



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR
One of the Guardians of Transportation looms over the Terminal Tower in the background.

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Plain Press

Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

Clevelanders for Public Transit rally for increased public transit funding

One hundred members of Clevelanders for Public Transit (CPT) marched from Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority headquarters to Public Square on July 23rd to rally for transit funding. The next morning, the group presented the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Board of Trustees with over 700 letters calling on the RTA Board to place a transit funding levy on the

November ballot. Clevelanders for Public Transit members also testified at the meeting.

On July 24th, RTA Board voted to draft tax proposals and call a special meeting in time to place a levy on the November ballot in Cuyahoga County. The deadline for ballot measures is August 8th.

The RTA Board asked its staff to draft two proposals for consideration

at the meeting—a sales tax increase from 1 to 1.5 percent and a 2-mill property tax.

In addition to seeking additional funding for RTA, Clevelanders for Public Transit is calling for new leadership for the organization. The RTA Board also responded to that request, voting to speed up the search for a new director and ask RTA General Manager Joe Calabrese to retire earlier than he originally planned. The RTA Board of Trustees also voted to speed up the transition to a new general manager.

In explaining the call for new leadership, CPT issued a statement saying, "RTA's Board of Trustees has supported the longest-serving transit administration in the country while those who depend on transit to provide for their family, to access medical care and to better themselves through education, have endured rising fares and reduced service. In 2006, a single trip on RTA cost only \$1.25. Since that time, fares have doubled while service has declined by over 25 percent. The result is record-low ridership of just 39.5 million rides last year—a decrease of over 30 percent in the past decade."

In explaining the urgency of action to raise additional funds, Clevelanders for Public Transit—continued on page 3



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Sunday, July 15, 2018; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Procession during 92nd Annual Italian Festival and celebration of the 800th Jubilee Year 1218-2018 of the Porta Santa Mercedarian order, W. 69th & Detroit Avenue: The procession featured flowers, religious statues on floats, musicians, and a number pauses for fireworks. Neighbors sat on their porches and lawns to watch the procession and pass out food and refreshments to the marchers.

Joseph's Home provides medical respite care and a support system for homeless men

by Chuck Hoven

Joseph's Home, a unique facility in downtown Cleveland, offers homeless men a place to receive ongoing care for acute medical conditions. Joseph's Home, a ministry of the Sisters of Charity's Health System, says it is "the only homeless service provider in Northeast Ohio exclusively focused on medical respite care."

A brochure provided by Joseph's Home describes medical respite care recipients at the facility: "All of our residents are homeless and have acute medical issues that require ongoing care. Typical residents are in need of or recovering from surgery, going through cancer treatment or stabilizing chronic conditions such as diabetes or Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Homeless shelters and hospitals

make referrals to Joseph's Home through the Cuyahoga County Central Intake staffed by Frontline Services. Referrals include men with chronic conditions such as diabetes or COPD, men with cancer, or individuals needing dialysis or treatment of open wounds. Others are in need of a place to rehabilitate after a surgery. Some individuals have more than one condition.

Staff and volunteers at Joseph's Home are able to work with residents on both physical and behavioral health issues and also offer support as residents transition out into the community after receiving care. Such support includes securing a birth certificate or state ID, a disability bus pass, help with signing up for Medicaid, food stamps, getting a Social Security card and signing up for benefits. Donations—continued on page 6



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE JOHANEK FAMILY
Sarah Johaneck, a Near West Side resident, competed for the United States of America, in the World Rowing under 23 Championships in Poznan, Poland from July 25-29, 2018. Johaneck is a Junior at Rutgers University, and member of the Rutgers' Women's Rowing Team and a two time First Team All-Big Ten selection. Johaneck started rowing in her freshman year of high school at St. Joseph Academy in Cleveland.

Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization's Managing Director and board members share thoughts on Strategic Alliance

The second article of a series of articles on the Strategic Alliance by Victoria Shea

In last month's issue of the *Plain Press*, the Strategic Alliance between neighborhood development organization, Cudell Improvement and Detroit Shoreway was announced. The news analysis was very brief and took information from the joint-released letter by the two

organizations as requests for comments went unanswered. To be fair to both organizations, the joint letter was published in its entirety on the *Plain Press* website.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Board members and staff of Detroit Shoreway have been helpful since last month's issue to address questions and concerns directed at them from the *Plain Press*. Manag-

ing Director of Detroit Shoreway, Jenny Spencer, stated that, "We're gonna figure it out," when asked about the alliance, but feels that it is going to be a good thing for both organizations. When asked about the question posed in last month's article in regards to serving the West Boulevard neighborhood, which up until the announcement was being—continued on page 5

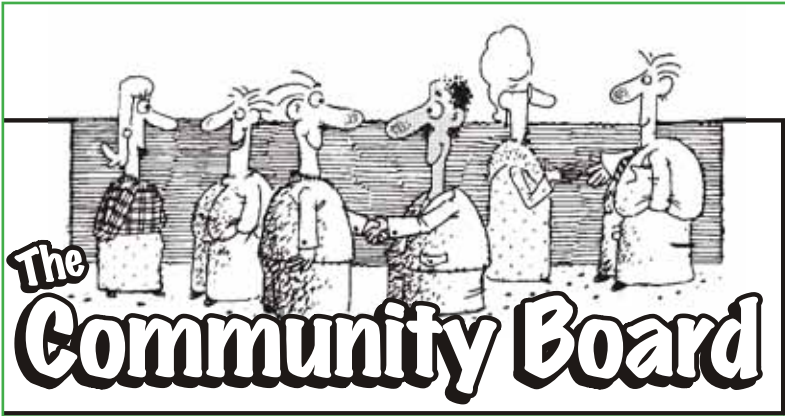


PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSEPH'S HOME
Working together to make soap are: (L-R) Lamont, a Joseph's Home resident, and William, a senior at MC2 STEM High School.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Sunday, July 15, 2018; An exhibit of the FRONT International: Cleveland Triennial for Contemporary Art on the grounds of the Transformer Center, 1460 W. 29th Street: This sculpture by artist A.K. Burns is made of crushed and painted chain-link fencing. According to the exhibition guide, the sculpture is “set in relief against the shifting fortunes and economies of gentrifying Hingetown.” The theme of the exhibition is “An American City” with art displayed in locations throughout Cleveland.



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.

ARTS/THEATRE/FILM

CLEVELAND PUBLIC THEATRE'S STUDENT THEATRE ENRICHMENT PROGRAM will perform an original play, *After the Shadow*, at the following outdoor locations (rain locations indicated): Saturday, August 4th at 7 p.m. at Lincoln Park (W. 14th and Starkweather) – rain location Pilgrim Church, 2592 W. 14th; Tuesday, August 7th at 7 p.m. at Cleveland Public Theatre, 6415 Detroit Avenue – rain location – inside the theatre; and Thursday, August 9th, at 3 p.m. at Thomas Jefferson International Newcomers Academy, 3145 W. 46th, rain location – inside the gym. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy the free performance.

ARTS IN AUGUST hosts free events in August at Lincoln Park at W. 14th and Starkweather: Cleveland Shakespeare Festival, Sunday, August 5th at 7 p.m.; Inlet Dance Theatre, Friday August 10 at 8:30 p.m.; Verb Ballets, Saturday, August 11 at 8:30 p.m.; Tony Mikhael, Friday Aug 17 at 7 p.m.; Cleveland Jazz Orchestra in partnership with Arts Renaissance Tremont, Saturday, August 18 at 7 p.m.; ContempOpera, Friday Aug. 24 at 7 p.m.; Papo Ruiz y La Dulura de la Salsa on Sat. Aug. 25 at 7 pm and Night of INDY Music, Friday Aug. 31 at 7 p.m.

WARD 14 MOVIE NIGHTS AT THE PARK WITH COPS: August 24 at 6:30 p.m. at W. 73rd and Berry Avenue (just North of Denison.) Movie: Jumanji.

ART HOUSE COMMUNITY CULTURE NIGHT with Ian Charnas founder and manager of think (box), a seven story Makerspace and Innovation Center that is free and open to the public: August 31, 7-8:30 p.m. at Art House, 3119 Denison Ave. Free event.

COMMUNITY

STRATEGIC ALLIANCE COMMUNITY MEETING: Cudell Improvement and Detroit Shoreway Com-

munity Development Organization announced a Strategic Alliance Community Meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 31st at 6 p.m. at Brother's Lounge, 11609 Detroit Avenue, to discuss the Strategic Alliance between the two organizations. Leading the meeting will be Ward 15 Councilman Matt Zone, who will do a brief presentation before the floor is opened to questions.

CLEVELAND DRUM CIRCLE: Sundays at 3 p.m. at Edgewater Park
DRUM CLINIC: Drummer **Frank Zummo (Sum 41, Street Drum Corps, Krewella)** has teamed up with **SJC Drums** and presenting sponsor **VANS** and on **Saturday, August 4th**, the **Loyal to the Craft** tour will be throwing a massive celebration at the **Rock N Roll Hall of Fame** of the event runs from **2:00pm - 5:00pm**. This is more than your typical drum clinic. From performances by local drummers/bands and hearing the story of entrepreneurship/SJC's humble beginnings, to learning professional tips from an artist and the opportunity to ask questions about touring, networking, and more, you'll leave the event feeling inspired to hone your own craft and take your passion for music to the next level. Best of all, these events are **free and open to the public!** For more information on SJC Drums and *The Loyal to the Craft Tour*, please head to <https://www.sjcdrums.com/pages/ltrc-tour>

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME: Tuesday August 7, 5-9 p.m., Steelyard Commons.
LA PLACITA: August 18th, 1:00 pm to 10:00 pm, 3104 West 25th Street: Live music, food, art and more
OPEN STREETS CLE: West 25th will be closed to motorized traffic south of Clark Avenue to Metro-Health Drive from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm on August 18th and open to biking, running, walking, and all other forms of activity!

GETTING TO THE ROOTS: Free

Summer Speaker Series 3rd & 4th Wednesday of August, 6:00 to 7:30 pm at Cleveland Roots, 3257 West 41st Street, Cleveland. Join Cleveland Roots, Stone Soup CLE, and Bright-spot Communities for conversations on gardening and community!

PARTY IN ROBERTO CLEMENTE PARK, 3690 Seymour Ave., Tuesday, August 28th, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. City Life Center is hosting the event with free food, games, henna or face painting & more!

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

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.

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 August 20th, 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.

HANDS ACROSS CLE: The City of Cleveland Community Relations Board invites all Clevelanders to Hands Across the Lorain Carnegie Bridge Street Festival on Friday September 1st from noon to 2 p.m. For more information call the Community Relations Board at 664-3290.

EDUCATION

BASIC COMPUTER SKILLS: Are you lacking basic computer skills which are holding you back from getting a job, restricting you at work, or limiting you in life, ... well **Digital C, technology skills building program**, will teach **basic computer** classes for the beginner at the West Side Catholic Center. The three-week program, will be held twice a week, Tuesday and Thursday, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. There is no charge. Child care is provided. All are welcomed. Please call Frank Johaneck at [216-631-4741 ext. 167](tel:216-631-4741) to register and class start dates.

CHOOSE A SCHOOL: Cleveland

families can visit the Cleveland Transformation Alliance website: myCLEschool.org to help find a public school. The interactive site allows comparisons and searches by neighborhoods and ratings and provides directions and travel time to any public school in Cleveland.

PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT underway for children that will be four years old by September 30, 2018. For information on enrolling your child call and what to bring to the appointment call 216-838-0110.

LITERARY CLEVELAND, a non-profit 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.

BRAIN BEE: Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) invites area students ages 14 thru 18 to test their knowledge of neuroscience in the NEOMED Brain Bee. The Brain Bee will take place Saturday, Jan. 12, 2019, at NEOMED. Free monthly tutoring sessions are available on Saturdays to help students prepare for the Brain Bee. Sessions will occur Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10 and Dec. 8 at NEOMED. Students may register at neomed.edu/brainbee. For more information about the Brain Bee, please contact Dr. Peterson at 330.325.6476 or dpeterson@neomed.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 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.

CHOICE MAGAZINE LISTENING: A free audio magazine for adults with impaired vision or other disability. Choice Magazine Listening records the best articles, stories and poems from over 100 of the finest magazines. Call toll free from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Eastern Time at 1-888-724-6423 or visit www.choicemagazinelisting.org.

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 OhioGuidestone 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.

EMPLOYMENT

WEST SIDE CATHOLIC CENTER workforce development classes assist all people in transition from initial assessments to interviews. The four-week program will assist you in identifying your passion, preparing you to re-enter the workforce and get you in front of employers with permanent positions with a career path potential. This is all in a one-on-one environment. With daily attendance and work requirement completed...**WEST SIDE CATHOLIC CENTER'S, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM WILL GUARANTEE YOU JOB OFFERS.** Classes run from 9:30 AM to 12:00 pm Monday thru Friday and with continuation of training/tutoring Tuesday thru Thursday 1:30 -3:30 pm. Questions, please call Frank Johaneck, Economic Opportunities Manager, 216-631-4741 ext. 167.

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: westsidecreationcare@gmail.com.

FOOD SERVICE

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE LUNCHESES: The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD)

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Veteran tenant organizer, Spencer Wells, offers to help train a new generation of tenant organizers

by Chuck Hoven

The closing of the Cleveland Tenants Organization has left a gap in services to help tenants deal with problems with their landlords. The Legal Aid Society has stepped up to fill some of the services once provided by Cleveland Tenants Organizations, but not all.

Spencer Wells, a veteran tenant organizer has offered to help train people in neighborhood organizations to fill that gap. Wells headed up the Cleveland Tenants Organization for many years before moving on to work with the Coalition for Homelessness and Housing and now is helping the Cleveland Lead Safe Network with efforts to rid Cleveland housing of lead hazards.

Wells says he would like to "help younger people learn how to use some of the techniques we used back in the old days."

At a June 18th meeting of Hispanic Alliance's La Familia group, Wells shared some thoughts about how advocacy for tenants' rights will proceed in the wake of the demise of Cleveland Tenants Organization.

Legal Aid will be responding to questions from tenants coming to the telephone information line, said Wells. He noted that Legal Aid staff will respond to questions about legal rights, eviction questions, leases, rental agreements and how to get repairs done.

Wells offered some advice tenants can use to get landlords to make repairs that are health and safety violations.

Here are the steps he recommended:

- 1) Tenants must give landlords a written notice of violations that need to be corrected.
- 2) Keep a copy of the notice
- 3) Wait a reasonable time – not more than 30 days
- 4) The tenant can take their rent payment down to Cleveland Housing Court
- 5) The Housing Court will notify the landlord that the rent is paid
- 6) Landlord can get the rent if the Housing Court is satisfied repairs have been made. If some, but not all of the repairs have been completed, the Housing Court may decide to give the landlord just a percentage of the rent reflecting the percentage of repairs completed
- 7) The tenant can ask for a rent reduction based on having to put up with a maintenance issue that wasn't addressed in a timely manner.

"Housing Court has a lot of discretion as to how money gets divided up between landlord and tenant,"

said Wells. While the process is not simple and may involve meeting with a landlord or a hearing before a judge, Wells said, "it does work."

One area where Legal Aid will not be able to help is in organizing tenants in multifamily buildings to take action on an issue that affects all the tenants. Wells says he is willing to talk to neighborhood organizations to help share techniques on organizing tenants.

One member of La Familia related a problem at her apartment building with a huge hole in the parking lot by the entrance. Residents and their visitors have had their cars damaged going over the hole. Wells said a court ruled three years ago that landlords are not only responsible for tenants but for tenants' guests when it comes to health and safety violations in common areas.

Wells said every three months the Cleveland Housing Court holds a meeting for landlords to teach them about their responsibilities.

Wells shared some examples of landlord tenant law. If a tenant is behind in their rent, a landlord is not allowed to seize their belongings or furnishings; turn off utilities; or padlock the property.

Wells addressed the problem of landlords trying to retaliate by raising the rent or making threats when a tenant asks for repairs. Retaliation is a tricky thing, said Wells. "You have to prove the landlord intended to get back at you for complaining about the conditions."

To gather proof, Wells said it is important to communicate with the landlord in writing so you have a record. He said text messages or email are just like writing. Another way is to have a witness with you when you communicate with a landlord or take a tape recorder with you, he said.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Sunday, July 15, 2018; Garden in the backyard of the home of Rose and Peter Zitiello at 1255 W. 69th Street: Rose Zitiello offered food and a garden tour to guests during the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Procession.

PUBLIC TRANSIT FUNDING

continued from page one

leased a statement saying "RTA is losing \$20 million in annual funding due to a change in state sales tax collection policy which will result in significant service cuts to an already inadequate and shrinking system. Funding is urgently needed in order to reverse the current death spiral by providing immediate fare relief and service restoration. In order to reestablish public trust and reform the organization, CPT is calling for the levy to be renewable after five years."

Clevelanders for Public Transit also made a proposal calling for appointment of a RTA Board of Trustees that is equipped to critically examine RTA staff recommendations rather than just approve them "without careful consideration." In order to create a stronger Board

of Trustees, the group suggests that Mayor Frank Jackson, County Executive Budish, and the Mayors and Managers Association when

appointing board members appoint "daily RTA riders as well as experts in rail and bus operation, finance and budget, land use, real-estate law and environmental sustainability."

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Join us at Cleveland Senior Walk!

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Mall C Downtown Cleveland





PHOTO BY SILK ALLEN

The Queer Tailor, seamstress Gabi Mirelez, works in the back of her shop, Sweetlime Alterations, tailoring a dress for a client.

The Queer Tailor is not just for anybody, she's for every "body"

by Silk Allen

What do you do when you have the most amazing dress or suit hanging in the back of your closet that just needs a few tweaks to fit you perfectly? You call a tailor who will hook your garment up with a quick nip and a tuck here, replace a button, hem your trousers and realign a zipper.

FASHION

But what happens when your nips and tucks are a bit more intricate than average, and you don't need your pants shortened, but your suit has to be tailored to fit your feminine physique, even though you are masculine in style, or prefer your shirts to fit loosely over your binders? Maybe you need your dress to fit more snugly, but move in sync to compliment your dance as you belt out a Beyonce/Britney Spears medley for the upcoming drag show you plan to perform in. Or, you could just be a plus sized woman or man in need of a tailor who won't make you feel ashamed of wanting to look stylish no matter your body shape.

Meet Gabi Mirelez, owner of Sweetlime Alterations - Queer Tailor in Tremont, whose website states, "To be queer is to be nonconforming with society's standards. As a Queer Tailor, it's my specialty to fit clothes to the individual, not the standard."

That reasoning, along with a successful Kickstarter fund is what helped Mirelez open up her shop in April 2016, and word of mouth helps maintain the business. When asked if her shop is open to anybody she states,

"Queer doesn't have to be about sexuality. It can be not of the norm, different styles and sizes."

"Queer doesn't have to be about sexuality. It can be not of the norm, different styles and sizes."

**--Seamstress Gabi Mirelez
The Queer Tailor**

Mirelez started her career right out of college, diving into technical design, working with patterns and measurements and loving it, then moving on to bridal after relocating from Chicago to Cleveland. After leaving the corporate world, citing health reasons, Mirelez started freelance tailoring and through word-of-mouth referrals, and the fact that there are not a lot of alterations places. She's the first one to pop up on Google's front page.

Mirelez is adamant that she is the Queer Tailor. Mirelez won't call or consider herself a designer, and doesn't even like to do custom

design work, but will work on small projects and help clients make their dreams a reality. She often encourages them to bring in thrift store pieces to recreate an entirely new look. "I don't like to design, but I love helping people create their own designs."

The area that Sweetlime is located in is perfect for Mirelez---affordable and accessible with four highway exits, and the RTA (the 81) runs right past it, but she would like to eventually open up a bigger venue for a place to hang out, rent out for events and to host workshops teaching important topics like financial literacy and how to purchase property. Things that, Mirelez believes should be free knowledge and taught in high school. She is currently working on that business plan of growth while maintaining her shop and collaborating with other queer creatives.

"I just want this one place that is safe for us, because that's all we really have."

Sweetlime Alterations is located on 2671 W. 14th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44113 right in between Trio and Laurie Myers Yoga. You can call:216-258-4055 to make an appointment or stop in during store hours- Wednesday through Saturday from 12-5 p.m. They are closed Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

J. Spang Bakery building on Barber Avenue and Terminal Tower awarded Historic Preservation Tax Credits

The Ohio Development Services Agency announced on June 20th the awarding of over \$30 million in Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credits for the rehabilitation of 31 historic buildings in the State of Ohio.

Two projects in the city of Cleve-

land received funding. One of those two projects, the J. Spang Bakery at 2707 Barber Avenue, is in the *Plain Press* service area. Developers of the Spang Bakery Building will receive a tax credit of \$1,752,089 toward a total project

cost of \$17,608,500.

A short history of the J. Spang Bakery building released by the Ohio Development Service Agency says: "Constructed between 1906 and 1937, the Spang Bakery building tells the story of a growing

bakery and home-delivery business. After the company sold the building in the 1950s, it saw a series of other light industrial uses until it was vacated a few years ago. The rehabilitation project will build out office and retail tenants on part of the first

floor and 67 apartments in the rest of the building. New residential units will be constructed on an adjacent vacant parcel."

The other project to receive funding in Cleveland is the Terminal Tower on Public Square. According to the Ohio Development Service Agency rehabilitation plans for the Terminal Tower "will convert a portion of the building into residential units as well as space for offices and a restaurant." The project is slated to receive a \$5 million tax credit toward a total project cost of \$110,518,750.

\$80,000 loan approved for clean-up of Ohio City Masonic Center on Franklin Boulevard

Cuyahoga County has approved a United States Environmental Protection Agency-funded Brownfield Redevelopment Revolving Fund loan of \$80,000 for the environmental clean-up of the Ohio City Masonic Center located at 2831 Franklin Boulevard on the near west side of Cleveland.

Cleveland Rocks Holding LLC, the real estate holding company which acquired the site, plans to redevelop the complex into a rock climbing

gym, office space and a "maker-space," providing community access to 3d printers, laser cutters, software development classes, youth-based coding camps, and access to mentors. The overall project will create 18 jobs for the neighborhood.

"We are pleased to be part of this important economic development initiative that will breathe fresh life into the Ohio City Masonic Center... this project will continue to add to the exciting progress of the Ohio

City neighborhood by creating jobs, health/wellness and technology resources for our residents," said Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish.

"We are excited to bring technology and health/wellness resources for Ohio City in a historical building that would otherwise be vacant," stated Kevin Wojton, Owner and Founder of Cleveland Rocks. "Our goal is to enhance Cleveland by developing a deep software development industry and providing access to the

world-class rock climbing facility. Cleveland is redefining itself as an outdoor, young, active, tech-focused city and Cleveland Rocks will be there every step of the way. Come see it for yourself, once we open!"

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Cleveland Metropolitan School District puts facilities plan on hold as it tries to resolve dispute with Ohio Facilities Construction Commission

by Chuck Hoven

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District (CMSD) has placed the last two segments (Segments Eight and Nine) of its Master Facilities Plan on hold while it tries to resolve a dispute with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) over how much the state will contribute to adjust for the higher construction costs in Cleveland.

Cleveland Metropolitan School District Chief Executive Officer Eric Gordon says in the first six segments of the CMSD Facilities Plan, the OFCC added between 12% and 16% to its portion of the facilities plan costs to adjust for Cleveland's higher construction costs. Now, says Gordon, the OFCC wants to have equal costs per square foot across the entire State of Ohio and not account for higher construction costs in the City of Cleveland. Gordon says this will add millions of dollars to the cost to CMSD that the OFCC says it will not reimburse.

Based on a formula developed in 2002 when the plan started, the state pays 68% of OFCC approved costs for the CMSD Facilities Plan. CMSD pays the remaining 32%, plus any unapproved costs.

The dispute with the OFCC also delayed some of the construction in Segment Seven. In the area served by the Plain Press, the major delay that occurred is in the building of the West Side Replacement High School on the site of the old Max Hayes on Detroit Avenue. The CMSD negotiations with the OFCC reached a compromise with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission agreeing to pay a 7% market adjustment to CMSD for Segment 7.

CEO Gordon says the 11-month delay in Segment 7 cost the CMSD an additional \$384,000 in increased construction costs. He estimates the reduced market adjustment (a reduction from about 14% to 7%) from

the OFCC for Segment 7 will result in \$10 million in additional costs for the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

Gordon says CMSD now plans to finish Segment 7 at the 7% market adjustment rate agreed to by the OFCC. This means the West Side High School will be built on the old Max Hayes site.

Other projects in Segment 7 in the Plain Press service area include the demolition of the Old Max Hayes, Waverly, Halle and Waterson Lake buildings and new construction of the H. Barbara Booker Pre-K to 8 school at the Halle School site, and the construction of Waverly Pre-J-8 school at the old Waverly site. Much of Segment 7 is already underway.

Plans for renovation or new construction of a number of schools in the Plain Press service area for schools in Segments Eight and Nine are now on hold while CMSD works to resolve its dispute with the OFCC.

In Segment Eight, the renovation of Joseph Gallagher PreK-8 and new construction of Marion Selzer and Lincoln West High School are now on hold.

In Segment Nine, new construction for Clark, Denison and Tremont PreK-8 schools are now on hold.

CEO Eric Gordon would like the OFCC to go back to paying the market adjustments of 12-16% that it has paid in the past. Otherwise, depending on what new adjustment the OFCC agree to provide, the district could face between \$22 and \$34 million in additional costs for Segments Eight and Nine.

Gordon urged residents to lobby on behalf of the CMSD. Concerned citizens can go to the CMSD website to obtain a sample letter to send to members of the Ohio legislature and also attend an OFCC Conference in Independence Ohio on August 16th.

Gordon says CMSD cannot afford

continued on page 8



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, July 7, 2018; Garden Walk Cleveland, self-guided tour of gardens in the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood: A raised bed vegetable garden in the Legacy Garden at W. 74th and Rutledge Avenue in the Edgewater Hill Block Club area.

STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

continued from page one

serviced by Cudell Improvement, Spencer stated that the part of the West Boulevard neighborhood South of I-90 will now be serviced by Westtown.

Donna Gonyon, another member of Detroit Shoreway, explained that there was pressure put on city council to compress the CDC's and that Detroit Shoreway approached Cudell Improvement about forming the alliance. Gonyon said that the process took time because Cudell Improvement did not want to lose their identity, but feels that in general, the Strategic Alliance is a good agreement and a win-win for both sides.

Chris Warren, a member of the Board of Directors of Detroit Shoreway who participated in the Strategic Alliance planning, stated that Cudell Improvement and Detroit

Shoreway will stay two separate organizations as written in the initial letter sent out last month. What the Strategic Alliance is, is nothing more than a contract for services. All this means is that Cudell Improvement has chosen to contract with Detroit Shoreway to provide services to the neighborhood that is serviced by Cudell Improvement, he said.

Lastly, Warren also stated that because the alliance is merely a contract for services, with notice, either side can pull out of the alliance at any time.

Editor's Note: Cudell Improvement

and Detroit Shoreway will host a Community Meeting on Tuesday, July 31st at 6 p.m. at Brother's Lounge, 11609 Detroit Avenue, to discuss the Strategic Alliance between the two organizations. Leading the meeting will be Ward 15 Councilman Matt Zone, who will do a brief presentation before the floor is opened to questions.

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, July 7, 2018; Garden Walk Cleveland, self-guided tour of gardens in the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood: This front yard garden at 7311 Rutledge Ave is described in the Garden Walk program as “evolving into a native habitat.”

JOSEPH'S HOME

continued from page one

to Joseph Home also help provide clothing and household supplies to some residents moving out on their own.

Joseph's Home, at 2412 Community College Avenue in downtown Cleveland, is housed in a building that was once a convent at the former St. Joseph's Parish. The building has eleven private bedrooms for residents. Artwork, by residents, board members and volunteers, hangs throughout the three floors of the building. There are elevators to reach different levels as well as a lift by the front door in an area with steps not reached by the elevators. There is a kitchen area, a dining room, a television room, a computer room, a clinic, staff offices and a room for clothes and household items to help equip residents as they transition to a new home following completion of medical respite care.

Joseph's Home Executive Director Christine Horne says the idea for creating a medical respite care facility for homeless men came from Sister Ruth Ann Patrick, a member of the Congregation of Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine. Sister Ruth Ann Patrick served as a social worker at St. Vincent Charity Hospital and was concerned about discharging homeless individuals back to the streets or shelters while they still needed time to recover or to stabilize after being in the hospital.

Horne says Sister Ruth Ann Patrick brought the problem back to her community of Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine for discernment. A planning group, referred to by Horne as “The Dream Team” was formed consisting of nine members of the congregation: Sr. Theresa Bontempo, Sr. Marian Durkin, Sr. Evelyn Flowers, Sr. Joan Gallagher, Sr. Coletta McNamee, Sr. Ruth Ann Patrick, Sr. Marietta Rohr, Sr. Elizabeth Schur, and Sr. Catherine Walsh. The Dream Team put together a plan and Joseph's Home opened in the year 2000. Sr. Joan Gallagher, a member of the Dream Team, served as Joseph's Home's first executive director, said Horne.

Horne says Joseph's Home provides a supportive encouraging environment while helping residents to become medically stable. Residents each receive their own room with a key lock in the eleven-bed facility.

Horne says Joseph's Home practices trauma informed care. She believes the welcoming atmosphere, security of having their own room and the provision of regular meals helps residents to relax. She notes trauma experienced by individuals

who end up homeless. She says often a shelter environment can feel claustrophobic. Those that have experienced trauma may need to come down to the television room in the middle of the night to watch T.V. or go outside to look at the stars.

With training in best practices for trauma related care, the staff, instead of making sure people are in their rooms, may instead sit and talk with a person and share a snack. “At any given time, you don't know what a guy is going through,” said Horne. She said guidelines provided by the National Health Care for the Homeless Council and training sessions have helped her staff to implement trauma informed care.

Horne says the average stay at Joseph's Home in 2017 was 3.33 months. In 2017, they served fifty-three residents.

While the average stays may be just a few months, Horne says Joseph's Home engages its alumni and involves alumni in sharing their positive experiences with residents. Several alumni serve as staff members now and others “want to give back.” She says seeing alumni that are doing well encourages residents and gives them hope. Joseph's Home welcomes alumni to continue to be involved and stay in touch. Horne related a story of one alumni who visits on a monthly basis to do his laundry. She said the staff encourage him to come to have lunch, dinner or visit for movie night.

Joseph's Home Development Manager Madeline Wallace says many residents and alumni don't have contact with their family and don't have a social support system. “We become that family and social support system,” she said.

Rich Gallagher, Chair of the Board of Directors of Joseph's Home, says, “We give guys a second chance in life. A lot of guys know that.” He believes that the alumni's appreciation of the help they received, is the reason for so many coming back to help out and share their experiences.

During their time at Joseph's Home, residents receive a wide variety of services and support not only from the 12-member staff of Joseph's Home, but also from alumni of Joseph's Home, volunteers and community organizations.

Some activities at Joseph's Home include Music Therapy provided by Cleveland State University students. Art Therapy and a Wellness Group offered by students from Ursuline College Counseling and Art Therapy Program. A movie night, started when an alumnus brought in a DVD player. Staff also got involved and Development Director Madeline Wallace says the Knights of Columbus donated a popcorn machine for

movie night. She says the smell of the popcorn helps to bring residents down to the television room to socialize on movie night.

“We give guys a second chance in life. A lot of guys know that.”

--Rich Gallagher, Chair of the Board of Directors of Joseph's Home

Seniors at MC2 STEM High School recently wrote a grant as part of a senior project to work with Joseph's Home. The students purchased supplies with the grant and joined with residents in making bars of soap.

Gallagher said one of the members of the Board of Directors, Debbie Rovito, wanted to get involved and started a poetry writing group that writes poetry while baking.

Gallagher and Wallace mentioned a recent Pizza and Puppies night funded by the Imagine Foundation. A pet store, Pick of the Litter, brought puppies and Angelo's Pizza donated pizza.

Horne notes that the facility is staffed 24 hours a day. The duties of the 12 staff members outline some of the scope involved in running Joseph's Home. Horne described some of the activities staff members are engaged in doing.

To address medical needs Joseph's Home has a part-time nurse that does wellness checks Monday thru Friday. The nurse provides an assessment of how the men are doing medically and provides some basic care such as dressing open wounds.

The Medical Director provides a connection for residents to a primary care physician.

The Behavioral Health Director, a clinical psychologist, helps assess where residents are at in regard to mental health and behavioral health treatment and screening. Horne says often residents have a second layer of mental health or substance abuse issues that can impact their

medical stability. A Peer Recovery Supporter offers shared life experience to those residents dealing with mental health or substance abuse issues.

Operations Coordinator Alfonso Gibson cooks three meals a day, does the food shopping and maintenance of the facility. He also supervises a team of four Resident Support Associates. Horne notes that three of the Resident Support Associates are former residents of Joseph's Home. She says that, as former residents, they can share their experiences and successes offering hope to current residents.

Health Care Navigator John Mytrysak helps transport residents to their medical appointments, helps residents manage their prescriptions, and tracks medication compliance by residents. Mytrysak says having the St. Vincent Charity Hospital clinic nearby helps make transportation to doctor's appointments easier as residents without a primary care physician of their own are able to obtain a regular physician at the clinic. Mytrysak says having a primary physician also helps residents to get the proper paper work completed so they can receive Social Security. Physical therapy is also available nearby at St. Vincent Charity Hospital. Mytrysak says a special relationship negotiated by Joseph's Home with the Center for Families and Children at 4400 Euclid Avenue allows for most of the prescriptions of residents to be located at their pharmacy. He can then order and pick up medications and clinical supplies at one central place.

Mytrysak, an alumnus of Joseph's Home, said he worked as a pharmacist for 30 years before an illness effected his performance at work. He says he went on vacation and was asked not to come back. Having lost his health benefits, he didn't go to the doctor and his condition worsened. He sold his home and was living in his car. Eventually he lost the car as well and ended up getting referred to Joseph's Home. At Joseph's Home, Mytrysak says he was able to get medical care and get the surgery that he needed to restore his health. With the help of the staff he entered a job training program at El Barrio and after working several other jobs, he began working at Joseph's Home as a Resident Support Associate. Because of his background as a pharmacist, Mytrysak was especially good at helping residents with their medications and soon was asked to be the Health Care Navigator. Now, Mytrysak, says he lives in senior housing near Joseph's Home and can walk to work. Mytrysak says he enjoys his job and likes helping people.

Respite Care Manager Raven Kauffman is the overall keeper of the plans for each resident as they work to develop a plan for where they will live when they leave Joseph's Home. Horne says it can be difficult to find housing for residents. Often homeless men have experienced trauma, have behavioral health issues that need addressing, have past evictions or a legal history that sometimes involves convictions.

When residents are medically stable and ready to move on, Horne says it can be very difficult to find affordable housing. She said the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority has a three-year waiting list. Noting the crisis in affordable

housing in Greater Cleveland, Horne says that the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless plans to have a funeral ceremony with a tombstone for affordable housing.

Executive Director Horne and Development Manager Madeline Wallace shared some statistics on what happens to residents when they leave Joseph's Home. Horne said some are able to find housing, some go to higher level of care such as hospice, a nursing home or a drug and alcohol treatment program, while others, unable to find a place to go, move to another homeless shelter. In 2017, 45% of the residents leaving Joseph's Home went to stable housing, 19% went to a higher level of care and 27% went to another homeless shelter, six percent were unreported and 3% moved out of the county or state.

Executive Director Horne says the annual budget for running Joseph's Home is currently \$700,000. She says about a third of the budget comes from the Cuyahoga County Office of Homeless Services and through funding from the Health and Human Services Levy. About a third of the budget comes from foundations, United Way and the Veterans Administration which funds three beds that are reserved for homeless veterans. Another third of the budget comes from individual donors.

Horne regularly visits with organizations and church groups to talk about ways they can get involved in helping Joseph's Home. Development Director Wallace shared a list of individuals, businesses and foundations that have made donations or volunteer contributions.

Securing long term funding remains a challenge for Joseph's Home. Board of Director's Chair Rich Gallagher says, in other communities around the country, hospitals provide direct funding for medical respite programs. Gallagher says a goal of Joseph's Home is to partner with hospitals. He says the medical respite program reduces emergency room costs and readmissions of homeless patients. He hopes area hospitals can be convinced to provide regular funding for medical respite as hospitals in other communities have done.

Executive Director Horne says one of the gaps in local services is the lack of a medical respite care program dedicated to homeless women. That is something to be addressed through strategic planning, and assessment of the ability of Joseph's Home to raise the needed funding. Horne said such a proposal would then need the approval of the Sisters of Charity Health Board.

While currently Joseph's Home raises the funds to pay for all the medical services provided for residents, Development Manager Wallace says she is in the early stages of exploring how to bill for some services through Medicaid.

Donations to Joseph's Home are welcome. A list of current needs supplied by Wallace includes: pillows, face towels – white and color, bath towels, travel size lotion, travel size shampoo and flip flops (shower shoes).

Editor's Note: Joseph's Home is located at 2412 Community College Avenue. For more information on how to get involved or make a donation visit their website at josephshome.com or call 216-685-1551.

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COMMUNITY BOARD

continued from page 2

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.

FREE CLOTHES

NEEDS CLEVELAND, 7710 Lorain Avenue, offers free clothing, adult and children's shoes and household items on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. No appointment necessary. No income or residency requirements. 5 items per person – Limit 30 items per visit. Visit as often as you need.

HEALTH & SAFETY

FRANKLIN BLVD TRAFFIC CALMING: Traffic diverters will be installed for eastbound traffic at the intersections of Franklin and West 85th Street and Franklin and W. 65th Street, and for westbound traffic at Franklin and West 54th Street through August 10. To offer feedback attend a meeting at W. 65th and Franklin on July 31 from 4-6 p.m.; call and leave a voice mail at 216-816-1512 or take a survey (at Detroit Shoreway's Community Development Organization's office at 6516 Detroit Avenue beginning August 6th. For questions about the demonstration portion of the planning process, please contact Calley Mersmann, Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, City Planning Commission, at cmersmann@city.cleveland.oh.us or 216.664.2952.

GAMBLING PROBLEM: If you or someone you know has a gambling problem call the Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline at 800-589-9966.

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IMMUNIZATIONS FOR CHILDREN: Get immunizations at McCafferty Health Center, 4242 Lorain Avenue, at no cost to you. Times: Every Monday from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m.; 1st, 2nd and fourth Wednesday from 8 a.m. – 11 a.m. and from 1-4 p.m.; every 2nd and 4th Thursday from 4-7 p.m. No appointment needed. Walk-ins accepted on first come, first served basis. Bring shot record or letter for school and Medicaid card (if applicable). Vaccinations are available for children who are uninsured, underinsured, or who have Medicaid. For more information call 664-6603 or 664-4120 or visit the Cleveland Health Department website at: www.clevelandhealth.org.

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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.

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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.

PARENTING

CHILDREN 12 YEARS OLD AND UNDER RIDE RTA FREE this summer until August 11, 2108. Must be accompanied by an adult age 18 or older. Limit three children per adult. Includes all services except paratransit.

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STEPS TO A HEALTHIER WEIGHT PROGRAM: designed for people with a BMI of 25 and above. FREE for Reproductive Health Clinic patients at McCafferty Health Center (Room 233). Free access to exercise facilities and childcare included. For more information call Kathleen, RN at 216-664-4269.

POLITICAL ACTION

VOTER REGISTRATION TRAINING SESSIONS: Cudell Improvement, Detroit Shoreway Community Development organization and Ohio City Inc. are partnering with Northeast Ohio Voter Advocates and Cleveland VOTES to increase voter turnout. If you would like to learn to do effective nonpartisan voter registration and educate the community on the importance of voting attend one of the following Voter Registration Training Sessions at Urban Community School, 4909 Lorain Avenue: Tuesday, July 31, 6-8 p.m.; Saturday, August 4, Noon- 2 p.m.; Saturday, August 11, Noon-2 p.m. Light meal will be provided. Child care is available.

WESTSIDE HOMELESS CONGRESS: Make your voice heard each 2nd Tuesday of the month (August 14th this month) at 1 p.m. at the Catholic Worker Storefront, 4241 Lorain Avenue. The homeless congress is made up of unhoused/homeless residents that come together to solve local problems in the homeless community. Questions: Call the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless (NEOCH) at 216-432-0540 or email: advocacy-coordinator@neoch.org. A limited



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Saturday, June 19, 2018; Market Square Park, W. 25th and Lorain Avenue: The group, Cleveland Refuse Fascism, holds a rally in support of immigrants.

number of bus tickets will be given out to participants at the end of the meeting. Sponsored by NEOCH and The Catholic Worker Community.

COMMUNITY MEETING FOR WARD 14: Thursday August 23 at Family Ministry Center, 3389 Fulton Road. For more information call the Office of Councilwoman Jasmin Santana at 664-4238.

RECREATION

NEAR WEST RECREATION is holding registration for Fall sports in August: Coed Soccer for children ages 4-13 and Coed volleyball for children ages 9-14. For information on how to sign up for these programs and other year round activities sign up for their newsletter at ohiocity.org/nearwestrec.

REUNION

THE LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL (Cleveland) classes of June 1949 and January 1950 will celebrate a 69th Class Reunion on August 4, 2018 from 4-10 p.m. at Sokolowski's University Inn (Tremont Area). The

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reunions are held annually on the first Saturday in August. For further information contact Mike Guzi at 216-524-4721.

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.

YOUTH

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

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**

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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.jason-foundation.com.

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Consumer Alert

Individuals posing as Premier Health Plan representatives try to steal premium funds

COLUMBUS — Ohio Department of Insurance Director Jillian Froment is warning Ohioans of an insurance fraud scam involving individuals posing as representatives of Dayton-based Premier Health Plan. Premier Health Plan, as of April 1, 2018, no longer offers health insurance products, but consumers from across the country are receiving numerous automated calls selling Premier Health Plan insurance. Some consumers have received “premium” invoices in lieu of a call, or have noticed unauthorized charges on their bank accounts.

“We are making sure Ohio consumers are aware of this scam and urging them to contact the Ohio Department of Insurance if they have been contacted or victimized,” Froment said. “Ohioans need to know that Premier Health Plan is not selling health insurance products in Ohio. The individuals behind the scam want to steal consumers’ bank account information and money, and have no intention of providing health

insurance.”

As part of the telephone scam, consumers interested in purchasing health insurance are routed to an individual who asks for their bank account information. Those not interested in receiving future calls are referred to Premier Health Plan’s actual website or are told to call Premier Health Plan’s actual member call center. Those who have received bills have indicated the invoice is generated on what appears to be Premier Health Plan letterhead. The unauthorized charges identified on bank account statements have shown up as “Premier Heal.”

To avoid being the victim of an insurance fraud scam, Froment recommends the following: 1) Don’t answer calls from an unknown number or pay an invoice from a company you don’t recall having an insurance policy with. 2) If you receive an automated call, don’t say anything and hang up. 3) If you answered a call that you believed was

a scam, write the number down and report it to the proper authorities. 4) Never give personal or financial information to someone over the phone. 5) Review bank account and credit card statements monthly and report unauthorized charges to your financial institution.

If you’ve been contacted about purchasing Premier Health Plan insurance, call the Ohio Department of Insurance at 1-800-686-1527 or submit information on the department’s website at www.insurance.ohio.gov. Consumers with questions about insurance can call the department at 1-800-686-1526.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Wednesday, July 4, 2018: Fireworks over Lake Erie at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River.

Children and Family Services announces changes to Child Welfare System

County Executive Armond Budish announced a series of actions being taken following the recommendations of a panel of local and national child welfare experts. The panel was assembled following the death of Aniya Day Garrett. Because of the pending criminal case regarding

Aniya Day Garrett’s mother, Sierra Day and boyfriend Deonte Lewis.

The panel made the following recommendations: 1.) Strengthen investigative skills with added law enforcement expertise. 2.) Include entire family in case evaluation and investigation with interviews with mothers, fathers and children. 3) Balance parental rights and child safety need, with latter being the first priority. 4) Strengthen relationships with neighborhood collaboratives with case assignments related to neighborhood connections. 5) Strengthen quality assurance function within DCFS.

Prior to the panel’s report, County Executive Armond Budish announced the following changes: Assign a Deputy Sheriff to assist with investigations; Engage in a community Listening Tour at six locations across the county; Create a Complaint Manager program for both DCFS and JFS; Hire more licensed social workers; and Create a new community advisory committee and provide regular input to DCFS.

Based on the expert panel’s recommendations, the county is initiating these additional improvements: 1) Will house a Deputy Sheriff at the DCFS and will hire 10 additional retired law enforcement officers to assist with investigations. 2) Will hire additional staff to reduce the caseloads carried by staff. The goal is to hire 12 additional case workers within 90 days to bring the

overall child-protection specialist staff to 500. Staffing levels will be continuously monitored. 3) Newly hired case workers will be assigned to work with experienced case workers for 6 months before they are permitted to handle cases on their own. 4) Make every effort to include the entire family in case investigations to include interviews with mothers, fathers and children. 5) Work closely with local collaboratives, police, and the community. Restore funding to a collaborative that was cut earlier this year and use geographically – related case assignments where possible. 6) Engage in a series of programs to educate mandated reporters of abuse and neglect (such as day care centers) about their obligations, in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 2151.421, to report suspected abuse and neglect *immediately*, without delay, by phone or in person and then follow with a written report.

Jan Flory, Chair of the panel said, “We are pleased to hear that the recommendations will be implemented. The report is focused on how the system works with improvements that will strengthen the ability of DCFS to keep children in this county safe.”

FACILITIES PLAN

continued from page 5

to go ahead with Segments 8 and 9 without the market adjustments. He says the OFCC change in the adjustments resulted from the OFCC hiring of Executive Director David M. Williamson in 2015. Williamson does not believe in market adjustments, says Gordon.

In addition to the public lobbying of the state legislature, Gordon says the CMDS’ options in trying to get the market adjustment it wants are to directly lobby the current Ohio Facilities Construction Commission to which Williamson reports, or to wait it out until a new governor appoints new commissioners and a new OFCC executive director is hired.

In addition to the changes in Segments Eight and Nine of the Facilities Plan that may result from the dispute with the OFCC, Gordon says the Board of Education will consider the recommendation by the Bond Accountability Commission that it re-examine and revise its Master Plan based on: “current neighborhood population and enrollment patterns; changes in academic programming; and rising construction costs.” The Cleveland Metropolitan School District plans to have fall meetings to get community input on new planning for Segments Eight and Nine.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Wednesday, July 4, 2018: Fireworks over Lake Erie at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River.

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