



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Sunday, June 1, 2014; Cold Brews and Climate News, PJ McIntyres Irish Pub, 17119 Lorain Avenue: State Representative Mike Foley discusses the impact of pending state legislation on efforts to slow climate change.

Plain Press

Cleveland’s Near Westside Newspaper

Activists gather at PJ McIntyre’s to drink cold brews and to discuss climate change

Environmentalists and alternative energy advocates gathered at P.J. McIntyre’s Irish Pub at 17119 Lorain Avenue on Sunday June 1st to drink cold brews and discuss climate change.

State Senator Michael Skindell said that Senate Bill 310, just passed by the Ohio legislature, wasn’t just about freezing timelines for alternative energy requirements. He pointed out there is language in

the bill that results in a change in Ohio law. The bill breaks a contract with alternative energy firms taking away the predictability they need to attract investors in wind and solar power.

Skindell said the bill also ends an “in state” mandate for the purchase of alternative energy. He said that allowing alternative energy to be purchased across state lines would hurt the development of local

alternative energy companies.

In the wake of the Ohio House of Representatives passing Senate Bill 310, State Representative Mike Foley urged those present to read an essay by local environmental advocate Randy Cunningham. In his essay, Cunningham says instead of fighting climate change with statistics and economic arguments, we should use a moral argument, which simply asks the question, “Is it right?” Cunningham says, a new American set of values, struggling to assert itself, is “based on a belief that we have an obligation to pass on to those that come after us a world that provides them with the basics of a decent life.”

At the gathering, activists from the Sierra Club urged those present to sign letters to the head of the United States Environmental Protection Agency in support of newly proposed New Source Performance Standards that would limit the amount of carbon pollution from new coal fired power plants. Other groups such as Moms Clean Air Force, Sustainable Cleveland, and the Audubon Society were on hand to call for cleaner air and to promote alternative energy solutions to combat climate change.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Sunday, June 1st, 2014; West Park Summerfest, Jefferson Park, Lorain Avenue between W. 133 & W. 134th Streets: Children gather around Jungle Bob Tuma for a chance to get up close to a large snake.

Board of Zoning Appeals approves Loren Naji Gallery’s parking variance

by Rich Weiss

At a 9:30 a.m. hearing on Monday, June 23, on the 5th floor of Cleveland City Hall, The Board of Zoning Appeals (BOZA) approved a parking variance request for the Loren Naji Studio Gallery, located at 2138 W. 25th Street.

The BOZA room was empty around 9 a.m., prior to the hearing. Loren Naji waited patiently, seated in the hall. “In order to get usage as an art gallery, they claim I need 53 parking spaces for my space, of which I have 3,” said Naji. “However, my great neighbor, Voss [Industries], has a huge parking lot and they gave me a lease for sixty spaces, right across the street from my building, so I’m hoping to get a variance so they allow me use that as my 53 spaces.” BOZA normally requires parking spaces to be on the same plot as the business the lot serves.

“The unusual thing is,” Naji continued, “I don’t know of any other

gallery in Cleveland that has 53 parking spaces, including the huge Transformer Station; I don’t know how many they have – maybe 15? So...an interesting comparison.”

“I would like people to see the positive light of what I’m doing. Communities need art. They need art galleries. They need culture. This is good for communities. Ohio City is becoming all bars; I think... nothing wrong with bars – that’s okay – but a gallery here and there doesn’t do any harm.”

Passionate Naji supporters helped to fill the seats, and then line the walls of the small, standing-room-only BOZA hearing.

The BOZA agenda was full of other items, but the Naji gallery request was entertained first.

After being sworn in, Naji testified, “The parking lot is owned by Voss Industries and they have given me a

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Sunday, June 1st, 2014; West Park Summerfest, Jefferson Park, Lorain Avenue between W. 133 & W. 134th Streets: Ree-C Pearl, belts out the blues, on stage with The Vernon Jones Blues Cartel.

Funds promised Cleveland school children cut, while Cleveland stadium allocation is increased

by Chuck Hoven

On June 28, 1995, Cleveland City Council passed resolution number 1025-A-95 allowing that revenue from levying a parking facility tax, and revenue from increases in the motor vehicle lessor tax and the admissions tax “can be used to fund recreational, cultural and

extracurricular programs within the Cleveland School System.”

NEWS ANALYSIS

Each year since that ordinance was passed, a Joint Board established by the ordinance meets to recommend how to allocate a portion of those tax dollars to the programs in the Cleveland School System. Three

people sit on the Joint Board – a representative of the City Council, a representative of the Mayor’s Office and a representative of the Chief Executive Officer of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. Cleveland City Council is then asked to approve the allocation

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PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON
Monday, June 16, 2014; United Building Lobby, 1012 W. 25th Street: A part of a mural showing a street scene with a horse and carriage and a streetcar passing the Cuyahoga County Court House. Artist Jessica Newell began sketching and painting the mural in the domes above the first floor lobby in the United Building on April 11th 2014. She hopes to complete the mural by September of 2014. Skylight Financial Group commissioned the artist to do the work. Skylight Financial Group recently moved its offices into the building. They occupy the 9th floor and a newly created 10th floor addition to the building.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Thursday, June 12, 2014, Edgewater LIVE, Cleveland Metroparks Edgewater Park: Lourdes Adkins, age 12, (above) came in first in a hula-hoop contest. Her brother Damien Adkins, age 8, placed second. Both Lourdes and Damien, were each awarded two tickets to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

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THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM is targeted Cleveland's emerging neighborhood leaders, who are already working to improve the city. The development of leadership skills is accomplished by a carefully thought out curriculum, use of expert guest speakers, and implementing the Intentional Change Process which is furthered by a participant's assigned personal coach. Most of the sessions are held at Trinity Commons located at 2230 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland Ohio 44115. Free parking is provided. There are 15 sessions, generally every third Saturday beginning in September and ending in May. You can obtain an application off the website: <http://www.nldpcleveland.com/index.php> or by requesting an application to be mailed or faxed to you by calling 216-776-6172.

DO YOU HAVE SKILLS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE? Stockyard, Clark-Fulton & Brooklyn Centre is looking for community members to share their skills with others. What are you good at? Are you an expert pastry maker? Have you fixed your bike so many times you could do it with your eyes closed? Do you have a green thumb, a mechanically inclined mind or have eyes for excel? We are all passionate about something; why not share it with our neighbors? If you are interested in sharing your skills with us, please contact Kaela at ksgeschke@gmail.com or 216.961.9073.

ARTS AND CULTURE
ART IN THE PARK will be held in Detroit Shoreway in July. At Herman Park, with Arts in the Park Media and Technology with Progressive Arts Alliance on Wednesdays 7/9,



The Plain Press Community Board is a listing of a variety of free activities and resources for neighborhoods served by the Plain Press. It is sponsored by Organize! Ohio through donations from readers and supporters.

7/16 to 7/23 from 1 -3 pm, with Art in The Park on 7/30 from 1-2pm, and on Thursday 7/31 at 7pm with the Cleveland Public Theatre: Student Theatre Enrichment Program (rain location: Cleveland Public Theatre at 6415 Detroit Ave). At Lake Pool, Art in the Park is scheduled for Thursdays 7/10, 7/17, 7/24 and 7/31 from 1-2pm. At Zone Rec Pavilion, Art in the Park/Zumbacraft will be held Wednesdays 7/9, 7/16, 7/23 and 7/30 from 5:30 to 7:30pm.

TRANSFORMER STATION will be showing a group exhibition of contemporary photography and video featuring new work by Ann Hamilton and Tim Davis. "UNKNOWN: Pictures of Strangers" explores how artists have used the camera to consider society through the anonymous portrait. New York photographer and teacher Tim Davis will premiere a new three-channel video installation titled "Transit Byzantium," which he filmed on the streets of Cleveland last year. The show will be open until September 20. The free show is open on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from noon until 5 pm, and on Thursdays from noon until 8pm. For more information, including on walking -related activities, visit www.TransformerStation.org or call 216/938-5429.

CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART OHIO CITY STAGES will be at the Transformer Station at West 29th and Church Avenue every Wednesday in July at 7:30 pm. Enjoy FREE live music. Check out: <http://www.transformerstation.org/page36/page43/index.html>.

WESTOWN CDC SWINGIN' SUMMER CONCERTS in the Gazebo at Halloran Park at 3550 West 117th are scheduled for Sundays from July 13, July 20, and July 27 starting at 4 pm. The main show will run from 6

to 8 pm. For more information on these family friendly events, visit WestownCDC.org

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
DONATE YOUR OLD CELL PHONE to be reused by domestic violence victims to call 911 in case of an emergency or be responsibly recycled or refurbished to raise funds to help victims of domestic violence and child abuse. They accept phones in ANY condition. Phones can be given to the theatre manager or mailed to Domestic Violence and Child Advocacy Center, 11811 Shaker Blvd. #220, Cleveland 44120. Or make arrangements by calling 216/229-2420. For help regarding domestic violence call the 24-hour domestic violence helpline a 216/391-4357 (HELP).

CLEVELAND SCHOOLS
SELECT SCHOOLS based on achievement, progress and location by visiting <http://www.clevelandta.org/choose-your-school> or calling United Way at 211. Achievement scores combines 2 results: how many students passed the state test? And how well did they do on the state test? Progress measures how many 4th to 8th grade students made at least one year of academic growth. It's not just about how a school looks on paper. Seeing it in person, observing teaching and learning environments, and asking questions and other forms of parental involvement are also important. For more information, visit the Cleveland Transformation Alliance website at clevelandta.org, find the Cleveland Transformation Alliance on Facebook or call 211 for 24/7 assistance.

8th ANNUAL YOUTH SUMMIT AND BACK TO SCHOOL FAIR will be held on August 2 at the Public continued on page 7

Correction: The photo with the three police officers on page 7 of the June Issue of the Plain Press misidentified Deputy Chief Wayne Drummond as Chief Calvin Williams.

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Young activists needed to help create a more just society in the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County

by Chuck Hoven

Several recent articles in the *Plain Dealer* touted Cleveland's recent brain gain. In a June 10, 2014 article by Robert L. Smith titled *Cleveland's unexpected brain gain garners national attention*, a reference is made to an a study by Richey Piiparinen and Jim Russell of the Center for Population Dynamics at Cleveland State University. Smith says the study indicates that, "the metro area's young adult work force had bloomed into one of the nation's brightest, largely because of new arrivals."

Clearly, in the article, the reference is to the Greater Cleveland area, rather than the City of Cleveland as the following paragraph reveals: "Between 2000 and 2012, the study reveals, Greater Cleveland added about 60,000 college educated adults while losing about 70,000 adults who lacked bachelor's degrees. The number of newcomers in the 25-to-34 age group grew encouragingly by 26 percent between 2006 and 2012."

NEWS ANALYSIS

The reality is that while the Greater Cleveland metropolitan area (a five county area) may be experiencing only modest population loss, Cleveland and Cuyahoga County are still experiencing a massive exodus of people. According to a recent analysis of U.S. Census and demographic data from Cuyahoga County by the Center for Community Solutions, Cuyahoga County's population now at 1,278,024 dropped by 9.1 percent since 2000. Analysis of Census data by the Center for Community Solutions indicates that while 29.1% of adults in Cuyahoga County have a bachelor's degree, 12.9% of adults in Cuyahoga County lack a high school diploma. Adjusted for inflation, the median family income in Cuyahoga County declined by 15 percent in the past decade going from \$49,377 in 2003 down to \$41,954 in 2012. Those income figures lag behind the State of Ohio. The census analysis by the Center for Community Solutions also indicates that 17.7 percent of the people in Cuyahoga County lived below the poverty line in 2012. Children were particularly likely to live in poverty in Cuyahoga County with 30% of the children under age 5 living in poverty and 25% of the children ages 5-17 living in poverty. Much of the population loss in

Cuyahoga County has occurred in the City of Cleveland. According to census data (Source: NEO CANDO System of the Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, MSASS, Case Western Reserve University) the City of Cleveland lost 17.1 percent of its population from 2000 to 2010, declining from 478,403 to 396,830. NEO CANDO indicates that in the year 2000 the median income for the City of Cleveland was \$33,651. The data also shows that in the year 2000, 26.3 percent of individuals and 32.3 percent of families with children in the City of Cleveland had incomes below the poverty level. NEO CANDO estimate for the poverty rate in Cleveland from 2005 to 2010 show 31.15% overall poverty rate and a poverty rate of 38.66% for families with children under the age of 18.

Wards in the area served by the *Plain Press* have their share of poverty. In Cleveland's Ward 3 the overall poverty rate from 2005 – 2010 is estimated by NEO CANDO at 31.77%, and the poverty rate for families with children is estimated at 42.46%. In Ward 14, the overall poverty rate for the years 2005-2010 is estimated at 36.69%, and the poverty rate for families with children is estimated at 45.72%. In Ward 15 the overall poverty rate for

2005-2010 is estimated at 45.22%, and the poverty rate for families with children is estimated at 52.75%. In Ward 12, the overall poverty rate for the same time period is estimated at 31.44% and the poverty rate for families is estimated slightly higher at 31.5%. In Ward 11, the poverty rate for 2005-2010 is estimated at 28.87%, and the poverty rate for families with children under the age of 18 is estimated at 32.37%

So while the scenario for the Greater Cleveland metropolitan area may show a nearly stable adult population and a "brain gain" amongst young adults, the overwhelming picture presented by looking at City of Cleveland data, or Cuyahoga County data for that matter, is that of growing poverty. The Center for Community Solutions cites data from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to show that in 2013, a large percentage of individuals in Cuyahoga County (21% or 273,673) used SNAP (Food Stamp) benefits in 2013. This represents a 52% increase in beneficiaries since 2006. Ironically this is the same time period that the *Plain Dealer* article mentions for the "brain gain" in the metropolitan area.

The Center for Community Solutions also notes that despite the increase in SNAP benefits, food continued on page 4



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON
Saturday, June 14, 2014; Party in Gordon Square, W. 65th & Detroit Avenue: Jarred Goldweber and Taylor Lamborn join in providing musical entertainment. The pair of local musicians say they have played together before at jam sessions held weekly at the Parkview (Wednesday nights at 10 p.m.) and at Brother's Lounge (Thursday nights at 9 p.m.).

Cleveland Public Library asked to invite authors to speak as a response to violence in society

To the editor:
An Open Letter to The People's University:

Would you invite Louise Erdrich and William Least Heat Moon to please share your stage and together mine the great and much neglected wisdom in that fine passage of T. C. McLuhan's, *Touch the Earth*: "The Lakota knew the softening influence of Mother Earth - and so kept their

children close to her."
I can't think of a more apt response, befitting a People's University, to the school shootings and street violence that routinely tears our communities and families apart.
Can't think of two authors more capable of translating that wisdom for us.
Here is Ms. Erdrich, writing about (leaves of) grass: "I would be

converted to a religion of grass. Sleep the winter away and rise headlong each spring. Sink deep roots. Conserve water. Respect and nourish your neighbors and never let trees gain the upper hand. Such are the tenets and dogmas. As for the practice—grow lush in order to be devoured or caressed, stiffen in sweet elegance, invent startling seeds—those also make sense. Bow beneath the arm of fire. Connect underground. Provide. Provide. Be lovely and do no harm."
And, Mr. Least Heat Moon, in *Blue Highways*, that fine and understated meditation on the intergenerational discontinuities of our day: "Alice Venable Middleton was one of those octogenarians who make age something you don't want

to miss. She stood in her kitchen & watched as I stepped around her garden of kale, collard, & corn....").
Thanks for considering this fairly urgent request.
Hayes Rowan ,Cleveland

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PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON
Saturday, June 14, 2014; Party in Gordon Square, Artisan Collective Cleveland show, 6706 Detroit Avenue: An untitled work by sculpture Anthony Bocchicchio. A plumber by trade, Bocchicchio, used left over pieces of copper piping to create this sculpture.

Lincoln West Wolverines win Senate baseball championship for third consecutive year

For the third year in a row, the Lincoln West High School Wolverines won the Senate Baseball Championship thanks to a spectacular defensive performance in the seventh and final inning of the game. In a game played in May on Progressive Field in Downtown Cleveland, Lincoln West

won 7-6 over Rhodes High School thanks to the Wolverine defense. The defensive efforts included a play at the plate for one of the three outs in the seventh inning and also a stab of a high line drive with the bases loaded for the final out in the game.

Homeless women treated to salon services

Forty-five homeless women received shampooing, cutting, and styling services during a daylong community service effort by the staff of the Beauty in You Salon at W. 98th and Denison. Women from the West Side Catholic Center, the Salvation Army

Shelter and other local shelters came for the styling services offered for free. The guests also were able to take some gently used clothing with them. The staff and clients of the salon donated the clothing, said Beauty In You Salon proprietor, Valencia Turner.

MetroHealth receives recognition for financial communications with patients

MetroHealth Medical Center, Cuyahoga County's public hospital system headquartered on W. 25th Street in the Clark Fulton neighborhood, received recognition from the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) as the first health care organization in the nation to adopt HFMA's Patient Financial Communications Best Practices. The award, from the Healthcare Financial Management Association, the nation's premiere membership organization for healthcare finance leaders, recognizes MetroHealth Medical Center as the first healthcare system in the nation to demonstrate excellence in financial interactions with patients.

Over the past year, MetroHealth implemented a single patient statement combining both physician and hospital services. The statement was created with the help of a patient focus group. MetroHealth also created an online interactive tool to promote education and understanding of the new statement. HFMA reviewers lauded MetroHealth for prominently displaying information about its financial assistance program on its website. MetroHealth's website also offers a glossary to help patients understand billing and payment terms. "This is a huge step toward achieving our vision of becoming the most admired public health system

in the nation," Chief Financial Officer Craig Richmond said. "We are very focused on providing a positive patient experience, and early and open communication with our patients about their financial situation is an absolute must. Through financial education and transparency, we can make a difference in the life of every patient we serve." HFMA's best practices were developed to improve communication between health care professionals and patients at a time when patients are paying a greater proportion of their health care costs out of their own pockets. The practices were developed **continued on page 8**

YOUNG ACTIVISTS NEEDED

continued from page 3

pantry use in Cuyahoga County is also up by 23% since 2006 with a total of 1,040,575 visits in 2013. While efforts to attract and retain the highly educated are to be lauded, Cleveland and Cuyahoga County need to also focus more resources on their low-income population, particularly families with children.

Survival for families with children has become particularly difficult in the City of Cleveland. A national study titled "2014's Best and Worst Cities for Families" by WalletHub ranks the City of Cleveland as the 6th worst city for families out of 150 cities it studied nationwide.

A key factor in Cleveland's low rating was the poverty level of families living in Cleveland. Cleveland ranked 148th out of 150 cities on that measure, with only Brownsville, Texas and Detroit, Michigan having a higher percentage of families living in poverty. Including other factors, Cleveland's Socio-Economic Environment Rank as a place for raising a family was 149th out of 150 cities with only Detroit, Michigan ranking lower.

Even when Median Family Salary was adjusted for Cost of Living, Cleveland ranked low – 147th out of 150 cities, with only New York City, Miami, Florida and Newark, New Jersey being worse in terms of the how expensive the city is in relation to the amount of income earned by the median family.

Perhaps another indicator of family stress, Cleveland had the

highest divorce rate of the 150 cities studied. These statistics beg the question: What can be done to address the overwhelming poverty and the stress it induces on families with children? Perhaps the answer lies in part in the bright young people moving into our region. The challenge to these young people, and to all the citizens of the region, is to join in an effort to create a more just society.

"It is such a mistake to expect politicians and government officials to do what is needed to be done. They will never do it. Hasn't your experience with them shown you by now? They are not going to do the things that need to be done. You and I are the only people that are going to."

--- Diane Nash,
Civil Rights Activist

In an article by Arthur Evenchik, titled *Education for Struggle*, which appeared in the Spring/Summer 2014 issue of *Art/Sci* published by the Case Western Reserve College of Arts and Sciences, describes the

efforts of the Social Justice Institute at CWRU to educate young people to help bring about a more just society. In the article, Social Justice Institute Director Rhonda Y. Williams says, "the institute's message is that we all have the power, the agency, the responsibility and the potential to bring about a more just society."

Education for Struggle describes a 2011 conference where two elders of the civil rights movement, Diane Nash and Rev. Dr. C. T. Vivian spoke on the 50th anniversary of the Freedom Rides. They both offered sage advice to those organizing for social change. Rev. Dr. Vivian said, "There are certain battles you've got to win, and every struggle makes other struggles necessary. And if you're not willing to fight the other struggles, you might as well have not fought the earlier ones." According to the article, Rev. Dr. Vivian's current efforts are focused on improving educational outcomes for African-American youth.

At the conference Diane Nash said, "It is such a mistake to expect politicians and government officials to do what is needed to be done." She told the audience, "They will never do it. Hasn't your experience with them shown you by now? They are not going to do the things that need to be done. You and I are the only people that are going to."

According to the article, Williams hopes CWRU Social Justice Institute will be a means "to educate and inspire a new generation of youth leaders and social justice advocates." Williams tells her students that activism is not simply showing up when something is organized. She says, "It takes intellectual, emotional, physical work to move people toward a more just society. It means figuring out what your social issues are, and building consensus. What action will we take? What are our campaign tactics? How do we build a platform?"

The hope for Cleveland and indeed Greater Cleveland's future is that some of the bright, young people moving into the area will use their talents in the pursuit of social justice. Many more dedicated activists are needed to continue the struggle to bring about a more just society in Cleveland and Cuyahoga County.

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Seeds of Literacy receives grant to support adult literacy programs

In early June, Seeds of Literacy, headquartered at W. 25th and Clark Avenue, received a \$12,000 grant from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation to support its adult literacy program.

“Funds from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation will help us to serve over 1,000 students this year,” states Bonnie Entler, Executive Director of Seeds of Literacy. “We are larger than the average high school, and most of our students are working toward their GED to go on to higher education, technical training, or a better job.”

Dollar General’s Chairman and CEO Rick Dreiling says, “It is exciting to see the Dollar General Literacy foundation’s outreach in action as we partner with organizations to further education and literacy and make a real difference in people’s lives.”

The Seeds of Literacy program offers free, one-to-one tutoring in basic education and GED preparation to adults. Classes are year-round and students may register every week. Over 200 tutors help students with math, social studies, science, and language arts. At the request of employers, the program also offers students a digital literacy certificate for computer skills.

Seeds of Literacy is the only nationally accredited literacy agency in the region, and won the 2013 Anisfield-Wolf Award for Outstanding Nonprofit Service.

Editor’s Note: For more information about Seeds of Literacy visit www.seedsofliteracy.org. For more information about the Dollar General Literacy Foundation and its grant programs, visit www.dgliteracy.org.

FUND FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN CUT

continued from page one

to the schools.

In ordinances passed on March 20 of 1996, Cleveland City Council allocated all the revenue (\$1.9 million) generated by its new parking tax in 1995 to the Cleveland School System, plus some additional dollars from the motor vehicle lessor tax and the admissions tax. \$198,000 was allocated to a middle school track program and an additional \$1,802,292 allocated for additional programs.

City of Cleveland legislation allowed the money from the three taxes to be spent for three possible purposes: programs in the Cleveland School System, the Cleveland Stadium (Browns), and Municipal Services. According to a June 2004 study by Cleveland State University’s Levin College of Urban Affairs and Conventions, Sports & Leisure Inc., titled *Economic Development and A New Convention Center in Downtown Cleveland: An Assessment of Issues and Viability*, revenue from the parking tax increased from \$1.9 million in 2005 to \$8.5 million in its first full year in 1996. In the years after that, the tax generated roughly \$10 million per year in 2002.

According to the study, the admissions tax revenue also steadily increased from about \$7 million in 1995 to roughly \$12 million in 2002.

Despite the increasing revenue, the portion of the money given to the Cleveland Schools in the years after 1996 remained at about \$2 million per year. That is until 2010, when the amount was dramatically reduced to \$1 million per year.

For the past several years educational advocate Gene Tracy, a retired Cleveland Metropolitan School District Math teacher, has been trying to get Cleveland City Council to restore \$1 million dollars to funds promised to Cleveland school students for recreational and cultural activities.

Tracy said the payment to the school system of \$2 million per year was first proposed in about 1994 or 1995 to help make the schools whole for the property tax exemption granted to the Browns stadium. He estimates that at the time the property tax exemption was worth \$4.1 to \$4.3 million. If levied, the Cleveland Municipal (now Metropolitan) School district would have received about 53%, he says. He estimates that now the exemption is worth \$6 or \$7 million a year. Over half of which would have gone to the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, if not for the property tax exemption of the stadium.

When Tracy confronted Cleveland City Council members at a recent Finance Committee meeting, he said he got the impression from

the City Council members that they “thought taking \$1 million from our children to improve the stadium was a great idea.” He quoted them as saying to him, “We have a city to run.”

Tracy notes that the combined revenue from the three taxes mentioned in Ordinance 1025-A-95 is now at roughly \$27 million this past year. He says the stadium is now receiving \$16 million of that amount.

Tracy cites the success of the programs outlined each year in a Comprehensive Extracurricular Activities Plan (CEAP) report issued by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District on the collaborative agreement between the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and the City of Cleveland. The 2011-2012 report notes “the program contains five critical components: Marching Band/Instrumental Music, Elementary Non Traditional Extracurricular, K-8 School Athletics, High School Athletics and Secondary Extracurricular Activities. Each of these programs provides recreational or cultural enrichment activities for the children of the City of Cleveland.”

The report from the school district outlines how the money was used, how many students participated in the programs and the increased academic performance and attendance rate of students participating in the programs, when compared to students not



Friday, June 13, 2014; Open House at 78th Street Studios, 1300 W. 78th Street: Spice, a local restaurant, offers a selection of items for lunch for guests touring artists’ studios during the Open House. Each Friday, some of artists at W. 78th Street Studios open their studios for the public to view. Artist Suzie Frazier designed the sign (Spice kitchen + bar) for the restaurant. Frazier has a studio near the lunch counter.

participating in the programs. In the 2010-2011 school about 70% of the students in the school district participated in the CEAP. The average Grade Point Average of students participating in the CEAP in the middle schools and high schools was above 2.6. The GPA of students not participating in the CEAP was just above 2.1.

Similarly students participating in CEAP have better attendance than those who do not participate. Attendance for those participating in the programs was about 85%, while the attendance of non-participants hovered at around 75%.

Tracy says he encouraged City Council members to read the sample CEAP report he provided. He encouraged them to read the report he says demonstrates the schools are using the money for programs that “enhance, engage, make learning fun and are truly successful.”

Tracy says of Cleveland City Council’s majority, which has ignored his request to increase the funds, “the motives to cut \$1million per year from this program and use that money to improve the football stadium should be painfully clear and clearly demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt that the powers to be in Cleveland do not want to provide a quality public education

for the children.”

Tracy urges citizens to act, “We must demand that not only should the money for the children be restored to \$2 mill per year, but

because of the clear success it should be increased to \$3 million and the city should be made to pay back the \$4 million it deprived the children of, for the past 4 years.”

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School Board passes draft of facilities plan extension

After a series of Facilities Plan Open Houses where residents and stakeholders were asked to rank various scenarios in their school's cluster, the Cleveland School Board met for three hours, on Monday June 23rd, to discuss various options and vote to approve a draft of a facilities plan extension at its Tuesday, June 24th, meeting held at Clark School.

The draft plan, presented by the school administration and approved by the Board of Education, seems to have heeded at least some suggestions by residents and stakeholders. Supporters of Paul Dunbar School can heave a sigh of relief as the draft plan calls for maintaining the school as a neighborhood K-8 school. That wish was clearly stated at the school's open house where stakeholders filled a sheet saying they didn't think

it was a good idea for students, at the newly constructed school, to be moved to Scranton and Orchard schools. Parents were particularly concerned about students crossing W. 25th to go to Scranton School.

The sparing of Dunbar School also had ramifications that saved a lot of other students from being moved around to fit into "new school" seats. The scenario rejected by Dunbar parents called for the "Newcomers Academy" at Thomas Jefferson to be moved to Dunbar and students from Luis Munoz Marin to be bussed to Thomas Jefferson. The draft plan approved by the Board of Education now calls for these buildings to continue in their current status. It calls for a review of both Scranton and Luis Munoz Marin schools to determine refresh/update needs.

The fate of two schools in the Ohio City and Tremont clusters remains undetermined -- that of the Garrett Morgan Building and the Tremont School Building. Scenarios for the Garrett Morgan building include having the building serve as a site for a West Side high school, moving New Tech West and the Garrett Morgan High School program to the Carl F. Shuler building, using the site as swing space during the construction of a West Side High School and exploring the sale of the property when it is determined the site is no longer needed by the School District. At Tremont Montessori the choices are maintaining the building or building a replacement building on the same site.

In the Clark-Fulton-Stockyards Cluster the plan calls for rebuilding **continued on page 8**

LOREN NAJI'S GALLERY

continued from page one

lease for sixty spaces that I can use. I only will be using these spaces probably 6, or less, times a year. I'll be having events only every other month, and probably skip a couple of those, so, 4 to 6 times a year I will have an event that will require any parking." Naji provided the board with a copy of his 5-year Voss parking lot lease.

All who wanted to testify in favor of Naji's request to allow his gallery parking spaces were sworn in as a group.

When it was explained to the board that BOZA requirements for "assembly use" parking spaces are calculated based on square footage and special use credits, Naji said, "I wanted to add that they calculated with the basement, which is never used for public use." He continued, "Actually, there's much less in square feet of the building as far as public use. The basement, I think, is 2,000 square feet, and that's just a storage area."

Tamara Ruiz, a co-owner of a business with a show yard located at Chatham and W. 26th Street, testified for the board in favor of

Naji's parking variance: "I have to say that it's never been a problem in the neighborhood with any of the parties, it's really just -- and it's not really a party so much as it is a gathering of artists, and a celebration, and a show."

Julia Sieck, president of the South of Lorain Block Club, said, "Mr. Naji presented his case for his zoning variance to our block club." She concluded, "The block club is in full support of this zoning variance."

Thomas Schorgl, president and CEO of Community Partnership for Arts and Culture, cited studies that show local economies are positively impacted by the arts and said, "Artists are producing things that (in a knowledge-based economy, which we're in) we need, and we need venues like Naji's gallery."

The Interim Executive Director of Ohio City, Inc., Tom McNair, testified, "In the last 4 or plus years we have not received one—I mean not one—complaint about Loren Naji's gallery. And if you know a little bit about Ohio City, you know people are not afraid to call our office and complain about things, but we have not received a single complaint."

Records show that former

2nd District Commander Keith Sulzer emailed Eric Wobser and Jeff Verespej of Ohio City, Inc. on Tuesday, March 12, 2013, saying he received complaints: "THE COMPLAINTS ARE THAT THERE MAY BE A COVER CHARGE, ALCOHOL BEING SERVED, OVERCROWDING, OPEN CONTAINER, IMPROPER PERMITS, ZONING VIOLATIONS, ETC.," and Sulzer requested a meeting or explanation.

Ironically, Henry Senyak, a neighborhood activist who was among the public safety complaints that resulted in a May 2nd state alcohol agent enforcement on Naji's gallery, actually testified in support of the variance request. Senyak wanted to discuss the building's fire safety issues that forced Naji to go before BOZA for this change of use variance. He turned in documentation and also proposed options to speed up any future approval of Naji's certificate of occupancy by revamping the application or submitting a new application to lower the building's square footage.

Although Senyak's testimony followed over a half hour of support statements, jam-packed with praise that wandered far from Naji's parking lot, Senyak was the first to be advised by the Zoning Board's attorney to only speak to the parking issue at hand.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, June 13, 2014; Open House at 78th Street Studios, 1300 W. 78th Street: Artist Susie Frazier of Earthminded Style stands by a display holding some of the natural materials she uses in her art.

Ward 3 Councilperson Joe Cimperman said, "I want to thank each and every person, and I mean each and every person who came down here on behalf of this case. Regardless of opinion, it takes a lot of time to come down here, as you know, and we're grateful, as always, for citizen input." Cimperman clarified that this hearing is the first of 3 separate issues for the gallery, including parking, building and housing code violations and liquor licensing. On the latter point, Cimperman said, "Madam Chair, there are many things in the City of Cleveland that divide us. I think the one thing that everybody agrees is that the liquor code in the State of Ohio does not fit the needs currently of the citizens of the City of Cleveland. Period. And we have to deal with that." He concluded, on the parking issue, "We're here, Madam Chair, to ask you to support Mr. Naji's application."

Following the hearing, Henry Senyak summed up his comments, saying, "I am worried that asking for the extreme with an occupancy of 299, and the basement included in the square footage, computations will delay Loren in getting open anytime soon. [Having] the basement included on the drawings will dictate an expensive sprinkler system per fire code." He continued, "Loren needs to address the need to apply for a live entertainment variance and install a stage area not right up against the fire doors so he is not blocking exits, something the fire department will surely close him down again for. Everyone at this stage owes it to the process to get it right and do it right."

Editor's Note: This report was produced through a content-sharing partnership between independent Cleveland newspapers, Plain Press and The Tremonster.

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School District works to increase number of students meeting third grade reading guarantee

According to the latest announcement by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, nearly 80 percent of CMSD third-graders complied with Ohio's Third Grade Reading Guarantee during the 2013-14 school year, roughly doubling the number who met the standard in the fall.

As of October, only 40 percent of third-graders had scored well enough on the Ohio Achievement Assessment to meet the standard, which is required to earn promotion to the fourth grade.

Since then, 1,046 achieved the minimum score or better on the Northwest Evaluation Association, or NWEA, reading test, an equiv-

alent exam accepted by the state. Another 160 met the threshold on the spring OAA, raising compliance to 77 percent.

The District is working aggressively with the remaining 625 third-graders to help them comply, Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon said. The students had a chance to enroll in a free summer reading academy and can take the OAA and NWEA in July.

To avoid a repeat performance next year and the prospect of many 3rd graders being held back a year, Educational Advocate Don Freeman proposed to the Board of Education at its June meeting that the district

resurrect the Primary Achievement Program. The Primary Achievement Program is a successful program piloted at two Cleveland elementary schools – Anton Grdina and Alfred Benesch -- about twenty years ago. In the program students advance to various levels of achievement based on their mastery of skills, says Freeman.

Freeman urged the Board of Education reinstitute the Primary Achievement Program for students grades kindergarten through third grade and provide the necessary training and resources for teachers to focus on teaching skills and advancing students based on their mastery of those skills.

COMMUNITY BOARD

continued from page 2

Auditorium at 500 Lakeside. Registration is from 8am to 9am and the event from 9am to 1pm. For more information, call 216/420-8087 or 216/838-FACE (3223).

FREE KINDERGARTEN is available for Cleveland children who will be 5 years old by Sept. 30, 2014. Call 216/574-8200. Children who will be 4 years old on or before Sept.30, 2014 may be eligible for free pre-kindergarten. Families that speak a language other than English and/or have children with special needs (ages 3 and up) should call these offices in order to be referred for assessment and registration: the Multilingual Multicultural Education Center at 216/404-5159 or Special Education at 216/592-7387.

REGISTER YOUR STUDENT for CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT through August 23 at East Professional Center (formerly East High School) at 1349 East 79th Street) or the Thomas Jefferson International Newcomers Academy at 3145 West 46th St. Open Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 7:30am-4pm or Tuesday and Thursday from 7:30am-7pm. Bring child's birth certificate, current immunization record, guardianship documents (if applicable) and proof of address. For more information, call 216/838-KIDS (5437).

OTHER EDUCATION

FREE TUTORING for 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders in reading and writing skills by Cleveland State University graduate students overseen by faculty. Each day's lesson will involve research-based skills development in a fun, interactive environment. Sessions will be held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from July 3 through August 7 from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm at Halloran and sites on the east side. To register, or for more information, email Dr. Josh Stephens at j.a.stephens@csuohio.edu.

GROWNEXTGEN, a new program offered by the **Ohio Soybean Council**, which provides STEM-based curriculum and interactive e-learning courses that connect students to careers in agriculture, food science, biotechnology and more. Through the program, which can be found at GrowNextGen.org, students are engaged in real-world math and science applications. A free curriculum from the Ohio Soybean Council for high school science teachers.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH (NAEHCY) has tip sheets, podcasts, and more on its webpage: <http://naehcy.org/educational-resources/higher-ed> . NAEHCY

also offers a toll-free helpline to assist individuals and professionals seeking to help young people in accessing higher education. The helpline information is (855) 446-2673 (toll-free) or highered@naehcy.org

ESPERANZA MENTORING PROGRAM connects students to positive adults, careers, college, leadership, and more. Sign up to be a mentor or mentee. One-on-one mentoring, school-based mentoring for middle school students after school, group mentoring for same gender groups that meet 1-2 time a month for field trips and workshops. Also offers programs for parents, to help them navigate the school system, understand school report cards, and research the right schools for their child. For more information, call 216/651-7178.

ENVIRONMENT FAITH COMMUNITIES TOGETHER FOR FRACK AWARENESS aims to spread the truth about fracking and move to a new paradigm of renewable energy to save God's creation. Fracking is horizontal drilling of deep shale using high volume, slick water hydraulic fracturing that poisons drinking water. For more information, visit www.neogap.org/neogap/fact.

THE SIXTH ANNUAL GREAT LAKE ERIE BOAT FLOAT is scheduled for September 6th at Edgewater Beach Park. Build at boat made out of plastic waste to help raise awareness about plastic pollution. Register online at www.lakeerieboatfloat.org or for more information, contact Cathi Lehn at clehn@cmnh.org.

THE SCRANTON FLATS/TOW-PATH TRAIL RIBBON CUTTING is scheduled for 1 pm on July 7th. The park at Scranton Flats features wild fish habitats, native plantings, an observation deck and a Towpath Trail connection, all in the heart of the Flats. The dedications will take place in front of Fire Station #21, 1801 Carter Rd. To RSVP and for driving directions, visit http://www.canalway-partners.com/scrantonflatsoverview.htm?utm_source=Scranton+Flats+Ribbon+Cutting+&utm_campaign=ScrantonInvite&utm_medium=email

SAFETY SAFETY FEST will be held on Tuesday July 1st from 6-8pm in Lincoln Park, next to the Farmers Market. Vendors, giveaways, door prizes, music, health and safety information from dozens of local and state organizations.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: EARN CREDITS AT OHIO CITY BIKE CO-OP: Help kids learn safe biking skills! Help Stockyard,

Clark-Fulton & Brooklyn Centre present an Earn A Bike camp at CCC at 3247 W. 58th on 7/13, 7/20 & 7/27 -- and earn shop credits from the Ohio City Bicycle Co-op for your time! But FIRST, get all the training you'll need to teach kids how to ride safely by joining a FREE Traffic Skills Ride at the Co-op in the weeks before the event (loaner bikes and helmets available) on one of these dates: July 12th (Intro to Traffic Skills) or July 19th (Family Traffic Skills). Call 216.961.9073 or email agifford@dscdo.org for more information, times and to sign up!

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Sunday, June 1st, 2014; West Park Summerfest, Jefferson Park, Lorain Avenue between W. 133 & W. 134th Streets: A young child seems thrilled to be able to hold the snake while visiting with Jungle Bob.

more information about what to do if you have a concern, visit www.cdc.gov/ActEarly or call 1/800-CDC-INFO.

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EVERY CHILD READY TO READ: Libraries have many resources to help you talk, sing, read, write and play with your children to help them get ready to read. Log onto www.everychildreadytoread.org or visit your local library.

FREE IMMUNIZATIONS for children are available at Thomas F. McCafferty Health Center at 4242 Lorain Ave. every Monday from 8am to 11am and every 2nd and 4th

Thursday from 4 pm to 7pm. Call 216/664-6603.

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SCHOOL FACILITIES PLAN

continued from page 6

Clark School on the existing site, while moving students to a nearby school during construction. Plans call for Walton school to be maintained while considering transitioning students to nearby schools due to the poor condition of the building. Plans call for Lincoln West to be maintained while studying how to configure the building to serve 1,000 students.

In the Detroit-Shoreway-Cudell-

Edgewater cluster plans call for H. Barbara Booker to be rebuilt on the current site while students move to a swing site. Waverly School would be rebuilt on the same site to accommodate students from both Waverly and Watterson-Lake. Plans call for Watterson-Latke to be closed and the site to be sold.

Plans call for the rebuilding of Marion Seltzer on the current site. Gallagher, Luis Agassiz will get refreshed. Wilbur Wright will see additional students transition to it

over a several year period from McKinley School in the Kamm's Bellaire Puritas cluster.

The Old Max Hayes High School will serve as a possible site for a new West Side high school or be used to swap land for another site for the proposed high school. The new Max Hayes High School is under construction and scheduled to open in 2015.

In the Kamm's-Bellaire-Puritas cluster, as mentioned previously, McKinley will be closed and students will transition to Wilbur Wright. Brooklawn School will serve as

temporary home this coming school year for the Bard College Program.

In the Old Brooklyn-Brooklyn Centre Cluster, plans call for the replacement of Denison School on its present site with students being relocated to Charles Mooney during construction. Plans call for using Mooney as a swing site and then eventually transitioning students to other sites and closing the building. Plans also call for building a replacement for William Rainey harper on the current site.

The district plans to vote later this summer on whether to place an extension of the bond issue on the November ballot to fund the facilities plan. The State of Ohio will match on

a two to one basis dollars devoted to new construction if the district can show the seats are needed. The Bond Accountability Commission has criticized the district for overbuilding in some neighborhoods and not having enough new seats in other neighborhoods. The district has countered that argument, saying stakeholders in those neighborhoods wanted to keep historic buildings. In order to maintain older buildings the district must spend dollars that are not matched by the state. The Bond Accountability Commission has recommended that at least a half mill of any new bond issue be devoted to maintenance to make this possible.

METRO HEALTH

continued from page 4

by a task force that included representatives from major industry groups, such as the American Hospital Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians

and the National Patient Advocate Foundation. National health care policymakers advising the task force included former Health and Human Services secretaries Mike Leavitt and Donna Shalala, former Senate Leaders Bill Frist and Tom Daschle, and Clinton Administration Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Saturday, May 24th, 2014; Car Show, Max Hayes Career and Technical High School, 4600 Detroit Avenue: This 1951 Packard 4-Door was one of the many cars featured.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Saturday, May 24th, 2014; Car Show, Max Hayes Career and Technical High School, 4600 Detroit Avenue: This 1941 Willys Coupe is a colorful addition to the 2014 Max Hayes Car Show.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Saturday, May 24th, 2014; Car Show, Max Hayes Career and Technical High School, 4600 Detroit Avenue: Jim Ables of Columbia Station gives this 1928 Pontiac 2-Door a rubdown. Ables says he has owned the vehicle since 2000.

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