



PHOTO BY CHRIS HARRIS

Friday, June 15, 2018; 81st Annual Convention and Summer Seminar of Buckeye State Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association, Cleveland Marriott East: Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner and Director and of Regional Forensic Science Laboratory, Dr. Thomas Gilson, addressed "The Evolution of the Opioid Epidemic in Ohio" with a group of funeral directors. Gilson said that while heroin overdoses appear to be declining, fentanyl overdoses are on the rise.

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Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

Cudell and Detroit Shoreway announce "Strategic Alliance"

by Victoria Shea

The boards of Cudell Improvement and Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization announced in a letter dated June 5th that the two neighborhood organizations have formed a Strategic Alliance that will take effect on July 1, 2018.

NEWS ANALYSIS

The letter, signed by Dan Berry, the President of Cudell Improvement and Joe Tegreene, the Chair of Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization (DSCDO), states the Strategic Alliance "will provide high quality community development services that leverage expertise and resources across the Cudell, Detroit Shoreway and Edgewater neighborhoods."

"The decision to partner between Cudell and DSCDO was a thoughtful process that took over two years, during which time the organizations built trust and performed thorough due diligence," the letter stated. "This partnership will now provide safety, economic development, neighborhood marketing, vacant and abandoned housing redevelopment, code enforcement and community engagement."

While neither the Cudell Improvement Board President or the Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization Board Chair were available for comment, as they were still working together to finalize the details of the Alliance, members of the Cudell Improvement board felt strongly about the Alliance, which they hope will strengthen the organizations as a whole.

The letter states: "This collaborative model for leveraging strengths across organizations is not new in the world of non-profits or community development, but it is also uniquely tailored to the needs and culture of Cudell and DSCDO. The strategic alliance will leverage expertise and resources across our neighborhoods, while also creating

synergies and cost efficiencies that afford even better service to our residents, businesses, and community members."

The letter also explained that the Collaboration and Shared Services agreement the two boards signed states the organizations will maintain separate organizations and boards, and that they will keep physical offices in the neighborhoods.

The letter is accompanied by series of questions and answers. The questions and answers section mention services will continue to be provided to the Cudell and Edgewater neighborhoods. However, the section does not mention the West Boulevard neighborhood which Cudell Improvement has served for many years, where a number of members of the organization reside, and where its current office is located.

In fact, the question and answers specifically say "services will continue to be provided in the DSCDO service area and to the Cudell and Edgewater neighborhoods, north of I-90 between West 117th St. and West 85th St." There is no mention of the West Boulevard neighborhood and the area South of I-90.

While the letter from the Cudell Improvement Board President and the Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization Board Chair is addressed to members of the organizations, it is simply an announcement of a decision already made by the respective boards. There is no mention of a process of seeking input from the members of the two organizations on the decision to form a strategic alliance.

Editor's Note: Visit the Plain Press website at www.plainpress.org to view the letter from Cudell Improvement Board President Dan Berry and Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization Board Chair Joe Tegreene and question and answers that follow the letter.



Strategic Alliance?



The passing of the torch at West Side Community House

by Victoria Shea

"We're here to honor the career, the passion and the legacy of Dawn Kolograf, our fearless leader for twenty-seven-years," proclaims Rachelle Milner, acting as Master of Ceremonies for the celebration to honor Dawn Kolograf's retirement from the West Side Community House. "This has been an awesome experience, and so awesome to sit at your feet."

For the last fifteen years, Milner has been serving as the Family Services Director. Now however, with a smile on her face, she has accepted the torch from Kolograf.

"It has meant so much to me," Milner said in her speech at the ceremony on June 21. "I'm so grateful to you."

When Dawn first arrived at West Side Community House, she joined at a grim time. According to the article written back in 1992 for the Plain Press announcing Dawn's arrival, the director of the Community House, Cynthia Maxwell, has resigned midsummer, the agency had been thrust into the middle of the St. Ignatius High School expansion issue; there was a six-figure deficit and relationships between management and the Social Agencies Employees Union, District 1199 was strained.

Since then, under Dawn's leadership, the Community House has experienced various changes. The

most significant difference was when Kolograf decided to "follow poverty" and move the Community House from its location at West 30th Street and Bridge Avenue to its present location at West 93rd and Lorain.

Kolograf's service to the Community House was also recognized. On behalf of the board, Board President Bob Moran presented her with a glass plaque honoring her years of tireless service and dedication. "Dawn had been a tireless and dedicated leader of this organization," he said.

But for Kolograf, she stressed

"Running the Community House has always been a team effort"

--Dawn Kolograf

that she learned by experience. Before becoming the Executive Director, she stated that she had excellent role models that "demonstrated the importance of having a staff of mission-driven people for whom the work was a calling, not just a job." It was something she would follow throughout her career, with diverse services at Salvation Army, Big Brother/Big Sister and Alta House.

During her speech, Kolograf reflected on those experiences, and stated that the first few years at West Side Community House were a "trial-by-fire" but that she "got through with considerable help and support."

However, she never considered the success of the Community House her own. "Running the Community House has always been a team effort," Kolograf said. "Your inspiration, determination and belief in our mission has always made West Side Community House such a very special place—a warm, welcoming place where kindness prevails even when situations become difficult. But warmth and kindness come from people not from buildings, and you are all the people who make up this place, no matter who the director is."

On passing the torch to Rachelle Milner, Kolograf spoke of the leadership, creativity, warmth and kindness Rachelle has to offer as the Community House's twenty-second Executive Director and stated that she felt comfortable leaving the Community House "in the hands of someone who loves it as much as I do."

In her speech, Milner thanked Kolograf for her service: "I'm so grateful to you. I thank you for your passion. I thank you for your dedication. I thank you for being mission-minded and driven."



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA SHEA

Thursday, June 21, 2018; Retirement Party for West Side Community House Executive Director Dawn Kolograf, West Side Community House, 9300 Lorain Avenue: (L-R) Dawn Kolograf (L) is retiring after nearly 27 years as Executive Director of West Side Community House. The new Executive Director is Rachelle Milner (R). Milner most recently served as the Family Services Director at West Side Community House.

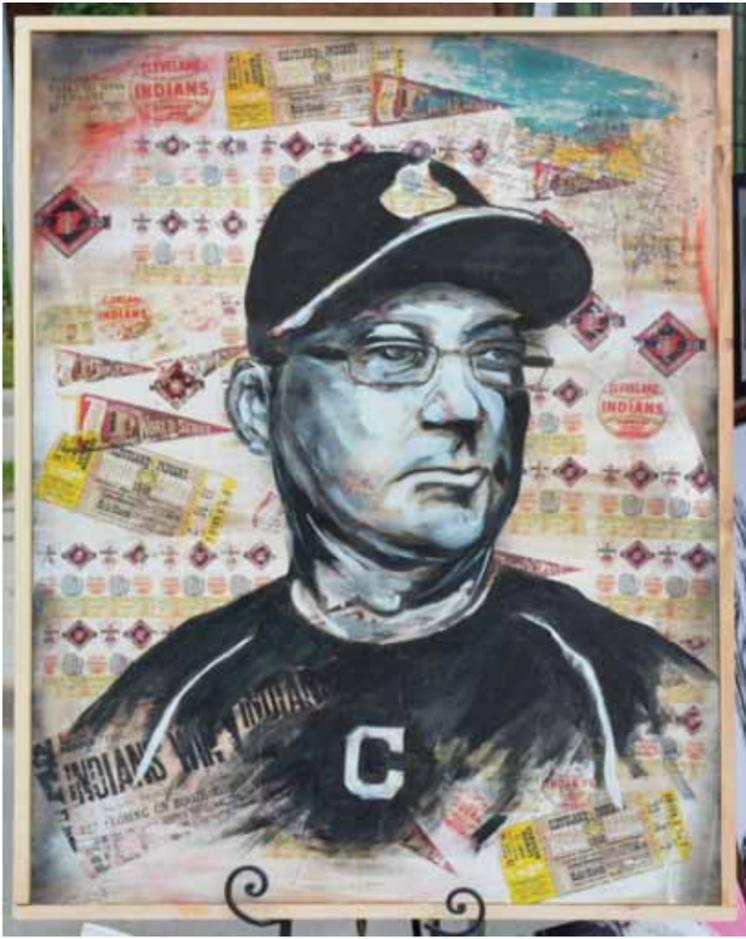


PHOTO BY VICTORIA SHEA

Saturday, June 16, 2018; 30th Annual Clifton Arts & Musicfest, Clifton Boulevard: Artist Eric Moore's painting of Cleveland Indians Manager Terry Francona is titled *Tito*. Moore, who does Cleveland themed art, has set up the Artolicious Foundation. He hopes to be able to use the proceeds from selling his artwork to provide funds to assist children's health programs and pet shelters through the foundation.

ARTS/THEATRE/FILM

WALKABOUTTREMONT is held every second Friday from 6 to 10 pm. For more information, visit walkabouttremont.com
78TH STREET STUDIOS, 1300 W. 78th Street. Art Opening for over 50 studios and galleries every 3rd Friday of every month, 5-9 p.m. 78streetstudios.com.

CITY OF CLEVELAND

FREE EMERGENCY ALERTS FOR YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD: Keep informed about emergency situations in your neighborhood with this GodeRED service. To sign up visit www.city.cleveland.oh.us.

VACANT LAND REUTILIZATION PROGRAM: vacant land is available through the Land Bank Program for side yard expansion or new construction. Applications sought that will contribute to the economic, social or environmental betterment of the city. Lots also can be leased or licensed for certain interim uses such as community/market gardens. Questions and information call the Land Bank Office at 664-4126.

COMMUNITY

CLEVELAND DRUM CIRCLE: Sundays at 3 p.m. at Edgewater Park

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL ITALIAN FESTIVAL: July 11-15 at 6928 Detroit Avenue.

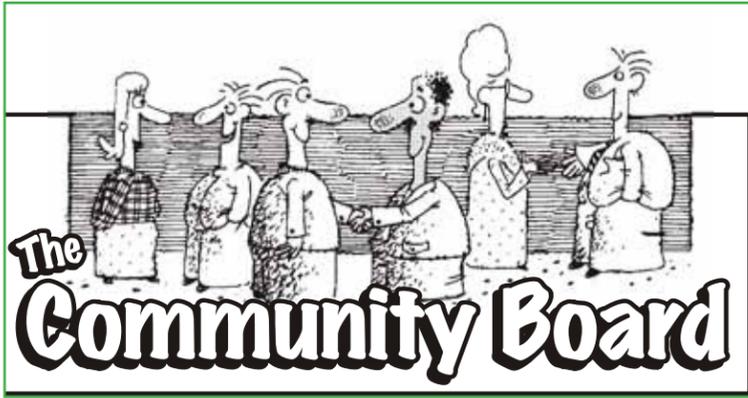
CLEVELAND METROPARKS ZOO, 3900 Wildlife Way: Free admission for Cuyahoga County residents on Mondays (Rainforest not included).

ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME, 1100 Rock and Roll Boulevard: Free to Cleveland residents for the next 10 years due to a donation by Key Bank Foundation

WESTOWN CDC SWINGING SUMMER CONCERTS in the Gazebo at Halloran Park, 3550 W. 117th Street. Free family friendly concerts on Sundays July 15, July 22 and July 29 from 6-8 p.m. Rain date: August 5th from 5-8 p.m.

RECESS CLEVELAND: Grill, Play, Chill. Free BBQ, fun and games at 7805 Madison Avenue every Tuesday until August 7th from 4:30 -7:30 p.m. weather permitting. Music, games, food and activities for all ages. Neighbors are invited to bring food and snacks to share. For more info: recessdetroitshoreway.com.

EDGEWATER LIVE: Thursdays July 12, 19th and 26th. Free concert with lineup of live music, food trucks, volleyball and entertainment at Edgewater Beach. For



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.

more information visit clevelandmetroparks.com/EdgewaterLive

LA PLACITA: A Latino themed open-air market, Saturday, July 14, 1-10 p.m. in the Hispanic Business Center Parking Lot on Clark Avenue at W. 25th. Live entertainment, food, art & vendors.

FAMILIA has been established to engage, empower, and create a voice for the residents of the Clark-Fulton area to address issues such as safety, housing, education, civic rights and health issues for the wellbeing of families in the community. Monday July 16, from 6-7:30 pm, at Hispanic Alliance Inc, 3110 W. 25th Street (at Clark). For info, contact Sonia Monroy Matis, 216-661-4249 or smatis@hispanicallianceinc.org.

PAINTING IN THE PARK FAMILY FUN DAY:

On Saturday, July 14, 2018, Fura Forever Productions will host their 4th Annual Painting in the Park Family Fun Day in Lincoln Park-Tremont from 12 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Come experience an afternoon of art, fashion and creativity featuring Clothing Designers Diane Liston from Styles of Imagination, Regie Haymon of Redux Clothing, Artists LaSaundra Robinson, Charllen Huff, and many more. There will also be live painting presentations, artsy vendors and various creative activities for children and families. This is a FREE family event you will enjoy. For tickets and or information, contact 216-202-0784 or visit us at www.ffpinfo.org.

EDUCATION

LITERARY CLEVELAND, a nonprofit organization committed to nurturing a vibrant community of readers and writers in Northeast Ohio, is hosting the Cleveland Inkubator conference, a free literary festival, from July 31st to August 4th. The programs are held in locations throughout Cleveland. To get a full schedule of events visit: www.litcleveland.org.

KEY BANK PUBLIC SAFETY SCHOLARSHIP provides financial assistance to women and underrepresented minorities who wish to pursue training in the public safety field at Tri-C's Public Safety Center of Excellence. Eligible public safety programs include: EMT/Paramedic, Fire Academy, Police Academy, Corrections and Criminal Justice. For more information contact Public Safety Education Program Manager Terry Muff at 216-987-

3037 or terry.muff@tri-c.edu.

THE SCHOOL OF ONE is a flexible high school educational program in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, specifically designed to meet the needs of gifted, talented and undecided students whose circumstances dictate a more personalized and supportive academic environment. For more information visit ClevelandMetroSchools.org/Page/2146. To enroll call 216-838-8850.

GALE COURSES: Free online classes with your library card. Classes run for six weeks and begin every month. Many types of classes including accounting, computer applications, legal and personal development. To enroll visit <http://cpl.org/galecourses> and click GET STARTED NOW. Browse the site and pick a class. Select a start date. Create an account and enter your library card number.

EDUCATION, OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING, AND PERSONAL GOAL SETTING and a \$10 per hour stipend are among the features offered to individuals age 18-24 eligible for the Ohio Guidestone CCMEP TANF Cuyahoga program. To qualify you will need to meet requirements for eligibility to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. Orientations are held weekly. To reserve a spot call 440-260-6817.

FREE DIGITAL SKILLS TRAINING: Learn high-demand digital skills used in today's workplace in Digital C's ReStart Program. No experience necessary. Class computer provided. Classes designed for Cleveland residents with little or no digital skills or experience. Open to veterans, single heads of household receiving public assistance, young adults aging out of foster care and re-entry. Contact us at: restart@digitalc.org or visit www.digitalc.org/restart.

ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL) classes are offered by ASPIRE Greater Cleveland throughout the year at community centers and libraries. Adults who wish to attend the ESOL classes must complete an orientation session. Call 833-277-4732 or visit the website: inspiregreatercleveland.org for a complete list of orientation sessions.

FREE GED PREP: Eastman Branch Library, W. 116th and Lorain Avenue, 2nd

Floor. Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesdays: 10:15 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.. Instructor: Alex. No appointment necessary. **FREE ADULT BASIC EDUCATION & GED CLASSES:** One-to-one tutoring, learn at your own pace, friendly and relaxed place to learn. Seeds of Literacy located at 3104 Clark Ave, 3rd Floor. Call 216-661-7950 or visit www.seedsofliteracy.org.

ENVIRONMENT

DON'T BREAK THE LAKE: A partnership between City of Cleveland Water Department, Sustainable Cleveland and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration asks you to combat plastic pollution in Lake Erie by switching from single-use disposable plastic bags to reusable shopping bags, and switching from single-use water bottles to reusable water bottles. To get involved & join the conversation visit Sustainable Cleveland on Facebook: @SustainableCleveland; on Twitter: @sustainableCLE or at: dontbreakthelake.org.

WEST SIDE CREATION CARE TEAM is an ecumenical grassroots organization promoting care for creation, including the climate crisis. WSCCT engages in public policy advocacy, with members writing letters to local newspapers, and directly to state and local lawmakers and executives on legislation related to sustainable, renewable energy alternatives and other issues that affect how we care for creation. To receive notices of meetings, events, etc., or to schedule a presentation at your faith community, send an email to: westsidecreation-care@gmail.com.

FOOD SERVICE

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE LUNCHES: The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) joins with the Cleveland Food Bank to provide lunches to students age 18 and under until August 10th from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. at the following area schools: Joseph Gallagher, 6601 Franklin Blvd; Luis Munoz Marin, 1701 Castle Ave; Paul Dunbar, 2159 W. 29th; Thomas Jefferson, 3145 W. 46th; Walton, 3409 Walton Avenue; and Charles Mooney, 3213 Montclair Avenue.

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE DINNER: The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) joins with the Cleveland Food Bank to provide dinner to students age 18 and under until August 10th from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m. at Clark School, 5550 Clark Avenue.

HEALTH & SAFETY

CARRY NARCAN! SAVE A LIFE! Did you know you can get Narcan (a.k.a. naloxone) in certain pharmacies? Here is how it works: Visit your local pharmacy (Recommendation: Discount Drug Mart, Walgreens or Marcs pharmacies). Tell pharmacist you need to obtain Narcan (a.k.a. naloxone). You don't need a written prescription for Narcan. There are no special requirements for obtaining Narcan. Give the pharmacist your medical insurance information. Narcan is not free in the pharmacy, but your insurance may provide partial or full coverage for the medication.

CUYAHOGA COUNTY PROJECT DAWN (Deaths Avoided with Naloxone) Program for individuals who use opioids and are at risk of death from opioid overdose and family and friends of those who are at risk of death from opioid overdose. Learn how to recognize and overdose and how to administer naloxone to reverse and opioid overdose. Distribute naloxone to participants free of charge. Cleveland Department of Public Health Thomas McCafferty Health Center, 4242 Lorain Ave. Walk-in hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

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PHOTO BY VICTORIA SHEA

Saturday, June 9, 2018; La Placita, Latino themed open air market, W. 25th and Clark: Bridget Gill of the MetroHealth Medical Center Trauma Unit measures Miguel Hampton, age 7, for a free bicycle helmet courtesy of MetroHealth Medical Center, while Lia Hampton, age 6; patiently awaits her turn. Gill, a Registered Nurse in the Trauma Unit says, "I hope the helmets we are passing out will prevent injuries so the children don't show up in our department."

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County Medical Examiner shares thoughts on how to intervene to prevent more overdoses

by Victoria Shea

It is a topic Doctor Thomas Gilson is passionate about. It shows in every presentation he gives. Yet, people in his county, young and old, are still dying. The numbers are still rising. He wonders, as many others do in law enforcement-what else can they do to stop the senseless deaths. Taking a deep breathe, he sighs, pointing to the graph displayed by the projector on the wall. "There is a lot going on in this story that I'm gonna spend the next hour talking about." Gilson's right-there is. And what he is going to touch on, is only going to be the tip of the iceberg.

Since 2011, Doctor Thomas Gilson has served as the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner and Director of the Crime Lab. His audience was a group of concerned licensed funeral directors from the State of Ohio attending the Buckeye State Funeral Directors Convention on June 15. His topic is the evolution of the opioid epidemic in Ohio. His focus is mainly the overdose deaths

from heroin and fentanyl that have risen since his arrival in the county.

Ohio has the second highest per capita of opioid overdoses death rates in the country, Gilson announces. This catches the attention of several of the directors. "We have the most absolute highest number of deaths in the country as well," Gilson adds.

For Gilson, the crisis has what he refers to as the three phases: prescription drugs, heroin and finally, illicitly-manufactured fentanyl. The state, he says, is partially to blame for the first phase. He is of course, referring to pill mills, which Ohio pioneered to have, and then when they realized there was a problem, pioneered to close. Gilson says with the pill mills gone, prescription drug overdoses have declined.

While many would say that is a good thing, Gilson notes that while the prescribing of opioid pain relievers is declining, there have been recent rises in the number people using heroin and illicitly-manufactured fentanyl.

In 2007, a total of 97 prescription opioid drug overdoses were reported in Cuyahoga County. Forty additional overdoses were contributed to heroin.

In 2008 and 2009, the number of heroin deaths rose to and stayed at 64. By 2010, 91 deaths reported were due to heroin. In 2012 and 2013 the number of heroin related deaths passed the total of opioid overdose deaths by 161 to 111 and 194 to 124 respectively. Since then, that number has only continued to rise in the county. By 2016, which is the last completed year data available, the number of heroin overdoses was 320 deaths.

"The heroin issue was brought up by a good employee doing her job in the toxicology lab at the medical examiner's office," Gilson has been quoted saying. She brought it up because she had worked in the toxicology lab once before, had left and then returned. Gilson said it reminded him of a conversation he had in New Hampshire in 1998 where Gilson himself expressed concern

in the rising number of oxycodone deaths. He said it made him take the employee's concern seriously.

Hitting his stride in his presentation, Gilson continues. He knows that while funeral directors may not be able to stop the drug overdoses, they understand where he is coming from. They are like him, speaking for the dead, and on the behalf of the dead. They are in the front lines like himself and the law enforcement officers. They see what the drug overdoses do, not just to the user, but to the families.

"Why does the mortality rise so fast in heroin?" Gilson asked rhetorically. "Because if I buy 80mg of oxycodone off the street that was diverted, that went through a quality assurance process. It's 80mg of oxycodone. Heroin is just a product

you buy on the street. Is it this pure, or that pure? Don't know. As a result, the mortality takes off a lot faster."

He goes on to explain that the decline in prescription overdoses is because heroin is cheaper and easier to obtain. Although heroin comes as either a white or brown powder or as a sticky black substance known as "black tar," in Cleveland, Gilson and his staff are seeing the brown powder more frequently. He explains that between the two coasts, knowing the difference in what heroin type is used makes a difference as fentanyl is introduced as the drug epidemic becomes worse.

"People on the west coast are more use to black tar heroin. People on the east coast, white powder,

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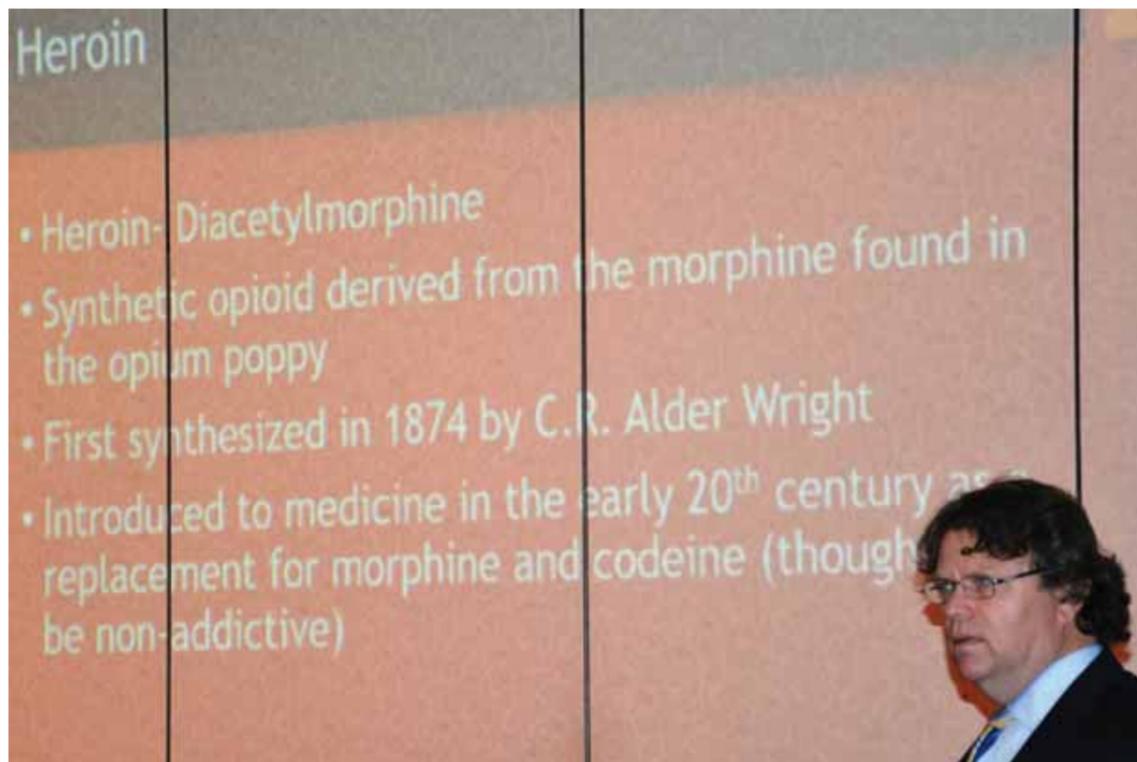


PHOTO BY CHRIS HARRIS

Friday, June 15, 2018; 81st Annual Convention and Summer Seminar of Buckeye State Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association, Cleveland Marriott East: Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner, Dr. Gilson, explains the history of heroin during his presentation. Gilson said that although heroin comes in both a powder or sticky black substance, the majority of heroin seen in Cleveland is the powder, which is brown in color.

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Community Roundtable on Transit urges the creation of better, safer and more affordable public transit



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Thursday, June 21, 2018; Community Roundtable on Transit, Old Stone Church, 91 Public Square: Marvin Ranaldson, Chair of the Fair Fares Committee of Clevelanders for Public Transit, offers some proposals to help lower costs for transit riders.

Ohioans for Gun Safety calls for background checks

by Chuck Hoven

Retired school teacher Dave Eggert and Clinical Psychologist Dr Terry Tobias were both drawn to work for greater gun safety as a result of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting where 20 children, ages six and seven, as well as six adults, were killed by a single shooter.

"As a former teacher, I had to do something," said Eggert referencing Sandy Hook.

Eggert, a Cleveland Heights resident, who is married to an ordained minister, urged people to put "God before guns." He said he believes "too many Americans are putting Second Amendment rights before the First and Second Commandments."

Dr Terry Tobias said, "Sandy Hook hit me hard. It was heartbreaking. As a civilized society, we should be able to do more to prevent gun violence."

Eggert and Tobias came to St. Malachi Parish Hall on June 10 to speak to about 30 people regarding their efforts to place an issue on the Ohio ballot that would require what they termed "common sense background checks" for gun purchasers.

Eggert says after researching the issue of background checks, Ohioans for Gun Safety determined "common sense background checks were something practical that we could achieve."

Under the Brady Bill passed in 1994, Eggert says individuals in the United States purchasing a gun through a licensed gun dealer are required to have a background check through the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

However, there are loopholes in the background checking system currently in place in the State of Ohio. The biggest, says Eggert is that it doesn't cover all gun sales. Private gun sales between unlicensed sellers don't require a background check. Persons prohibited from buying a gun from a dealer, such as felons, fugitives and those with a domestic violence misdemeanor on their record, can purchase a firearm in a private gun sale.

Support is high, says Eggert, for closing the background check

by Chuck Hoven

Organizers of a Community Roundtable on Transit said they hope to create a new vision for the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority and stop the cycle of service cuts, fare increases and ridership loss.

In an effort to bring about their vision of a better, safer and more affordable public transit system, several community groups, Clevelanders for Public Transit, Linking Employment Abilities and Potential (LEAP), Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE) and Policy Matters Ohio, joined in a collaborative partnership to hold the Community Roundtable on Transit on June 21. Seventy-five people gathered at the Old Stone Church on Public Square to participate in the roundtable.

Before breaking into small discussion groups, some speakers addressed the group as a whole.

Skshai Singh of Clevelanders for Public Transit shared some information about the past successes of the organization founded in 2015. Singh spoke about a successful effort to stop fare increases from taking place this year; the reopening of Public Square to bus service and the completion of a survey of public transit users. Singh noted that the three primary concerns of Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA or RTA) riders were cost, service and safety.

Singh criticized the poor record of the State of Ohio in funding public transit. He said that Ohio was one of the lowest state funders of public transit in the nation.

Chairman of the Clevelanders for Public Transit Fair Fares Committee, Marvin Ranaldson, shared some measures his committee has explored to help make RTA more affordable for riders. Ranaldson urged that RTA bring back transfers. He called for a fair fare pass amount that would allow single trip or daily pass riders to build up to the amount of a monthly pass and then ride for free the remainder of the month after they had reached that level. This, he said, would help riders that could not come up with enough for a monthly pass up-front.

He noted the escalation of the cost of a single trip fare has increased from \$1.25 in 2006 to \$2.50 today. This, he says, along with a thirty percent cut in service has resulted in a death spiral for RTA which is now at an all-time low in ridership. Ranaldson also called for more local

and state funding for public transit to help increase service to assure that "people can get to where they need to go in a timely manner."

A Midtown employer spoke, stressing the importance of public transit in making life affordable for potential employees. He said that a study by the Fund for our Economic Future found that the average Cleveland family was spending forty-one percent of their household income on housing and transportation. He said the cost of having a car is about \$9,300 per year and noted you could save that amount by giving up a car and taking public transit. He called fair funding of public transit "one of the biggest economic development projects we can have."

Gloria Aron of Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality urged those present to work for "a safe, affordable transit system that meets the needs of all of us." She said RTA is a public transit system and it is "our responsibility to hold RTA accountable and make sure it is working for us."

Aron called for an increase in the county sales tax that would be dedicated to the RTA. She also shared her history of using the bus, as she used it as a way to go to work during the 1990s. She now uses the bus to go shopping or take her grandchildren on trips to the Great Lakes Science Center. But she warned that if RTA rates go any higher, it would be cheaper to go by Uber.

Aron talked about cuts in service. She said that a cousin was unable to take a job located on Rockside Road because no bus would take him there.

Aron also called for the restoration of the Madison/Bridge bus, saying that residents along those corridors have to go to Lorain or Detroit Avenue's to catch the bus.

In addition, she called for bringing back the Zoo bus, which took riders directly to the entrance of the zoo. As the bus now drops off at the top of the hill leading down to the zoo, she mentioned the challenges of taking a toddler down the steep hill and then back up it.

Aron finished by saying she felt RTA should be running promotional ads on their buses aimed at parents and grandparents, urging them to take their children or grandchildren to destinations such as the Science Center or Zoo via the bus.

Lynn Solomon of Clevelanders for Public Transit said that when she first arrived in Cleveland in 1976,

she loved the bus system. She could get anywhere and got very familiar with Cleveland by taking the bus. She said that often, she would explore new areas of the city by taking a different bus to her destination.

After 20 years as a bus rider, Solomon said, her mother convinced her to get a car. She was married and had children, so the car made her more assessable if the children had an emergency. Solomon said after her children were grown, her car continually broke down, and she decided to go back to riding the bus. But when she returned to the RTA system, she noticed a big difference from before. Routes had been cut out, it cost a lot more, and it took longer to get to where she wanted to go. Solomon said, "I thought RTA was dying."

Zach Schiller of Policy Matters Ohio said the Ohio Department of Transportation did a study which said the state should be spending \$120 million per year on public transit. Instead, the state allocates only \$40 million to public transit, and most of that is from the federal government, he said.

When Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCO) that used to pay sales tax were removed from the tax base, RTA lost about \$20 million a year in local sales tax revenue, said Schiller. The state legislature tried to design a fix with a franchise fee to make up the loss; however Governor John Kasich vetoed the fix.

Schiller talked about some sources of revenue that could be used to help fund public transit. He said the State Legislature passed a law saying cities cannot tax companies like Uber and Lyft. Schiller urged citizens to contact the legislature and let them know that they do not think this is a good idea.

He then spoke of two unexpected developments that could be sources of revenue. Schiller said the State of Ohio has a \$400 million surplus this year. He said the state could efficiently use the surplus to make up for the MCO sales tax cuts to RTA for at least one year. "They have the money, they should do it," he said.

The morning of the roundtable discussion, Schiller said the U.S. Supreme Court announced that states for the first time can now require online retailers to collect sales tax even if they do not have a physical presence in the state. Schiller said, with just a few changes in state law, online companies could begin paying sales taxes in Ohio. He estimated that statewide, this would bring in anywhere from \$280 million to \$450 million per year. Some of that would go directly to RTA via the local sales tax, he said.

Schiller again urged citizens to call their state representatives and senators to urge them to take actions on both the budget surplus and the online sales tax. Transit riders attending the meeting had many additional suggestions as well as complaints about RTA. One resident complained that the No. 8 bus on Cedar that once ran every 20 minutes, now runs once per hour. Akshai Singh, in response to the rider's concern, noted that when bus service s reduced to less than two or three buses per hour, ridership declines.

A rider suggested that RTA could do a better job in Public Relations and Marketing. She said many church groups like to go places, and RTA should market which buses would take the groups to various

continued on page 8



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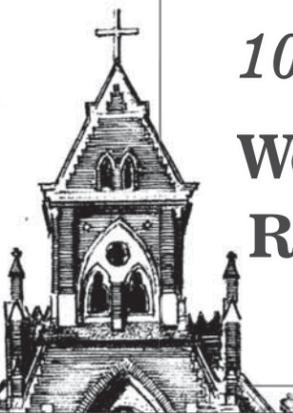
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Cleveland Public Library aids in creating personal style among its patrons

by Silk Allen

Maybe you aren't into sewing or knitting, but you still want to make a personal statement with your clothes. The Cleveland Public Library is equipped to handle that.

Usually when you think of the library, you rarely think of fashion and personal style, but the main branch downtown is helping to change that by providing patrons access to software and technology that allows them to personalize anything

they can imagine.

The Tech Central Maker Space has a variety of high tech machinery including a laser engraver and cutter, a 3D printer and scanner, and professional level photography, videography, graphic design and music recording and production software and equipment, but the most popular machines are the vinyl printer and cutter and the heat press.

"Most of the use is for the heat press", said Library Assistant Alison Guerin. "Lots of guys come in to print on clothing."

FASHION

You can bring on t-shirts, jeans, jackets, canvas bags- even socks- whatever you can think of- and personalize it with a logo, a photo of your kid, a favorite celebrity, a song lyric or a fun message.

The process is fairly simple with the hardest part being able to come up with an idea. Guerin explained that depending on how detailed the image is, the majority of time is spent prepping the final image in the software program Corel Draw and then weeding the design out once printed.

If you already have an idea and it's simple, you can be in and out in two hours or less. Come in, download your image, import it into the software, print it and then use the heat transfer to press it onto your item of clothing.

Although DIY (do it yourself) is highly encouraged, there is always a designated staff member available to help at every step of the way because there is a slight learning curve to working the software and equipment. The library also offers tutorials on each of the machines via their Maker Monday series that travels to each neighborhood branch throughout the year.

The Maker Space is available to all patrons age 18 and up (14 and up with a guardian) that have a library card and

are in good standing with the library. There is no charge to use the equipment and you only pay for the supplies you use, allowing patrons to come in and affordably experiment with equipment that they might not otherwise have access to.

In addition to designing images on clothes, you can also create buttons with the button maker, design a wooden medallion or a pair of earrings with the laser cutter, or use the 3D printer to design a custom bracelet.

Library staff have seen patrons get creative by bringing in their own materials like exotic snakeskin leathers used to engrave and customize the tongues of their sneakers, and the creation of laser engraved pins, button holes and glass beads. According to staff, with the

right type of (approved) fabric, you can create anything. And yes, you can also learn how to knit, sew, embroider and crochet- check with your neighborhood branch to see when and where classes are offered.

The Maker Space is open Monday-Saturday from 10 a.m.- 5:30 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays are for walk ins, but reservations are strongly encouraged for Mon.- Thursday by calling 216-623-2980. To find out more information visit the Cleveland Public Library's website at www.cpl.org.



PHOTO BY SILK ALLEN

Thursday, June 14, 2018; Maker Space of Tech Central in the lower level of the Cleveland Public Library Main Branch, E. 6th and Superior Avenue: Motivational speaker Denise Powers uses a vinyl cutter and heat press machine to design a t-shirt with her image on it and her personal motto "Dream Hard, Go hard!". In this photo, Powers presses excess air bubbles to ready the shirt for the heat press which will then attach the photo to the shirt.

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MEDICAL EXAMINER

continued from page 3

brown powder," he explains. "Fentanyl is a white powder. So, if you sell white powder to somebody on the west coast, they're like wait a minute, that's not my heroin."

A chemistry major, Gilson cannot avoid the quick chemistry lesson that comes when talking of heroin. Used to wean morphine addicts, Gilson declares that this was a terrible drug to use because as it breaks down in the body, it becomes morphine. The good, that came out of the morphine abuse in the early 20th century, was the drug schedule system, which assigned numbers to drugs based on their acceptable medical use and the drug's abuse or dependency potential. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration's website, heroin falls into Schedule 1, which are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical use and a high potential for abuse.

The number of heroin deaths in Cuyahoga County, Gilson said, was like taking a jumbo jet and crashing it into Lake Erie every year. With this in mind, the Poison Death Review Committee was formed to review all heroin deaths. It featured representatives from medical, treatment, public health and law enforcement areas to ensure a well-rounded panel of experts.

What was discovered was that heroin overdoses were mainly of the male predominance with a four-to-one ratio. They lived in the suburbs, not downtown Cleveland as one would expect. Those dying were predominantly white, and as Gilson called it, the shocker, was that this was not the cause of death for those in the teens and twenties, but rather, those 45 to 60 years of age. In fact, those in their teens and twenties were the least likely to die from heroin overdoses. The rational behind this was those dying were ones who had gotten hooked on prescription pain medication and

had switched to heroin.

It was also discovered that the number of people dying of heroin overdoses while in proximity of another person was approximately seventy percent, with fifty-eight percent of the bystanders not using drugs. It was determined that wider access to naloxone might save lives from heroin overdoses, which was the creation of Project DAWN.

Shocking still was that forty-eight percent of those who had died of a heroin overdose had received substance abuse treatment or detoxification within two years of their deaths. Forty percent of those who died had been incarcerated within two years of their deaths. This allowed the committee to realize that treatment facilities and jails were potential intervention points for educational activities such as how to handle a drug overdose and use naloxone.

He also knows that if given the chance, two-thirds of them will stop using if they live long enough.

While the numbers do most of the talking for him, Gilson knows facts the numbers don't always reflect. He knows that while many, including those sitting before him, may think drug users are just party people, many drug users want to quit using. He also knows that if given the chance, two-thirds of them will stop using if they live long enough. But he knows his numbers don't clearly show that. He must use his words to explain that to the audience. He must try and made them understand.

"I don't want to see people go back to using drugs," he announces to the crowd. This statement does not appear to catch anyone off guard. For those in attendance, the shocker would be if he said he did. "But I'm smart enough to know that

won't happen."

So, he explains what happens as you take heroin and how as you use the drug. The doses at which you use it begin to rise to increase the high. He also explains the downfall when something happens like going to a treatment facility or jail. You come out and go back to using the same amount you were using before you went in. Instead of getting the high with everything alright, you wind up on his autopsy table instead.

Proving that prescription drugs were helping the cause of the heroin overdoses, it was determined that seventy-three percent of heroin overdose victims had a file with the Ohio Automated RX Registry System and within two years of their deaths had received a legal prescription for a controlled substance. This information showed that a high percentage of fatal overdose victims were receiving legal prescriptions for narcotics despite a state prescription drug monitoring program.

Despite the negative information discovered by the committee, according to the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy, the Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System has worked. In 2011, there were 782 million solid doses of opioids prescribed in Ohio. By 2015, that number had decreased seventeen percent to 701 million solid doses.

If only that was the end of the story, Gilson thinks, as he ready's himself to begin the final phase. He knows the story-he lives it-everyday he sees it. While the numbers are starting to decrease, even slowly, in heroin, fentanyl is on the rise. He knows what he is about to say as he looks at the graph once more showing the deaths from heroin, cocaine, fentanyl and all opioids...

"This purple drug is fentanyl, and fentanyl started to take off," He says before pausing. "We had thirty-seven overdose deaths in 2014, but I can tell you, thirty of those happened in November and December of that year."

An already silent room has sudden become even more silent if that is possible for a moment. He knows that his audience is processing this

information. How is that possible? He knows it is. He saw it happen. So, he continues.

"The number rose up to ninety, ninety-two in 2015," he announces. "This drug is starting to make its appearance." But he continues with the numbers. By 2016, there are 399 dead from overdoses. 2017 he sees the number up to 492.

But why is fentanyl on the rise? He knows this a question on everyone's minds. It must be. It was certainly on his at one point he is certain. He explains, now in greater detail than before when he first started his presentation. He knows that this has to do with the potency of fentanyl. He knows that the potency has to do with the high. "Its potency is substantially more than heroin," he explains. "We use morphine as a base line, and heroin is about four to five times the potency of morphine. Fentanyl is about eighty to a hundred times the potency."

But he continues. He must make those here that could help make a difference understand. Fentanyl is unforgiving. Much more so than

heroin.

Naloxone can help in a fentanyl overdose, he states, but you have to be there with it fast and you better have a lot of it. You must have those things on your side to have a chance with a fentanyl overdose.

But like everything else, the real reason it is on the rise is because it is cheap to make. And therefore, cheap to sell and cheap to purchase.

Yet, even after saying his peace, he knows that he cannot in good faith send these funeral directors back into their neighborhoods without a bit of hope. He has some good news-it is not much, but still, it is a start, so he announces it. He's not seeing as many deaths from drugs this year. He doesn't have all the numbers yet, but he knows it is going down.

He knows that his county has much more to do to combat the drug epidemic. But with the numbers going down, even slightly, he knows that something they are doing is helping.

He is making a difference. Even if it's a small one.

GUN SAFETY

continued from page 4

loopholes. He cites statistics saying 77 percent of gun owners support such measures as do 87 percent of non-gun owners, 70 percent of Republicans, and 88 percent of Democrats.

Twenty-one states have already closed the background check loophole says, Eggert. He says states have taken action because of substantial evidence that more background checks result in fewer deaths of women from domestic violence, reduced gun trafficking and fewer aggravated assaults.

While other states have strengthened their background check laws, Ohio is moving in the opposite direction. Bills that have passed in Ohio in recent years are relaxing gun laws, not reinforcing them, said Dr Tobias. As a result, she said Ohioans for Gun Safety has little confidence that the State of Ohio Legislature would act to close loopholes in the background checking system. So,

she said, the group plans to take their proposal directly to voters in 2019 or 2020.

To place the proposal on the ballot, Dr Tobias said the Ohioans for Gun Safety would need to gather close to 200,000 signatures.

Eggert says to get that effort underway, Ohioans for Gun Safety is looking for people or organizations that are willing to be groundbreakers and host events so they can present their idea to voters and listen to their feedback.

Dr Tobias says this initial stage will be a listening campaign and participants will be surveyed to help create clearly written ballot language for the proposal and to decide whether to pursue a new state law or an amendment to the state constitution.

Eggert encouraged those that want to get involved by providing financial help, hosting a house party or informational event, or by pledging their support for common-sense background checks to visit the Ohioans for Gun Safety website at www.ohioansforgunsafety.com.



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PHOTO BY VICTORIA SHEA

Saturday, June 9, 2018; St. Colman Parish presents a Day of Music celebrating the 100th anniversary of the church building, St. Colman Churchyard, 2057 W. 65th; Members of the Cleveland Drum Circle (L-R) Linda Corrigan, Eric Vogt, Luis Arocho Jr., and Daniel Silva, engage the crowd with the rhythm of the beating drums.



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COMMUNITY BOARD

continued from page 2

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FREE SMOKE ALARMS FOR YOUR HOME are available through Operation Save-A-Life, a program of the American Red Cross and the Cleveland Fire Department, that provides free smoke alarms and batteries to Cleveland residents. Smoke alarms are installed by Cleveland firefighters at no cost to residents. Please note that application and installation process may take up to 90 days. Call the Operation Save-A-Life 24-hour hotline at 216-361-5535 to apply for free smoke alarms.

LEGAL ADVICE

TENANT INFORMATION LINE: Legal Aid now handles tenants' questions through the Tenant Information Line at 216-861-5955. Advice is also available to those who speak Spanish. Para Español: 216-586-3190.

FREE LEGAL ADVICE CLINIC: The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland offers free, first come, first served, legal advice event for low-income individuals. July 14 at Lorain Branch Library, 8216 Lorain Ave. Intake from 10 – 11 a.m. For more information call 687-1900.

NEED LEGAL HELP WITH YOUR JOB? Been paid late or not at all? Not received the minimum wage? Not received overtime pay? Not received your last pay check? Experienced unsafe working conditions? Had other employment-related problems. The Legal Aid's Wage Project can help. Call 888-817-3777 toll free to complete an application for legal services.

IMMIGRATION LEGAL SERVICES: Need immigration Help? Call Catholic Charities at 216-939-3769. Low cost immigration assistance for applications filed with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and representation in Immigration Court.

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feeding support. To be eligible to participate in the nutrition education program you must be pregnant, breast-feeding or postpartum (having a baby less-than six months old). Or, be an infant or child under five years old. You must also live in Cuyahoga County, have a nutritional need and have a household income that is less than or equal to the Ohio WIC guidelines for your family size. For family size a foster child counts as a one-person family, a pregnant mother counts as a two-person family. For a one-person family the income eligibility is \$22,311 or less annual income. For a two-person family the income would be \$30,044 or less. For a three-person family the eligible income would be \$37,777 or less. As the size of the family increases, the amount of income you can have and still be eligible also increase for income guidelines for larger families call 216-957-9421.

FATHERHOOD DEVELOPMENT: Free programs: Job readiness & placement programs, financial literacy, healthy parenting, legal assistance, career counseling. Contact Passages Connecting Fathers and Families and New Beginnings for New Fathers at 3631 Perkins, or call 216-881-6776 or visit www.passages-oh.org.

METROHEALTH MOMS: Sign up for a chance to win a stylish diaper kit, free weekly emails, personalized to the growth and development of your baby. MetroHealth Moms guides you through your pregnancy. Each week learn something new about the growth of your baby. To sign up visit metrohealth.org/birthing and click on the MetroHealth Moms icon on the right-hand side.

MOMS FIRST: A helping hand for your pregnancy and your baby. Are you Pregnant? Do you live in the city of Cleveland? MomsFirst can help you learn how to reduce the stress that comes with being pregnant and parenting; connect to resources for housing, education and health care; understand how to keep your baby safe; find birth control options that work; set and achieve your goals before and after birth. Call 216-664-4194 to connect to a MomsFirst provider in your area. www.momsfirst.org.

POLITICAL ACTION

CLEVELANDERS FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT urges public transit supporters and riders to join in a march & rally on July 23. The group will meet at RTA Headquarters at 1240 W. 6th at 5 p.m. and march to Public Square for a 5:30 p.m. rally on the South side of the square to urge RTA to put transit funding on the ballot. For more information visit www.clefortransit.org @CLEforTransit on Facebook or Twitter.

CLEVELANDERS FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT will meet at the Starbucks on W. 6th at 8:30 a.m. on July 24th and then go to the RTA Board Meeting to lobby RTA to place an issue on the ballot seeking more funding and to start a Fair Fare program. For more information contact

clefortransit.org/fairfares.

OHIOANS FOR GUN SAFETY: A grassroots movement to bring common sense background checks on gun sales to Ohio. For more information visit www.ohioansforgunsafety.com.

MOMS DEMAND ACTION for gun sense in America: For more information on joining or volunteering with a local chapter visit: www.momsdemandaction.org.

EVERYTOWN SURVIVOR NETWORK: The Everytown Survivor Network brings together Americans who have been personally affected by gun violence to build a community of support and empower them to become leaders in the gun violence prevention movement. If you or someone you love is a survivor and you would like to get involved text the word SURVIVOR TO 644-33 or email: survivors@everytown.org.

VOLUNTEERS

CASA of Cuyahoga County, a program of Child and Family Advocates of Cuyahoga County, needs volunteers to advocate for children who have been neglected and abused. CASAs are everyday citizens who are appointed by the Court to advocate for the safety and well-being of children and represent the children's best interests. CASAs are trained to investigate, facilitate, advocate, and monitor one or two cases at a time to help the Court make the best decision for a safe, caring, and permanent home for children involved in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Those interested in becoming a CASA, please visit cfadvocates.org or call 216.443.3377 for more information.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for Mobile Pantry at Walz Branch Library, 7910 Detroit Avenue on 4th Friday of the month at 11 a.m. See Mrs. Lefkowitz to volunteer.

CALLING ALL CRAFTERS: Warm Up Cleveland and the Cleveland Public Library are seeking donations of handmade items to help our neighbors in need: hats, scarves, cowls, mittens, gloves, handwarmers, headbands, socks, slippers, sweaters, shawls, blankets, afghans, quilts, stuffed toys, baby clothes, baby booties, and baby blankets. All sizes needed: infants to adults. Drop off completed items, yarn or supplies year-round at any Cleveland Public Library location. Donations of washable yarn, knitting needles and crochet hooks are very much appreciated. Busy knitters and crocheters will turn your unwanted yarn into finished objects. All items are distributed to local charities. Join the group at: www.ravelry.com/groups/warm-up-cleveland. For more information contact Outreach and Programming Services at 216-623-2921 or visit: www.cpl.org.

NORTHEAST OHIO COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS (NEOCH): works to organize and empower homeless and at-risk men, women and children to break the cycle of poverty through public



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN
Saturday, June 16, 2018; La Sagrada Familia Latin American Festival, 7719 Detroit Avenue: Angie Sedano enjoys the festival with her children Antonio Feghali, age 20 months, and Alejandro Feghali, age 3 months.

education, advocacy and the creation of nurturing environments. If you would like to find out more, or help, visit NEOCH at www.neoch.org.

YOUTH

CHECK OUT 216TEENS.ORG for information on puberty, STDS, pregnancy prevention and relationships. 216TEENS is the Cuyahoga County Board of Health's campaign to prevent teen pregnancy and STDS.

SUMMER LIT LEAGUE FINALE CELEBRATION: Saturday, August 4th, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. Complete Lit League and earn two free tickets to the Zoo and Rainforest for our Aug 4th celebration including the Cavs Scream Team, Z107.9, puppet shows, crafts, and the 12:30 p.m. drawing for Southwest Airlines gift cards (you must be present to win).

YOUTH SUMMIT AND CMSD BACK TO SCHOOL FAIR: Saturday August 4, at Public Auditorium, 500 Lakeside Avenue from 9 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Doors open at 8 a.m. For more information call 216-838-3223.

TEEN SUICIDE: LEARN THE WARNING SIGNS AND RISK FACTORS that may contribute to youth suicide by using the free online staff development (in-service) training for teachers and others who work and interact with youth on suicide awareness and prevention. The online staff development trainings offered by The Jason Foundation introduce the scope and magnitude of the problem of youth suicide on both the national and state level. It discusses the educator's relationship that allows them to recognize when the youth are struggling or changing and how to respond. For more information and a list of the warning signs and risk factors that can elevate the possibility of suicidal ideations visit The Jason Foundation at: www.jasonfoundation.com.

Plain Press Website: For more Community Board notices, articles and photos visit the Plain Press online at www.palinpress.org

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PHOTO BY VICTORIA SHEA
Saturday, June 16, 2018; 30th Annual Clifton Arts & Musicfest, Clifton Boulevard: Equinox, artwork created by artist Timothy Martin of Sidney, Ohio. Martin greeted festival goers at his booth along with his grandson and apprentice welder Heyven Sutter.

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Thursday, May 31, 2018; Burke Lakefront Airport, 1501 N. Marginal Road: "Doc" a World War II B-29 Superfortress, stopped in Cleveland during its 2018 summer tour. "Doc" is one of two B-29's still flying.

A rare piece of World War II history dances into Cleveland on "laughter-silvered wings"

by Victoria Shea

A rare sight to behold arrived in the warm afternoon of May 31 at Burke Lakefront Airport in the form of "Doc," the lone survivor of a B-29 bomber group, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."

"It was hard to miss," retired U.S. Coast Guard Lieutenant Commander Robert Shields explained, having heard "Doc" flying over his residence in Bay Village, Ohio, "There is no missing the purring of radial engines."

Doc was accompanied into Burke by two other World War II era warbirds -- a B-25J Mitchell Bomber, "Georgie's Gal" based at the Liberty Aviation Museum in Port Clinton, Ohio; and a P-51C Red Tail Mustang, "Tuskegee Airmen" based in Red Wing, Minnesota. "Doc" is just one of two airworthy B-29 Superfortresses left flying (the other being "Fifi" based in Addison, Texas).

Glistening with her spit-shine polish in the late afternoon sun on the tarmac behind the International Women's Air and Space Museum, located inside the airport terminal, one would never imagine that when she was found almost 30-years-ago, "Doc" was a sight for sore eyes.

"Tyres were all dry-rotted and flat, and it has sunk into the sand," explained a former volunteer and friend of "Doc" while waiting for his chance to board. "It was there and still in one piece, but it was vandal-

ized, windows had been broken, and it had graffiti on it."

Located in a remote corner of China Lake, a Naval Air Weapons Station in California, it was a challenge to get "Doc" back to her present state. The owner of the B-29, Tony Mazzolini, of South Euclid, Ohio contacted the U.S. Air Force in search of a B-29 to restore but was informed that all remaining B-29s had been sent to China Lake to be used for aerial bombing practice. Determined, Mazzolini then reached out to the U.S. Navy, who confirmed the Air Force's story, stating that they had blown up all the B-29s when they were used for strafing practice.

But luck would be on Mazzolini's side when a janitor stationed at China Lake located a lone B-29 in the remote corner of the station, which had "slipped through the cracks." With this information in hand, Mazzolini drove out to China Lake and with the base commander, went to locate "Doc." Upon seeing the airplane, the base commander was quoted as saying, "Son of a gun. I didn't know this was here."

After obtaining all needed permissions, Mazzolini's next task was to get the B-29 off China Lake's property. Shutting down the station for a couple of hours, along with a bulldozer and new tyres made from molds located in England, Mazzolini and his crew pulled the B-29 off U.S. government property and to

a small airfield nearby. From there, the plane was disassembled, placed on flatbeds and trucked to Wichita, Kansas to the Boeing plant where she was originally built. The next sixteen years saw volunteers from far and wide across the U.S. arriving to help get "Doc" back to airworthy flying status. It was worth it when in June 2016 "Doc" returned to the skies for her first flight.

Currently out on summer tour, "Doc" is expected to make a minimum of nine stops in five states, with additional tour stops to be added throughout the tour season. "Doc's Friends" spokesman, Josh Wells said that the mission of the B-29 is history.

"Our mission is to honor the Greatest Generation and connect and educate current and future generations with the rich history of the B-29 as it relates to our nation's history," writes Wells on the B-29's website. But there is hope that somewhere in the future, "Doc" will be able to provide Living History Flight rides in the historic aircraft as well to help enhance the history already being taught.

"Doc" is scheduled to return home sometime in the fall to Wichita, Kansas. In the meantime, those looking for additional information about "Doc" are encouraged to visit www.b29doc.com.

TRANSIT

continued from page 4

sites in Cleveland.

Singh suggested that instead of playing loud, obnoxious commercials for other companies, RTA could be promoting itself on its buses and rapid lines.

Singh also suggested that those with smartphones download the Transit App. The app, he said, will find your location and tell you where the nearest bus or rapid line is, as well as the next scheduled arrival.

Newly elected RTA Board President, Dennis Clough, said, "it all comes down to funding" when referring to implementing some of the suggestions made. "We don't want a temporary fix," he said. "We want something that is going to be lasting. All ideas need to be explored."

Ward 5 City Council Representative and Chair of City Council Transportation Committee, Phyllis Cleveland, called public transit a social justice issue. Her ward, which includes Central, Kinsman and North Broadway, is the most deprived council ward in Cleveland. She said many of the residents in Ward 5 either don't have cars or access to cars. "People in my community largely depend on public transit."

Cleveland said while she agrees with Clough's statement that a long-term solution is needed, she also feels the public is facing a critical situation soon due to the loss of the Medicaid tax. She said RTA's budget has to be balanced and if

there is not enough revenue, service gets cut. Those cuts will affect both riders and RTA employees. "A real short-term crisis has to be dealt with—we have to come up with a solution, for now, that is viable."

Furthermore, Cleveland speculated about how the scandals at RTA would play out politically and if they would hinder the passage of a sales tax. Her suggestion was to possibly create a body like the Bond Accountability Commission that was created to monitor spending of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District's Bond issue to fund its Facilities Plan.

As well, she suggested outlining specifically what more RTA would have to do if the levy were to pass. In promoting the levy, RTA could say: "this is what your additional dollars would pay for," she said.

William Nix, President of Local 268 of the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU), talked about union members being laid off during budget cuts at RTA. He said the workforce on the rail line has been reduced from 100 employees to 40, and the rail system does have state of the art equipment.

Nix was also critical of RTA Chief Executive Officer Joe Calabrese for not pushing for a tax increase to stabilize the transit system. Noting that long-time Board President George Dixon got away with not paying health insurance premiums for decades, Nix said union members have to swipe their cards to make sure their premiums are up to date before they can come back to their jobs

after being laid off for six months. The union member suggested new management at RTA from the top down would help to restore trust in the system.

Following comments from speakers and attendees, those present at the roundtable broke into discussion groups to discuss topics related to RTA service and affordability. Topics included: service hours, service frequency, coverage area regarding the bus getting someone where they want to go, accessibility and availability of ticket machines and lastly, affordability.

Many of those in attendance signed a letter to RTA Board of Trustees members and elected county officials urging the placement of a levy on the November ballot. The letter, composed by Clevelanders for Public Transit, closed by saying, "I am calling on you to put a levy on the ballot this November to raise the necessary revenue to restore GCRTA to a level of service that meets all the needs of our great community."

Clevelanders for Public Transit plan to hold a rally on July 23 to urge RTA's Board to put transit funding on the November ballot. The group hopes to attract transit riders to that rally. Those interested in attending should meet at the RTA's headquarters located at 1240 W. 6th St. at 5 p.m. The rally will take place on the south side of Public Square starting at 5:30 p.m. For more information about Clevelanders for Public Transit, upcoming events and their Fair Fares Plan visit www.clefortransit.org or @CLEforTransit on Facebook or Twitter.

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