



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Sunday, November 19, 2017; Metanoia Project Community Open House, in former St. Malachi School building at St. Malachi Parish, 2459 Washington Avenue: A Care Alliance Health Center volunteer prepares to put food on a tray for another volunteer to serve to guests sitting at cafeteria tables.

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Plain Press

Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

The Metanoia Project hosts its 10th Anniversary Open House

The Metanoia Project held a special 10th Anniversary Community Open House, on Sunday November 19th, at its shelter at St. Malachi Parish, 2459 Washington Avenue. The Open House followed the opening of the overnight shelter

and homeless hospitality center, on Friday November 17th. Now in its tenth year, the Metanoia Project's ministry to the homeless will continue to offer respite to guests on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday evenings, starting at 7 p.m.

each night. During nights of severe weather, the Metanoia Project will open on weekdays when they normally would be closed. The shelter will remain open through mid-April. The Community Open House featured a healthy dinner prepared by Care Alliance Health Center. The dinner featured healthy items like spaghetti squash with meatballs, baked chicken, cooked vegetables, fruit salad and vegetable salad. Care Alliance staff and volunteers brought the food to tables occupied by Metanoia Project volunteers, supporters and guests who make use of the shelter.

Speakers included Executive Director Megan Crow, Program Manager Carl Cook, and co-founders Jim Schlecht and Tim Walters. Speakers talked about the history of the Metanoia Project and the current services it offers. They noted the availability of MetroHealth doctors on Friday nights; Courage to Change classes on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays; and the Care Alliance Clinic's medical and mental health services on Sunday nights.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Sunday, November 19, 2017; Metanoia Project Community Open House, St. Malachi Parish, 2459 Washington Avenue: Metanoia Project Co-Founder Jim Schlecht speaks to guests at the open house.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NRP GROUP
October 2017; Habitat for Humanity Home at 2027 W. 99th Street: Habitat for Humanity homebuyer Marketta Ramos with her daughters Patricia, age 15, and Rylee, age 6. The NRP Group, a Cleveland based developer, sponsored the project. The NRP Group is currently developing the Edison at Gordon Square, a 306-unit rental community along Breakwater between W. 65th and W. 58th in the Gordon Square section of the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood.

Mayor Frank Jackson shares his post election priorities for governing the City of Cleveland

EDUCATION, PUBLIC SAFETY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

by Chuck Hoven

In a post-election press conference with neighborhood and community newspapers, Mayor Frank Jackson said he hoped that everyone in Cleveland would be able to participate in improvements in the quality of life and the progress of the city.

To that end, Mayor Jackson outlined three areas of focus: education, public safety and economic development.

In education, Jackson mentioned the importance of improving the investment schools, addressing the needs of students with individual educational plans (IEPs) and quality education as a means of wealth creation by preparing young people for future jobs and careers.

Jackson said the Cleveland Plan has resulted in quality school choices such as Campus International and John Hay that have caused

people with school age children to stay in Cleveland rather than move to the suburbs. He noted the Cleveland Metropolitan School District was applying to be a "Say Yes to Education" school system, which he said would create an infrastructure around the child.

When asked about providing more dollars to investment schools, Mayor Jackson said he didn't feel more funding would necessarily improve performance in the Investment Schools. He tied school performance to "something going on within the school." He said you could have two schools drawing from the same population, with one school performing well and the other not. He said improving the performance of a school was a matter of programming and staffing.

Jackson talked about the "Say Yes to Education" grant that he hoped

The NRP Group sponsors Habitat for Humanity home on W. 99th Street

A fully rehabbed Habitat for Humanity house at 2027 W. 99th Street is now providing a home for a local family. Sponsored by the NRP Group and dedicated at a ceremony on October 26, the house is now the new home of Marketta Ramos and her family.

The NRP Group, a vertically integrated, best-in-class developer, builder, and manager of multifamily housing, sponsored the re-construction of the Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity home in Cleveland, the company's headquarters city.

The home was fully rehabbed

over the course of the summer by NRP and 20 subcontractors and suppliers, who came together to donate their time, services, and materials.

From early June until mid-October, NRP's construction department personnel carved out business hours to coordinate the scope of the work, while 16 NRP employees from across the company devoted four weekends to perform the general labor.

The NRP Group is the contractor building the nearby development, The Edison at Gordon Square. Many

of the subcontractors and suppliers who worked on The Edison donated their services to help with the Habitat for Humanity House. NRP is the second contractor in Cleveland to ever sponsor a Habitat home.

"We greatly appreciate this significant contribution by The NRP Group, working as a partner with us to revitalize this neighborhood," said John Habat, President/CEO of Cleveland Habitat. "The quality of their work is just excellent and the family is very fortunate to have this home."

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Tuesday, October 31, 2017; La Villa Hispana Merchants Group, Trick-or-Treat on Clark Avenue: Trick-or-Treaters visit Little Caesars and Subway at Taybeh Plaza on Clark Avenue.



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Sunday, November 19, 2017; Metanoia Project Community Open House, in former St. Malachi School building at St. Malachi Parish, 2459 Washington Avenue: Care Alliance Health Center volunteers place food on trays for other volunteers to take to guests sitting at cafeteria tables.

ARTS AND CULTURE

BURNING RIVER BRASS will perform at 7 pm on both Thursday, December 14 and Friday, December 15 at Pilgrim Congregational Church at 2592 West 14th St. Admission is by freewill donation. Pilgrim Church is wheelchair accessible.

Visit <http://artconcerts.org>

LITERARY CLEVELAND'S LATEST PODCAST (Volume 3: John G.) features local cartoonist and comics creator John G., who speaks about serving as Gordon Square's first artist, making a living as an artist, his biggest artistic influences, and

more. Visit <https://soundcloud.com/literarycleveland>, <http://shinercomics.net/john-g/> and <http://www.gordonsquare.org/arts/>.

REBELLIOUS MOURNING: The Collective Work of Grief, another product of Literary Cleveland, is scheduled for Friday, November 24 from 7-9 pm at Guide to Kulchur Books, at 5222 Lorain



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

Ave. Join anthology editor and contributor Cindy Milstein for the Cleveland launch of the book. Free.

TRANSFORMER STATION. Various shows are on exhibit at the Transformer Station through December 23, and presented by the Cleveland Museum of Art. All are free. Two solo exhibits featuring new works by **Northeast Ohio artists Scott Olson and Jerry Birchfield.** Olson's abstract paintings employ a broad range of techniques and materials; He traces the history of painting back to the early Renaissance. Birchfield's complex photographic and sculptural processes revolve around the question of how images emulate or subvert the sources from which they came. **DEATH KNELL** is a performance, installation and audio piece by Liz Roberts and Henry Ross. "The death knell of American industrialism manifests and mirrors its legacy, starting with a bang and gradually fading to nothing. At 1460 West 29th St. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday from 11am to 5 pm, and open until 9 pm on

Thursday. For more information visit <http://www.transformerstation.org> or call 216/938-5429.

CHILDREN AND TEENS NEAR WEST RECREATION BASKETBALL registration open. Deadline to apply is Friday, December 22nd. **Divisions:** coed U8 (ages 7-8), coed 10 (ages 9-10), coed 12 (ages 11-12), middle school boys (ages 13-14), high school boys (ages 15-17), teen girls (13-17). Youth practices (ages 7-12) will take place once a week in the evenings. Games will take place on Saturday mornings and early afternoons starting February 10. Teen (ages 13-17) practices and games will take place weeknights - no more than twice a week. Practice and games will be located at gyms on the near west side of Cleveland. Gyms include: Pilgrim Church, Merrick House, Hispanic Youth Center, Nehemiah Mission, etc. Cost is \$40. Need based

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St. Herman's House of Hospitality

Annual St. Nicholas Spaghetti Dinner

Sunday, December 3, 2017
11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

St. Malachi's Parish Hall
2459 Washington Ave., Cleveland, OH

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 Cost: \$8.00 – Adults \$6.00 – Seniors (over 60)
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Christmas Dinner

There will be a delicious Christmas dinner served at St. Augustine Church, 2486 West 14 St., on Christmas day from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. If you are homebound and unable to attend, please call 216-781-5880 and we will make arrangements for a meal to be delivered right to your door. Requests for Christmas Dinners will be taken up until 1 p.m. on Friday, December 22nd.

Please call between the hours of
9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

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TAX PREPARATION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Free tax preparation is the gateway to financial stability and service for thousands of working families. Most low-income families are eligible for a tax refund, which is their largest source of income all year- often one-fourth of their annual income. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is largely responsible for making tax time so crucial.

The EITC is the largest poverty relief program in the country, aimed at helping families with children provide basic needs and save for the future. What's more, free tax preparation increases tax compliance by encouraging families to file their taxes on time and accurately. More than one-fifth of eligible EITC filers do not claim the credit or do so incorrectly. Free tax preparation not only helps with EITC claims and accurate returns but it also provides an entry point for families to become better banked, determine eligibility for and claim public assistance, and receive financial education.

This year, Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization and Metro West Community Development Office will be offering free tax preparation Monday-Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings starting in late January. Anyone can sign up to become a volunteer. There are greeter positions and tax preparation positions available. There is no experience necessary, just attend a Coalition led training to become certified. Sign up today by visiting www.refundohio.org

METRO WEST
 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Cuyahoga EITC Coalition

United Way of Greater Cleveland

ESOP receives Bank of America’s Neighborhood Builder Award

On October 17th, Bank of America announced the selection of Empowering and Strengthening Ohio’s People (ESOP) as a 2017 Neighborhood Builder®. ESOP, a HUD-approved housing and financial counseling nonprofit agency dedicated to promoting sustainable homeownership, is being recognized for its work to foster financial stability among Ohio homeowners.

Through Neighborhood Builders the bank provides nonprofits with a unique combination of leadership development (for the executive director and a developing leader in the organization); \$200,000 in flexible funding; a network of peer organizations across the U.S. and the opportunity to access capital in order to expand their impact in the communities they serve.

Since 2005, ESOP has assisted more than 35,000 homeowners in all 88 counties across the state of Ohio, including 10,000 in the Cleveland area alone.

In 2014, ESOP launched the Senior Financial Empowerment Initiative (SFEI) to help older adults regain and maintain control of their

finances. The program has grown four-fold over the past four years and features a variety of client offerings, including senior financial education workshops, ongoing housing counseling and coaching, senior property tax loans, and free income tax preparation and filing. SFEI will remain a top priority as ESOP uses its Neighborhood Builders funding to develop an outcome-based evaluation system, implement additional programming to facilitate aging in place, and meet its overall staffing and training needs.

Founded in 1993, Empowering and Strengthening Ohio’s People (ESOP) is a HUD-approved housing and financial counseling agency headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio. ESOP was responsible for putting over \$117 million back into the community through the Save the Dream Ohio program administered by Ohio Housing Finance Agency. Since 2014, ESOP has helped more than 10,000 low-income seniors age in place with greater financial stability and a reduced risk of financial exploitation through its Senior Financial Empowerment Initiative, an innovative, integrated suite of financial capability programs directed at vulnerable older adults. ESOP is a subsidiary of the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging. Learn more about ESOP at www.esop-cleveland.org and connect on Twitter at @esopcommunity.



PHOTO BY JENEEN HOBAN OF BENJAMIN ROSE INSTITUTE ON AGING
Tuesday, November 14, 2017; Neighborhood Builder Award Celebration: (L-R) Bank of America Ohio Market President Jeneen Marziani; Edwins Leadership and Restaurant Institute founder Brandon Chrostowski; Empowering and Strengthening Ohio’s People (ESOP) Executive Director Roz Quarto; Bank of America Charitable Foundation Philanthropy Manager George Thorn; and Executive Director of City Year Cleveland Toi Comer.

LETTER

Lutheran Hospital urged to accept detox patients with a single addiction -- heroin

To the editor:

I would like to commend the *Plain Press* on its coverage of the panel discussion at Lutheran Hospital concerning the present opioid crisis.

As I read the article, however, I was aware of the fact that, while Lutheran Hospital has a very good detox program, and an excellent social work staff, they do not admit persons for detox if they are only using heroin.

We are seeing a larger number

of folks on the street who are heroin addicted and many are seeking detox and treatment.

In my opinion, providing more detox beds would be a significant step in addressing this crisis.

It is my hope that Lutheran Hospital might reconsider their present policy.

Jim Schlecht
Outreach Worker

Literary Cleveland launches *Gordon Square Review*

Literary Cleveland launched the first edition of the *Gordon Square Review* at a November 9th party at the Happy Dog on W. 58th and Detroit Avenue. The new literary magazine plans to showcase emerging writers nationwide and provide a spotlight to Northeast Ohio writers.

The inaugural issue of the biannual magazine features eight prose pieces, ten poetry pieces and work by local artist Chris Pekoc. To read the prose and poetry and see the artwork in the *Gordon Square Review* go to www.gordonsquarereview.org.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY HOME

continued from page one

Marketta Ramos, the Habitat homebuyer, grew up in the same neighborhood on Cleveland’s west side and is now the mother of two daughters, Patricia, age 15, and Rylee, age 6.

“I wanted to find a home that they can grow up and have memories in, and be proud of,” said Ramos, who was introduced to Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity by a friend who is also a Habitat homeowner. “It feels like a fresh start, a new beginning, a new outlook.”

For Ramos, the fourth time applying for a Habitat home proved to be the charm, after three previous denials.

“First, it was discouraging but I just kept working on myself in order to get over that hurdle,” she said. “Through volunteering, it is very humbling for me to see how much goes into Habitat and see the different things that they do.”

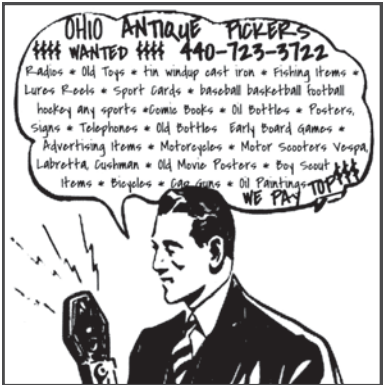
NRP’s work on the Habitat home included new flooring and drywall, repainting, new wiring and light fixtures, new plumbing lines and fixtures, new gutters and downspouts, the installation of two-panel doors throughout, installation of high-efficiency mechanical/AC systems, low-emissivity glass windows throughout, new shingles and siding,

new insulation throughout the home and in the attic, and rebuilt front and back porches.

On meeting and getting to know employees of sponsor partner NRP Group, Ramos added: “To have sponsors and people who are there to help you, I’m appreciative,” Ramos said.

Sponsors include: Severino Construction, Kazmir Construction, Inc., A Quality Rehab and Restoration, Preferred Insulation, Inc., Exterior Armor, Energy 1 heating and Air, Roman Plumbing Co., Inc., Norman Electric, Inc. Ellen Lighting, Famous Supply, ABC Supply, Sliman Lumber, 84 Lumber, Hoenigman Landscaping, Miles Waste Disposal, Superior Speedie Portables, Brumco Construction, Stone Facilities LLC, Taptech Inc., and More Than Blinds.

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PHOTO BY M. YESENIA SUMMERS

Thursday, November 16, 2017; Eileen Sheehan's Create-A-Craft Studio at the Shore Cultural Center, 291 E. 222 in Euclid, Ohio: Artists Hector Vega, Eileen Sheehan and Richard Romero are spearheading an effort to use the sale of art to raise funds for Puerto Ricans hit hard by Hurricane Maria.

MAYOR JACKSON SETS PRIORITIES

continued from page one

would help with more than just low performing schools. He said the additional wrap around services should help to identify children that are displaying certain behavior. He said quite a few children in Cleveland have Individual Education Plans (IEPs), some of the children have learning disabilities. He said most those children are so far behind because of behavioral issues. He said their capacity to learn "is quite good."

Jackson said he hopes prevention and intervention with troubled youth can lead them on a good path rather than on a criminal path. Jackson called on all nonprofits and social service agencies to follow their missions and identify resources to help children with IEPs and children in Investment Schools with the various mental health or social service needs.

Jackson called for a holistic approach to public safety that not only includes law enforcement but also addresses the underlying causes of violent crime. He indicated some upcoming decisions would be made

regarding the relationships between African Americans and police, centralized booking, and reforming education to help increase opportunity and reduce the probability of youth turning to a life of crime.

Jackson called for an Economic Development policy that is not focused on bringing in new people, but focused on taking care of people that are already here. He said he hopes to "create an environment where Cleveland is the place to be." Jackson says he hopes all Clevelanders can participate in quality of life improvements and increased prosperity in an equitable way across the city.

Jackson talked about the difference in developing neighborhoods like Ohio City, Tremont and Detroit Shoreway where the basic infrastructure is still in place--where the community has design review committees and a desire to preserve the neighborhood dynamic. He contrasted those neighborhoods with neighborhood's like Central where the basic infrastructure is gone and needs to be rebuilt with new construction.

Mayor Jackson also talked about a new phenomenon in Cleveland: neighborhoods such as Little Italy and Ohio City where the land has become so valuable that developers are building up to fit more people on the same spot. They are creating income property that they are leasing out. He noted this is creating problems with residents already there "who don't want to live with this." He mentioned issues such as high rises blocking sunlight and scenic views.

Jackson talked about "wealth creation among those who have no wealth today." Jackson noted the challenge of "having a system that has built itself on not allowing for equity in building its wealth." He noted these social and economic conditions are prevalent in all urban America. Jackson said, "we have to take the challenge head on and do it in a way to have impact and sustainability."

Editor's Note: The press conference with Mayor Frank Jackson was organized by Neighborhood Media. The nonprofit organization works to form partnerships between independent neighborhood and community newspapers in Cleveland.

Cleveland artists to raise funds to help Puerto Rican hurricane victims

Puerto Rico was ravaged by hurricane Maria, leaving millions in need of shelter, water and other goods. Local artists Eileen Sheehan and Linda Zolten Wood are coming together to help to help families in need on the island through an event called CLE ART for Puerto Rico. The upcoming event will raise funds through the sale of art donated by local artists.

Sheehan and Zolten Wood were inspired by the efforts of local chef and TV personality Lisa Pucci Delgado. She has been working hard, since Maria hit, to facilitate the shipment of supplies through Amazon to her isolated hometown of Piedra Azul. After seeing the devastation in Puerto Rico, the artists created the idea of selling art from local Cleveland artists to raise funds for Puerto Rico relief efforts.

Well known Cleveland artist, Hector Vega, and graphic designer, Richard Romero, volunteered to be involved in the fundraiser and brought with them valuable resources.

CLE ART for Puerto Rico is now seeking local artists to participate by donating a work of art that will be sold to help Puerto Rican families in need. Contact Eileen Sheehan at eileen@eileenstudio.com or 216-505-0684 for artist/food donations. Monetary donations can be made at <https://www.gofundme.com/cleartforpuertorico>.

CLE ART for Puerto Rico will take place in the community room at Euclid's historic Shore Cultural Center located at 291 E. 222 St. Euclid, Oh 44123. The event is on December 16, 2017 and open to the public. Tickets are available \$10/person at <https://www.gofundme.com/cleartforpuertorico>. Walk-ins welcome with ticket purchase at the door. Children are free. The hours are from 4-8 pm. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Editor's Note: For more information contact Eileen Sheehan at eileen@eileenstudios.com or call 216-505-0684.

Campaign underway to repair "It's Up to Us" mural

Metro West Community Development Organization has started a fundraising campaign at www.ioby.org to help raise \$10,335 to repair the "It's Up to Us" mural at Clark and W. 25th Street. Funds raised will also be used to add more security and lighting around the mural. The campaign is titled: "It's Up To Us: Reclaiming Our Clark Avenue Mural/ www.ioby.org". A link to the site is also available on Metro West Community Development Organization's Facebook page.

The mural, designed by artist John Rivera-Resto, was defaced with graffiti. The painting of the mural was a massive project that involved a number of community members helping the Rivera-Resto, including neighborhood youths working during the summer months. An article by Nancy Lewis about the creation of the mural was published in the August 2014 *Plain Press*. To view the article, visit the *Plain Press* August 2014 Archive at www.plainpress.org.

Teachers under stress in Cleveland Metropolitan School District's Investment Schools

by Chuck Hoven

At the November 21st meeting of the Cleveland Board of Education, educational advocate Don Freeman, for the third month in a row, brought up the issue of the stress that the teaching staffs at Cleveland's twenty-three investment schools are experiencing.

Freeman emphatically said, "Professionals, by that I mean teachers, experiencing stress cannot produce positive educational outcomes."

The public knows the 23 schools as investment schools because the Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD), when seeking to

pass the school levy, promised to invest extra dollars and resources in those schools to help improve the academic performance of students in these struggling schools. The CMSD refers to the schools as Corrective Action Schools.

CMSD initially started with 13 Investment Schools in the 2013-2014 school year, and then added an additional 10 schools a year later. Investment Schools in the *Plain Press* service area include Luis Munoz Marin, Walton, Almira and Lincoln West High School.

However, teachers working in the investment schools report that instead of hiring more teachers or addressing the physical and resource needs of the Investment schools, the CMSD hired outside vendors to implement corrective action plans at the schools and to monitor the progress.

Freeman called upon CMSD Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon and the Cleveland Board of Education to "phase out the vendor program." Freeman said it was "essential to give priority to this necessity."

Freeman is a member of the Cleveland Education Committee, an advocacy group that focuses on educational quality in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District. The Cleveland Education Committee has been looking into the stress experienced by the teaching staffs at Cleveland's 23 investment schools.

The Cleveland Education Committee engaged in an outreach effort to teachers working in Investment Schools and listened to concerns of those teachers about conditions in the investment schools. The Cleveland Education Committee learned from reports from the teachers that the vendors have shifted the focus in the schools to "teacher performance" rather than "how can we help students."

Teachers in Investment Schools report that while the information continued on page 8

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Hope for those grieving during the holiday season comes in the most unusual form: A Christmas Tree

by Victoria Shea

The sight of a fully decorated Christmas tree is something that many do not expect to see in their local funeral homes. But those in the Lorain-Denison neighborhood would be surprised to not see it, as it has become a symbol of hope during what many describe as the most difficult part of the year.

At Walter Martens & Sons Funeral Home, 9811 Denison Avenue, the annual Tree of Remembrance has remained a comforting sight since 1990 when the late Bernadine Martens, the wife of funeral director Walter Martens, Jr created what has become a holiday tradition.

“Bernadine got the idea after she read an article in a trade journal,” Martens said, as he reflected on his wife’s program. “A funeral home in Arizona was doing something very similar to what we continue to do now.”

The driving force behind the Tree of Remembrance came in 1989 when Walter’s father, Walter Martens Sr., died and Walter Jr. and Bernadine found themselves with several small children left grieving the loss of their grandfather.

“Our oldest at the time was 14 and our youngest was five.” Martens said. “After my father’s passing, Bernadine knew it was the right time to do it.”

The Tree of Remembrance program consists of two parts: the first is the decorating of the ornaments, and the second, is the actual ceremony.

Families come to the funeral home starting on the Friday after Thanksgiving until the second Friday of December to decorate an ornament in honor of their loved ones. Then, those ornaments are placed on a live tree until the dedication of the tree, normally the second or third Saturday of December.

“While decorating the ornaments for their loved ones have special meaning for those grieving, it is the actual ceremony that I feel, continues to help the families,” Martens said. “Anybody can decorate an ornament, but when you

are sitting in a room with upwards of a hundred, other people who are experiencing similar emotions and feelings as you are, it reminds you that you aren’t alone on this journey.”

The dedication and ceremony lasts just over an hour, and consists of the formal dedication of the tree and all the ornaments on it. Following the ceremony, there is a reading of those the Martens family served over the last twelve months and an opportunity for others present to remember loved ones from past years or those served by a different funeral home.

“The reading of the necrology has to be the hardest part of the ceremony,” Martens said. “Other than the voice of those reading the names, a hush comes over the room and those present as they reflect and remember.”

The last part of the service is a candlelight ceremony, led by various staff members. As candles in a wreath are lit, those present are given a final chance to reflect, remember and celebrate their loved ones.

The Tree of Remembrance is already under way this year, as Martens and his staff have already started to see families come in and decorate their ornaments in anticipation of the holiday season. Many who come, Martens says, will be repeats who have embraced the Tree of Remembrance and have made it part of their annual holiday tradition.

“When Bernadine started this in 1990, she always hoped that it would give grieving people a chance to remember that the holidays didn’t have to be as dark and depressing as people think it has to be. Her hope was that this would become a tradition of hope, which it has.”

When asked if there are any plans for discontinuing the program, Martens has stated that for long as people show interest in it, his family will continue it, not just as a tribute to

their own family members who have passed, but to all those who need a little hope during the holiday season.

“This is what Bernadine had in mind when she created this program, that it would become something to help others, which is what she was always good at. And after twenty-seven years, I know she would be pleased to know that it continues to work for the community.”

This year’s ceremony will hold even more emotions and memories for the Martens family, as it would have been the 101st birthday of Walter’s mother Pauline who passed earlier this year.

“Mom always enjoyed attending the ceremony,” Martens said. “She always felt that it was the nicest thing that we were able to do for our families during the holidays.”

This year’s Tree of Remembrance ceremony will be held on Saturday, December 16th at 5PM at Walter Martens Funeral Home, 9811 Denison Avenue. Those wishing to decorate ornaments for their loved ones are welcomed seven days a week from now until Friday, December 15th from 10AM to 8 PM.

METANOIA PROJECT

continued from page one
They said that due to requests by guests of the hospitality center, this year there will be a Foot Clinic on Sunday nights from 8:30 p.m.- 9:30 p.m.

Co-founder Tim Walters shared the secret of success that helped the Metanoia Project sustain its growth over the years. The project has grown from being a small hospitality center for the homeless at St. Augustine Church ten years



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Sunday, November 19, 2017; Metanoia Project Community Open House, St. Malachi Parish, 2459 Washington Avenue: Metanoia Project Co-Founder Tim Walters shares his thoughts on how the Metanoia Project grew from its start at St. Augustine ten years ago to what it is today.

ago, to moving to a larger facility at St. Malachi and being able to offer hospitality and overnight cots to an average of eighty people a night during the cold months of the year.

The Metanoia Project welcomes donations. Donations are needed to help provide bus passes, sandwiches, replace worn out cots, and operate the hospitality center. To donate

got to: www.projectmetanoia.org, or send your donation by mail to: P.O. Box 93453, Cleveland, OH 44101.

Volunteers are also needed. There are a wide variety of volunteer positions available. To receive a menu of volunteer opportunities, send an email to: Volunteer@projectmetanoia.org or call 216-212-5305.

Merry Christmas!

Our Neighborhood Churches Welcome You!

Bethany Presbyterian Church
6415 W. Clinton Ave.
will host 2 Services on Christmas Eve Day

A Blue Christmas Service at 11:00 a.m.
A service of healing and hope for those experiencing loss, health concerns, and other not so jolly issues this holiday season.

A Christmas Eve Worship Service at 7:00 p.m.
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Wed., Dec. 20th, at 7:00 p.m.

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Mass at 6:00 p.m.
Swahili Mass 9 p.m.

Christmas Day:
Masses at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

New Year's Day:
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www.stcolmanparish.org


Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church
6928 Detroit Ave., Cleveland, Oh., 44102
Holy Day Schedule of Masses
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Christmas Concert .. 11:30 PM
Midnight Mass at 12:00 A.M
Christmas Day: 8:00 AM, 10:00 Italian, 11:30 AM
Please join us in celebration of the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ

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[www. FranklinCircleChurch.org](http://www.FranklinCircleChurch.org)


Sunday 10:30 Service
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CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS!
• MASS SCHEDULE •

December 24 4:30PM & 10PM

December 25 9:00 AM & 11:30 AM

December 31 9:00 AM and 11:30 AM

January 1 10:00 AM

St. Augustine Church
2486 West 14th St. - 216-781-5530
Special Children's Eve Liturgy
welcoming especially for deaf and disabled children
4:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Vigil Mass
5:30 p.m.
Midnight Mass
12:00 a.m.

Christmas Day
8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m.
All services will be signed for the deaf

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CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

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4:00 p.m. English
11:30 p.m. Concert Choir (Polish & English)
12:00 Midnight... Bi-Lingual

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25th
9:30 a.m. Polish
11:30 a.m. English



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Sunday, November 19, 2017; West Side Market Parking Lot, W. 25th and Lorain Avenue: The parking booth at the West Side Market with the ticket boxes covered with plastic bags await an official start of parking fees for the lot. While the City of Cleveland has not yet announced a starting date, it has announced a fee structure. During the daytime, before 6 p.m., there will be free parking for 90 minutes with a \$1 per hour charge after the first 90 minutes. In the evening, after 6 p.m., the cost will be \$1 per hour with no free period. The maximum cost per day will be \$10.00.

Advocacy effort calls for restoring lost \$1 million to Cleveland Schools’ Comprehensive Extracurricular Activities Program

by Chuck Hoven

On June 28, 1995, the Cleveland City Council passed legislation which increased parking, admissions and motor vehicle leasing taxes. The legislation allowed the money to be used for extracurricular activities for the Cleveland Schools, repairs for the football stadium and the general fund of the City of Cleveland.

With the funds designated for the school system, the Cleveland Metropolitan School District created

the Comprehensive Extracurricular Activities Program. The legislation created a Joint Board made up of the Mayor of Cleveland, the Council President and the Superintendent (now CEO) of the school system or their designated representative to oversee the funds that were to go to the school system and agree on an annual budget.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Why, might you ask, was the City of Cleveland getting involved in passing taxes to fund the school

system, which has local property taxes already designated for its use? Educational advocate and retired Cleveland School Teacher Gene Tracy, who has been involved in advocating for the Comprehensive Extracurricular Activities Program (CEAP), says the reason for the funding for the schools was to make the Cleveland School system whole for the Cleveland Brown’s stadium being exempt from paying property tax.

During the county-wide campaign to raise funds to build the stadium, it was promised that the new stadium would result in increased property taxes to fund the schools. Instead Mayor Michael White went downstate and successfully lobbied for the stadium to be exempt from local property taxes. Tracy says at the time the stadium, if taxed, would have meant an additional \$2.3 million for the Cleveland schools. While Cuyahoga County voters overall supported the new taxes for building the Browns’ stadium, the tax did not win a majority of Cleveland voters.

Urban Community School and Urban Squash Cleveland to build new Youth Development Center on Lorain Avenue

Urban Community School and Urban Squash Cleveland broke ground in late October for Urban Squash Cleveland’s Youth Development Center. Urban Community School President Tom Gill says the new 10,000 square foot building will be on Lorain Avenue at W. 47th Street. Gill says the brick on the new building will be similar to the brick on Urban Community School and will front on Lorain Avenue.

Urban Community School purchased the former Sunrise Food Mart and the used car lot next door to make way for the project which will represent over \$3 million in investment on Lorain Avenue, says Gill. Plans call for the new facility to be ready by the end of the Summer of 2018, says Gill.

Urban Squash Cleveland’s website says the new building will house four squash courts, a classroom for 60 students, an office for Urban

Squash Cleveland, and boys’ and girls’ locker rooms.

Urban Squash Cleveland describes itself as “a youth development organization.” Urban Squash Cleveland’s website describes the program as providing “academic support, instruction in the sport of squash, community service, as well as mentoring, and life skills opportunities to transform the lives of middle school and high school students in Cleveland.”

Squash is a sport played with rackets on an indoor court. Urban Squash Cleveland says it works closely with schools to identify fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade students to be enrolled in its program. Their website says, “Students are chosen to be part of the team through a tryout and selection process based largely on attitude, effort and commitment.”

Cleveland Schools were cut from \$2 million to \$1 million.

Mayor Jackson said he believes the extracurricular programs do help students. He recalled some of the many activities funded by the program. Not just sports, but chess clubs, cheerleaders, and arts programs, he noted. Jackson said the City of Cleveland continues to give to the program “whatever we are able to provide.”

Jackson said that students that develop a passion for an extracurricular activity, always do better. He cited passion, as a reason the School of Arts does so well. Indeed, data, presented by the Comprehensive Extracurricular Activities Program, reveals that students participating in the program had both higher attendance rates and higher grade-point averages than students that did not participate in the program.

As he has done for years, Tracy spoke at the Cleveland Board of Education, meeting on November 21st, calling upon Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon to demand that the \$1 million per year be restored to the Comprehensive Extracurricular Activities Program budget to bring the level back to the \$2 million level that was originally promised. Gordon is one of the three members of the Joint Board that must agree each year on the amount given to the program.

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COMMUNITY BOARD

continued from page 2

financial assistance is available. Sign up by visiting nearwestrecreationbasketball.org or calling 216-781-3222 x 108. They are looking for volunteer coaches for all ages. Commitment level is about 5 hours a week. Season starts mid-January and runs through late March. Sign-up to volunteer at nearwestrecreationbasketball.org

METRO CATHOLIC SCHOOL is accepting applicants for the 2017-2018 school year! It is a Preschool through Gr. 8 program. Traditional curriculum along with many special learning programs and services in a safe and nurturing environment. Call 216-281-4044 x128.

CHRISTMAS TURKEYS
Fortney & Weygandt employees and volunteers will distribute 1,000 free frozen turkeys and bags of potatoes to low-income Northeast Ohio residents on Wednesday, December 13 at 8AM while supplies last at the St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVDP). Fr. Wittman Hunger Center (in the St. Philomena Church back parking lot) located at 13824 Euclid Avenue in East Cleveland. Although there is no advance registration, recipients will be required to show a state ID or driver's license.

**CONSUMER PROBLEM?
FAIR HOUSING ISSUE?**

The city of Cleveland's Office of Fair Housing & Consumer Affairs helps with problems with a product or service purchased from a business located within the city of Cleveland, FHCA can investigate your issue. If you feel that you have been discriminated against in seeking housing (on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, ethnic group, veteran or familial status or ancestry), FHCA can investigate. Call FHCA from 8 - 5 weekdays at 216/664-4529 with the facts you wish to discuss.

HEALTH CARE
AFFORDABLE CARE ACT open enrollment is through December 15. For more information, visit <https://www.healthcare.gov>

MEDICARE open enrollment is through December 7. Visit Medicare.gov. or call the Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program (OSHIIP) at 800/686-1578 or TTY at 614/644-3745.

MEDICAID ENROLLMENT. Cuyahoga County Expands Call Centers to Improve Access and Timeliness of Medicaid Enrollment. The county has now expanded the call center to all of The Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) Division of Job and Family Services (JFS) neighborhood family service centers. Real-time eligibility determination is done while a customer is on the call. Customers who are seeking to apply for Medicaid can call 844/640-6446.

GIRLS' HEALTH SUMMIT. All girls ages 10 - 17 are invited to the 7th Annual Girls Health Summit on Saturday, December 2, 2017 at Cuyahoga Community College, Metro Campus. The event is presented by ALL ABOUT YOUR HEALTH and is free! It runs from 8 am - 3 pm. Register now at AllAboutYourHealth.org **as space is limited. Email Linda at linda@cudell.com if you need transportation.**

HOLIDAY EVENTS
NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY PRACTICE's Second Annual Winter Cultural Fest will be held on Thursday, December 14th from 5:30 to 7:00 PM at 3569 Ridge Road. For the whole family! Enjoy cultural exhibits and sample dishes from around the world. At the event, guests will: Learn about diverse cultures and sample traditional dishes from around the globe, enjoy food, music and a craft table for kids, Embrace new arrivals to Cleveland! There are two ways to be involved: Attend the event as a guest and enjoy the experience, or Participate! We are looking for participants who are interested educating others about their culture's winter holiday celebrations and traditional food! If you have any questions, or to RSVP or register as a participant, please contact Meredith at 216/281-0872 ext. 214.

TREMONT HOLIDAY BREWHAHA POP-UP SHOP AND PARTY on Friday, December 8th from 5 to 11 pm at the Grand Ballroom Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church at 2187 West 14th Street. FREE Admission and parking. Family friendly. Over 25 artists and trolley rides. For more information, visit www.Tremontbrewhaha.com
ANNUAL HOLIDAY PEACE FESTIVAL AND BAZAAR, sponsored by Women Speak Out for Peace and Justice, is scheduled for Saturday, December 9th 10 am to 4 pm at Pilgrim Church, 2582 W. 14 St. in Tremont. Featuring bake sale, cafe with homemade soups, chili and sandwiches, Artists and Social Justice Groups. Poinsettias, peace calendars, note cards and holiday cards for sale.

HOUSING
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH WATCH'S BUILDHealth Challenge 2.0 Project would like to invite you to a dinner and conversation to talk about how Cleveland residents choose housing. You must live in the City of Cleveland, and you must rent your home, have moved within the last five years, or plan on moving soon. What we learn from this discussion has the potential to help other Clevelanders when looking for housing. You will be asked to share your experiences and how you felt when you were looking for a place to live. **RSVP REQUIRED for one of the following dates and times:** December 5th, 5:30-8:00pm Hispanic Alliance, 3110 W. 25th St, no childcare available (Facilitated in English and Spanish). December 7th, 5:30-8:00pm –childcare available; Calvary Hill Church, 2765 Woodhill Rd. Dinner provided at both sessions. Ev-

everything you share will be kept private; however, we will be taking notes. We will not release any information that can be linked to you. If you would like to attend, please let us know by registering: English: <https://goo.gl/forms/FOkC8seYn3IT5lw62> or Spanish: <https://goo.gl/forms/mJhgfbPH4ANgBOK1>. If you need help signing up or have any questions, call 216/961.4646 (ext-104) or email Kim.Foreman@ehw.org. If you speak Spanish, please contact Jerry Pena at 407/924-8908 or jpena@neighborhoodgrants.org. Please leave your name and telephone number and they will get back to you.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY advocates for everyone to have a safe, affordable place to call home. They partner with individuals and families from application through construction to when the keys are handed over. By working with us from beginning to end, we can help prospective individuals prepare for the various responsibilities of homeownership, including learning about personal finances, mortgages, maintenance and upkeep of homes, and much more. Habitat's path to homeownership is an important and in-depth process, requiring hard work, time and dedication. This helps to ensure the long-term success of Habitat homeowners. Many volunteer opportunities available. Call 1-800-HABITAT (1-800-422-4828) for more information.

REBUILDING TOGETHER helps maintain existing homes and neighborhoods for elderly, veterans, families, and residents with disabilities. Activities include rebuilding day/volunteer events, critical home repairs, safe at home, professional home inspections, lead abatement, Veterans Service Day, United Way Day of Action. For more information, visit <http://www.rebuildingtogetherneo.org/> or call 800/418-4429.

METRO WEST CDC
Help to identify residents and stakeholders who have gone above and beyond to improve the Stockyard, Clark-Fulton, and Brooklyn Centre neighborhoods that Metro West serves. Award categories include The Beautiful Home Award, Community Vibrancy Award, Neighborhood Business Award, Community Partner Award, Community Champion Award, and Community Spirit Award. If you know somebody who deserves recognition, cast your nomination by Monday, December 4th. Nominations may be submitted by mail, fax, or email to: Adam Gifford, Director of Community Involvement, 3167 Fulton Rd, Suite 303, Cleveland, OH 44109. Phone: 216-961-9073 ext. 205. Fax: 216-961-9387. Email: agifford@dscdo.org
POLICE/COMMUNITY RELATIONS FIRST DISTRICT POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING: Thursday, December 7, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Ignatius of Antioch, 10205 Lorain Avenue. Reminder: Immediately following the meeting will be Pot luck for



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Sunday, November 19, 2017; Metanoia Project Community Open House, in former St. Malachi School building at St. Malachi Parish, 2459 Washington Avenue: A Care Alliance Health Center volunteers Eli Berger and David Sanson bring salad dressing to guests seated at the tables.

those who would like to participate. If you have any questions please contact: Tammy L. Hanna, Community Relations Board (216) 664-6634. Reminder to bring canned goods or household products such as toilet paper or peroxide to donate to St. Ignatius of Antioch.

VETERANS
THE VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA sponsors the Veterans & Families FIRST Program to provide services and financial assistance to those meeting certain criteria. To receive services, the applicant

must meet all of the following criteria: Be a veteran or a member of a family in which the head of the household is a veteran; the veteran must have a discharge other than dishonorable; be homeless or have an eviction notice; have an income that is below 50% of the area's median income. Services that may be provided are: affordable housing assistance; household budgeting; rental assistance; community referrals; landlord and tenant mediation. Call 216.302.2602 or go to vetsandfamiliesFIRST.org.

Classified

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FLEA MARKETS/THRIFTS
ST. PAUL'S THRIFT STORE: W. 45th and Franklin, Clothing, bric-a-brac, household items and more. **Open Wednesdays** 1 to 5pm (regular prices) **First Saturday** of Month 10 to noon store and Gym, Bargain Prices, Clothes **\$1.00 a bag. Third Saturday** of Month 10 to Noon Store only, All unmarked racked clothes **\$1.00 a bag.**

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NEED ANSWERS TO LANDLORD TENANT QUESTIONS? Call Cleveland Tenant's Organization's Client Service Center: 216-432-0617.
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Mayor of Cleveland	Number of Votes	Percentage
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Frank G. Jackson	35,506	59.6%
Zack Reed	24,116	40.4%
Total	59.622	

Cleveland City Council

Ward 3	Number of Votes	Percentage
Kerry McCormack	2,692	84.7%
Logan E. Fahey	486	15.3%
Total	3,178	

Ward 11	Number of Votes	Percentage
Dona Brady	1,951	79.0%
Gilder E. Malone	519	21%
Total	2,470	

Ward 12	Number of Votes	Percentage
Anthony Brancatelli	2,021	72.9%
Shalira Taylor	751	27.1%
Total	2,772	

Ward 14	Number of Votes	Percentage
Jasmine Santana	999	51.2%
Brian Cummins	951	48.8%
Total	1,950	

Ward 15	Number of Votes	Percentage
Matt Zone	2,522	79.7%
Alex Karrfalt	643	20.3%
Total	3,165	



PHOTO BY M. YESENIA SUMMERS

Thursday, November 16, 2017; Eileen Sheehan's Create-A-Craft Studio at the Shore Cultural Center, 291 E. 222 in Euclid, Ohio: This painting is by Hector Vega, one of the artists involved in CLE Art for Puerto Rico.

Friends of the Plain Press -- Donation Form

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Checks should be made out to **Organize Ohio** and sent to: **Organize Ohio, 3500 Lorain Avenue, Suite 501 A, Cleveland, Ohio 44113**. Your contribution will be tax deductible. To make online donations link to Organize! Ohio's Pay Pal via **www.plainpress.org**.



PHOTO BY M. YESENIA SUMMERS

Thursday, November 16, 2017; Eileen Sheehan's Create-A-Craft Studio at the Shore Cultural Center, 291 E. 222 in Euclid, Ohio: An art piece by Eileen Sheehan, one of the artists involved in CLE Art for Puerto Rico.

INVESTMENT SCHOOLS

continued from page 4

about teaching methods provided by the outside vendors may have been useful in the first year of their contracts, the vendors were repeating the same information in the second and third years.

The teachers report constant evaluation of teaching methods by vendors; vendors pulling teachers out of classrooms to give them evaluation results; teacher training sessions that take teachers away

from the classroom; and administrators unavailable to address discipline problems because they are so heavily involved in walking around with laptops filling out teacher evaluations.

Teachers say the evaluations don't ask if the needs of the school or the classroom teacher are being addressed. Instead, the vendors just criticize teachers with negative evaluations without providing resources to address needs. Teachers described a pattern of bullying and intimidation by some of the vendors. They say the vendors and their agenda have taken over the school. When teachers complain that the program is not working, the vendors

say it is because the teachers are not buying in.

The teachers say the stress level; the increased number of forms they must fill out as part of the evaluations; the constant scrutiny by evaluators; the intrusive methods such as having someone critiquing the teacher via an earphone while they are teaching; and threats of termination are causing veteran teachers to retire early and first year teachers to leave. The presence of the vendors and the extra burden on teachers in the Investment Schools also makes it hard to attract quality teaching candidates to replace lost teachers, say teachers involved in school hiring committees.

The Plain Press seeks your help

Dear Plain Press Readers and Supporters:

This year marks the 46th anniversary of the *Plain Press*, a free community newspaper founded in 1971 to present issues and community news to residents of Cleveland's west side. In 2017, the *Plain Press* continues its mission of presenting issues and news at no charge to its 40,000 readers each month.

The *Plain Press*' ability to continue to serve the west side neighborhoods of Cleveland is due in large part to the contributions of readers and supporters in the annual Friends of the Plain Press Campaign. The Friends of the Plain Press Campaign was established following the successful 2011 40th anniversary fundraiser. The *Plain Press* reached out to readers and supporters and you came through in a big way to help sustain the newspaper.

This year, we are again asking you to donate to the *Plain Press* to ensure the newspaper moves forward. To mark its 46th anniversary we are asking you for a donation of \$46 or a reflection of its 46 years of operation (e.g. \$92, \$146, \$460). It will help subsidize the operations of the newspaper, but will be specifically used to support the *Plain Press'* Community Board that lists free events and resources for area non-profit organizations.

A separate *Plain Press* fund has been established for the newspaper by Organize! Ohio (a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization). Checks should be made out to **Organize Ohio and sent to 3500 Lorain Avenue, Suite 501 A, Cleveland, Ohio 44113**. Your contribution is tax deductible.

To make online donations you can link to the Organize! Ohio PayPal through the *Plain Press* website: www.plainpress.org.

The *Plain Press* has served as your community newspaper for 46 years. We call upon you to contribute towards another year of publishing the *Plain Press*. We appreciate your support.

Gail Long (Fundraising Committee)
Larry Bresler
 (Fundraising Committee & Co-Coordinator 1970's)
Chuck Hoven (Managing Editor - 1988-present)
Deborah Rose Sadlon (Editor - 1990-present)
Leo Jeffres
 (Secretary, on behalf of the Board of Trustees)

Please fill out the donation form to the left.