



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, January 8, 2016; Fiesta de Reyes (Three Kings Day Celebration), Hispanic Youth Center, 3115 Scranton Road: Mother Mary, portrayed by Tatiana Garcia, age 16, cradles the Christ child while the three kings present their gifts.

Plain Press

Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

Disparity in four year graduation rate exists within the Cleveland's schools

by Chuck Hoven
In January, Ohio Department of Education released four-year graduation rates for students in the Class of 2014 who started ninth grade in 2011 and graduated by 2014. While the Cleveland Metropolitan School District increased its overall graduation rate there remains a big gap between the district's top six schools and the remaining twenty schools in the district.
The four-year graduation rate for Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) students for the Class of 2014 was 65.9% which earned the district a grade of F. The State average four-year graduation rate was 82.1%. The four-year graduation rate for schools deemed similar to the Cleveland Metropolitan School District was 70.2%. The state's grading system for four-year graduation rates is as follows:

78.9% or less = F;
79 – 83.9% = D;
84-88.9% = C;
89 – 92.9% = B;
and 93-100% = A.

Following the release of the state report card data on graduation rates, the CMSD News Bureau sent out a press release noting the progress the district has made in improving its graduation rate. The release notes that the four-year graduation rate for the class of 2014 was higher than for the class of 2013: "The graduation rate grew from 64.3 percent to 65.9 percent, setting a District record for the fourth year in a row, and has increased 13.9 percentage points in four years," said the CMSD release.

NEWS ANALYSIS

While the progress noted by the school district is encouraging, a look at individual schools reveals a tale of two separate tracks of four-year graduation rates within the Cleveland Metropolitan School District – those schools receiving an A grade and those schools receiving an F grade – with very few schools falling in between.

Of the twenty-six CMSD schools continued on page 8



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, January 8, 2016; Fiesta de Reyes, Hispanic Youth Center, 3115 Scranton Road: Leo Donavoun, age 3, and Reina Alina, age 5, hold the presents they received at the celebration of Three King's Day.

Fiesta de Reyes commemorates visit of Three Kings to Bethlehem with gifts for children

On January 8th, children and their families packed into the Hispanic Youth Center at 3115 Scranton Road to participate in the celebration of Fiesta de Reyes (Three Kings' Day Celebration). The event, hosted by the City of Cleveland Community Relations Board and planned and executed by the Cleveland Office of the Hispanic Liaison, commemorates the arrival of the Three Kings in Bethlehem of Judea to bring gifts and honor the Christ Child and the Holy Family. The annual event features food, beverages, entertainment and gifts for children.
Community Relations Board Hispanic Liaison Lucy Torres welcomed the crowd and the three kings Melchior, Caspar and Balthazr (Michael Shockley, Michael McDonald and Edwin Parris) worked their way through the crowd in a slow procession. While children awaited the distribution of gifts, the three kings sat regally in their thrones in front of the room. Joseph, portrayed by Felix Ramos Muñoz, age 16, and Mary, portrayed by Tatiana Garcia, also sat in front of the room holding the baby Jesus. Dancing angels from the Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center entertained the Holy Family, while children sitting in the front rows of the crowd delighted in viewing the dancing.
About 25 youths from the Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center helped put on a program for the Children and their families that included angels, models and two dance groups. One of the dance groups, the Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts continued on page 6



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, January 8, 2016; Fiesta de Reyes, Hispanic Youth Center, 3115 Scranton Road: Dancers from the Julia de Burgos Cultural Arts Center's dance group, Sabor Latino, performed two traditional Puerto Rican dances called Plena and Bomba during the Children's Program.

To participate in our democracy – make sure you are registered to vote

This year promises to be an important and exciting year for those voting in local, state and national elections. American citizens, age 18 and older are eligible to vote in elections, but must first register to vote. To vote in Cuyahoga County, you must be a resident of the county for at least 30 days prior to the election. Seventeen year olds who will turn 18 by the November election are eligible to vote in the primary election, but can vote for candidates only. To vote in the March 15 Primary Election you must register to vote 30 days prior to the election.
If you have not voted in a long time, or if you have moved since last voting, you should check to see if your registration is up to date. To do that, visit the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections website at: boe.cuyahogacounty.us to check on your registration status and receive information on how to get up to date. You can also visit the Board

of Elections at 2925 Euclid Avenue to check on your registration status. There are also a number of locations in the neighborhood where you can register to vote. Registration forms are available at the May Dugan Center, 4115 Bridge Avenue; the Spanish American Committee, 4407 Lorain Avenue and at the following high schools: Max Hayes, Lincoln West, Rhodes and John Marshall.
March 15 Ballot
Those wishing to take a look at the March 15th Ballot can view the ballot online at boe.cuyahogacounty.us beginning on January 28th or go to the Board of Elections office for an in person viewing. March 15 is a primary election so ballots will be available for each political party. Candidate races include those for the party nominations for President of the United States and United States Senator. By viewing the continued on page 5



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, January 8, 2016; Fiesta de Reyes, Hispanic Youth Center, 3115 Scranton Road: The three kings, Melchior, Caspar and Balthazr (Michael Shockley, Michael McDonald and Edwin Parris) look out at the crowd of children eagerly awaiting the distribution of presents.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Friday, January 8, 2016; Fiesta de Reyes, Hispanic Youth Center, 3115 Scranton Road: Members of the girls' team prepare to compete with the boys' team in a race that involves walking while holding a ball with their heads.

ARTS AND CRAFTS
29TH ANNUAL CLIFTON ARTS & MUSICFEST APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE Cudell Inc. is presenting the Festival on Saturday, June 18th from 10 am - 6 on Clifton Boulevard. Go to www.cudell.com to find the 2016 artist application. Acoustic musicians are invited to apply for a spot to entertain in one of the five street level entertainment venues. Email anita@cudell.com to express interest.

CHILDREN
SOLE Thursdays is held Thursdays from 3:30-5:30 pm at the Walz Branch of the Cleveland Public Library at 7910 Detroit Ave. Children K-3 can ask and answer big questions using the library's iPads and with adult assistance. No registration is necessary. For more information, call 216/623-7095.

READING FOR GRADES K-3 is held Monday-Thursday 3:30 -5:30 pm at Walz Branch of the Cleveland Public Library at 7910 Detroit Ave for children whose reading skills need improvement. FREE. Students also receive free bagged meals. No registration is

necessary. For more information, call 216/623-7095.
TUTORING IN ALL SUBJECTS FOR STUDENTS K-8: Math, Science, History, Language, Arts, Homework Help. Will be held Monday-Thursday from 3-6 pm at Walz Branch of the Cleveland Public Library at 7910 Detroit Ave. (216/623-7095), Fulton Branch at 3545 Fulton Rd. (216/623-6969), Rockport Branch at 4421 West 140th (216/623-7053). FREE. No registration is necessary.
IS YOUR CHILD GIFTED? The Menlo Park Academy at 14440 Triskett Rd serves the needs of K-8 gifted learners. Tours any Wednesday at 10 am. Register for tours online at MenloParkAcademy.com, call 440/925-6365, or email admissions@menloparkacademy.com. Tuition-free.



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.

LITERACY FOR LITTLE ONES: Every Child Ready to Read will be held on Saturday, February 20, 2016 from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Lorain Branch of the Cleveland Public Library at 8216 Lorain Avenue. Caregivers and children birth to 5 years old are invited to experience interactive learning that will engage children, learn skills that will help make children ready to read by Kindergarten, receive an early literacy kit full of books and other literacy tools (limit one per household/family group). Free Lunch. Registration required at <http://tinyurl.com/ECRR-Feb2016> or call 216-623-7011.

SCHOOL QUALITY FAIR, sponsored by the Transformation Alliance and PRE4CLE, is designed to serve Cleveland families looking for preschools and public K-8 schools, both district and charter, that best fit their children's needs. Invited preschools meet PRE4CLE's star-rating criteria, while invited K-8 schools meet standards set by the Transformation Alliance. To begin school registration at the Fair, bring ID, proof of residence, your child's immunization records and birth certificate. Free physicals, vaccinations, lead screening will also be available, along with workshops and activities for kids. Saturday, March 5, from 9 am to 1 pm at Public Hall, 500 Lakeside Ave.

WINTER BALL is a free formal event for children years 1-13 years of age. Food, the crowning of the Royal Court, music, fun and prizes. Saturday February 6th, at St Colman Church at West 65th and Madison. Call 216/712-8739 for more information.

COMMUNITY GUIDE
THE PLAIN PRESS COMMUNITY GUIDE will be published in the March issue of the Plain Press. The Community Guide offers a free listing of area Non Profit Community Organizations and Government Agencies serving the Plain Press target area with their phone numbers. If your agency is new, or has changed its name or phone number, please email the Plain Press at plainpress@gmail.com to add your organization's name and phone number to the Community Guide.

CUYAHOGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Tri-C Foundation Establishes Scholarship Program to Support hardworking Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) students who graduate with excellent attendance records. Tri-C will award the scholarships to 28 Cleveland students representing each high school with a graduating class. Each scholarship will provide up to \$2,500 annually for two academic years for tuition, fees, books and academic supplies. To be eligible for consideration, CMSD students must have at least a 3.0 GPA and be on track to complete their senior year with fewer than 10 absences. Recipients must attend Tri-C on a full-time basis beginning with the fall semester after their high school graduation. Students will be recommended by their schools.

DEMOCRATIC CLUB
WARD 14 DEMOCRATIC CLUB is scheduled for Tuesday, February 16 at 6 pm at Sachsenheim Hall at 7001 Denison Ave. Hear from Jay Westbrook, Michael O'Malley, Ohio Organizing Collaborative about RTA, the Cleveland Restoration Society, POPCE and about Bernie Sanders.

DETROIT SHOREWAY ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DETROIT SHOREWAY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION is scheduled for Thursday, February 25 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, 6928 Detroit Ave., behind the church. Dinner from 5:30 – 6:30 pm, meeting at 6:30 pm. Memberships can be purchased online at http://www.dscdo.org/membership_information.aspx or at the door. Membership includes the price of Spaghetti Dinner. Membership costs \$10 for ages 18-55, and \$5 for 55 years and up. Contact Austin Boxler at 216/961-4242 ext. 243 or aboxler@dscdo.org with questions.

DIAPERS
THE CUYAHOGA COUNTY DIAPER BANK provides families in financial need with diaper aged children with diapers, wipes and related items, as well as adult sized disposable briefs for adults in need. To receive or donate diapers, go to 13816 St. Clair Ave. every 4th Saturday from 12:30 – 2:30. For more information, call 216/393-7275 or visit www.thedowneyhouse.com To obtain diapers or adult briefs, bring a photo id, proof of participation in a government program (such as SNAP card, WIC booklet, or insurance card), and birth certificate or birth letter.

EARTH DAY COALITION
EARTH FEST'S Art, Poetry, and Essay Contest 2015 winners' works will be at the Carnegie West Branch of the Cleveland Public Library, at 1900 Fulton Road, starting Wednesday 2/16/16. Brochures for next year's Art, Poetry, and Essay Contest, are available online at earthdaycoalition.org and at public libraries. The 2016 celebration year theme will be "Sustainable Transportation". Call Earth Day Coalition at 216/281-6468 for more information.

GENEALOGY AND FAMILY HISTORY
RESEARCH CLINICS will be held monthly at the Cleveland Public Library, Main Library, 6th Floor Louis Stokes Wing, 525 Superior Ave., NE. on Saturday, February, 13 from 10:30 am – 2 pm. Beginners should be there no later than 10:45 am, and advanced researchers can arrive any time between 10:30 am and 1:30 pm. Learn from library staff and expert volunteers from the African American Genealogical Society of Cleveland. For more information, call the Center for Local and Global History at 216/623-2864. No registration necessary. Free and open to all.

HEALTH
THE COMMUNITY HEALTH, WELLNESS AND PREVENTATIVE CARE CENTER at the Metropolitan Campus of Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C®) provides low-cost health care services to uninsured or underinsured adults while giving Tri-C health career students learning and training opportunities in a clinical setting. The center will be open 2-5 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays through April 28. It is located in Room 105 of the Health Careers and Sciences building at Metro Campus, 2900 Community College Ave. Services offered at the center include blood pressure readings, glucose and cholesterol screenings; physical therapy and occupational therapy; physical rehabilitation for daily living; pain management; bone density screenings; nutritional coaching; stress management; and exercise and education programs. To schedule a visit or to find out about special health-related workshops, call 216/987-3555.

HOME HEATING ASSISTANCE TO OBTAIN THE 2015-2016 WINTER RESOURCE GUIDE for information on home heating help and other resources for qualifying Cleveland residents, visit http://www.cleveland-oh.gov/sites/default/files/forms_publications/2015-2016WinterResourceGuide.pdf (or use the computer at your local library).

ICE SKATING
ICE SHOW is scheduled for Hallo-ran Skating Rink at 3550 West 117th St. on Friday, February 12 from 6 – 7:30 pm. Free.

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Correction
In the January issue of the *Plain Press*, in an article by Chuck Hoven titled *Cleveland Community Police Commission asks Monitoring Team's help in "reset" of proposed City Charter provisions*, the author incorrectly assumed that legislation introduced by Cleveland City Council had been passed at its December 7th meeting. The legislation had only been introduced, not passed. All references to passage of the legislation have been eliminated from the version of the article on the *Plain Press* website. To read the corrected version visit: www.plainpress.org.

Cudell Improvement members celebrate at 41st annual meeting

A hundred and twenty-five people gathered at the Brennan Party Center on Triskett Road on January 16th to celebrate Cudell Improvement's 41st Annual Meeting. The meeting featured a retirement celebration as well as a number of award presentations.

Those in attendance took the opportunity to offer their best wishes to Jan Kappenhagen upon her retirement from serving as Housing Director for Cudell Improvement. Anita Brindza, Cudell Improvement's Executive Director, noted that since Kappenhagen started working on neighborhood housing improvement seventeen years ago her efforts had led to the completion of over 40,000 housing code inspections in the neighborhood. Brindza noted Kappenhagen's role as a founder of the Cleveland Code Enforcement Partnership, and her involvement in saving houses in the Cudell Improvement Service area including 22 homes renovated in 2015. Brindza noted that over the years Jan and her husband Dave have been involved in supervising Court Community Service workers doing various projects in the neighborhood. Brindza said Kappenhagen plans to continue to serve the neighborhood in her retirement planning to work with the youth group at her church, Simpson United Methodist Church at W. 86th and Clark Avenue.

Bob Fuchs, a housing specialist from Cleveland Housing Court, praised Kappenhagen for her expertise in code enforcement and said she has been the go-to person in Cleveland for those looking for advise in training new Community Development Corporation staff members to work on housing issues.

Councilpersons Matt Zone

invited former Councilman Jay Westbrook to the podium to share some of his memories from many years working with Kappenhagen. Westbrook noted that the model of training and using neighborhood volunteers to do code enforcement that Kappenhagen developed is now being used city wide.

Westbrook also recounted some stories that demonstrated Kappenhagen's resolve in saving housing in the neighborhood. One story involved an elderly couple whose house was fire damaged. While the insurance company wanted to just settle with the couple for a cash amount and have the house demolished, Kappenhagen insisted they honor their policy and pay to restore the house. Westbrook said the house was restored and while the elderly couple has moved on, the house now provides a home for another family. Westbrook also shared a story of his being recruited by Kappenhagen to help clean animal feces from the basement of another neighborhood house which he says now has been rehabbed and is providing a home for a family. Westbrook mentioned Kappenhagen's ability to work with people of all ages, noting she worked for Simpson Seniors prior to coming to work for Midwest Housing and Cudell Improvement and now was returning to Simpson in her retirement to work with the church's youth group.

In accepting the presentations and proclamations from Cudell Improvement, Cleveland City Council and from State Senator Michael Skindell, Kappenhagen noted that housing in Cleveland has experienced a bumpy ride over the past few years, but the



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, January 16, 2016; Tribute to Jan Kappenhagen, Cudell Improvement's retiring Housing Director, Cudell Improvement Annual Meeting, Brennan's Party Center, 13000 Triskett Road: (L-R) Ward 12 Councilman Anthony Brancatelli, Ward 15 Councilman Matt Zone, retired Cleveland Councilman Jay Westbrook, Jan Kappenhagen, Housing Court Specialist Bob Fuchs, and Kathy Tierney, former Executive Assistant to Councilman Westbrook.

Cudell Service area fared better than some in the fight against the assault of the foreclosure crisis. "We survived to a place where we feel we are thriving, because residents in the area are willing to fight for it," said Kappenhagen. She thanked residents for their time and effort in making the Cudell Edgewater area one of the finest in Cleveland.

Kappenhagen praised her co-workers and the spirit of cooperation that she experienced from fellow workers at Midwest Housing, Safety Net and Cudell Improvement. Kappenhagen praised the organizations that worked with

neighborhood residents to improve the neighborhood such as Cleveland Housing Court, Court Community Service, and Community Housing Solutions. She also had high praise for the Community Development Corporation community in Cleveland and the cooperation of the City Council people – Jay Westbrook, Matt Zone and Brian Cummins – she worked with over the years.

In addition to the retirement of Kappenhagen, another long time staff member, Safety Program Coordinator Birgit Hilliard left Cudell Improvement in 2015. Executive Director Brinzda praised Hilliard for

her service and presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

The awards ceremony included the presentation of awards by Cudell Improvement President Dan Berry as well as certificates of recognition from District 23 State Senator Michael Skindell.

Joseph A. Nanni, Chief of Staff of the Cuyahoga County Council, received the Excellence in Government Award. In introducing Nanni, Brindza noted that he grew up in the neighborhood and was part of the Cudell Tutoring Group when he was in the third or fourth grade.

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Saturday, January 16, 2016; Cudell Improvement Annual Meeting, Brennan’s Party Center, 13000 Triskett Road: Willie Lawson of #UnlimitedLove received the “Good Guy” Award for his work with children and families at the Cudell Recreation Center.

CUDELL IMPROVEMENT

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She noted that Nanni had served on the board of Neighborhood Housing Services, worked for the storefront program at Westown Development Corporation prior to working for the City of Cleveland and the Cuyahoga County Council. Nanni in accepting the award cited neighborhood leaders such as Anita Brindza, Bill Denihan, Carol Johnson and Tim Hagan as role models. He recalled working at Clifton Cleaners during his high school and college years and getting to know and chat with

Tim Hagan when he came in to pick up his dry cleaning.

Willie Lawson of #UnlimitedLove was the recipient of the “Good Guy” Award for “his work with children and families at the Cudell Recreation Center in the wake of the Tamir Rice tragedy,” said Brindza in introducing him.

Lawson said he was happy to be able to give back to the community. Lawson said his family moved to W. 102nd and Madison when he was a young boy. He said the Cudell neighborhood was safer and more diverse than the East side neighborhood his family came from. He said Cudell Recreation soon became his second home and he participated in every program the center offered. Lawson said he graduated from West Tech, went to college at Kent State and later as an adult took automotive classes at Max Hayes.

Lawson said he hopes to make a difference by promoting spiritual balance and emotional development. He has been involved in meetings with neighborhood residents to develop programs for children and families at Cudell Recreation Center. He works with a number of sports programs, Cudell Cooking Club and the Unlimited Christmas celebration at Cudell Recreation Center. Lawson says

he hates negativity and hopes to “neutralize that with the power of love.”

Cudell Improvement’s Service Award was given to four members of the Clifton Boulevard and West Boulevard Historic District Design Review Committee: Franklin Piccirillo, Jeff Blazek, Nick Faehnle and Tom Yablonsky. Brindza noted the time and effort put in by the group in documenting history of properties and researching techniques on how best to preserve the original character of properties. She thanked the group for their efforts in the historic districts and for their assistance and advice concerning buildings on Lorain Avenue as well.

Bill Denihan, a founder of Cudell Improvement 41 years ago, praised the group for their community engagement and caring for one another while working to improve the neighborhood. Denihan, Executive Director of the Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County, urged residents to support the Health and Human Services levy on the March ballot. Denihan noted the importance of the levy to help serve individuals with mental illness and addictions. He said it is rare for a family not to be touched with mental illness or addiction. He said that “Anita and Jan would agree that many issues with code enforcement involve mental illness in a family.”

Denihan noted that at a recent presentation he made to the Cuyahoga County Council on training police officers on how to response to calls involving those with mental health emergencies, the issue of where the funds for the training would come from, came up. He was able to respond that the Health and Human Services levy provides funding to help with the training. Denihan again urged voters to support this and other important programs funded by the Health and Human Services levy up for renewal on March 15th.

The Board of Trustees election results were announced at the end of the meeting. the members of Cudell Improvement elected five board members to new three year terms. Those elected are: Dan Berry, Sarah Ryzner, Karen Cahil, Jerry Schmelzer and Charles Stone.

Practical Money Matters

Take a Close Look at Social Security in 2016

by Nathaniel Sillin

If you’re not close to retirement age, it’s easy to ignore what Social Security is doing. However, some significant announcements late last year make now a very good time to pay attention.

What follows is a summary of notable changes to Social Security at the start of 2016 and ways to ensure you’re making the right retirement planning and claiming (<http://www.consumerfinance.gov/retirement/before-you-claim/>) decisions based on what’s ahead:

1. 2016 Social Security payments won’t increase.

In late October, Social Security (<https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/>) announced that there wasn’t enough inflation in 2015 to create a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to monthly benefits this year. Understandably, this announcement shook up recipients who look to Social Security for a significant part of their monthly income. It’s only the third time payments were frozen in the past 40 years since automatic COLA adjustments began, but here’s the rub – all three occasions occurred after 2010. In short, most seniors will have to live with an average monthly payment of \$1,341 with married beneficiaries receiving a average total of \$2,212.

2. Married and divorced individuals may have to rethink the way they claim benefits.

Also last October, Washington settled a federal budget battle in part by closing some notable loopholes in Social Security law that allowed certain married couples to substantially increase their benefits over time and certain divorced individuals to claim benefits from former spouses under certain circumstances. These new restrictions on so-called file-and-suspend and restricted-claim strategies go into effect this coming May. In short, if you’re close to age 62 (the earliest age you can start claiming Social Security benefits) getting qualified advice has never been more important.

3. Other COLA-related issues.

When there’s no cost-of-living adjustment, there’s no change in the

maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax, which will stay at \$118,500 in 2016. This means earnings above that level aren’t subject to the Social Security portion of the payroll tax or used to calculate retirement payouts. At the same time, the Social Security earnings limit for people who work and claim Social Security payments will stay at \$15,720 in 2016 for people ages 65 and younger. Social Security beneficiaries who earn more than this amount will have \$1 in benefits temporarily withheld for every \$2 in earnings above the limit.

4. Some benefits are going down – a little.

The highest possible Social Security payment for a 66-year-old worker who signs up for Social Security this year will be \$2,639 per month, down \$24 from \$2,663 in 2015. The reason? Social Security noted that despite no cost-of-living adjustment there was an increase in the national average wage index, one of the statistical guideposts the agency uses to calculate benefits.

5. Service changes.

If you haven’t created a My Social Security account, do so for two reasons: First, there have been reports of ID theft related to thieves attempting fraudulent signups for such accounts. Second, the agency is making more detailed account data available online such as estimates of monthly payments at various claiming ages. Also, Social Security expanded office hours in some of its field locations in 2015, so if you need face-to-face assistance, check hours of operation at your closest local office (<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>).

Bottom line: Social Security froze benefit amounts for the coming year, and that has an impact on both current and future recipients. You can’t fully understand your retirement without understanding how Social Security works, so now’s the time to learn.

Nathaniel Sillin directs Visa’s financial education programs. To follow Practical Money Skills on Twitter: www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney

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Cleveland native earns Senior Sailor of the Year serving at Naval Air Force Atlantic

by Mr. Rick Burke, Navy Office of Community Outreach

Petty Officer 1st Class Jasmine Fletcher from Cleveland, Ohio, serving with Commander, Naval Air Force, Atlantic (CNAL), earned Senior Sailor of the Year for 2015. Fletcher is an alumni of Max Hayes High School on the Near West Side of Cleveland.

The Sailor of the Year Program recognizes superior performance of enlisted personnel emphasizing outstanding achievements, exemplary personal conduct and military bearing, and demonstrated initiative in the performance of duty. This program also motivates personnel to strive for improvement

in their assigned duties and leadership.

“Receiving this honor means a lot to me because as a Sailor, it’s nothing like being at a command that recognizes not only the job you do, but the extra mile that you take for others,” said Fletcher.

As an Aviation Maintenance Administrator, Fletcher performs a variety of clerical, administrative, and managerial duties necessary to keep aircraft maintenance activities running efficiently. The rating requires close communication with all other aviation maintenance ratings.

“I am the Force Aviation Readiness Analysis Leading

Petty Officer for my division,” said Fletcher. “I coordinate contractor personnel efforts in providing current Readiness Analysis data required by Commander, Naval Air Force Pacific and Atlantic readiness cells and upper echelon Flag Officers.”

Fletcher, a 2002 graduate of Max S. Hayes Vocational High School has earned her Associates Degree in General Studies from Central Texas College 2013 and currently enrolled at Saint Leo University (will be graduating in May with a Bachelor in Business Administration Management).

“Serving in the Navy has given me the guidance to succeed in life, not only professionally but as well as for my family,” said Fletcher. “It has given me the tools needed to be successful to the best of ability and I will always be thankful for that.”

Fletcher’s readiness analysis officer, Cmdr. Rob Palmore. “These assets include all aircraft carriers, aircraft-embarked amphibious ships, carrier air wings, and shore aviation facilities. AZ1 Fletcher is a key

part of this team by tracking and providing timely analytical data on worldwide deployed aviation units.”

Her mother, Marsha Fletcher, and brother, Gary Fletcher, also reside in Cleveland.



PHOTO COURTESY OF NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Petty Officer 1st Class Jasmine Fletcher, a 2002 graduate of Max Hayes High School on Cleveland’s Near West Side, earned the honor of being named the United States Navy’s Senior Sailor of the Year for 2015.

CMSD Families can explore school choices online at new school portal

CMSD has set up a new school choice portal.

The portal will:

- allow new families to log in and make a choice. In the past, families who were new to the District had to register students in person.
- include an interactive map that shows schools and proximity to students’ homes.
- list academic data and “conditions for learning” scores – student ratings for safety, support and academic rigor.
- allow parents to stay up to date by registering for email and text messaging.
- let families choose and rank up to eight choices, an increase from the previous limit of five.

New and current CMSD families can find the new portal by searching for: CMSD Enrollment Portal. They can sign in or create an account to use the portal to explore school options.

MARCH 15TH ELECTION

continued from page one

ballot, you will be able to tell which presidential candidates made it on to the Ohio ballot. There is also an important Cuyahoga County levy on the ballot – the renewal of the Health and Human Services Levy (a renewal of an existing levy – not a tax increase)

Issue 23: Health & Human Services Renewal Levy

The Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County urges Cuyahoga County residents to vote for Issue 23 – the renewal of the Health and Human Services levy. Their statement in support of the levy on the March 15 ballot follows:

Each year hundreds of thousands of families, children and seniors depend on the vital and often lifesaving services available through our county’s health and human service programs. These programs ensure that children are safe in their homes, that the elderly are supported, that healthcare is accessible to all, and that families in poverty are linked with benefit programs providing childcare and nutritional support.

In order to protect these vital programs, the County Executive and Cuyahoga County County Council unanimously supported a measure to place Issue 23, a 4.8 mill renewal levy, on the March 15, 2016 ballot. The levy will be for a period of eight years and is expected to generate an estimated \$130 million annually beginning in 2017.

Core Health and Human Services are made possible by two levies. The second, smaller 3.9 mill levy was approved by voters in November

2013. Collections began in 2014 and will continue for five years through 2018.

The cost of Issue 23 to the owner of a \$100,000 home will be \$147.00 per year based on the effective rate of the ongoing levy.

Issue 23 is Critical for Cuyahoga County

Without voter approval of Issue 23, our community will lose \$130 million forcing deep cuts to vital emergency services and programs that protect children, help those living with mental illness, and provide a variety of services that seniors depend on.

Vital human services dependent on levy resources include: 1) Programs that protect children from abuse and neglect. 2) Early childhood and preschool education programs that ensure children enter school healthy and ready to learn. 3) Home health care and support services that make it possible for seniors to continue to live in their own homes. 4) Counseling and treatment programs for children with behavioral health or drug problems. 5) Emergency shelters for the homeless, drug & alcohol treatment programs, counseling for those living with mental illness, poison control & suicide prevention hotlines, rehabilitation for stroke victims and other crisis and prevention services.

The levy-generated dollars provide the largest share of local support for programs through which County government and local agencies serve the needs of our most vulnerable citizens. Services are maintained and available for those times when any resident of the county may need assistance with trauma or crisis.

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, January 16, 2016; Cudell Improvement Annual Meeting, Brennan's Party Center, 13000 Triskett Road: Cuyahoga County Council Chief of Staff Joseph A. Nanni, (L) receives the Excellence in Government Award from Cudell Improvement President Daniel L. Berry (R).

Self Defense Corner

by D. L. White

Open up a newspaper, or your search engine, and the news is laced with violence and destruction. Walking into a restaurant, school, or waking up can make anyone apprehensive about the days' events. What can be done about your day to day safety? Guns, stun guns, mace, and knives are an option. There are laws and regulations to abide by. Training is needed in order to use any weapon. Guns need to be cleaned and there is always the chance of premature discharge. Stun guns may have to be charged or need batteries. Mace has to be in a prime location handy for quick access and be pointed in the right direction when released. Knives require professional training. No matter what type of weapon you

use to defend yourself, there is a chance of failure. Self-defense techniques are not full proof, but when weapons fail, your techniques will not.

Becoming aware of your surroundings is the first step toward self-defense. If you are walking into a grocery store to shop for dinner the last thing on your mind is someone coming out of the shadows and putting a gun to your head. Reaction time is everything. Is the assailant standing behind you, beside you, or in front of you? Consider the time it would take to reach for your gun or mace. Is it ready in your hand while you are shopping? The problem is that no one expects bad things to happen. Learning self-defense or karate takes time and energy. How important is your life to you? How about your family? Self-defense

classes should be taken for your own good.

The next step is to realize that something bad could happen to you in your unimpeachable world. Your reaction is detrimental to your continued pursuit of life and happiness. In reality many people do not understand the impact of striking another person. The thought of being hit by an assailant is out of the realm of reality.

Commitment is the last important component needed to complete a well rounded safety improvement program. Be committed to your own safety by practicing learned techniques. In your pursuit for health and happiness be aware of your surroundings, understand your effect on others and their effect on you.

Editor's Note: D.L. White has an MBA from DeVry University, a Black Belt, and teaches at KSU. She is the author of "Shattered to Bits" @Amazon.com on e-book



FIESTA DE REYES

continued from page one

Center's Sabor Latino, performed two traditional Puerto Rican dances called Plena and Bomba.

Children also engaged in a number of organized games with teams of girls and teams of boys of various ages competing with each other for prizes.

After the entertainment and games, the children were grouped by age and lined up to receive gifts.

Event sponsors included Hispanic UMADAOP, Esperanza, Hispanic Alliance, Spanish American Committee, Old Stone Church, Ward 14 Councilman Brian Cummins and Attorney Margaret Wong.

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COMMUNITY BOARD

continued from page 2

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JOB FAIR

THE LOFTS AT LION MILLS SUB-CONTRACTOR JOB FAIR: February 5th, 8 a.m.- 9:30 a.m., Detroit Shoreway Community Room, 6516 Detroit Ave. The Lofts at Lion Mills Project, located at W. 25th and Meyer Ave, is a historic rehabilitation of a currently vacant commercial structure. Plans call for the creation of 36 residential housing units. The Lofts at Lion Mills is owned and developed by Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization with general contracting and design services administered by Marous Brothers Construction. Sub-contractor requirements include: licensed, bonded and insured within the City of Cleveland and a capacity for large scale project undertaking. For questions or to learn more about The Lofts at Lion Mills contact Brittany Senger at 216-961-4242 ext. 268.

MUSIC

YMusic provides a relaxed interactive learning environment for young adults and teens ages 13-21 who want to expand their musical education, explore different aspects of the music industry, and network with likeminded musicians and peers. Artists are selected by a peer panel of musicians, music critics and other professionals will be based upon the materials submitted with the application, past performances, and a live call back. Application submission requirements include 350 word essay on how music influences your life and how you may benefit from the YMusic Program. If you have no current materials posted, you may still be selected for a call back by submitting your essay and a sound clip sample. For more information, email ymusicnow@hotmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/YMusicFund or <http://youtube/tl8Jbbfm7tq>. Habla espanol Arlene 216/941-9262. Due date February 5.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

COMMUNITY GRANTS are available from \$500 to \$5000 for groups of residents in the city of Cleveland to help fund small projects that improve the quality of life in their communities. Next deadline is Friday, February 12 at 5 pm; drop off your proposal at the Stockyard, Clark-Fulton, & Brooklyn Centre Neighborhood Development Office at Lin Omni Building at 3167 Fulton Rd, 3rd floor. For more information or to apply online, log onto www.neighborhoodgrants.org.

OHIO CITY

BRITE WINTER MUSIC FESTIVALS will be held on the west bank of the Flats on Saturday, February 20th from 5 to 11 pm. Art, music and fire. Any weather. See map at www.ohiocity.org/event/brite-winter-music-festival.

MARKET DISTRICT AMBASSADORS wear red shirts and hats and work to provide safety and maintenance assistance, including safety escort services. For more information, visit www.ohiocity.org/MDIC, or call 216/241-4949 to request assistance. To see the **OHIO CITY EVENTS** calendar, log onto <http://www.ohiocity.org/calendar/month/2016-02>.

POLICE MEETINGS

SECOND DISTRICT COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETINGS are held the second Tuesday of each month, February 9 at 7 pm at Applewood Centers, 3518 West 25th St., in the gym on Daisy Ave.. Meet the District Commander, Supervisors, Officers, and neighbors, learn about resources, and become involved in the community. For more information, call 216/664-3293, or email mmcdonald2@city.cleveland.oh.us.

PRESIDENTS' DAY

THE MALTZ MUSEUM presents a free, family-friendly celebration about the complicated relationships that have existed between the country's leaders and the Jewish community. Open to the public. Free admission & programs. Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, 2929 Richmond Rd in Beachwood. 216/593-0575; maltzmuseum.org. Presidents' Day, Monday, February 15. "Meet the Presidents" presentations, 1-2 pm. Photos with Presidents & kosher cookie treats, 2-2:30 pm. Crafts & free Museum admission, 11 am–5 pm.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

BOOK CLUBS focusing on race, cultural diversity and social justice are sponsored by the Cleveland Public Library, YWCA Greater Cleveland and the Ohio Center for the Book. The library offers Book kits on 35 different books (27 fiction and 8 non-fiction). Each book kit has 10 copies of the book as well as book club guidelines for community or workplace clubs. For information on the book kits, call the library at 216/623-2881. Or visit the Ohio Center at www.ohiocenter-forthebook.org for lists of titles and guidelines. For more information on It's Time to Talk, contact the YWCA Greater Cleveland at 216/881-6878. **SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACH-IN**, sponsored by the InterReligious Task Force and the Case Western Reserve University Center for Engagement and Learning, will be held on Saturday, February 6 from 11 am to 3 pm at the Tinkham Veale Center at 11038 Bellflower Rd in University Circle. Opportunity for people of all ages to learn about human rights issues and practice hands-on skills to organize for change. Register at www.2016teachin.eventbrite.com **SUMMER ADVOCACY INSTITUTE**, sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union, for rising high school seniors at Georgetown University in Washington DC June 19-25, 2016. Build expertise in advocacy and grassroots activism, debate the issues currently at play in the U.S. courts and political arena, strategize with leaders in the field, and develop strong relationships with fellow student leaders, rolling admissions, but students who apply before February 15th, 2016, will have their application fee waived. Scholarships available. For more information, see <https://www.aclu.org/>. Apply at <https://action.aclu.org/secure/summer-institute-application>.

SPACES

Geologic Cognition Society: UNDERNEATH IS BEFORE focuses on one moment in geologic time: the moment when the massive salt deposits under Lake Erie were formed. Visitors take a journey through geologic deep time to encounter the atmospheric and sensory conditions of an ancient ocean and the subsequent events leading to the formation of Cleveland's salt. On view at SPACES through March 25. SPACES is located at 2220

Superior Viaduct, in Cleveland, OH. Gallery hours are Tuesday -Sunday: 12 – 5 pm, and the gallery is open until 8 pm on Thursdays. Admission (and parking) during regular gallery hours is free and open to the public. For more information, visit www.SPACESgallery.org, call 216/621-2314 or email contact@SPACES-gallery.org.

TAX PREPARATION

Cuyahoga County and the Cuyahoga Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition are offering **FREE TAX PREPARATION** as part of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program. Sites include the County's Westshore Neighborhood Family Service Center (NFSC) (9830 Lorain Ave.), at the Gordon Square Arcade (6516 Detroit Avenue) and at the Lin-Omni Center (3167 Fulton Rd.). For more information, contact Austin Boxler at 216/961-4242 ext. 243. To schedule an appointment go online to www.211oh.org or call 211/United Way. Call for income restrictions. Tax-payers should bring: Current photo I.D., Social Security cards for each adult and child on the return, W2 and 1099 income statements, child care expense statement and provider's Tax I.D. Number, Form 1099-INT for any checking or savings accounts, as well as bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit. If the taxpayer purchased health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, bring 1099 tax credit from health insurance company. Free training is available to become an IRS certified tax preparer. For more information about volunteering, visit www.refundohio.org or contact Keely Andrews for more information at kandrews@enterprisecommunity.org.

TIME BANK

CLEVELAND TIMEBANK PARTY: Wednesday, Feb. 17th, 6 PM at The Party Rican! (3324 Fulton Road, Cleveland OH, 44109) Are you interested in learning more about TimeBanking? Join the Cleveland TimeBank for a party! Festivities include a DJ, food, and presentation about TimeBanking from Abby Greer, Executive Director of Crooked River Alliance of TimeBanks. For more information contact Laura 216.961.9073 ex. 211.

VOTING

February 16 is the DEADLINE FOR VOTER REGISTRATION for the March 15 presidential primary election. Visit <http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/voter-registration.aspx>. Or go to James Ford Rhodes High School (Main Office) 5100 Biddulph Road; John Marshall High School (Main Office) 3952 West 140th Street, Lincoln West High School (Main Office) 3202 West 30th Street, Max S Hayes High Schools (Main Office) 4600 Detroit Avenue, or May Dugan Center 4115 Bridge Avenue. **EARN UP TO \$200 WORKING ON ELECTION DAY.** If you are a registered voter in Cuyahoga County who is interested in working as a poll worker, call 216/443-3277 or obtain an application at www.443VOTE.com. **SE BUSCA** por La Junta Electoral del Condado de Cuyahoga Votantes Registrados. Ganar hasta \$200 trabajando en el Dia de las Elecciones. Llame al 216/443-3277. Solicitudes para Trabajadores Electorales estan disponibles en el sitio Web de la Junta Electoral www.443VOTE.com **WOMEN'S HEALTH FREE MAMMOGRAMS AND PAP TESTS** for women 40 years of age and above, without insurance, and at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty guidelines. Guidelines for mammograms for women 40-49 vary; for eligibility and other information, call 800/443-2168, or 216/201-2001, ext. 1541 or 1542.



PHOTO BY ED TISHEL

Saturday, January 23, 2016, Sokol Ceska Sin's 40th Annual Gymnastics Winter Exhibition, 4314 Clark Avenue: Katherine Coyne demonstrates her skill on the balance beam.

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Finding Effective Treatment for America’s Pain Crisis

by Bob Twillman

The last thing the world needs right now is more suffering.

More than 100 million Americans suffer from chronic pain, at an annual cost of \$635 billion. That’s more than we spend treating cancer, diabetes, and heart disease combined.

Worse, our efforts to treat this pain have led to a significant increase in the use of prescription pain relievers, with tragic and often ineffective outcomes.

Taken together, these trends constitute a pain crisis -- one that demands a new treatment model that better balances safety and effectiveness through the responsible use of prescription drugs and alternative therapies.

How did the pain crisis come about? Advocacy for pain sufferers grew in the 1990s, as many medical professionals began to recognize that pain was being undertreated. To

help their patients, they turned to powerful opioids like oxycodone and hydrocodone.

Prescriptions soared. In 2013 alone, 207 million prescriptions were written for opioids. Today, hydrocodone still tops the list of most prescribed drugs.

But opioids turned out to be more addictive and dangerous than previously thought. With long-term use, some patients develop tolerance, meaning they require higher doses to get the same amount of pain relief.

The unintended and devastating consequence of our current pain management practices is a prescription drug abuse epidemic -- one punctuated by a four-fold increase in opioid-addiction related hospitalizations; triple the number of fatal overdoses involving prescription drugs; and a resurgence of heroin use.

To reverse this crisis, healthcare providers need to treat both acute and chronic pain in ways that don’t exacerbate prescription drug abuse.

Decades of research have shown the effectiveness of “multimodal” approaches to treating pain. A multimodal model maintains that treatment for pain requires much more than just using opioids.

This approach focuses on treating the whole person through traditional methods along with self-care, pain education, and complementary or alternative treatments.

Effective pain care regimens might include medications other than opioids, like acetaminophen -- the same compound sold as Tylenol -- or nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like aspirin and ibuprofen. When combined with other therapies, this approach is known as “multimodal analgesia.” It can expedite recovery and reduce

morbidity, while carrying fewer adverse effects than opioids.

Multimodal care also recognizes that pain is a multifactorial problem. It arises from a number of sources: surgeries, broken bones, diseases, or elusive causes – an inexplicable headache or back pain – that can be difficult to pin down, but no less real.

Because pain is so unique and complex, every patient needs an individualized approach for treatment. Opioid pain medications are just one, often over-used, tool to treat pain.

A multimodal approach might involve stress management, relaxation, physical therapy, improved sleep and nutrition habits, and exercise. In some cases, it means getting patients on the right dose of an appropriate medicine.

Moving toward a more integrated model of pain management will require a real investment in

educating doctors and patients. Few physicians have adequate training in pain relief, and there’s a lack of standard practice to guide them. Non-drug alternatives have traditionally not been covered by insurance. They also require the patient to engage in the healing process and not expect a magic bullet.

Safe and effective pain management is a balancing act. Careful and judicious use of prescription drugs will remain an important tool for physicians in treating pain. They and their patients should not overlook other tools to relieve pain and improve quality of life.

Bob Twillman, Ph.D., FAPM, is Executive Director of the American Academy of Pain Management and Member of the Alliance for Balanced Pain Management.

FOUR YEAR GRADUATION RATES

continued from page one

listed with four-year graduation rates for the Class of 2014, six schools received an A Grade, meaning they had graduation rates of 93% or better: Cleveland Early College, Cleveland School of Architecture & Design, Cleveland School of Science and Medicine, Cleveland School of the Arts, MC2 STEM High School, and Whitney Young. Most of the schools receiving an A Grade have admission requirements used in selecting their students.

Eighteen of the remaining twenty schools received a grade of F. This means that their four-year graduation rate was 78.9% or less. The schools that received the Fs for their graduation rate for the class of 2014 are: Collinwood, Design Lab & Health Careers, East Technical High School, Garrett Morgan School

of Science, Glenville High School, James Ford Rhodes High School, Jane Addams Business Careers, John Adams High School, Law and Municipal Careers at MLK, Lincoln West High School, Max Hayes High School, New Technology High School at East Tech, New Tech West, Success Tech Academy School, The School of One, Thomas Jefferson and Washington Park.

Only two schools fell in between: Ginn Academy which received a grade of C (84-88.9% four-year graduation rate), and Health Career Centers which received a grade of D (79-83.4% four-year graduation rate.)

Efforts like the CMSD’s Get2School campaign should help to increase graduation rates. For example, Lincoln West High School has a 90.1% attendance rate thus far in the 2015-2016 school year,

compared to an 83.1% attendance rate in the 2014-15 school year.

Other strategies and additional resources need to be brought to help schools to improve their graduation rates.

---the school district lauded a success story at East Tech where the four-year graduation rate rose from 46% to 72.9% in just one year.

In another press release from the CMSD News Bureau, the school district lauded a success story at East Tech where the four-year graduation rate rose from 46% to 72.9% in just one year. The increase is significant, and should be studied, even though it still represents an F Grade on the State Report Card.

The press release outlines the factors that East Tech Co-Principals

Temujin Taylor and Paul Hoover credit for the increased graduation rates:

1). *The school mixes special-education students with other peers in core classes and assigns two teachers to each of those classrooms. The co-principals say the model raises the bar for special-education students, who account for nearly 40 percent of East Tech’s enrollment.*

2). *Volunteers from the service group City Year provide individual and small-group instruction to ninth- and 10th-graders during and outside of class time. The Friendly Inn Settlement, a neighborhood agency that coordinates “wraparound” community services for the school, also tutors students at its offices.*

3). *East Tech employs a strategy known as “no-nonsense nurturing” that corrects misconduct by directing students’ attention to peers who demonstrate good behavior.*

4). *The school also has what is called a “level system” that rewards good behavior with “Scarab Bucks” and penalizes bad behavior with demerits and progressive discipline. Students can use “Scarab Bucks” to buy school gear and free or discount admission to sporting and other school events.*

5). *All students who score below grade level in reading or math are scheduled for a mandatory daily “intervention period” that will provide them with extra instruction. Students who get on track or pass their state graduation tests earn the right to take elective courses such as urban agriculture, culinary arts, band or JROTC.*

6). *Teachers use an instructional strategy that calls for them to serve as guides instead of lecturers and lets students apply skills to demonstrate they know content. Three coaches help teachers to master the practice.*



Thursday, January 21, 2016; Edgewater Park: After a mild beginning to the winter, temperatures dropped in mid January as evidenced by water from Lake Erie’s waves frozen in place on the rocks.

PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN