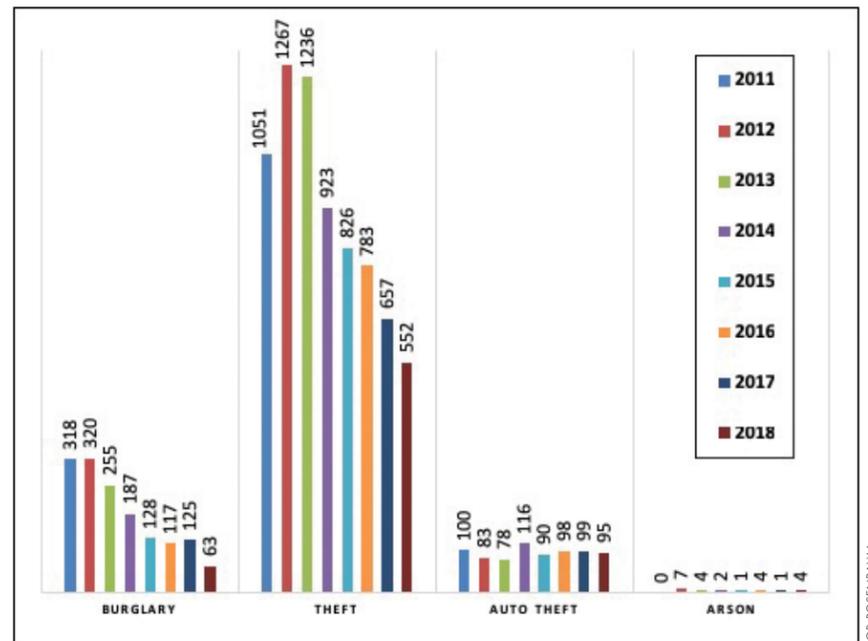
The campus provides a sustainable, supportive and collaborative environment for these organizations that offer artistic and educational opportunities, as well as community services, for residents of the Heights and Greater Cleveland. Their goal is to

transform the building into a modern and self-sustaining arts, culture, education and incubation center, which will interact with an improved playground and park, be open to all, and capable of hosting even more community events. With thoughtful creative placemaking, Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus seeks to solidify Cleveland Heights' reputation as "Home to the Arts."

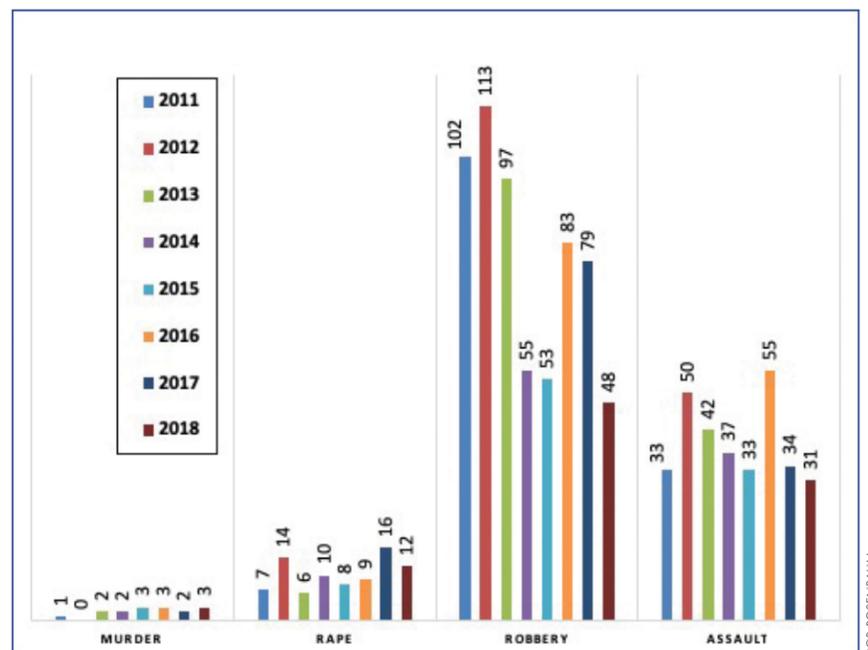
More information and tickets for the fundraiser, which start at \$50, are available at <http://coventrypeacecampus.org/events/the-art-of-community-fundraiser/>. The program begins with a Meet & Greet with Michael Mikel for PEACE Maker ticket holders at 6 p.m. The talk will take place at 7 p.m. The movie screening, which is free and open to the public, will screen at approximately 9 p.m. in the park. The movie is not rated, and may not be suitable for children.

Deanna Bremer Fisher is executive director of FutureHeights, publisher of the Heights Observer, and president of Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Campus.

CRIME continued from page 1



Serious property crime in Cleveland Heights, 2011-2018.



Violent crime in Cleveland Heights, 2011-2018.

Among property crimes, there were significant declines in burglaries and thefts, while the number of auto thefts and arsons rose slightly.

Police Chief Annette Mecklenburg credits much of the decline to good teamwork. "It takes the efforts of everyone, from beat officers to patrol officers to detectives to supervisors," she said. "Most of our arrests are based on evidence collected at the scene by patrol officers, and investigative work performed by our detectives."

She also noted that many suspects turn out to be involved in multiple crimes. As a result, each arrest has potential to prevent several future crimes—which is why the crime rate has continued to fall each year.

The charts present a year-to-year comparison of serious crimes reported in Cleveland Heights since 2011, which is when the CHPD began compiling data with a view toward using it to manage police operations. Since then, the CHPD has emphasized consistency with the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting guidelines—a regimented, clearly defined set of rules for classifying and reporting crime that has been updated continually since being introduced in 1930.

"Based on past crime stats we're able to determine which areas are likely to have a greater

likelihood of crime, and we will increase our visibility in those areas—which includes patrols and traffic enforcement," Mecklenburg said. "I also believe that we should recognize the communications we have with residents. . . . Sometimes it is because of an alert citizen that we are able prevent a crime or apprehend an offender committing a crime."

The data reported here don't represent every crime that occurs. Rather, these are serious crimes as defined in Part I of the FBI guidelines: violent crimes against people, and serious crimes against property.

The FBI does not collect data on less serious Part II crimes—including trespassing, disorderly conduct, sexual imposition, public intoxication and 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 *Heights Observer* publishes them, see the original article in this series at <http://bit.ly/cbcrimestats>.

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

Monday, May 20, 2019

Lost Cleveland Memories Presents

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For more information about local historian Dennis R. Sutcliffe visit: lostcleveland.com

Local programs mark National Preservation Month

Kara Hamley O'Donnell

May is National Preservation Month, and four Cleveland Heights institutions are joining together to sponsor a series of local history programs that take place in May, and beyond.

The Cleveland Heights Historical Society, Cleveland Heights Landmark Commission, Cleveland Restoration Society (CRS), and Heights Libraries kicked off the first of five programs on April 25, and the series wraps up on June 1. All programs are free, and do not require registration.

Saturday, May 4, noon, In My Day Wrap Party—Celebrate the wrap of Heights Libraries' In My Day Oral History project. All day,

library staff will be recording stories, and ice cream will be available 2:30-3:30 p.m. [Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road.]

Wednesday, May 22, 7 p.m., Gatsby and the Van Sweringens, with Christopher Whipple—Author of *Cleveland's Colorful Characters*, Christopher Whipple will explain how F. Scott Fitzgerald used the Van Sweringen family and their friends as the basis for his famous book, *The Great Gatsby*. [Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road; sponsored by the Cleveland Heights Historical Society and Heights Libraries.]

Wednesday, May 29, 7 p.m., Sacred Landmarks Lecture—Michael Fleenor, CRS's director of preservation, will give an overview of Cleveland's most significant sacred



The 1930 Heights Rockefeller Building, pictured here in 1935, is a stop on the June, Best of the Bricks bike tour.

COURTESY CITY OF CLEVELAND HEIGHTS

Nighttown hosts Officer Jason D. West scholarship fundraiser May 5

Lita Gonzalez



Officer Jason West

Nighttown will host the 2019 Officer Jason West Memorial Scholarship Mega Raffle fund-

raiser on Sunday, May 5, 5-8 p.m. Raffle tickets are \$2 and can be purchased from any committee member, at Quintana's Barber & Dream Spa, CLE Urban Winery, Shawn Paul Salon and Nighttown, or at the event.

This year will mark the 12th anniversary since a group of Cleveland Heights residents and business owners first came together to start the scholarship, which honors the memory of Officer West, a member of the Cleveland Heights Police Department, who lost his life in 2007 while responding to a disturbance call.

"Officer Jason West was a hero, not because of the way he died, but because of the way he chose to live his life—as a devoted son and brother, loyal friend, a mentor and role model to young adults in the community, and as a dedicated police officer," said Liz Radivoyevitch, co-chair of the scholarship committee.

West had always wanted to be a police officer. He felt it was important to serve as a role model to young adults. "Because of the scholarship,

Jason's memory and beliefs continue to touch the lives of young men and women hoping to continue on a path to a career in law enforcement," said Radivoyevitch.

The first scholarship was awarded in 2008 to a graduating senior from the Criminal Justice Program at Cleveland Heights High School. Since then, the scholarship committee has given out a total of 17 scholarships to graduating seniors from the Criminal Justice Program at Heights High, and paid the full tuition for two award recipients to attend the Cleveland Heights Police Academy.

The Mega Raffle is the only fundraising event the scholarship committee holds each year, and all money raised during the event goes directly to the scholarship fund.

Contributions can also be mailed to: The Officer Jason D. West Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o The Treasurer's Office, Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District, 2155 Miramar Blvd., University Heights, 44118. Checks should be made payable to "Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District," and be sure to include "Jason D. West Scholarship" on the memo line.

For more information, call 216-410-4577, or visit www.facebook.com/jasonwestscholarship.

Lita Gonzalez has lived in Cleveland Heights since 1995. She is recently retired, and an avid volunteer.

landmarks—those that represent this region's rich diversity of faith traditions and ethnicities. He will talk about issues with which these congregations have had to contend, and how CRS has been able to help them. Finally, he will demonstrate the local creativity undertaken in adapting empty sacred landmarks for new uses. [Lee Road Library, 2345 Lee Road.]

Saturday, June 1, 10 a.m., Best of the Bricks Bike Tour—Cleveland Heights Council Member Mary Dunbar has led many past

bike tours, including a 2018 Best of the Bricks Bike tour of residences and commercial buildings south of Cedar Road. This year, she'll lead a bike ride featuring the excellent brickwork on view north of Cedar Road. [Tour begins at the Noble Neighborhood Library, 2800 Noble Road.]

Kara Hamley O'Donnell is City Planner II at the Cleveland Heights Department of Planning & Development, an historic preservationist, and staffs the city's Landmark and Planning commissions.



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Enjoy National Bike Month in the Heights



LIFE CYCLE

Heights Bicycle Coalition

Since 2010, Cleveland Heights and University Heights have joined cities nationwide to celebrate May as National Bike Month.

Activities take place in and around the Heights throughout the month, including Bike the Heights Weekend, May 3-5; Bike to Work Week, May 13-17; and the Ride of Silence, a memorial that honors those injured or killed while riding their bicycles, on May 15.

Kicking things off, the Cedar Fairmount, Cedar Lee and Coventry Village special improvement districts will host their first collaborative Bike the Heights weekend, featuring an array of bike-related activities. On Saturday, May 4, 1-3 p.m., Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) will hold a Bike Fix-It Day in the parking lot of the former Zoss Bakery (12397 Cedar Road). Experts will be on-hand to assess bicycles and make minor repairs. Also that Saturday, HBC will host a family-friendly ride through the three districts at 3 p.m., originating and ending at Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park.

On Sunday, May 5, All Geared Up will celebrate its fifth anniversary with a family-centric day of bike events, including a bike rodeo, 4-mile fun ride, a used bike sale and more. Activities get underway at 1 p.m., at Canterbury Elementary School in Cleveland Heights.

On Wednesday, May 8, students in kindergarten through eighth grade, in CH-UH public schools and some private and parochial schools, will take part in Walk or Bike to School Day. Walking or biking to school is a great way for kids to get exercise while being social, and studies show that children who walk or bike to school arrive more ready to sit down and learn.

Bike to Work Week begins on

Monday, May 13, and concludes with Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 17. That morning, from 7 to 9 a.m., HBC will provide free coffee, courtesy of Phoenix Coffee, and snacks at the corner of Edgehill and Overlook roads—Northeast Ohio's most traveled commuter bike route. Stop by and say, "Hi," and meet fellow commuters as HBC promotes cycling in the Heights, and note the construction project underway at that intersection, designed to make biking, walking and driving there safer.

The May 15 Ride of Silence—a worldwide coordinated event—takes place each year on the third Wednesday in May. Heights-area bicyclists will gather at John Carroll University's southeast parking lot at 6:30 p.m., departing at 6:45 p.m. to pedal down Fairmount Boulevard to University Hospitals on Adelbert Road in University Circle. There, they will join with riders coming from the Free Stamp sculpture in downtown Cleveland for a memorial observance, at about 7:30 p.m.

Bike Month wraps up with a Best of the Bricks ride on Saturday, June 1. Led by Mary Dunbar, HBC vice president and Cleveland Heights council member, this fun, leisurely and informative ride will depart from the Noble Neighborhood Library (2800 Noble Road) at 10 a.m. Participants will view some of Cleveland Heights' most noteworthy, interesting and historic brick structures, located north of Cedar Road.

This is just a sampling of the many Bike Month activities happening in and around the Heights. For more information, or to get involved in bicycle advocacy, visit www.heightsbicyclecoalition.org.

Heights Bicycle Coalition is a 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to educating and encouraging Heights community members to use bicycles as a sustainable and healthy form of transportation and recreation. This article was written by Jamison Babb and members of HBC's Communications Committee.

MEMORIAL continued from page 1

however, there have been a number of restoration efforts in recent years. For several years, Holden Parks Trust has been replacing lost trees within Cleveland's city limits.

In 2016, the city of Cleveland Heights installed three signs along North Park Boulevard to draw attention to this rich history.

Two Cleveland Heights residents, Al Oberst and Tom Gilbride, have looked over the years, and Oberst has installed flags near the remaining plaques on Memorial Day for several years. He'll be placing flags near the plaques again this year.

The Cleveland Tree Plan, approved by the city of Cleveland in 2016, aims to make Cleveland the

"Forest City" once again. One of the plan's objectives is to develop a Landmark Tree Program. In order to accomplish this objective, the Sustainable Cleveland Forest City Working Group has initiated an inventory of the remaining Liberty Row Trees. Cathi Lehn, the Sustainable Cleveland manager in the Cleveland Mayor's Office of Sustainability, and Courtney Blashka, community forester with Holden Forests and Gardens, lead the working group. For more information, contact Lehn at clehn@city.cleveland.oh.us.

Jamie Miles is an intern for the Cleveland Heights Department of Planning & Development and a graduate student in historic preservation at Ursuline College.

Cleveland Heights SIDs kick off May with Bike the Heights

Myra Orenstein

May is Bike Month, and the Cedar Fairmount, Cedar Lee and Coventry Village special improvement districts (SIDs) will be celebrating in a big way with the introduction of their first collaborative Bike the Heights weekend, Friday to Sunday, May 3 to 5.

Recognizing the increasing popularity of bike riding in the districts, leaders of the three SIDs determined an event was in order. In addition to rides, special offers will be available at select merchants in each of the districts.

The Heights Bicycle Coalition (HBC) is taking an active part in the weekend with a family-friendly ride on Saturday, May 4, at 3 p.m., originating and ending at Coventry P.E.A.C.E. Park. Since Saturday is May 4 ("May the Fourth be With You!") Coventry Village will tip its hat to "Star Wars." Crank Set Rides asks everyone to arrive in "Star Wars" costumes to become eligible for prizes as part of its Star Wars Bar Crawl Ride through Cedar Lee, Cedar Fairmount and Coventry Village.

The weekend isn't only about bike rides. Green Tara Yoga, in Cedar Fairmount, across from Nighttown, will offer special stretching for bicyclists on May 3, at 6 p.m., and May 4, at 11 a.m. Those who ride their bikes to Green Tara Yoga's studio on May 4 may take a free yoga class from 9:30 to 11 a.m. Confluence Cycle and Yoga on Coventry Road is offering a 9 a.m. drop-in special on Friday, May 3, and a 9:45 a.m. drop-in special on Saturday,

May 4 (mention code Bike 10 for both classes). Confluence wraps up its offerings with an outdoor fitness ride at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, May 5.

In celebration of Cinco de Mayo, Lopez on Lee will feature a Brunch Fiesta from noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday.

In need of bike repair? Stop by the parking lot adjacent to Nighttown on May 4, where HBC will have six mechanics working to get bikes running like new. Self-service bike stations will be open throughout the weekend at the Lee Road Library and at the northwest corner of Lee and Superior roads, across from Cain Park.

Those interested in purchasing bikes should stop by the Cleveland Heights Police Department's Annual Bike Auction on Sunday, May 5, 1 p.m. It will take place in the parking lot adjacent to the police entrance at CH City Hall.

In addition to their own activities, the SIDs are also helping promote activities in University Circle, where the Slow Roll takes place on Monday, May 6. For more information visit www.ugoointhecircle.com/events.

For more information about Bike the Heights weekend, visit www.cedar-fairmount.org, www.coventryvillage.org, and www.cedarlee.org.

Myra Orenstein has been a Cleveland Heights resident for more than 30 years, and is president of CATV, a marketing/advertising/pr collaborative acting as executive director of Cedar Fairmount SID and Cleveland Independents.

CH Senior Center News

Amy Jenkins

This month, through a partnership between the Cleveland Heights Office on Aging and University Circle Interactive Cleveland, Senior Activity Center (SAC) members are invited to participate in cultural outings that will take them to the latest exhibits, concerts and museums in Cleveland.

Using video-conference technology, the SAC is able to bring educators from around the world to the center.

On Thursday, May 9, at 11 a.m., seniors can participate in a video-conference with Joel Cohn, live from Israel. Cohn's talk, "The Start-Up Nation," will consider the technology boom in Israel, with a focus on the Jewish people and their connection to the land. Afterward, following an optional box lunch from the Stone Oven at the SAC, participants will travel on the SAC van to the Maltz Museum for a docent-led tour of the current exhibit, *Israel Then and Now*. This world-premiere exhibition takes a look back and imagines what's ahead for the country, via milestone moments, historic images, interactive media and film. Participants are urged to register early. The cost is \$35 for the video lecture, lunch and trip; \$25 for the lecture and trip only.

On Friday, May 24, at 11 a.m., participants will travel to Severance

Hall on the SAC van to hear the Cleveland Orchestra perform Greig's "Peer Gynt." Space is limited, so early registration is recommended. The \$30 fee includes a seat at the concert, transportation, a pre-concert talk and continental breakfast.

Call 216-691-7379 for additional information about these and other programs, and to register.

The Cleveland Heights SAC, located in the CH Community Center at 1 Monticello Blvd., offers a variety of programming for those 60 and older. A complete schedule of programs is published in the community center's newsletter, available online at www.chparks.com.

SAC membership is \$5 for Cleveland Heights residents. 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@university-heights.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 ajenkins@clvhts.com.

Gardening is for the birds



Cedar waxwings feed on native insects, which in turn feed on native trees.

Peggy Spaeth

We choose each plant that we place in our garden. But what if birds and insects chose instead? After all, to humans plants are beautiful and fragrant, but to wildlife they are essential food and shelter.

Human health is inextricably bound to the health of wildlife for a healthy environment. Global-scale policies are needed to mitigate the impact of climate change, but individuals, neighborhoods and communities can do what is necessary to make a difference, such as choosing to plant native flora to support native wildlife.

Change can start small. This spring, 20-plus homeowners on Bradford Road are each planting a small patch of native flowers on their tree lawns and front lawns to create a pollinator path. The cumulative effect will be the creation of a quarter acre of native habitat—the Bradford Pollinator Path! Plants include milkweed varieties (*Asclepias syriaca*, *A. incarnata*, and *A. tuberosa*), cardinal flower, blue lobelia, Culver's root, obedient plant, wild bergamot, and more.

What do spring warblers migrating through Northeast Ohio need to eat? Insects. What do the insects need? Flowers. The first native spring flowers are on trees and shrubs, and that's where the migrants are seen feeding. Oak trees, according to entomologist Doug Tallamy, support 534 species of caterpillars, aka bird food. A flock of cedar waxwings fed on insects in a blooming Heights maple tree for a week last spring. Native trees support native wildlife.

Native understory shrubs, such as dogwood, spicebush, chokecherry and serviceberry, also flower in May and June. Some create thickets that shelter nesting native birds, as well as

providing food. Plant native shrubs, put out a birdbath, keep your cat inside or leashed (it's the law), and you've provided a healthy habitat.

The ground layer of the garden is probably the most delightful, because we all love flowers. Horticulturalists "improve" them to make them bigger and better to satisfy our human craving for the newest and best, but sometimes they inject them with pesticides to keep them looking perfect. Insects and birds eat the tainted plants with devastating effect.

Our gardens might contain beautiful plants from all around the world. But non-native flora and fauna wreak havoc on what is native to its eco-region. We can't change this overnight, but we can begin to appreciate and re-introduce native plants in our own eco-region.

Heights residents can incrementally and collectively build a healthy eco-system. We can change our practice of mowing and blowing our yards. We can demonstrate that native plants are feasible, attractive, enduring and beneficial. We can go beyond yards and encourage public entities such as schools and parks, to plant more native trees and plants. We can educate young people about the environment through the magic of butterflies, bring neighbors together through the pleasures of gardening, mitigate stormwater runoff through proper yard management, and sequester more carbon by increasing vegetation.

Consider adding a few native plants to your garden this May. As Tallamy advises, "Garden as if life depends on it."

A list of Northeast Ohio sources for native plants can be found at FriendsOfLowerLake.blogspot.com. (Never dig up plants in the wild!)

In addition, the 17th annual Nature Center at Shaker Lakes plant sale, on May 11, will contain a large selection of hard-to-find native plants. For information about the sale, go to www.shakerlakes.org/plant-sale.

Peggy Spaeth volunteers as a Cleveland Metroparks certified watershed steward, is co-chair of Friends of Lower Lake, and a Nature Center at Shaker Lakes plant sale volunteer.

Goines installed as Forest Hill co-pastor

Peg Weissbrod



On Sunday, May 5, 4 p.m., Forest Hill Church, Presbyterian, begins a new era of pastoral leadership and ministry. The Rev. Dr. Veronica R. Goines will be installed as co-pastor. All are welcome at this service of installation.

A nearly lifelong resident of California, Goines is excited by the call to work collaboratively with co-pastor John C. Lentz Jr. in leading the church. She brings extensive ministry

experience in cross-cultural and multicultural contexts to her post.

Forest Hill has a legacy of being a leader in the community and in its PC(USA) denomination. With the call of Rev. Goines, Forest Hill Church more faithfully seeks to pursue Christ's call to the Beloved Community, and manifest relationships of diversity, equity, and transformative love.

Forest Hill Church is located at 3031 Monticello Blvd. Learn more at www.fhcpresb.org.

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

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Annual RoxEl Run benefit set for May 18

Jessica Schantz

The annual RoxEl Run, one of Roxboro Elementary School's most popular fundraisers and community events, will take place this year on Saturday, May 18, at 9 a.m. Now in its seventh year, the PTA-organized event, with the tagline "Run Like It's Recess," promotes physical fitness as a fun and social pursuit.

Race co-chairs Gillian Grim and Clare Taft emphasize that the RoxEl Run is an event for everyone. "In our seventh year, the RoxEl Run is so much more than just a fundraiser for our PTA," said Taft. "The run is a chance to engage families, the business community, the district and the Roxboro neighborhood, while having

fun and celebrating our students."

The race includes four-mile and two-mile runs, and a two-mile walk, which begins at the same time as the run and follows the same route. The race sets off from the Roxboro Middle School track, 2400 Roxboro Road, and loops through the neighborhoods surrounding the school.

The Kid's Fun Run, exclusively for elementary-age children and free this year for participants, begins at 10 a.m. and takes place inside the middle school track.

Childcare is offered again this year for caregivers who would like to run. Sign up is available on the online registration form.

Following the race, runners,



Participants of a past RoxEl Run wait to race at the starting line.

COURTESY: CH-UH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

families and community members can enjoy healthy snacks and refreshments, games, face painting and a DJ inside the track. Spectators are encouraged to bring their own blankets and chairs.

All Heights residents are welcome to sign up, regardless of whether they have children in the district. The event has gotten so popular that other CH-UH school run clubs now regularly participate.

Approximately 500 people attended the event last year, to run or spectate, and similar numbers are expected this year. Last year's proceeds, used to support Roxboro Elementary School students and teachers, totaled \$5,000.

Past and present event sponsors include the Cleveland Clinic Children's Foundation, Romanin Concrete, Eastside Landscaping, Bruegger's Bagels, Luna Bakery & Café, Tommy's restaurant, Zagara's Marketplace, Mitchell's Ice Cream, Heights Dental Group, Two One Fix Bicycle, CareSpotlight, the

Children's Museum of Cleveland, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, EDWINS Leadership & Restaurant Institute, Tom Waina of Farmer's Insurance, Justin Ragor of State Farm Insurance, the Little River Pet Resort, Butcher and the Brewer, Hoff & Leigh, Confluence Cycle and Yoga, Inspiral Motion, and Real Estate Agent Steve Toth.

The entry fee for the four- and two-mile run options and the two-mile walk is \$25 for adults and \$10 for kids. T-shirts are included in the fee. Kids Fun Run participants can purchase T-shirts at registration for \$10.

Online registration is now open. For full event and prize details, visit www.runsignup.com, follow the event on its Facebook page (www.facebook.com/roxelrun), or email roxelrun@gmail.com.

Jessica Schantz is the e-news manager at the Heights Observer and a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights.

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Rummage sale will benefit Heights preschool

Emily Lampe

Heights Cooperative Preschool has planned a multi-family benefit rummage sale on Saturday, May 18, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. All of the proceeds will benefit the school and support programs for the children.

The sale will be held in the parking lot of Church of the Redeemer, at 2420 South Taylor Road. In case of rain, the sale will move inside, to the lower level of the church building.

Any items left at the end of the sale will be donated to Common



Threads, which funds Building Hope in the City.

Emily Lampe is an education consultant and parent in Cleveland Heights. She currently has a child enrolled at Heights Cooperative Preschool. She has been a resident of Cleveland Heights since 2013.

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Honor society inducts its largest class in a decade



The Heights High chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) inducted 75 students into the organization on March 14. "This is our biggest inductee class in more than 10 years," said NHS advisor Haethem Rasul. In 2018, Heights High inducted 50 students into its NHS chapter. Sophomores and juniors with a 3.5 GPA or higher are invited to apply for membership, having demonstrated achievement in the area of scholarship, one of the four pillars of NHS. The application requires evidence of student activities in the three other pillars: character, service and leadership.

Heights High team wins televised Academic Challenge

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher

Cleveland Heights High School junior Rohan Bruce has "always really liked reading," and commented, "I retain a lot of (seemingly) useless information"—a skill she puts to use as captain of the high school's Academic Challenge team.

Bruce and teammates Maple Buescher and Leo Kenealy competed against St. Ignatius and North Ridgeville high schools on the Academic Challenge program on March 23 on WEWS-TV (Channel 5/ABC). Their Heights High team won, scoring 505 points to St. Ignatius' 485. North Ridgeville came in third

with 380.

Academic Challenge is a quiz show for high school students, testing their knowledge of topics ranging from literature and history to physics and geography. A fledgling club was started at the middle school level a few years ago, which is where sophomores Buescher and Kenealy got their start.



Maple Buescher, Rohan Bruce and Leo Kenealy (seated) with alternates (standing, left to right) Sam Hermes and Elliot Zoldak on the set of Academic Challenge at WEWS-TV.

Buescher hoped to continue competing in high school and proposed a club to administrators, who approved the idea as long as she could find an advisor. Social studies teacher Karl Neitzel stepped up to the challenge, so to speak.

"Each student has their own areas of expertise," said Neitzel. "One might know everything about history while another reads all the time." The quiz structure includes team rounds, where students have time to confer with one another, and lightning rounds, where they have to buzz in as quickly as possible.

All three students said they were extremely nervous about competing on television. In fact, Bruce said she was so scared at the start that she thought she might be sick. But, according to Buescher, "The WEWS staff and our competitors were all super friendly. We had an

intense and competitive game, that was also incredibly fun and rewarding."

Kenealy called the experience "amazing," and said, "Maple, Rohan and I were proud to represent Heights High on TV."

The team won first place in an intense back-and-forth final minute that started out with Heights 20 points ahead and saw them tied with St. Ignatius 30 seconds later. With just ten seconds remaining, St. Ignatius was up by 10 points, until Rohan correctly identified Mozart's opera "The Magic Flute" to pull ahead as the final seconds wound down.

Krissy Dietrich Gallagher, a longtime resident of Cleveland Heights, is a former District teacher and freelance journalist under contract with the CH-UH City School District.

Cleveland Heights - University Heights Board of Education Meeting highlights



MARCH 19, 2019

Board President Jodi Sourini, Vice President James Posch, and board members Dan Heintz and Malia Lewis were present. Beverly Wright was absent. Interim Superintendent Brian A. Williams and Treasurer Scott Gainer were also present. The meeting began at 7:03 p.m. and adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Awards and recognitions

Awards and recognitions were presented for the Martin Luther King Jr. Essay/Artwork Contest winners, Heights Middle School Spelling Bee champions, and Tiger Team Members of the Month.

Middle school renovations

Doug Myers of MPC Consultants updated the board on progress made in the middle school construction. At Monticello, a kitchen issue was resolved, and at Roxboro, a structural repair was made to the gas line. It was noted that the project is on time and on budget.

Board president's report

Board President Sourini thanked everyone who participated in the process of choosing a new superintendent. Board members commented on the difficulty in choosing the superintendent given the high quality of applicants. Elizabeth Kirby has been chosen, and comes from Chicago Public Schools. It was noted that this does not change the strategic plan, which will continue to be followed.

'Time to Teach, Time to Learn' resolution

The board adopted a resolution read by Dan Heintz, "Time to Teach, Time to Learn." The resolution calls for an end to the overuse and misuse of standardized testing. The reading can be heard on the Cleveland Heights - University Heights Board of Education YouTube channel, and can be found at www.chuh.org/BoardofEducation.aspx under BoardDoc.

Heights High swimming pool

Malia Lewis noted that 78 passes were purchased for the winter swim sessions. Given the number of community members using the pool, this pilot program has been [deemed] successful and will continue.

LWV Observer: Carol Spackey.

APRIL 2, 2019

Present were Board President Jodi Sourini, Vice President James Posch, and board members Dan Heintz, Beverly Wright and Malia Lewis. Also present were Acting Superintendent Brian Williams and Treasurer Scott Gainer. The meeting began at 7:10 p.m. and ended at 8:50 p.m.

Student recognitions

Williams recognized the Heights Middle School group that won the Great Lakes Science Design and Build Contest: Caleb Green, Marcus Holland, Arthur Schmiedl and Ruby Tugeau, led by teachers Amy Statler and Dianna Neal. The student team placed first in all divisions including the adult division. Caroline Imka, the high school representative to the board, reported that the Heights High Academic Challenge team took first in its meet earlier this month.

Union negotiations

The board approved a resolution of understanding with two public school employee unions, the Ohio Association of Public School Employees Locals 617 and 102.

Middle school renovations

The main order of business was the discussion and approval of change orders for the Heights middle schools. The board was apprised of roofing issues occurring at both Monticello and Roxboro middle school sites.

State school funding proposal

Scott Gainer summarized his review of the Patterson school funding proposal being discussed in the state legislature. He feels that our district could benefit from an increase in funding from the state, and from the potential for school vouchers to be paid in a less-onerous manner than the present funding manner. He submitted the five-year financial forecast, which the board approved.

Task force reports

Several board members made task force reports. Dan Heintz reported that the early childhood task force had its first meeting. Jodi Sourini reported that the gifted task force met.

Reaching Heights Spelling Bee

Malia Lewis encouraged the board to field a team for the Reaching Heights Spelling Bee.

National equity symposium

Beverly Wright reported on her attendance at the National School Board Association's Equity Symposium. She shared notes from several presentations she attended and shared a video dramatizing equity issues.

LWV Observer: Robin Koslen.

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.

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Read your way through 'the great outdoors' this summer



Isabelle Rew

Summer is just around the corner, and what goes hand-in-hand with picnics, beaches and parks? A good book, or—for many of Heights Libraries' summer reading program participants—lots of them.

This year, Heights Libraries is encouraging literacy and exploration

with "The Great Outdoors," a brand new summer reading theme, and will kick off the summer with exciting reading challenges and literacy-rich activities for participants of all ages.

From June 1 through Aug. 9, for every book they read, adults will be invited to drop an entry into a ballot box at a library branch for the chance to win weekly gift bags and a grand prize at the end of the summer. Grand prizes include a Fitbit Inspire heart rate and fitness tracker, an Amazon Fire HD 8 tablet, and a Roku Premiere streaming media player.

Adults can further embrace this year's theme by joining a group discussion of nature-themed classics, such as Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* and Alan Weisman's *The World Without*

Us, at the Lee Road branch; participating in seed saving with the Cleveland Seed Bank at the Coventry Village branch; and testing out their nature knowledge at a "great outdoors" trivia night at Christopher's Pub.

"We hope adults will find this to be a fun incentive to find time to read this summer, and maybe take a book with them on their way to a park or the beach," said Chuck Collins, adult services manager. "Some parents find it easier to get their kids to do their summer reading if mom or dad are reading at the same time."

Children and teens are also encouraged to exercise their literacy skills while participating in their own version of the summer reading program. According to the American Library Association, summer reading programs play an integral role in ensuring that children retain reading and learning skills over the summer recess.

Throughout the summer, young people will be invited to join library staff in celebrating the natural world through free programs about gardening, bicycle maintenance, and outdoor survival. They'll also have a chance to meet a naturalist from the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.

"With this theme we wanted to design a fun reading program that also encourages participants to get out and explore—whether it's a local park or just their own backyard and

neighborhood," said Sam Lapides, youth services manager.

Children and teens will be invited to read books, update reading logs, and complete activities to earn raffle tickets to enter to win a wide array of prizes. Thirty days of reading are needed to officially complete the program, but participants are encouraged to fill out additional reading logs after they've completed the first.

The program will also offer bonus raffle tickets for participants who complete simple activities, such as drawing a picture outside, reading a book under a tree, or painting a rock and leaving it outside for someone else to find.

Prizes vary by age group and include an annual membership to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo for preschoolers, a one-of-a-kind outdoor fun bundle for elementary-school-age kids, and Cedar Point tickets for teens.

"We hope this year's program is a 'down to earth' way to spend the summer," said Lapides. "We'd love to see kids enjoy as much time outside as possible and maybe even discover the joys of reading outside, too!"

To learn about more Great Outdoors programs, visit any Heights Libraries branch, or go to www.heightslibrary.org.

Isabelle Rew is the community engagement associate for the Cleveland Heights-University Heights Public Library System.

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Cleveland Heights - University Heights Public Library Board Meeting highlights



MARCH 18, 2019

Board members present were President Chris Mentrek, Vice President James Roosa, Secretary Dana Fluellen, Max Gerboc, Annette Iwamoto, Suzanne Moskowitz and Vikas Turakhia,

pantry one day a month this summer at the Coventry Village Branch. This event will serve adults 18 years and older. More details will be forthcoming.

Purchase of computers

The board approved a resolution to approve the purchase of 101 new replacement computers for the library. Computers are replaced on a five-year rotating basis.

Report on elimination of overdue fines

Circulation Services Manager Ty Emerson presented a report on the elimination of nearly all overdue fines since January 2018. The only fines still charged are for hotspots and video games. The change was made to remove a barrier to access of materials for library customers. Instead of a steep decline in fines paid in cash, the library saw an increase of \$4,000. Circulation also increased; there was a 1.28 percent increase in first-time circulation of physical materials.

Financial report

Heights Libraries' fiscal officer reviewed the February financial statement. Total cash balances across the operating accounts, Bauer Fund accounts, and investment accounts at the end of January was \$16,012,834.76. The board accepted the financial report.

UH Branch Sunday events

Weekend programs were moved from Saturdays to Sundays at the University Heights Branch, to improve attendance. Reading & Rescue, typically offered on Saturdays, saw an increase of 168 percent when held on Sundays.

Suicide prevention training

Last month, 27 employees attended Gatekeeper (QPR) suicide prevention training. People trained in QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) learn to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help.

Youth services

In February, youth services staff visited six preschools, daycares and schools, reading stories to 249 children. Librarians visiting the high school engaged with 75 teens. Youth services librarians also produced two African and Caribbean folktale puppet shows, attended by 91 people.

Lee Road space utilization study

Staff members are making note of how library customers use the Lee Road Library during a two-week time period in March. It has been 12 years since the use of the building has been examined. Results of the study will inform planning for future revisions, such as carpeting, meeting rooms, and staff spaces.

LWV Observer: Elizabeth M. Tracy.

Mobile pantry at Coventry Village Library

The library will partner with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank to host a mobile

Look for earlier and often expanded postings of meeting summaries online at www.heightsobserver.org. See disclaimer on page 8.



Reprinted from Funny Times. Cartoon by Andy Singer.

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Every day is Earth Day at Fairmount Cleaners

Mike Cook

Earth Day is April 22. For the owners of Fairmount Cleaners, every day is Earth Day.

Steve Grace runs Fairmount Cleaners with his son Adam. They know that dry cleaning has a reputation for being damaging to the environment. That's why they take steps to make their business as environmentally friendly as possible.

"Customers in the Heights have always been eco-sensitive," Steve said. "We're on the same page as our customers, and we are always making environmental improvements."

Fairmount Cleaners' solvent of choice, SOLVONK₄, is now bio-



Steve and Adam Grace at Fairmount Cleaners.

based, and has been awarded the USDA BioPreferred product label. SOLVONK₄ is the first and only

bio-based solvent in the dry-cleaning industry.

As defined by the USDA, bio-based products are derived from plants and other renewable agricultural, marine and forestry materials, and provide an alternative to conventional petroleum-derived products. Made primarily from corn, SOLVONK₄ is also completely biodegradable.

"Bio-derived and sustainable are words never before applied to the dry-cleaning industry," Steve said. "There is peace of mind in using SOLVONK₄. We know we are safe using it, our customers are better off, and the environmental liability is eliminated as well."

Solvent use is not the only way

Fairmount Cleaners tries to help the environment. "We use plastic bags made with 50-percent recycled material, and we offer reusable fabric garment bags to further reduce our need for plastic," Steve explained. "We use many recycled paper products as well. In addition, we manually recycle many hangers we receive back from our customers."

Heights Observer readers named Fairmount Cleaners, at 2163 South Taylor Road, "Best University Heights Business" in the 2019 Best of the Heights Awards.

Mike Cook is the communications and civic engagement coordinator for University Heights.

Heights HVAC company picks recipient in furnace giveaway

Bob Rosenbaum

Verne & Ellsworth Hann Inc., the Cleveland Heights-based heating and cooling company, selected Heather Kwedder of Willoughby as the winner in its third annual Helping Hann Furnace Giveaway. The company provided her with a free furnace and installation, including labor and materials.

Kwedder's 23-year-old son, Rick, is chronically ill and has been hospitalized on and off throughout his life. While her husband, John, is Rick's full-time caregiver, Kwedder has had to take leaves of absence from her nursing job when lengthy hospital stays require more attention than one person can provide.

It was during one such period of financial burden in December when the family's 17-year-old furnace stopped

working. Kwedder's mother, Sherri Pierce, nominated her for the furnace giveaway.

After nominations closed in February, Verne & Ellsworth Hann's owners interviewed deserving entrants and selected six finalists. Their names were placed in a hat for a random drawing conducted via video on Facebook.

"I am in shock and speechless," Kwedder said. "Life has been so stressful for so long. Not having to worry about the furnace takes one thing off our plate and helps ease that stress. . . . I have no idea how to begin to thank this company. I am so very grateful. What a testament to the idea of taking care of each other and our communities."

Brothers Bill and Chris Hann are the fourth generation of family members to own the HVAC business, and members of the family's fifth genera-

tion also work there. They created the Helping Hann contest as a way to give back to the community.

"Heather's story touched us, and it was our pleasure to provide her and her family peace of mind with a new furnace and installation," Chris Hann said. "Helping Hann is the highlight of our year and we look forward to continuing the tradition."

Verne & Ellsworth Hann Inc. is located at 2026 Lee Road in Cleveland Heights. For more information, visit www.vebbrothers.com.

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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Cedar Lee to screen film on yoga master

Karen Allgire

A new documentary film, "Iyengar: The Man, Yoga, and the Student's Journey," will be screened at the Cedar Lee Theatre on Wednesday, June 5, at 7:30 p.m.

Directed by award-winning filmmaker Jake Clennell, the film looks at the life and teachings of B.K.S. Iyengar, considered instrumental in popularizing yoga around the world. An Official Selection of the Vancouver International Film Festival, the film was made with the support and cooperation of B.K.S. Iyengar and the Iyengar family, the Iyengar Yoga National Association of the United States, and students and supporters worldwide.

The film is being brought to Cleveland by a new crowd-sourcing platform, Theatrical-on-Demand®, which enables movie-goers to bring movies that they want to watch to their local theater, with no rental cost and no risk. Tickets must be purchased in advance, and the screening takes place only if enough tickets are sold by May 24. Tickets for the June 5 event are available now at www.gathr.us/s/28373.

Green Tara Yoga, the only Iyengar Yoga studio in the Cleveland area, is

hosting this screening of "Iyengar." Green Tara Yoga exclusively teaches the Iyengar method—an innovative form of classical yoga that uses breath and alignment to create integrated action and awareness.

A portion of the proceeds from the film's release will benefit B.K.S. Iyengar's Bellur Trust, continuing humanitarian efforts started by Iyengar in his birth village of Bellur, India.

This documentary will appeal to anyone with an interest in yoga, wellness, spirituality, or the connection of mind and body. Iyengar Yoga is practiced worldwide and credited by many students as being life-transforming. Thanks to exclusive, intimate access to Iyengar, Clennell's documentary showcases the profound spirituality embedded in this legendary yogi's practice.

B.K.S. Iyengar is regarded as one of the world's greatest yoga masters, whose seminal work, *Light on Yoga*, is the most published book on yoga ever written. In 2004, *Time* magazine named him one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

Karen Allgire is the owner of Green Tara Yoga in the Cedar Fairmount district. She has been teaching Iyengar Yoga since 1998.

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Lusty Wrench closes after 40 years

Patti Substelny

Cleveland Heights has many intelligent, knowledgeable, skilled, dedicated and civic-minded entrepreneurs. Sam Bell, who has been one such local treasure for nearly 40 years, made the decision to close his business, The Lusty Wrench, as of mid-March.

Bell started The Lusty Wrench in 1979, after having taken his own car to be serviced before a road trip. Despite the "trip check," the car broke down en route. The frustration of having just paid a professional to attend to the car to prevent such misery and inconvenience spurred

Bell to wonder: "Is it feasible to run an auto repair shop based on competence, honesty and integrity?" He opened The Lusty Wrench the next week.

Bell said of his business, "Our goal has always been to provide excellent mechanical repair and maintenance services to all our automotive customers. We're in the service business, so our job is to say, 'Yes.'"

"Our customers see the results of our continuing devotion to ongoing training to stay on top of rapidly evolving technologies. Over the years," said Bell, "many customers have become friends. My employees are as devoted to service as I am, and they are the key to our success."

Bell cited "a number of factors" for his decision to close The Lusty Wrench. "Mostly," he said, "it's a question of age and energy. Auto repair is still very physically demanding work, and some mornings I can barely move my fingers. I've been doing this for 50-plus hours a week for 40 years."



Sam Bell, owner of The Lusty Wrench, holding his 2015 Best of the Heights award for Best Customer Service.

Asked about his plans for the future, and how he'll spend his free time, Bell replied, "Don't worry. I've just founded a new company called RoadPrintz that is developing a robotic system to paint turn arrows, crosswalks, bike symbols, etc. on streets and roads. We're demonstrating proof-of-concept now, and will be working toward a prototype over the next two years. It's exciting!"

Bell offers this advice to his eco-conscious customers: "The world is on fire, and we in Northeast Ohio live in an air-quality non-attainment zone. The private automobile is the spawn of the devil. Give up your car, at least as much as you can: walk, bike, take public transit, or carpool instead."

The Lusty Wrench received numerous awards and accolades, including a 2015 Best of the Heights Award for Best Customer Service, a category not often associated with auto repair; Best Garage in Cleveland (*Scene* magazine), and Best Auto Repair Shop (Patch.com). [Future-Heights, publisher of the *Heights Observer*, sponsors the annual Best of the Heights Awards.]

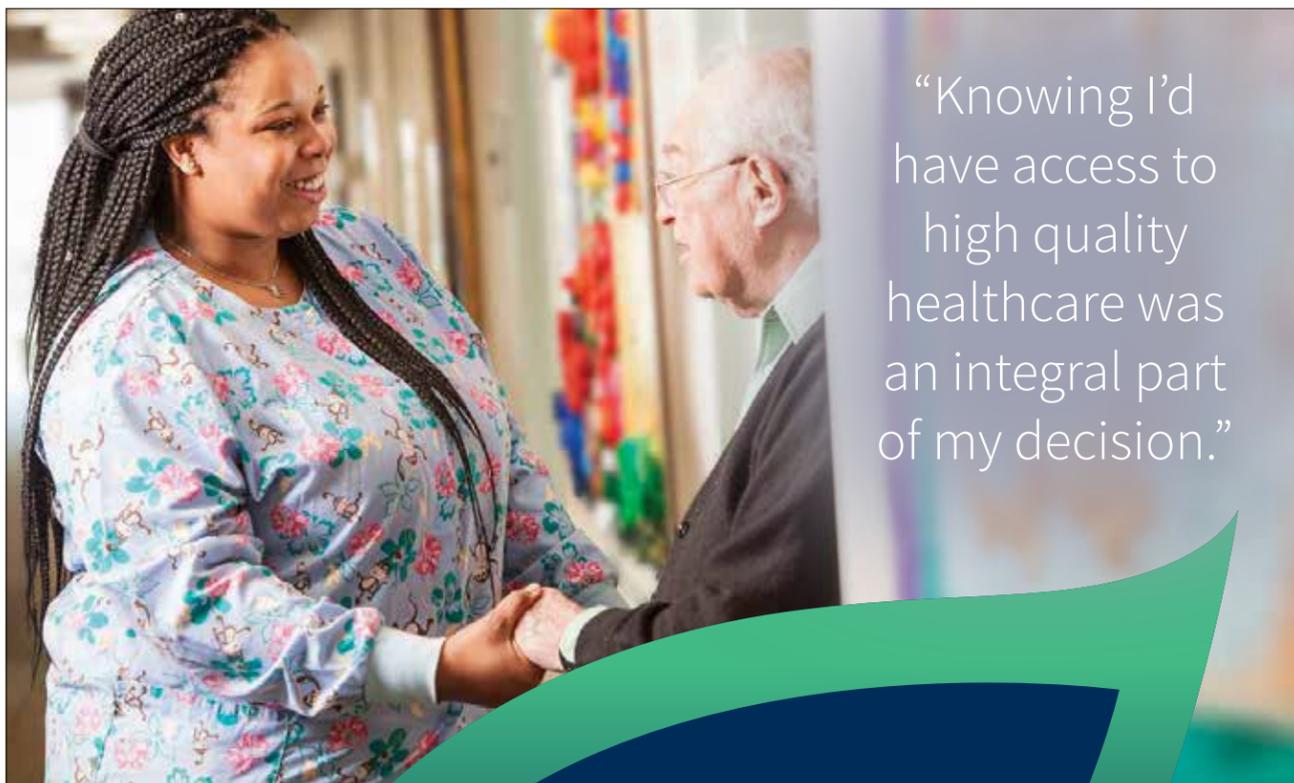
Bell himself has been honored with awards and other recognition, including being named ASE Technician of the Year in 2010, and receiving an Entrepreneurs for Sustainability award as a Champion of Sustainability for his pioneering concept of what he calls "eco-conscious auto repair." He is profiled in Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management's "Business as an Agent of World Betterment" collection.

Bell's civic involvement has included supporting youth soccer, scouting, the National Ski Patrol, and serving on the CH-UH City School District's Lay Facilities Committee as chair of its Sustainability Working Group. He currently serves on the Cleveland Heights Transportation Advisory Committee.

Patti Substelny was a Lusty Wrench customer for more than 20 years, and is a proud resident of Cleveland Heights.

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S'Wonderful Gifts delivers personalized service close to home

Libba Jackson-D'Ambrosi

S'Wonderful Gifts at 2254 Lee Road can solve a gift emergency faster than a drive to a big box store. Bill Wort opened his shop in the Cedar Lee shopping district in November 2015, after 32 years as a buyer for museum shops in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. The store stocks a cross-section of gifts, from whimsical to wearable—silly and sassy socks are a perennial best-seller during the holidays.

Wort's collection is curated but eclectic. Maybe that's because he worked for 16 years at the Smithsonian's Asian museums in D.C., buying things that had to be related to their Asian collections. "I don't have that restriction now!" exclaimed Wort. "It's fun when you go to market and think . . . I love this. I haven't seen this before."

His products fall into five categories: jewelry and other wearable accessories, such as watches, scarves and purses; games and toys; stationery/cards; pens/pencils; and books (mostly children's). Whether big or small, items are laid out to be seen and enjoyed, as if in a museum.

"I hate to say this because it's so unhumble, but I have a lot of things you don't find everywhere," said Wort. "Unique things make this a good destination."

Wort looks at the completed Lee Road rejuvenation as "momentary pain for long-term gain," noting that street parking and turn lanes have improved business.

S'Wonderful Gifts has more



S'Wonderful owner Bill Wort inside his colorful Lee Road shop.

natural light now, thanks to restoration of the storefront's upper facade. Building owner Alan Kraus says coordinated new signs are in the works for all the businesses in his building, and he's also adding a patio at the Lee/Meadowbrook corner.

Wort, who also worked as a buyer for the Navy Memorial, the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and the Ringling Museum in Florida, is planning to buy new games at ASTRA, the American Specialty Toy Retailing Association show in Pittsburgh, this June.

He enjoys giving the personal attention shoppers don't get in a chain store, and sees beyond his own business. "It's about this whole block," Wort said. "There's a lot of vitality, and I do appreciate that my customers make the choice to shop locally. I'm enthusiastic about what's happening at Cedar-Lee in general."

People are realizing that it's not true that everything on Amazon is cheaper, Wort said, adding, "Shoppers like things now, but I can get people things today. Walk in! There's a name for that . . . a store!"

Libba Jackson-D'Ambrosi earned a bachelor of journalism from University of Missouri. Her communications career in radio, television, education, philanthropy, water and wonder runs through seven states.

May 17 workshop will focus on home-based businesses

Sruti Basu



Jennifer Corso

On May 17 home-based business owners will have the opportunity to learn strategies and techniques on how to move into an office or storefront. FutureHeights is sponsoring the free workshop "From Home-Based to Storefront," which aims to teach business owners about the resources available to them in the community, what to consider when determining whether to move into a storefront or rented office space, and strategies for growth.



Mark Rosen

The workshop will host two speakers, Jennifer Corso and Marc Rossen of Petronzio Schneier Co., LPA, who have both focused much of their careers on small business development. Corso practices in the area of employment law, and advises small businesses on hiring, firing, discipline and safety issues. Rossen focuses on startup law, helping entrepreneurs and small businesses with such issues as setting up a business entity, protecting business ideas and intellectual property, funding a growing business, acquiring new businesses and more.

"From Home-Based to Storefront" will take place at Ensemble Theatre at the Coventry PEACE Campus, 2843 Washington Boulevard at 8 a.m., on Friday, May 17. RSVP at www.homebasedtostorefront.eventbrite.com or e-mail sbasu@futureheights.org.

Sruti Basu is the director of community building programs at FutureHeights.

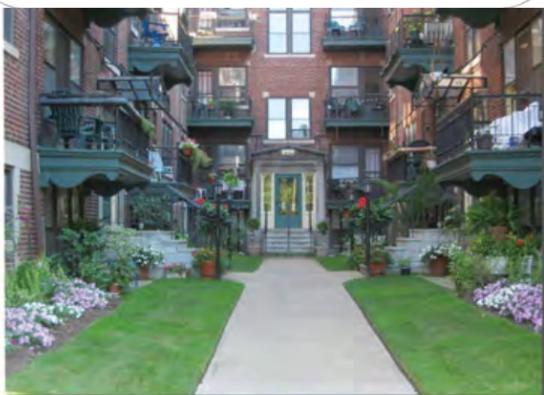
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Dobama Theatre wins Actors Equity award for diversity



COURTESY DOBAMA THEATRE

Dobama Artistic Director Nathan Motta accepts an Actors' Equity regional award for the theatre's commitment to non-traditional casting in the 2018-19 season. Presenter Tina Stump watches in the background.

Casey Venema

Dobama Theatre was honored with a regional award by the Actors' Equity Association (AEA) for making non-traditional casting a priority all season long, and providing ongoing opportunities for underrepresented artists.

The theatre received the Kathryn V. Lamkey Award at the annual "Spirit, a Celebration of Diversity" event in Chicago's Shakespeare Theater on March 11. Named after a former AEA Central Regional Director, the "Kathy" recognizes

Dobama's current 2018/2019 season, which features only women playwrights, including Dominique Morisseau, Annie Baker, Karen Zacarias, Alice Birch, Jennifer Haley and Melissa James Gibson.

Past winners of the award include Damron Russel Armstrong, founder the Black Repertory Theatre of Kansas City; Ellen Alberding, president of the Joyce Foundation; Ron Himes, the founder and producing director of the St. Louis Black Repertory Theater; Barbara Gaines, founder and artistic director of Chicago Shakespeare Theater; and the Court Theatre.

Dobama Artistic Director Nathan Motta accepted the award. He said, "At Dobama, what we are trying to do, quite simply, is produce important new plays with integrity. Artistic integrity means many things, including fair wages and safe working conditions for artists, something that [Dobama] is dedicated to as an Equity theatre. Artistic integrity also includes, very importantly, representing the community we serve in the stories we tell and who tells them, on and off stage. . . . While we are beyond grateful for this recognition, I think we would agree that we will all truly celebrate when inclusivity in programming, casting, and hiring is the norm. It should be as instinctual as holding the door open for the person behind you or serving your neighbor before

you serve yourself at the dinner table."

Dobama's upcoming 60th anniversary 2019/20 season will represent various identities, including playwrights of different races, genders and sexual orientations. This summer, Dobama will produce the world premiere of the musical "33 1/3," which focuses on a young man coming to terms with his sexuality and how it changes the course of his life. As part of its focus on inclusion, Dobama will also expand its Pay-What-You-Can Initiative to include all performances during the season.

Dobama will continue its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion with the 41st Annual Marilyn Bianchi Kids' Playwriting Festival, June 7-9. The theatre receives play submissions from school-aged children all over Northeast Ohio and produces a select winning few for the festival. Submissions represent stories about all walks of life.

Call the box office at 216-932-3396 or visit www.dobama.org for more information, season memberships, or to purchase tickets.

Casey Venema is a directing intern at Dobama Theatre.

Artists contemplate local experiences

Laura Yurko

Karen Sandstrom is the next featured artist in the Heights Arts Spotlight Gallery in a show opening May 10. Sandstrom's recent body of work, "Such Agreeable Friends," pays homage to George Eliot's quote, which observes the personified virtues of the kinship animals offer. Sandstrom's work in this show combines handwritten text and illustrated imagery in an article-style composition. Mentions of local weather, animals, seasonal fruits and trees, etc., construct a life that is familiar to any number of suburban Cleveland residents. The mellow exterior and visually flowing scrawl of the lettering sits in contrast to the sharper, snarkier voice of the text. Focusing a humorous and honest lens on the everyday, Sandstrom's pieces do not aim to critique or to settle for paying homage. They heighten an awareness of the existence of these pleasantly simple and small moments that would otherwise be overlooked. Come to the opening reception on May 10, 6 to 9 p.m., to see how the narrator works in conjunction with an intertwining collage of tenderly rendered watercolor pieces, and converse with the artist herself.

Heights Arts' *Ekphrastic: Artists Talk + Poets Respond* program combines short talks by exhibiting artists with readings by area poets in response to the works on view. The



COURTESY HEIGHTS ARTS

Karen Sandstrom's illustrations tap the relationships between humans and animals.

poets are recruited by Cleveland Heights Poet Laureate Damien McClendon. The next *Ekphrastic* event is slated for Thursday, May 23, 7 p.m., for the exhibition *Emergent*, which showcases the work of 11 recent graduates of the region's college and university art programs. The exhibition will be on view through June 9.

Michelangelo Lovelace's Spotlight exhibition closes on May 5. An exhibition of Lovelace's work in New York City last summer sold out every painting. Now that he has legitimately hit the "big time," this may well be his last exhibition in Cleveland. Heights Arts is able to present this show because of the longterm friendship between Lovelace and Bill Schubert, the Heights Arts exhibition community team member. Schubert championed Lovelace's work when Schubert operated Headfooters Gallery some years ago in Larchmere. Layers of realism and commentary distinguish Lovelace's work, visually providing recognizable locations throughout Cleveland juxtaposed with an emotional and sociopolitical reality depicted through darkly humorous labeling. Don't miss this chance to experience the work of a Cleveland original.

For more information on Heights Arts community programs and events, including house concerts, gallery performances and outreach, visit www.heightsarts.org.

Laura Yurko is a marketing intern and assistant store manager at Heights Arts.

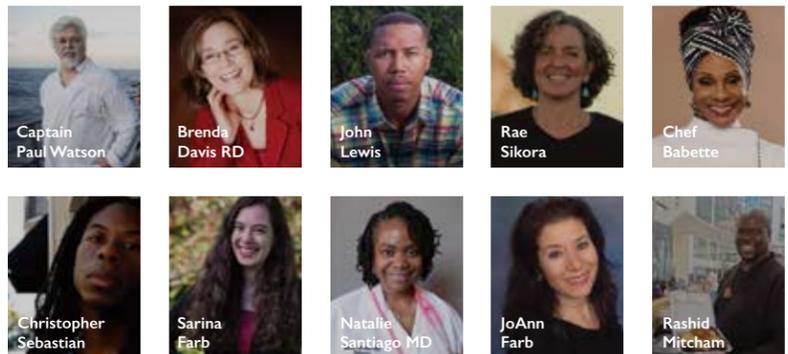
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SONGS AND STORIES

My birthday has always been in May. Every year of my life. All 54 of them. I'm not totally sure of that number, but I know it's been at least 54.

I have eaten dinner at Tommy's on Coventry on my birthday for, I believe, 42 of the past 46 years.

One birthday that really stands out in my memory was the one in 1978, when a woman I was dating at the time convinced Tommy Fello to sell her an entire restaurant-size Cherry Cheese Pie—my favorite dessert for many years—which she presented to me for a birthday present. I took it home and didn't share it with anyone, not even that kind, thoughtful woman (I lived alone, which made that easier), and I ate the entire, enormous Cherry Cheese Pie. In two sittings, in a two-day period. I kept thinking, while I was indulging in that exercise of gluttony, that I would really regret consuming so much of it in such a short amount of time. But I was wrong. I didn't. I felt great afterward. And back then, in an era during which I was super-skinny, I remained so, even after ingesting so many calories, carbs, fat grams and

whatever else.

My mother was well known among her family and friends for several things, two of which were her cooking and baking, and her imaginative creation of themed birthday cakes. The first one I can remember was for my fifth birthday: a sheet cake on top of which was a complicated, and mostly edible, playground scene. And then my birthday party took place at a playground—the one that was in the section of Forest Hills Park on Superior Road, at the north end of the street where I grew up, Belmar.

And, for some reason, I remember that my main birthday present that year, when I turned 5, was a record album I had actually asked for—Rossini's *William Tell Overture*. That was the last year of my life that I didn't want rock or folk records. I knew the music because it was the theme from "The Lone Ranger" TV series, but I wanted to really hear the music—all of it, and without the narration over it. (Narrator: "A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust and a hearty, 'Hi Yo Silver!' The Lone Ranger!" The Lone Ranger's voice: "Hi Yo Silver, away!" Narrator: "With his faithful Indian companion, Tonto, the daring and resourceful masked rider of the plains led the fight for law and order in the early West. Return with us now to those thrilling days of yesteryear. The Lone Ranger rides again!")

Another unforgettable birthday was

just five years ago, 2014, when I went to the Cleveland Indians game (and, by the way, there were no Cleveland Indians named Tonto). The game started at noon. It had rained all night and all morning before the game, and it rained again after the game, and it stayed that way for the whole game. And when I say the whole game, I mean, all five and a half hours of it.

This was the third game of a three-game series with the first-place Detroit Tigers. The Indians had lost a bunch of games before this series, but they had won the first two of this one. We kept giving up runs, but then coming back and tying the score. We were losing in the last half of the 13th inning, when, with two outs and two on, Detroit's best relief pitcher intentionally walked a batter to load the bases, and then, in the funniest and oddest ending I've ever seen, that pitcher, with an injured Asdrubal Cabrera on third base, balked, allowing Cabrera to walk home and score the winning run.

Then we went to Tommy's for dinner. An Uncle Gay and a Fresh Fruit Freeze for me. Tommy's no longer offers the Cherry Cheese Pie. But I didn't need to order dessert there, because my mother had made me a batch of my lifelong favorite cookies—Hurry-Up Butter Cookies,



COURTESY DAVID BUDIN

This is not a Tommy's Cherry Cheese Pie, but it looks like it, except that the one from Tommy's, that I ate all of, was much larger.

chewy diamond-shaped cookies made of just flour, butter, sugar and lemon juice, with nuts on top. I was not living alone, but I still managed to eat pretty much all of them. And that's memorable—not that I ate them all, which is, sadly, normal, but that my mother made them, because that was the last time she made them. She moved to a nursing home a year later, where she spent the next four years. She died a couple of months ago. And I do have her cookie recipe, if you're wondering.

So, anyway, this month, for my birthday, I'll be back at Tommy's, as usual.

I'll probably see you there.

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. If you'd like the recipe for Hurry-Up Butter Cookies, you can contact him at popcycles@sbcglobal.net.

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