



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Saturday, August 8, 2015; Esperanza, Ready to Learn, Back to School Celebration for Students, Esperanza Parking Lot, 3104 W. 25th Street: Angeli Rodriguez, age 5, and Elizabeth Rodriguez, age 4, hold up their new Esperanza backpacks filled with school supplies.

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Vol. 42, No. 9 September 2015

# Plain Press

Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

## Aetna Foundation seeks community partners to address health disparities in Cleveland neighborhoods

by Chuck Hoven

The Aetna Foundation is looking for community partners to work with in addressing health disparities in some areas and to help improve nutrition and healthy lifestyle opportunities in those neighborhoods. Dr. Garth Graham, president of the Aetna Foundation, says research indicates "your zip code matters more than your genetic code in determining health outcomes." Even with a mobile

population, Dr. Graham says people tend to stay within the same social economic strata when they move – moving to similar neighborhoods. He says social determinants in those neighborhoods, such as access to quality education, access to transportation, availability of health food options and availability of safe places to exercise, help determine health outcomes.

Dr. Graham, who has been involved in researching health

disparities at the University of Florida School of Medicine, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Minority Health, agrees with the findings and focus of the Cuyahoga Health Improvement Partnership's plan. For more information on the plan see *Community Health Improvement Plan seeks health and wellness for all the people in Cuyahoga County* in the July issue of the *Plain Press* at [www.plainpress.org](http://www.plainpress.org).

Of the seven neighborhoods with the lowest life expectancy (72.7 years or less) in Cuyahoga County, The Cuyahoga Health Improvement Partnership's plan includes four neighborhoods in the *Plain Press* readership area: the Stockyard, Clark Fulton, Brooklyn Centre and Edgewater neighborhoods.

Dr. Graham says he recently looked at the Cuyahoga County Health Improvement Plan and was impressed that the plan was "focusing on a pretty robust strategy" that looked at some of the social determinants of health such as access to education, transportation and presence or absence of various community assets and resources.

Dr. Graham says for example that Cuyahoga County's plan to track hypertension cases by zip code fits with the focus of the Aetna

continued on page 6



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Tuesday, August 4th, 2015; Cleveland Public Theatre's Student Theatre Enrichment Program performance of an original new play, *Lost in the Water*, Herman Park, W. 58th and Herman Avenue: In the act titled *To the River*, inspired by *Selekana and the River Goddess*, Anna, an elder of the village (portrayed by Omarri Vargas) offers encouragement and advise to Selekan, as Selekan preservers through hardship and endures the taunts of other youths.

## Park and multipurpose trail proposed for Big Creek Valley in Stockyard neighborhood

In hopes of creating a new park, just south of Denison in the Stockyard neighborhood, Big Creek Connects, a non profit organization dedicated to the stewardship of the Big Creek Valley, hopes to seek funding this fall from the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency's (NOACA) Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI). The TLCI grant would allow further study of the group's proposed Big Creek/I-71 Relocation and Restoration Initiative.

The March 2015 Big Creek/I-71 Relocation and Restoration Initiative, prepared by Big Creek Connects, outlines a number of options for restoring the Big Creek, where possible, to its original stream bed in the Stockyards neighborhood, just south of Denison Avenue, and creating a park with a multipurpose

trail. One possibility involves the elimination of the entrance and exit ramps to I-71, just east of W. 58th and Denison. This scenario calls for the conversion of the land to a park area that would also link the Big Creek Valley from Brookside Park, extend south through Brooklyn, to the Big Creek Reservation in Parma.

One option, outlined in the study, calls for the removal of most of the Denison access ramps to I-71 and relocating the Cleveland Police Firing Range (south of Denison at W. 58th). The study says this would open up over 50 acres of land to use for potential environmental remediation and recreational use. The study estimates 10 acres would be used for the stream and floodplain, 25 acres for recreational

continued on page 8



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Tuesday, August 4th, 2015; Cleveland Public Theatre's Student Theatre Enrichment Program performance of an original new play, *Lost in the Water*, Herman Park, W. 58th and Herman Avenue: In the act entitled *To the River*, inspired by *Selekana and the River Goddess*, A South African Myth, Selekan (portrayed by Tasheania Lee) sings a song to Dezbezisa, the River Goddess, asking for her blessing.

## PRE4CLE increases number of quality preschool slots

Last August, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District announced the launching of PRE4CLE, an effort to expand the number of quality preschool seats available to children ages 3-5 years living in the City of Cleveland (see *PRE4CLE sets goals to expand quality preschool offerings in city of Cleveland*, *Plain Press*, September 2014, [www.plainpress.org](http://www.plainpress.org)). The

expansion effort, announced last year, specifically targeted four year olds with a goal of increasing the number of four year olds in quality preschool slots by 2,000 students from 2014 to 2016. When the goal was announced there were 1,200 four year olds in quality preschool seats.

Last August, when the PRE4CLE program started, a Case Western

Reserve University study indicated that in the 2013 school year "only 2,857 Cleveland children ages 3 to 5, fewer than one in five, were enrolled in high-quality preschool." The study noted that, while there were 10,013 preschool slots available in 2013, only 3,530 of those slots were rated as high quality by the State of Ohio and, of those slots, only 2,857

continued on page 5



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Tuesday, August 4th, 2015; Cleveland Public Theatre's Student Theatre Enrichment Program performance of an original new play, *Lost in the Water*, Herman Park, W. 58th and Herman Avenue: Dezbezisa, the River Goddess (portrayed by Dezhany Simmons) rewards Selekan (portrayed by Tasheania Lee) with gifts for her good deeds.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Saturday, August 8, 2015; West 58th Street Church of God Back to School Celebration and Supply Give-A-Way, 3150 W. 58th Street: (L-R) Christopher Evcic, age 5, Cameron Evcic, age 10 and Makayla Evcic, age 6, display their new backpacks filled with school supplies.

## Cleveland Police Foundation Safety Tip of the Month

### PERSONAL SAFETY: General Safety Tips (while at home)

1 - Keep your doors locked while at home or away. Don't leave keys hidden outside. Install a peephole viewer in your door and don't open it without knowing who is on the other side. If a stranger comes to the door and asks to use the phone, have them wait outside and make the call for them.

2 - Don't give out personal

information over the phone or in writing, and remind children not to give out information.

3 - Don't offer information to wrong number callers. Instead, ask them what number they were trying to reach. On answering machines, simply request that callers leave their name and number.

4 - Hang up immediately on any threatening or harassing phone calls. If the caller persists, call police and phone company immediately.

*The Safety Tip of the Month is a service of The Cleveland Police Foundation in partnership with the Ohio Crime Prevention Association provided to the Plain Press courtesy of Cleveland Police Captain Keith Sulzer.*

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or visit our website at [stcolmanparish.org](http://stcolmanparish.org) to reserve/purchase,  
we accept debit/credit cards.



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.

## AGING

A STUDY ON "AGING IN PLACE" is being conducted for the Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization. Individuals 55+ are needed to participate in 3 focus groups. The sessions will be held at Luxe restaurant on Sept. 2 and 3. Dinner is free. To register and to check on the time, contact Michael Mandela at the Coral Company at 216/316-9686 (cell) or 216/932-4341 (office) or [mam@thecoralcompany.com](mailto:mam@thecoralcompany.com).

## DINNERS FOR CHILDREN

FREE SUPPERS all children ages 5-18 on Mondays-Fridays this fall at all Cleveland Recreation Centers. Call to confirm and check times: Clark (5706 Clark Ave., 664-4657), Cudell (1910 West Blvd., 664-4137), Estabrook (4125 Fulton, 664-4149), Gunning (16700 Puritas, 420-7900), Halloran Rink (3550 West 117th, 664-4187) or Michael Zone (6301 Lorain Ave., 664-3373). Or call 664-2561.

## ENGINEERING

**FUTURE ENGINEERS SCHOLARSHIP** is a \$5,000 award that will be presented by Kelly Services to one eligible undergraduate student in December 2015. The scholarship award, which can be used for tuition, fees, books, and room and board expenses for the 2016 calendar year, is awarded to one student based on a written essay, documented acceptance into a school of engineering, demonstrated academic success and an intention to pursue a career in the field of engineering. Applications and additional information on the Future Engineers Scholarship are available at: [www.kellyengineering.com/scholarships](http://www.kellyengineering.com/scholarships). The submission deadline is October 15, 2015.

## BLINDESS

**PREVENT BLINDESS** Offers Free Resources to Help Ensure Kids See Clearly as They Head Back to School. For more information, log onto <http://ohio.preventblindness.org/free-resources-help-kids-they-head-back-school>.

## BLOOD DONATIONS

**RECEIVE FREE HAIRCUTS** if you donate blood. The American Red Cross and Sport Clips Haircuts are teaming up nationwide to offer blood and platelet donors a free haircut coupon. Those who give blood or platelets will receive a coupon for a free haircut via email a few days after their donation. Donors must have a valid email address on record to receive the coupon.

On Sept. 2 from 7 AM to 5 PM at MetroHealth Medical Center (2500 MetroHealth Drive), Sept. 2 from 9 AM to 2 PM at 2 p.m., Senior Health & Wellness Center (MetroHealth Old Brooklyn Campus, 4229 Pearl Road) and on Sept. 9 from 9 AM to 2 PM at Key Tower (127 Public Square, 27th Floor). Download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) to make an appointment or for more information.

## BREAST HEALTH

**METROHEALTH/BREAST/AMIGAS PROGRAM** is sponsoring a free health fair on Saturday, Sept. 26 from 9 AM to 1 PM at La Sagrada Familia Church at 7719 Detroit Ave. Services include: Mammograms and Clinical Breast Exams, Health Screenings, and Community Resources. For more information, call Camille Garcia at [cgracia@metrohealth.org](mailto:cgracia@metrohealth.org) or 216/778-8347.

## CLEVELAND TIME BANK

**WHAT SKILLS DO YOU HAVE?** STOCKYARD, CLARK-FULTON & BROOKLYN CENTRE is looking for someone to lead a skill share. The Cleveland TimeBank Skillshares are designed as a way to share your knowledge, talents, skills, and expertise with your local community. Skillshares are workshops that are led by you, me, and people in our community. Meet new people and enhance your knowledge on things that you and your neighbors find fun and/or important. For more information, contact Laura at [lzeck@dscdo.org](mailto:lzeck@dscdo.org) or 216/961-9073 ext 204, or visit <http://clevelandtimebank.org/skillshare/>

## Plain Press

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continued on page 7

## Ohio State Budget fails low and middle income Ohioans

by **Byron Solomon**

This year's Ohio state budget, once again, shows how little the state legislature cares about low and middle income Ohioans. In November, members of Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality came together to develop a community platform of needs. These needs ranged from more money for K-12 education, health and human services, more money to our local governments so that they can fix the number of potholes and provide the services that we need for our community, and greater tax equity among all Ohioans.

### COMMENTARY

We have developed a Report Card that evaluates the Governor's and Legislature's effectiveness in addressing these and other issues. Sadly to say, both received an F in their ability to help low and middle income Ohioans. Those that make less than \$38,000 a year will see a tax increase due to the Governor's income tax cut. Local governments will not receive any additional support while education funding overall will decline. Funding to help subsidize the high cost of childcare increased marginally, but not enough to really help lower

income families.

We need to make sure that when our legislators write the budget they make a budget that's fair to all Ohioans.

We invite you to our next meeting September 23 at 5:30pm at our office at 3500 Lorain Ave to discuss how we can make Ohio a better place for all Ohioans. For more information or details about the budget and how it affects you, please call Byron at <216-651-2606> or visit us online at [www.organizeohio.org/noble](http://www.organizeohio.org/noble).

*Editor's Note: Byron Solomon is a member of Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality.*

## American students need an engaged team based experiential learning environment with that allows them room to grow

by **Dick Resch**

American students need to hit the books. According to the latest international data, the United States ranks 24th among 34 developed countries in math and science achievement -- well below countries like Slovenia, Vietnam, and the Czech Republic.

Our dismal academic performance has real consequences for our economy. If U.S. students were to match the test scores of their Canadian peers -- who rank 17 spots higher -- the American economy would generate \$10 trillion in additional growth over the next 35 years. That's an average of \$285 billion a year.

### COMMENTARY

In order to raise the achievement level of American students, our schools have to do a better job teaching them. That means scrapping the age-old lecture model in favor of an approach that engages students directly and allows them to learn by doing.

Even modest improvements in educational outcomes would deliver significant economic gains. Raising math and science scores to the developed-country average would boost our economy by 1.7 percent by 2050. That's equivalent to \$2.5 trillion of extra growth over that period.

Sadly, our students show little sign of making such progress anytime soon. Despite aggressive education reforms and billions of dollars in government spending, America's performance in math, science, and reading has remained mostly

unchanged for at least the last decade.

Improving these stubbornly low levels of achievement will require a dramatic shift in the way we educate our children. We can start by abandoning the traditional classroom.

A growing body of research has demonstrated the importance of an "engaged learning" environment -- that is, a classroom that promotes team-based, experiential learning. Students must be free to sit in small groups, collaborate on hands-on projects, discuss ideas with one another, and interact with technology.

Instead of holding court at the front of the classroom, teachers roam freely, providing individualized assistance and coaching.

The evidence shows that this

approach works. Consider the case of North Carolina State University -- one of more than two dozen schools to implement an engaged-learning approach for large undergraduate classes.

According to one recent study of 16,000 students, failure rates in these classes were typically 50 percent lower than in traditional lectures -- particularly among women and minorities. Students in engaged-learning classes also ended up understanding key concepts better and posted higher attendance rates.

The approach has also worked in primary and secondary schools. In 2009, for example, the math department at Minnesota's Byron High School abandoned the

continued on page 4



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Sunday, August 2, 2015; Cleveland Shakespeare Festival performance of *The Merchant of Venice*, Arts in August, free art programming in Tremont's Lincoln Park: Portia (portrayed by Faith Whitacre) shares her hopes with her maid in waiting, Nerissa (portrayed by Hillary Wheelock) that her favorite suitor, Bassanio, will pass the test designed by her father for those seeking her hand in marriage.

## Commitment to Health Improvement Partnership includes our selves

### To the Editor:

In the July issue of the *Plain Press*, the following article appeared "Community Health Improvement Plan seeks health and wellness for all people in Cuyahoga County". In it, the writers quoted Cuyahoga County's Health Commissioner, Terry Allen, when he said, "Everyone deserves the right to be healthy."

### LETTER

As participants in the Health Improvement Partnership (HIP-Cuyahoga), we take this seriously and are committed to a partnership that must include health care providers, non-profit organizations, hospital systems, grocers, government entities and

most importantly our selves. If we are to improve health outcomes by eliminating structural racism, providing access to healthy eating and active living, establishing a true partnership between clinical and public health and increasing our ability to manage chronic illness, changes have to be made and partnerships must be formed.

A healthy population is not only one that combines excellent health

outcomes (reducing obesity, drug and alcohol abuse, mental illness, heart attacks and cancer rates; and preventing diabetes, strokes and suicides). It is combining care with many other things that influence whether or not we are a healthy community. This health improvement plan has an excellent perspective on how to do this by combining health care; how institutions view their patients; how many things influence

our health; and how we can take charge of our own health.

We strongly urge you to get involved in the implementation of this plan. Please call Martha Halko or Nichelle Shaw at 216-3092447 or go to the HIP-Cuyahoga website at [www.hipcuyahoga.org](http://www.hipcuyahoga.org).

Take care of your health.  
Gloria Aron and Gail Long

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PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Saturday, August 8, 2015; 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Bigelow Garden Site, 3164 W. 82<sup>nd</sup> Street: Mariah Myers, age 8, stocks the garden's Little Free Library with donated books.

## AMERICAN STUDENTS NEED SPACE TO GROW

continued from page 3

traditional lecture setup for a form of engaged learning known as the "flipped classroom." The share of students who passed the state mathematics test quickly rose from 29.9 percent in 2006 to 73.8 percent in 2011.

The success of engaged-learning classrooms only confirms what education researchers have known for years. Indeed, team-based learning has been shown to improve knowledge retention among students by up to 90 percent.

Not surprisingly, schools around the country have been investing in engaged-learning classroom designs in recent years. New York's Campbell-Savona Central School District, for instance, recently overhauled three of its conventional classrooms. Thanks to a new integrated system of tables and chairs, teachers and students can easily adjust the room for either large-group instruction or small-group collaboration.

Unfortunately, classrooms like

these are the exception rather than the norm. Given the reluctance among school districts to adopt teaching techniques that deviate from the status quo -- even if they've proven effective -- it's no wonder that student achievement has been stagnant.

Worse still, investments in school improvements have been declining. Spending on school construction averaged more than \$20 billion a year between 2000 and 2008. In 2012, however, school districts spent only \$13 billion on building projects.

America's educational leaders must commit to modernizing our schools to reflect the latest pedagogical research. Without learning environments that allow students to engage in active, hands-on learning, America's educational performance will remain lackluster and the achievement gap between our nation and others will widen.

That's a detriment to not just our students but our economy, too.

Dick Resch is CEO of KI Furniture.

## High-quality preschools have openings for 2015-2016 school year SPACES AVAILABLE AT PRIVATE AND CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT CLASSROOMS

There is good news for families in Cleveland who wish to send their 3- or 4-year-old preschoolers to a high-quality program this school year. According to PRE4CLE, Cleveland's high-quality preschool expansion plan, private preschools and Cleveland Metropolitan School District classrooms that partner with PRE4CLE have openings for the 2015-2016 school year in many Cleveland neighborhoods.

Preschools that partner with PRE4CLE are high-quality programs, meaning they have at least three out of five stars from Ohio's Step Up to Quality Rating systems, or are in the process of obtaining that rating. High-quality preschool programs offer: environments that are fun, welcoming, safe and caring; staff and teachers who are well-trained and professional; curriculum based in research with lesson plans for each day's activities; educational activities to prepare your child for kindergarten; creative and imaginative play to inspire a lifelong love of learning; and information about your child's learning and progress.

"High-quality preschool programs help prepare children to enter kindergarten ready to learn and give them the tools to be successful students throughout their school careers," said Katie

Kelly, PRE4CLE director.

Many of these programs also offer free or low-cost services to parents who qualify.

High-quality preschools in areas served by the Plain Press that have openings for the 2015-2016 school year are listed below, by neighborhood. Families wishing to enroll their children in

a Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) preschool should call CMSD's Office of Early Childhood Education at 216-838-0231. Families wishing to enroll in a private preschool, or who need information about financial assistance and how to enroll, should call Starting Point at 216-575-0061.

### High-Quality Preschools with openings

#### BELLAIRE-PURITAS

Bellaire Head Start  
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#### CUDELL

Williard Head Start  
Marion Seltzer Elementary School

#### DETROIT-SHOREWAY

Gordon Square Early Learning Center  
St. Augustine Manner Child Enrichment Center

#### DOWNTOWN

Cleveland Fed Kids

#### OHIO CITY

Orchard School of Science  
Ohio City Early Learning Center

#### STOCKYARDS/ CLARK FULTON

The Salvation Army Ohio City  
Thomas Jefferson Elementary School

#### TREMONT

Tremont Montessori School  
Merrick House  
Horizon Child Development Center

#### WEST BOULEVARD

St. Ignatius Head Start

Please note that while information provided is current as of Monday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, openings are filled on a rolling basis and availability is subject to change.

**About PRE4CLE:** PRE4CLE is a plan to ensure all 3-and-4-year-old children in Cleveland have access to high-quality preschool. PRE4CLE is a major next step in implementing Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools and is led by the Cleveland Early Childhood Compact. For more information, visit [www.clevelandmetroschools.org/pre4cle](http://www.clevelandmetroschools.org/pre4cle).



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Saturday, August 8, 2015; 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Bigelow Garden Site, 3164 W. 82<sup>nd</sup> Street: Flowers keep the pollinators coming to Tom Mullen's garden.

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Cove United Methodist Church is a traditional Bible based ministry  
anchored in the love of God for all people.

## Gund Foundation gives \$950,000 to CMSD schools

CMSD NEWS BUREAU: The George Gund Foundation has awarded \$950,000 to support new and innovative CMSD schools.

The foundation approved \$780,000 for three small high schools that make up the new John Marshall Campus, as well as the Cleveland High School for Digital Arts and the Cleveland School of the Arts.

The John Marshall School of Engineering, John Marshall School of Information Technology and John Marshall School of Civic and Business Leadership are geared to needs in the regional workforce and will provide smaller, personalized learning environments.

Each school will open with the ninth and 10th grades. Juniors and seniors who attended John Marshall High School will remain on the West 140th Street campus until they graduate.

The Cleveland High School for Digital Arts was developed in partnership with the Center for Arts-Inspired Learning, formerly Young Audiences. The year-round school, which opened downtown

last year, integrates core subjects with game design, digital filmmaking and recording arts technology.

The Cleveland School of the Arts is now in its new building in University Circle. CSA is revamping its academic curriculum while beginning a transition from a school for grades six through 12 to a four-year high school.

Gund also approved \$170,000 for Bard High School Early College Cleveland.

Bard, which also opened last year, allows students to seamlessly earn both a high school diploma and associate of arts degree – tuition free – in four years.

Gund also gave \$400,000 to charter school operators who work closely with CMSD. The foundation approved \$300,000 for Friends of Breakthrough Schools and \$100,000 for the new Stonebrook Montessori School.

Gund approved \$300,000 for PRE4CLE, a partnership between CMSD and private providers that is expanding access to high-quality preschool. Another \$137,500 went to the Cleveland Transformation Alliance, which promotes school choice and holds the District and charters accountable for carrying out Cleveland's Plan for Transforming Schools.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Saturday, August 8, 2015; 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Bigelow Garden Site, 3164 W. 82<sup>nd</sup> Street: Bigelow gardeners: (L-R) Front Row: Garden Leader Jan Lascko, Linda Gilbert, and Patti Vandepol. (L-R) Back Row: Chuck Hoven, Ahmed Morad, Tom Mullen, and Brian Gilbert.

## PRE4CLE INCREASES

continued from page one

were filled.

This July, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District released an update on the PRE4CLE program indicating that PRE4CLE now offers 4,700 high-quality seats at 90 sites including 59 CMSD schools. This marks an increase of 1,170 high quality preschool seats available to Cleveland children since the 2013 school year. The goal now is to fill all those seats. Openings are still available for this coming school year (see related article on page)

If PRE4CLE is able to fill all 4,700 slots it will have increased the number of 3-5 year olds in quality preschool seats by 1,843 since the 2013 school year.

The majority of the quality preschool slots available in Cleveland are provided by the 31 private providers, which are now offering 2,857 quality preschool slots. The Cleveland Metropolitan School District offers the remainder of the slots.

When the Cleveland Metropolitan School District joined in the launch

of PRE4CLE, in August of 2014, it announced it had just increased its preschool slots by 230 spaces bringing its total to 1,020 quality spaces for children. As this school year opens, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District announced it now has 59 preschool sites with 1,846 prekindergarten seats available. This marks an increase of 826 seats since the beginning of last school year. New seats include additional classrooms at Joseph M. Gallagher and Tremont Montessori schools as well as the addition of a new preschool site at Marion C. Seltzer School.

Of the 4,700 quality preschool seats now available, it is not yet clear how many will be filled by four year olds. So, it is difficult to assess how far along PRE4CLE is in its goal of having 3,200 four year olds in quality preschool seats by 2016.

However, the PRE4CLE is making progress toward its goal of having 6,000 quality preschool seats by the end of 2016. Reaching that goal would mean PRE4CLE would be able to serve about 37% of the estimated 16,500 children ages 3-5 years old by the end of 2016. Currently, the 4,700 available, quality, preschool slots represent seats for just over 28% of the estimated preschool age population.

Last year, PRE4CLE's new Director Katie Kelly said, "while the ultimate goal of PRE4CLE is to make high-quality preschool available to every pre-school aged child in Cleveland, but we anticipate, based on research from other similar programs the 'take up rate' will be 70%." Last year, Director Kelly said with the current population of 3-5 year olds, a 70% mark would mean serving 11,447 children in quality preschool seats.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Saturday, August 8, 2015; 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Bigelow Garden Site, 3164 W. 82<sup>nd</sup> Street: A sunflower scarecrow brightens Jan Lascko's garden.

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PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015; Cleveland Public Theatre's Student Theatre Enrichment Program performance of an original new play, *Lost in the Water*, Herman Park, W. 58<sup>th</sup> and Herman Avenue: in the Act, *Storm of the Gods*, inspired by the *Susanoo-no-Mikoto* story of Japan, Amatarasu, Goddess of Sun and Fire (portrayed by Omarri Vargas) confronts Susanoo, God of Storms and Seas (portrayed by Amaan Dixon) concerning his bad behavior.

## AETNA FOUNDATION SEEKS PARTNERS

continued from page one

Foundation on disparities that occur because of where people live. One

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of the main goals of the Aetna Foundation is to fund programs that are working to tackle some of the health disparities related to geography, said Dr. Graham. The foundation also is involved in supporting related programs that work to improve healthy eating options as well as promoting healthy lifestyle opportunities.

The Cuyahoga Health

Improvement Partnership calls for focusing on four areas: eliminating racism as a social determinant of health, improving coordination between clinical and public health, chronic disease management, and improving nutrition and physical activity.

In each of those areas the Cuyahoga Health Improvement Partnership's plan sets some goals. In addressing structural racism,

the Cuyahoga Health Improvement Partnership calls for: "teaching organizations how to recognize and address structural racism; encouraging organizations to work closely with community members; and developing policies to create social and economic opportunities for all people in Cuyahoga County."

In addressing the need for public health agencies to work more closely with clinical health care providers, the Cuyahoga Health Improvement Partnership calls for: "encouraging both systems to work together on shared goals; building public health and health equity training into the curriculum of health profession students; and identifying opportunities for combined data collection to better represent community health needs."

In tackling the need for better management of chronic diseases, the Cuyahoga Health Improvement Partnership calls for: "recruiting residents to become trainers or participants in chronic disease self-management programs; training doctors to care for all patients with chronic disease in ways that are proven to work; and training doctors to be culturally sensitive and speak in plain language."

In addressing the goal that "everyone should be able to eat healthy and be active if they choose to", the Cuyahoga Health Improvement Partnership's plan calls for: "making healthy food available in neighborhood stores; making sure new streets are built to encourage walking and biking; and encouraging schools and churches to open their doors so people can be active after hours."

Dr. Graham said the Aetna Foundation's focus on neighborhoods with health disparities includes addressing the issue of the availability of healthy food to purchase in neighborhoods without easy access to a grocery store. Dr. Graham talked of groups that have focused on creating options for purchasing healthy foods at an affordable price within those neighborhoods.

A lot of people are doing things in the community that help to address health disparities or help to improve the availability of nutritious food and positive lifestyle changes, and Dr. Graham said the Aetna Foundation would like to "connect with individuals doing these activities." The foundation would like to "work with and support partners" working to reduce health disparities related to where a person lives. Dr. Graham says he hopes these individuals and groups involved in

tackling disparities and improving neighborhood health will look to the Aetna Foundation as a source of funding and expertise to help to address some of these issues.

The Aetna Foundation funds a variety of programs, examples can be found on the foundation's website at [www.aetnafoundation.org](http://www.aetnafoundation.org). Among the initiatives, funded by the Aetna Foundation, is the National Reach Coalition's Health Equity Leadership and Exchange Network (HELEN). According to the Aetna Foundation's website, HELEN offers "a national forum for health equity champions. The goal: to advance racial and ethnic health equity in laws, policies and programs."

The foundation's website also has heading titled "local grants promote healthier lifestyles." Under that heading the foundation describes some programs it funded to promote healthy eating through schools and after school programs as well as in neighborhood settings.

Dr. Graham says a favorite program funded in Cleveland involves the use of technology to help people to remember to exercise. He said a group of pastors are using text messages to encourage members of their congregations to exercise. Dr. Graham says there is no specific range of funding for programs, the foundation has funded programs to set up community gardens in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range as well as much larger projects. Dr. Graham says the foundation has worked with school systems around the country on programs that promote healthy eating. He hopes that partners, working on the Cuyahoga Health Improvement Plan, will seek out the foundation as a source of funding.

He says the Aetna Foundation is very interested helping to foster the "great ideas" that are being put forward in Cleveland.

Dr. Graham said the Aetna Foundation was very interested in working toward "more prevention on the front end" of the causes of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. He says providing a safe environment for walking and running is important as well as increasing hours available at recreation centers. Getting the message out to people about the importance of healthy eating and exercise is also an important priority. Dr. Graham says the Aetna Foundation sends out requests for proposals every five months. He hopes that Cleveland organizations working to address needs in the priority areas outlined by the foundation will seek the opportunity to partner with the Aetna Foundation.

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## Housing market in Cleveland rates as one of the worst in the nation

A recent study, by WalletHub, compared 300 United States, large, midsize and small size cities on the health of their housing market. Cleveland ranked 294 out of the 300 cities studied. This means, according to the study, that Cleveland does not fare well as a place to purchase a home when compared to housing markets across the country. The cities worse than Cleveland in the study were: Hartford, CT; Elizabeth, NJ, Dayton, OH, Newark, NJ; Paterson, NJ; and Flint, Michigan. Among cities studied with populations over 300,000, Cleveland was dead last of the 62 big cities studied. The housing market here was ranked worse than in Detroit which was 61<sup>st</sup>; Milwaukee at 60, Baltimore at 59 and Chicago at 58. The five best housing markets

among large cities were: Austin, TX at number 1; Seattle, WA at number 2; Denver, CO at number 3; San Jose, CA at number 4 and San Francisco, CA at number 5.

### Here is how Cleveland fared on some key metrics:

#### Health of the Housing Market in Cleveland (1=Best; 150=Avg.):

- 292<sup>nd</sup> – % of Homes Underwater (with Negative Equity)
- 186<sup>th</sup> – Average Number of Days Until a House Is Sold
- 257<sup>th</sup> – Median Home-Price Appreciation
- 264<sup>th</sup> – Job Growth
- 183<sup>rd</sup> – Foreclosure Rate
- 251<sup>st</sup> – % of Mortgage Holders in Delinquency
- 281<sup>st</sup> – Number of Unsold Homes Owned by Banks (REOs)
- 271<sup>st</sup> – Unemployment Rate
- 280<sup>th</sup> – Population Growth

**Cleveland ranks 294<sup>th</sup> overall and 62<sup>nd</sup> among large cities.**

For the full report, please visit:

<http://wallethub.com/edu/healthiest-housing-markets/14889/>

## COMMUNITY BOARD

continued from page 2

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### LA PLACITA CLEVELAND

**AN OPEN-AIR MARKET** that celebrates the rich culture and entrepreneurial spirit of Cleveland's Hispanic Community, is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> from 1-8 p.m. at the US Bank Parking Lot at 2511 Clark Ave. and West 25<sup>th</sup>. Live entertainment, food vendors, kids zone, community corner, free health screenings by MetroHealth, local artist vendors and beer garden. Cultural Latin American attire encouraged. Call Maria Soucek at 216/961-9073 ext. 202 for more information.

### OHIO CITY

**OHIO CITY STREET FESTIVAL** will be held on Sunday, Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> from 11AM to 7PM. Are you a business or organization in Ohio City that still needs to sign up? Contact Zoe at [zadams@ohiocity.org](mailto:zadams@ohiocity.org). Interested in volunteering? Email Hattie at [hkotz@ohiocity.org](mailto:hkotz@ohiocity.org).

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The 300 cities were measured on 14 key metrics. The data sets ranges from median home-price appreciation to home price as a percentage of income, to job growth.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Sunday, August 2, 2015; "We Care" Expo in Jefferson Park, 1312 Lorain Ave: We Care volunteer Barbie Chapin passes out watermelon. Walk of Faith Community Center and Aable Rents sponsored the "We Care" Expo, which featured food, raffles and free school supplies.

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## BIG CREEK VALLEY

continued from page one

use, 15 acres for roadways, parking and other uses, 1.5 miles for new access roads/parkway and over 5 miles of new all purpose trails.

Bob Gardin, Executive Director of Big Creek Connects, points out that the long northbound exit from I-71 at Denison was originally built in the 1960s to take the Parma Freeway north to connect with I-90. While the Parma Freeway was never built, the long exit remains along with the damage done to the Big Creek in preparing for the Parma Freeway. The creek was placed into a concrete lined channel and much of the contour of the land in the Big Creek Valley was leveled and filled. Gardin hopes to use funds from the Transportation for Livable Communities program for further study of the options outlined in the March 2015 report. He hopes additional funds will allow Big Creek Connects to: solicit public input, assess economic impacts, perform traffic modeling, and develop a preferred plan with recommendations.

The March 2015 Big Creek/I-71 Relocation & Restoration Initiative reviews a multitude of planning studies for the area; includes maps of the original Big Creek bed; and offers multiple options for the restoration of the Big Creek to some of its natural streambed. The initiative even looks at the possibility of creating a new entrance and exit to I-71 on Ridge Road. The initiative also looks at several ways to create an industrial access road to connect Denison at W. 56 or W. 58th to Ridge Road to benefit area industry. One

suggested route connects to an existing road through the Ridge Road Transfer Station. Another route extends the Tradex Parkway across W. 56th and W. 58th and then continues along the southern side of the Norfolk Southern tracks allowing businesses, south of the tracks, to get to Ridge Road without the interference of train traffic.

The study examines the possibility that the City of Cleveland would relinquish the Police Firing Range at the southern end of W. 58th to be used as part of the park.

The plan suggests the benefits of the proposed creek restoration would have for the Stockyard neighborhood and residents of nearby neighborhoods such as Clark Fulton, Brooklyn Centre and West Boulevard. The report suggests that the amenities provided through the plan would increase the housing values in the Stockyard neighborhood, reduce traffic and congestion on Denison Avenue and make the area safer and more livable.

The plan looks at the value of creating a natural streambed--reducing the amount of erosion downstream and runoff from the massive amount of concrete that would be eliminated from converting the area under the I-71 ramps into parkland.

The plan also looks at the possible impact of creating a full freeway entrance and exit for I-71 at Ridge Road, saying this could benefit area industry with greater freeway access and relieve truck traffic congestion on Denison. It is hoped this will spur economic development opportunities for both the City of Cleveland and the City of Brooklyn.



PHOTO BY DEBBIE SADLON

Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015; National Night Out Against Crime, Steelyard Commons: Jane Yifei Gao, Gracia Lu, and Andres Lu meditate outside a booth which urges Clevelanders to sign a petition to stop forced live organ harvesting in China. The youths meditating are practitioners of Falun Dafa (Falun Gong), a traditional Chinese self-cultivation practice now banned in China.

The March 2015 Big Creek/I-71 Relocation & Restoration Initiative was funded by the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Cleveland City Council through the support of Councilmen Brian Cummins and Councilman Kevin Kelley, and the City of Brooklyn. Gardin estimates that, in addition to the \$32,000 in funding for the project, the initiative

received in-kind contributions in the form of "pro-bono and volunteer assistance from federal, state and local government departments and agencies, several professional consultants, and board members with expertise in key technical areas." Gardin estimates that, when these contributions are included, the total value of the March 2015 study is roughly \$60,000.

Gardin says Big Creek Connects applied for funds from the 2016 Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative for a planning grant for the Big Creek/I-71 Relocation & Restoration Initiative. While the proposal was turned down, NOACA staff promised to work with Big Creek Connects and the City of Brooklyn to "identify key project elements for an application

for the next round of TLCI expected this fall."

The Big Creek/I-71 Relocation & Restoration Initiative March 2015 report cautions that, even if the proposed TLCI planning grant is received, the project will take many years to reach fruition. The study says under the best conditions it is likely to take 10 years or more for any construction to begin on this project. It also cautions that the Ohio Department of Transportation District 12 has committed its funds for many years to the completion of the Cleveland Innerbelt.

For more information about Big Creek Connects and this proposal visit [www.bigcreekconnects.org](http://www.bigcreekconnects.org) or contact Bob Gardin, Executive Director at 216-269-6472, or by email at [bgardin@bigcreekconnects.org](mailto:bgardin@bigcreekconnects.org).



Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015; National Night Out Against Crime, Steelyard Commons: Quincy Johnson, age 5, mounts a police motorcycle.

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