



**PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN**  
Friday, January 17, 2020; End Poverty Now Press Conference to present demands to Cleveland Public Power, 3500 Lorain Avenue: Adam Jefferson, who lives in an all-electric subsidized apartment, had his electricity shut off by Cleveland Public Power because he was unable to pay the full bill. Jefferson says on cold nights he has been going to a Metanoia Project shelter to stay warm.

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# Plain Press

Cleveland's Near Westside Newspaper

## End Poverty Now Coalition raises concern about CPP's business practices and shutoffs

by Chuck Hoven

At a January 17<sup>th</sup> Press Conference, The End Poverty Now Coalition demanded changes to Cleveland Public Power's (CPP) business practices that

are resulting in what the coalition says are too many utility shutoffs. According to the End Poverty Now Coalition, in 2018 over 10% of Cleveland Public Power's customers experienced a power shut off.



**PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN**

Saturday, January 18, 2020; Women's March Cleveland 2020, Cleveland City Hall, E. 6<sup>th</sup> and Lakeside: As marchers head from City Hall to Public Square, this woman demonstrates her appreciation of the importance of journalism in helping to sustain a democracy.

## Renee Jones Empowerment Center offers hope and the bonds of community to human trafficking victims

by Silk Allen

Horse therapy, fashion clinics, camping, yoga; the activities read like the brochure of a swanky social or country club, but no; these are some of the services provided by the Renee Jones Empowerment Center (RJEC) for victims of human sex trafficking and sexual assault.

RJEC believes in combining services designed to provide survivors with holistic healing and restoration, and has helped victims and survivors of human trafficking and sexual assault since its inception in 2002. The center has even bigger goals after moving from a small storefront on W. 65th in the Gordon Square area of the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood and expanding to a large two story multi room building on W. 25th and Archwood in the Brooklyn Centre neighborhood.

Speaking of the reason for the move from the Gordon Square area, founder, president and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Renee Jones said, "The community changed, and the population is not from that area. We want to reach people that would benefit, and there was limited space."

The RJEC started off as an idea that Jones had after creating a weekly empowerment program for homeless men at the Bishop Cosgrove Center to help them get off of public assistance and into a home of their own with dignity and self-sufficiency. After realizing the continued success of that program, Jones envisioned a new community center that would address specific needs of the community and help empower vulnerable individuals. As time went on, Jones noticed more human trafficking victims needing help, and in 2008, she created Project Red Cord as a response to the urgent and unique needs of the women. Project Red Cord was designed to provide those with the courage to break the chains of trafficking with life coaching and after care services.

The United Nations defines human trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons by improper means (such as force, abduction, fraud, or coercion) for an improper purpose including forced labor or

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Cleveland Public Power customer Jonathon Harris testified that the power in his apartment, along with 10 to 15 other apartments of the 24 apartments where he lives in East Cleveland, was shut off on April 15<sup>th</sup>. The building uses electricity for everything including heat. Harris said there was no advance notice that the power would be turned off. Harris says he was making monthly payments on his bill, but he was unable to pay off the entire bill.

Kimberly Ambruster, a college student on limited income, says she was making payments to the Home Energy Assistance Program mistakenly believing that the payments were going to both Dominion gas and Cleveland Public Power. She found out that Cleveland Public Power was not part of HEAP and she had accumulated a bill of about \$500. She went down to Cleveland Public Power to see if she could arrange a payment plan and was told that Cleveland Public Power has no payment plans, and she would have to pay off the entire bill to have power restored. Ambruster says she was able to borrow the money, to pay off the bill and get the power restored. Ambruster says she is now falling behind on the bill again. She says she is worried that without access to a payment plan she will get shutoff again.

Adam Jefferson says he is a low-income person who lives in a subsidized apartment. He says Cleveland Public Power shut off his electricity in the fall because he was unable to pay his full bill. He says he is unable to pay the full

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**PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN**

Saturday, January 18, 2020; Women's March Cleveland 2020 Rally, Cleveland City Hall, E. 6<sup>th</sup> and Lakeside: A 17-year-old Cleveland Heights High School student inspires the crowd singing Alicia Keys' song "Girl on Fire".

## Speakers at Women's March Cleveland 2020 address social justice and women's rights

by Chuck Hoven

Over 300 people gathered on the steps and sidewalks in front of Cleveland City Hall enduring a cold steady rain, Saturday January 18<sup>th</sup>, to participate in the Women's March Cleveland 2020. Prior to the march,

speakers addressed the crowd. A range of social justice and women's rights issues were addressed.

Speaker Bishop Tony Minor spoke of the importance of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the women's movement and the civil rights movement.

Violence against women was addressed by a number of women and men in attendance at the march, including representatives of

Black on Black Crime, the Imperial Women Coalition and Black Man's

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**PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN**

Saturday, January 18, 2020; Women's March Cleveland 2020 Rally, Cleveland City Hall, E. 6<sup>th</sup> and Lakeside: (L-R) Women's March Cleveland Lead Organizer Kathy Wray Colman, Cleveland Rape Crisis Center President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Sondra Miller, State Senator Nickie J. Antonio (District 23), and State Representative Juanita Brent (District 12). Rape Crisis Center CEO Sondra Miller, one of the keynote speakers at the rally, shares grim statistics on the percentage of women who have been victims of rape and sexual assault.

**ARTS/MUSIC/THEATRE**

**FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE AND ROCK HALL PARTNER** to Help Dads and Kids Make a Musical Connection through a program encouraging fathers and their children to visit the museum and discover a new hobby together. Fathers and their children who visit the Rock Hall can participate in self-guided activities that lead them through discovering a new hobby and exploring the museum together. Special guides can be found on the [Fatherhood Initiative website](#), or at the Rock Hall's Welcome Kiosk. Visitors who live in Cleveland can take advantage of free admission through the CLE VIP Program. Visit [rockhall.com](#) for more information about exhibits, programs and events.

**WRITERS SUPPORT GROUP** every other Friday. 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Published and Non-published Writers Welcome! Lakewood Public Library 15425 Detroit Ave, Lakewood, OH 44107. February 14th, February 28th and every other Friday thereafter. 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Members are requested to bring works in progress, up to 15 double-spaced pages, to read. Please bring at least 5 copies to share with others. All genres of fiction, poetry, stage plays and screenplays welcome. Critiques and suggestions are encouraged but with the understanding that the writer's vision is sacred. This is not a class. It is a support group of aspiring writers.

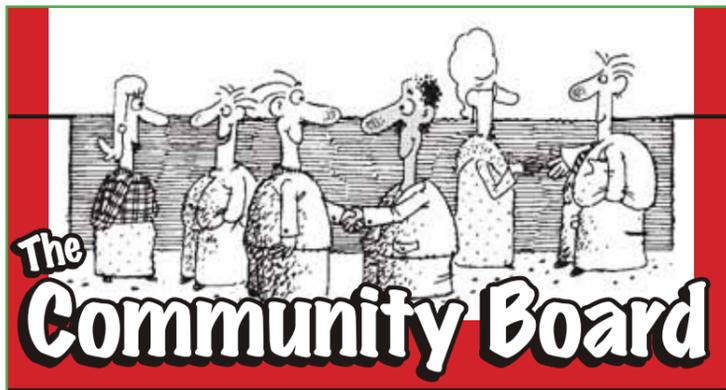
**CLEBRATING BEETHOVEN:** Internationally acclaimed pianist Pierre Réach will pay tribute to Beethoven as part of the 2019-2020 Performing Arts Classical Piano Series presented by [Cuyahoga Community College](#) (Tri-C®). His free performance begins at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 9, in the Cleveland Museum of Art's Gartner Auditorium, located at 11150 East Blvd. in University Circle. Seating is on a first-come basis the day of the recital.

**BAND SUBMISSIONS NOW OPEN FOR CLEVELAND METROPARKS SUMMER CONCERTS:** The Cleveland Metroparks is seeking a diverse array of local and regional bands to play its popular summer concerts throughout the park district. Bands who wish to be considered for inclusion in this year's summer concert lineup, must apply online. Full details, criteria and an interest form can be found at: [clevelandmetroparks.com/concerts](#). The band submission deadline is February 24<sup>th</sup>.

**MUSIC NEAR THE MARKET:** Featuring Cleveland's world-famous Beckerath Organ. Every Wednesday, 12:15-12:45 p.m. Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, W. 30<sup>th</sup> and Lorain Avenue.

**SPACES**, at 2900 Detroit Avenue, offers free gallery admission. Its hours are Tuesday through Friday from Noon to 5 p.m. Wednesdays- open until 8 p.m. Free gallery tours available upon request.

**WALKABOUT TREMONT** is held every second Friday from 6 to 10 pm. For more



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.

information, visit [walkabouttremont.com](#)  
**78<sup>TH</sup> STREET STUDIOS**, 1300 W. 78<sup>th</sup> Street. Art Opening for over 50 studios and galleries every 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of every month, 5-9 p.m. [78streetstudios.com](#).

**COMMUNITY**

**THE CLEVELAND WEST SIDE VILLAGE** invites you to a Program on Fun, Fitness and Aging. Saturday, February 29, 2020, Doors open at 10 am, Program will begin at 10:30am At Carnegie West Library, 1900 Fulton Rd. Learn about the benefits of exercise to the aging process, about opportunities for exercise near you, and about exercises you can do. Dr.

Emily Kullman, Associate Professor of Exercise Science at Cleveland State University will present on the benefits of exercise, and Judy Pestak, Silver Sneakers instructor, will demonstrate simple exercises that can be done at home or at a gym.

**CONSUMER**

**PARATRANSIT SURVEY:** Northern Ohioans for Budget Legislation Equality (NOBLE) will be conducting a survey regarding Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (GCRTA) paratransit rider experiences for the next couple of months in an effort to improve paratransit services in entirety. If you or someone that you know utilizes paratransit and would be open to hearing more about and or taking the survey please contact our organizer, Brittny Madison at [BMadison@organizeohio.org](#) or 330-571-3333.

**2020 EXTERIOR PAINT PROGRAM:** Contact the City of Cleveland Community Development Department, 601 Lakeside, Room 302, for an application and income eligibility requirements. Applications are due by February 28, 2020.

**DOES YOUR HOME HAVE A SMOKE ALARM?** If not, call the operation Save-A-Life 24-hour hotline at 216-361-5535 to apply for FREE smoke alarms.

**EDUCATION**

**TRI-C PROGRAM EXAMINES MEDIA BIAS AND THE INFORMATION ECOSYSTEM:** Learn how to look past sensationalized headlines and determine the legitimacy of news sources during an upcoming discussion at the Western Campus of [Cuyahoga Community College](#) (Tri-C®). The free program — "The Media Bias Chart: The Importance of Rating News Sources for Reliability and Bias" — will take place from 12:30-1:45 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 6, at Tri-C's Western

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Campus Theatre in Parma. Vanessa Otero, who created the Media Bias Chart to provide a system for rating news legitimacy, will lead the discussion. The Colorado patent attorney's infographic chart debuted in 2016 and went viral as people sought ways to make sense of the media landscape. Visit [www.tri-c.edu/mediabias](http://www.tri-c.edu/mediabias) to reserve a seat at the free event. There will be a reception after the presentation. Call 216-987-5508 for more information. Western Campus is located at 11000 Pleasant Valley Road in Parma.

**GORDON SQUARE COMPUTER LAB:** Free classes Tuesdays from 10am to 4pm; Thursdays from 11am to 6 pm, and alternating either Friday 1-5 pm OR Saturday 9-11am. For more information or to register, call Digital Literacy Coordinator Alicia Greasby at 219-961-4242 ext. 235.

**METRO WEST COMPUTER LAB:** Free classes on Mondays from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Wednesdays from 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.; Fridays from 1-5 p.m.; and every other Saturday from 9 a.m. -11 a.m. at 3167 Fulton Road, Third Floor, Suite 303. For more information and to register call Digital Literacy Coordinator Alicia Greasby at 216-961-9073 ext. 235.

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## Neighbors and homeless advocates defend Denison Avenue United Church of Christ's offering of hospitality to the homeless

by Bruce Checefsky

On a late Sunday afternoon in January, an old rusted Ford pickup truck carrying a twenty-foot ladder tied to the back pulled up to a stop sign just a few blocks from Denison Avenue United Church of Christ building at West 99th Street and stopped. The driver's side door swung open and out stepped a young man in his twenties with an orthopedic cast wrapped around his leg that stretched from his ankle upward past his knee. He removed the cast and threw the wrap into the cab, got back in the truck and drove off. A couple of doors

down the street, an American flag made from an old wood fence and plywood, painted with colorful stars and stripes, leaned against the side of a two-story house. In this low-income neighborhood made up of empty storefronts and bordered up family homes, one of the poorest neighborhoods in Cleveland and among the poorest in the United States, no one seemed to mind the homeless spending a night at Denison Avenue United Church of Christ in the coldest of cold weather. Most people knew nothing about it.

Last Christmas Eve, the

Cleveland Department of Public Safety notified the United Church of Christ (UCC) that it can no longer function as a church if it chooses to house those experiencing homelessness. A 'Cease Use Notice' was taped to the door of the church, issued by Angelo Calvillo, Chief, Division of Fire, citing, "No certificate of Occupancy for R-1 Use Metanoia Project Transient Lodging and Housing" and recommended that UCC submit plans and permits to the City of Cleveland Division of Building and Housing to change the use of the

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## WOMEN'S MARCH

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Army. Activist Alfred Porter Jr. read off the names of the eleven women murdered on Imperial Avenue by serial killer Anthony Sowell as well as other women killed or kidnapped in Cleveland. Kathy Wray Coleman, lead organizer for the Women's March Cleveland 2020, called for the Ohio Eighth District Court of Appeals to deny a motion by Sowell's attorneys to appeal his conviction.

Cleveland Rape Crisis Center President and Chief Executive Officer Sondra Miller also addressed the issue of violence against women. In her speech, she noted that one in five women are victims of rape or sexual assault during their lifetimes.

Ward 15 Cleveland City Council Representative Matt Zone spoke of legislation he plans to introduce in Cleveland City Council that will offer job protection to City of Cleveland employees who are victims of domestic violence. Zone said he hopes that the legislation will set a precedent and large Cleveland corporations will follow the city's lead in offering this protection. Ward 1 City Council Representative Joe Jones also spoke to the marchers.

Voter registration, political activism and a political agenda of inclusion were

also topics at the rally.

State Senator Nickie Antonio (Senate District 23) and State Representative Juanita Brent (District 12) both spoke of the importance of women being elected as public officials. Antonio noted she was the first woman to hold a Senate seat in her district. Brent urged those present to call their representatives to gain their support for legislation calling for a \$15 minimum wage in Ohio.

It was noted that 38 states have now ratified the Equal Rights amendment to the Constitution and organizers called for Congress to extend the deadline for states to ratify the proposed amendment.

Activist Lois Romanoff spoke of the importance of amending the United States constitution to end corrupting influence of corporate dollars allowed by the Supreme Court decision in the case of Citizens United.

Activist Valerie Bai, representing The Coalition to Stop the Inhumanity at the Cuyahoga County Jail, called for a variety of reforms to address the crisis at the local jail. Reforms she called for included: bail reform, prosecutorial reform, improved living conditions inside the jail, a pre-booking diversion center to prevent future jailing of people struggling with mental health or addiction, and access to diversion regardless of ability to pay.

Other issues addressed by speakers included women's reproductive rights,

LGBTQ rights, and the need for a welcoming and compassionate treatment of immigrants. Members of Refuse Fascism spoke about the current critical need for activism.

Others in the crowd brought their own concerns to the rally via their signs.

Madison Hall's sign read "Girls just wanna have FUNdamental Human Rights."

Rosie Palfy and her boxer Blue sought to bring attention to the Metanoia Project's efforts to continue using Denison United Church of Christ as a place for refuge from the cold for Cleveland's homeless and heat deprived population. Palfy's sign called out as missing Ward 11 Council Representative Dona Brady, who has opposed the use of the church as a night-time shelter. Palfy says she is a veteran, who was homeless for 2 1/2 years. She credits help available to veterans as helping her to turn her life around, but says those resources are not available to everyone, she said.

As the crowd prepared to march to Public Square, a seventeen-year old Cleveland Heights High School Senior inspired the crowd with her singing of the song, "Girl On Fire."

**Editor's Note:** The annual women's marches began in 2017 in response to the inauguration of President Donald



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, January 18, 2020; Women's March Cleveland 2020 Rally, Cleveland City Hall, E. 6th and Lakeside: Rosie Palfy and her boxer Blue protest Ward 11 Cleveland City Council Representative Dona Brady's opposition to the use of Denison United Church of Christ as a Metanoia Project night time refuge from the cold for the homeless and heat deprived.

Trump. Women's March Cleveland 2020 resulted from a grass roots organizing effort led by local activist Kathy Wray Coleman. More information about the march can be found on Coleman's blog

or the Cleveland Urban News website. Coleman blogs at: kathywraycolemanonlineblog.com; the Cleveland Urban News website is at clevelandurbannews.com.

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PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Saturday, January 18, 2020; Women's March Cleveland 2020 Rally, Cleveland City Hall, E. 6th and Lakeside: This enthusiastic protester says she has President Trump to thank for making her an activist.

# Detroit Avenue has a rich history

A century ago, traffic from downtown to the near west side crossed the Detroit-Superior High Level Bridge, then dodged streetcars that emerged from the lower level of the bridge in the middle of Detroit Avenue; that expansive section of Detroit, today, sits between housing developments that welcome new residents to Hingetown.

Connections to Detroit Avenue from downtown shifted through the years. Operated by the West Side Railroad Co., in 1863, the first Cleveland streetcar line to run west of the Cuyahoga carried passengers from Superior and Vineyard St. to the Flats, then crossed the river on the Center Street Bridge where it climbed the hill and continued on Detroit to W. 38th Street. When access to the new Superior Viaduct was acquired in 1880, the route through the flats was eliminated, and, then again, the route shifted to the Detroit-Superior High Level Bridge, when it opened in 1917.

Over the years, the Detroit Superior (the Veterans' Memorial) Bridge has been spruced up on a number of occasions. An article by Chuck Hoven in the November 2002 *Plain Press* titled "Plans unveiled for Detroit Superior Bridge Project" describes plans revealed by Lillian Kuri, Executive Director of Cleveland Public Art. The plans called for a number of changes including the reduction on lanes on the bridge to allow for a 12-foot-wide sidewalk and a bike lane on the north side of the bridge.

What greeted streetcar passengers when they arrived on Detroit Avenue in those early days is a far cry from today, and much of the land on Detroit was residential or

undeveloped, but streetcar development after 1863 encouraged commercial development along Detroit. This part of Detroit Avenue had been lined with single-family residences located near the Irish immigrant neighborhood known as the Angle.

The Forest City Savings and Trust building, with access to the streetcar line below ground, is still there but it's now home to the Ohio City Gallery. The Seymour Building next door also remains, but the Kieffer's German restaurant sign is all that remains of that popular spot, now occupied by new businesses, the Beauty Shop and Foyer. What began as a beer and bratwurst stand operated by William W. and Anna Kieffer at the 1936 Great Lakes Exposition, became the Schwarzwald (Black Forest) restaurant at 2519 Detroit Ave. the following year, then had a name change to Kieffer's during World War II, according to the *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*. It closed in 1991.

Across Detroit Avenue on the northern side is the Quarter, a \$60 million residential-commercial development opened in 2018 by the Snively Group that has space for 194 apartments as well as The Music Settlement and The Grocery. This was the site of a parking lot for a couple decades. This development was announced in the *Plain Press* in March of 2015 in an article titled "Snively Group hopes development plans will transform corner of W. 25th and Detroit Avenue." The article describes the Snively Group's plans for three of the four corners of the intersection of W. 25th and Detroit Avenue.

The Quarter sits at the site where Shondor Birns died in a car explosion on Holy Saturday in 1975. In a recent *Plain Dealer* article about the famous car bombing, *Plain Dealer* reporter Laura DeMarco describes the corner in 1975 as "a gritty hub of strip clubs and dive bars and hustlers - where infamous gangster Alex "Shondor" Birns, 69,

was blown to pieces in his Lincoln Continental after a night drinking at Christy's Tavern, a seedy go-go joint he frequented."

Cleveland ranked close to New York as one of the country's leading centers for garment production until the depression, and the Federal Knitting Mills at 2860-2882 Detroit Avenue produced wool sweaters from 1907 to 1939. Later the structure was converted to apartments, and it soon will have company as ground was recently broken for the \$50 million Church and State mixed use complex across the street. This project, between West 28th and West 29th streets, will add about 160 apartments and 20,000 square feet of retail space to Detroit Avenue.

Next door to the Federal Knitting Mills building, the Spaces gallery occupies the first floor of the Van Roy building, but this was home to the Van Rooy Coffee Co. from 1935 to March 2003. Before that, its uses reflect Cleveland's diverse industrial base. From 1895 to 1926 it housed the Cleveland Steel Range Company that later was known as Imperial Steel Range, and from 1929 to 1935 it was occupied by Thompson Products, later known as TRW---manufacturer of pistons for automobiles and airplane engine valves. The company's manufacturing facility at 2900 Detroit Ave. was the only location that manufactured the pistons for the Ford Motor Company's Tri-Motor Airplane.

In the 1940's the Van Rooy Coffee Company decided to use Van Roy as a product name and slowly phased out the double O from its products. The official company name remained the same, but they believed that their name recognition would be better with the single O, and it also allowed more room for graphics, which made the product more visible. The name is still visible on the west side of the building today, next to the Bop Stop.

Detroit Avenue retains some industry amidst the housing and other businesses. The Kowalski Heat Treating Co., at 3611 Detroit was started in 1975. It specializes in salt bath and vacuum heat treating. Next door, Kennick Mold & Die has operated for 63 years in the molded plastic products sector, and Conveyer & Caster, a third-generation family owned business, has provided material handling needs industry for 55 years. Their industrial customers and residents next door have a clear view of Lake Erie with a small park and the Cleveland Memorial Shoreway across the street.

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## DETROIT AVENUE

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Moving west on Detroit, travelers will encounter The Harp, where patrons stand in lines on St. Patrick's Day for beer and corned beef sandwiches, and Cleveland Bagel, a popular stop that was successfully started as a product of LeBron James' Cleveland Hustles competitive reality TV show on CNBC in 2016.

The W. 45<sup>th</sup> Street entrance to the Shoreway from Detroit Avenue once ran all the way down to Division Avenue near the Clear Water Reservoir, a block from the lake and near the Cleveland yards of the American Ship Building Co.

On the northwest corner of the W. 45<sup>th</sup> Street intersection, a new west side high school is under construction on the site of the former Max Hayes High School that occupied that site from 1957 until it was moved to W. 65<sup>th</sup> Street with a new building. But this site has roots in education that go back much further, to the Detroit Elementary School on the western portion of the block next to W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street before World War II. And maps show a public school on the same site in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

A June 2017 *Plain Press* article titled "Plans unveiled for new high school building at former Max Hayes site on Detroit Avenue" describes plans for a new west side high school to be built on Detroit Avenue from W. 45<sup>th</sup> to W. 49<sup>th</sup>. According to the article the projected cost of the new building was \$32.5-million and it was slated to be ready for opening in August 2020.

Over the years there has been a residential-business mix along Detroit Avenue from W. 45<sup>th</sup> Street to the heart of the Detroit Shoreway neighborhood, Gordon Square at W. 65<sup>th</sup>. In the late 1800s, at the turn of the century the property north of Detroit Avenue between W. 65<sup>th</sup> and W. 59<sup>th</sup> Street was undeveloped all the way to the Breakwater street and what is Herman's Park today. But, by the 1920s and 1930s, Detroit Avenue had become lined with businesses and some residences. Before WWII, you could buy a car from Bergholz Chevrolet, located at W. 55<sup>th</sup> Street and Detroit, then fill it up with gas at a station on the corner of W. 61<sup>st</sup> Street and Detroit. Today, this stretch of Detroit Avenue and further west is littered with a host of ethnic and American restaurants, from The Big Egg and India Delight, to Gypsy Beans, Minh Anh, Rincon Criollo, Lux Kitchen & Lounge, Sweet Moses, and Banter Beer & Wine.

The Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization (DSCDO) which serves the area from W. 45 to W. 85<sup>th</sup> on Detroit Avenue has played a role in rehabbing a number of apartment buildings on that stretch of Detroit Avenue. Included among the DSCDO efforts to increase the residential population on Detroit Avenue is the adaptive reuse of the Templem Bradley Building at 5700 Detroit Avenue. An article in the August 2015 issue of the *Plain Press* describes completion of the \$8-million-dollar effort to convert the former corporate headquarters to 30 units of mixed income rental housing.

One intersection on Detroit Avenue has become a destination not only for hungry visitors but also for the celebration of Dyngus Day. W. 58 Street and Detroit is epicenter for the celebration as Detroit is blocked off for what has become a popular celebration of Polish culture on the Monday after Easter Sunday. This is also home to the farm-to-table restaurant, Spice Kitchen and Bar, and the Happy Dog, where patrons have listened to programs featuring Cleveland Orchestra musicians and City Club panels.

On a historical note, long-time residents will remember Mom Socotch's Restaurant at 5801 Detroit Avenue in the building that now houses the Happy Dog. The ads for the restaurant appeared regularly in the *Plain Press* during the 1980s.

While commercial enterprises have fueled recent growth on Detroit Avenue, public and private institutions have long been the foundation of the area.

Among the churches on Detroit Avenue, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, founded in 1926, at W. 70th and Detroit Avenue, was established to meet the needs of the growing Italian community in the Cleveland area. Our Lady of Mount Carmel School was featured in the October 1999 issue of the *Plain Press* as it celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. And the Romanian community continues to be served by St. Helena Romanian Catholic Church just a short distance off Detroit Avenue on W. 65<sup>th</sup> Street and

the Hispanic community served by La Sagrada Family Church further west on Detroit Avenue.

"Gordon Square Arcade has a rich history" is the title of an article by Blane Warrene in the October 1995 issue of the *Plain Press*. The article notes that at the time it was built in 1920, it was the only arcade outside of downtown. It also notes the efforts of the Detroit Shoreway Community Development Organization to purchase and save the building following the collapse of the east wall onto W. 65<sup>th</sup> Street in May of 1978. By October of 2009, the *Plain Press* was reporting the success of the Gordon Square Arts District in articles such as "Gordon Square Arts District becomes a reality: Detroit Shoreway takes a huge step toward economic diversity" by Joe Narkin; and "Detroit Shoreway community celebrates Detroit Avenue streetscape completion" by Frank Barnett.

Residents and visitors are likely to agree that the rebirth of the Gordon Square area is due in part to work by the Detroit-Shoreway Community Development Organization's efforts supporting the arts, initiated by James Levin's founding of Cleveland Public Theatre. With the reopening of the Capitol Theatre in the Gordon Square Arcade building and the addition of the Near West Theatre in 2015, the Gordon Square Arts District has become a major force in the community. The Capitol Theatre, built in 1921, was a vaudeville and silent film house that had been closed for nearly three decades until reopening in 2009 as a state-of-the-art movie theatre. The December 2011 *Plain Press* describes the finishing touches added to the restoration with the celebration of the lighting of the Capitol Theatre blade sign.

Although not on Detroit Avenue, the 78<sup>th</sup> Street Studios that once were home to American Greetings creative studios, are an important part of the entertainment district centered on Detroit Avenue. 78<sup>th</sup> Street Studios, just north of Lake Avenue, hosts openings for over 50 studios and galleries on the third Friday of each month. In its July 2019 issue, the *Plain Press* reported that on June 14, 2019 the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Transgender Community Center opened a new facility at 6705 Detroit Avenue on the south side of the street. The LGBT Community Center had previously been located across Detroit Avenue in the Gordon Square Arcade since May of 2000.

State of Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credits have played a role in the restoration of buildings along Detroit Avenue. One example is the Dorn School of Expression building at 7306 Detroit Avenue which according to an article in the January 2018 *Plain Press* received \$249,999 in historic preservation tax credits to be used toward a reported \$1.8 million rehabilitation of the building.

Before Detroit Avenue leaves the Detroit-Shoreway neighborhood, it is home to the St. Augustine Health Campus (once St. John's Hospital), the Walz Branch of the Cleveland Public Library, Community Corner, the Strickland Cri-



PHOTO BY CHUCK HOVEN

Friday, January 17, 2020; mural on east side of trd Leather, 6321 Detroit Avenue: This mural, painted in late October of 2019 by artist Shane Pierce of Abstract Dissent, adds scenic beauty to the drive down Detroit Avenue. Chuck Perez, owner of trd Leather, says a photo of his mother was used as a model for the painting. The painting celebrates Perez's mother's Native American heritage.

sis Center, and EDEN Inc.'s Commons at West Village.

Detroit Avenue arrives in the Cudell neighborhood, passing what was the site of Monarch Aluminum at W. 93<sup>rd</sup> Street, then crossing the former Nickle Plate Road, now the tracks of Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and Norfolk & Southern, and arriving at Cudell Commons, Cudell Recreation Center and the Cudell Fine Arts Center at West Boulevard—the site of the Emma Cudell dwelling.

The only RTA rapid stop on Detroit Avenue is on the north side of Detroit at West Boulevard. Across the street from the rapid station is The Palazzo restaurant, reopened this year by chef Rafael Zaloshnja after being closed for many years.

In May 2006, in an article titled "Detroit Avenue industrial site receives funds for cleanup", the *Plain Press* reported "The site of the former Monarch Aluminum/Trinity Building at 9203 Detroit Avenue is now slated for cleanup for redevelopment. On Monday, March 27th, the Clean Ohio Assistance Fund (COAF) announced a \$750,000 grant has been awarded for brownfield remediation activities at the site." While plans at that time anticipated the site would be used by Energy Wise Energy Systems for a new office/warehouse facility, today the site is home of the new City of Cleveland City Kennel which opened a new \$7.3 million dollar facility on the site in March of 2019 as reported in the April 2019 issue of the *Plain Press*.

Across the street from the new kennel is the Islamic Center of Cleveland, a place of worship for Cleveland's Muslim community.

Passing the intersection of Detroit Avenue and West Boulevard, the street goes under the railroad tracks once again. Traveling west and immediately upon emerging from the underpass, visitors looking south will see a brick building that has been renovated for apartments. This was the site of W. J. White's Gum Factory where chewing gum was conceived in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. William White operated a candy store in 1884 when he mistakenly bought a barrel of Yucatan chicle. Discovering it could be softened and made chewable, he added mint, and sold the product as "Yucatan." In 1890, he established and became president of American Chicle Co., according to the *Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*. A housing development just west of the original site is named for the Chicle roots there.

A little further west on Detroit is the Eliza Jennings Health Campus at 10603 Detroit, site of the Eliza Jennings Home, which opened in 1888. This stretch of Detroit Avenue is home to the Cannon LoPresti & Catavolos Funeral Home, Kirby Manor, Friends Restaurant, and the former St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church and its school which now houses the Hope Academy North-

west Charter School. Another charter school Lake Erie International High Schools sits on the corner of Detroit at W. 117<sup>th</sup>.

Before leaving Cleveland at W. 117<sup>th</sup> Street, visitors to Detroit Avenue can stop at The Brothers Lounge, home to popular music and where those old enough to remember and lucky to have been there once could have heard Barbara Streisand perform as a relatively unknown. Cleveland Blues legend Robert Junior Lockwood and his band the All Stars entertained crowds there for many years as well.

Detroit Avenue continues on into Lakewood as it passes West 117<sup>th</sup> Street, leaving the circulation area of the *Plain Press*.

**Editor's note:** As part of the lead up to the *Plain Press*'s fiftieth anniversary in 2021, the *Plain Press* is publishing a series of articles on the main streets in the *Plain Press* service area. The articles were initiated by *Plain Press* Board member Leo Jeffres and students in his journalism class at Cleveland State University. *Plain Press* staff added information from the *Plain Press* archives to supplement the articles from Professor Jeffres' class.

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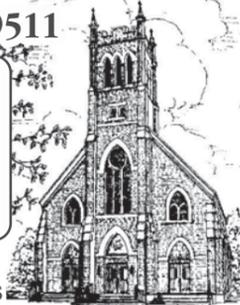
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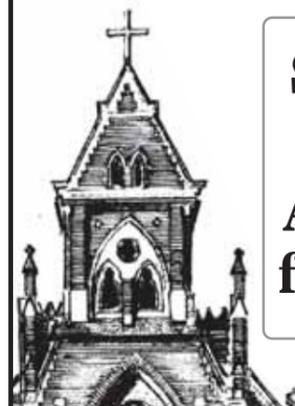




PHOTO BY MICHAEL OAKAR

Monday, January 6, 2020; Cleveland City Council Meeting, Cleveland City Hall, E. 6<sup>th</sup> and Lakeside: Ward 15 City Council Representative Matt Zone takes a stand for the heatless and homeless offering his support for the Metanoia Project using Denison United Church of Christ as a refuge on cold nights.

**DENISON AVE UCC**

continued from page 3

facility.  
Denison Avenue United Church of Christ pastor, Nozomi Ikuta, has

no immediate plans to change the church into transient lodging and housing. "Jesus wouldn't want us to

do it," she said. "We want the city to commit to working with us to come up with a workable solution that allows us to continue to exercise our ministry to help the homeless at our church."

Ward 11 Councilwoman Dona Brady forced the issue, challenging the church's right to act as a shelter ever since a Cleveland fire inspection found that Metanoia had been violating the 45-person limit at St. Malachi Church on West 25th Street. Pastor Nozomi Ikuta accepted the homeless overflow with support from her congregation. Brady called in the Cleveland of Public Safety to shut her down.

Weeks later, over 100 homeless advocates packed Cleveland City Council chambers to protest. Brady sat motionless as minister and social justice advocate George Hrbek stood up in city hall chambers and recited, over the voice of Cleveland City Council clerk Patricia Britt, the name of Lorraine Van De Venter, a woman who froze to death on Cleveland's east side in 2017. Councilmen Kerry McCormack and Matt Zone gave passionate speeches about the need to take care of Cleveland's

most vulnerable citizens. Basheer Jones called on his council colleagues to have the courage to do something, not just talk about it. Jones should know. He stayed at the city's Salvation Army shelter with his family when he first moved to Cleveland from Brooklyn, NY, as a boy.

"No matter how bad you have it, someone else has it worse," Jones pleaded.

As the City Council meeting wound down, Council President Kevin Kelley gaveled the proceedings to a close and disappeared out the side door along with Mayor Frank Jackson and his staff, and most city council members.

Police stood back and watched as protestors chanting grew louder with, "No more neighbors froze to death," and "Housing is a human right."

Rose Driscoll was standing on her seat in the vaulted 2-story great hall public space pumping her fist into the air, her voice hoarse from shouting, "Keep the shelter open!"

Other protestors followed with loud clapping protests.

Later that same night, the church got a midnight visit from two inspectors from the Cleveland Fire Department and six police officers. Many in the community felt that the visit was in retaliation for the outpouring of support. Even though the church passed the fire watch inspection, Lt. Mike Norman, Cleveland Fire spokesman, said the inspection was a routine check during cold weather and at night when the shelter would likely have a large population. Still, Nozomi understood the political message all too well.

A half block from Denison Avenue United Church of Christ on the same side of the street, a neighbor stood on his porch smoking a cigarette and checking his phone. When asked about the incident, he said that he read about it in the newspaper. The story has been an ongoing feature in the local media including TV news, *The Plain Dealer* and *Scene Magazine* since last November. He added that he didn't mind if the church provided a warm safe place for the homeless to sleep. "It don't bother me none," he said, wishing to remain anonymous.

Back at the Curbside Coffee Shop on the corner of West 99th Street and Lorain Avenue, owner Judy Fitch talked about the good work being done by the pastor, Nozomi, and volunteers at UCC. "It's a good thing they're doing. They're trying to help the homeless and bring them in. They're helping people and the city's giving them a tough time."

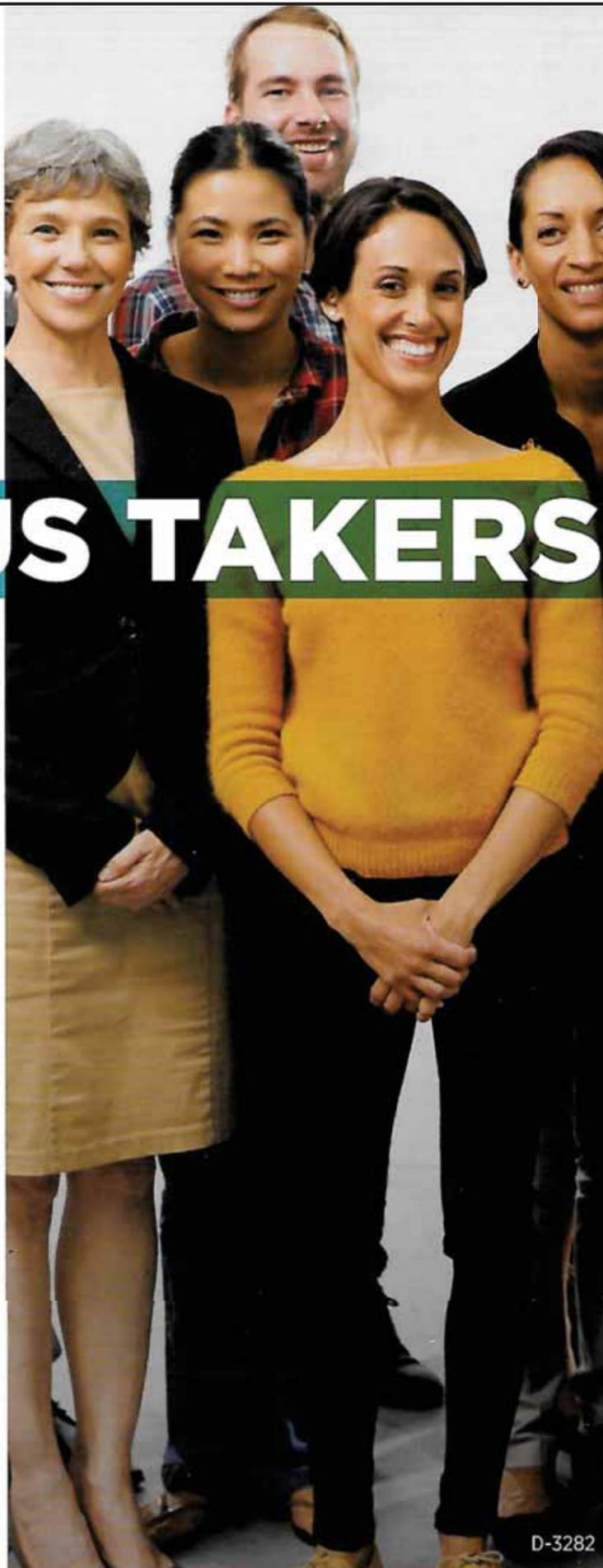
The Curbside Coffee Shop is a gathering place for the community where live music is played most nights of the week and the walls are decorated with a collection of hanging guitars, banjos, and mandolins. Fitch and her late husband, Terry, opened the Curbside thirteen-years ago.

"The church is meaning well," she said. "We have a lot of homeless people in our neighborhood that we're trying to take care of, too. You don't want to see anyone freeze to death."

Doug, a longtime musician and friend of the late Harold King, vocalist and guitarist for the legendary Bluegrass Kings, the regular Tuesday night Curbside band, added, "They're doing the right thing to feed the homeless. I agree with everything she said."

Fitch glanced across the room to ask Earl, leaning against the counter and another Curbside regular, what he thought. He nodded his head in agreement.

"He don't say much," Doug laughed.



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## RENEE JONES EMPOWERMENT CENTER

continued from page one

sexual exploitation.

According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, Ohio ranks in the top five states for human trafficking due to several factors including having large urban and rural areas, a massive transient and immigrant population, and five major highways that lead to other states and Canada.

RJEC helps victims and survivors by providing them with resources and services that are otherwise unavailable to them and all in one place. They receive help with housing, medical and legal concerns, but also through holistic healing and restoration programs and events designed especially for them with the suggestions from survivors. This act creates a much-needed sense of empowerment for the women to see things that they suggested, being implemented. Activities like journaling, art therapy, intergenerational support groups and social outings do more than just help the ladies; they are also beneficial to the communities that the ladies live in.

"You need diversity and exposure. It can't be all sanitized," Jones said when asked of the extracurricular programs that include women of all ages, races and socio-economic backgrounds. The support groups, especially, are all inclusive and a way for victims and survivors to share resources, discuss problems unique to them, and offer up solutions and ways to cope with the trauma that they have been subjected to.

"Love is the most powerful force in the world. You heal the whole person by showing them love, hope, self-esteem and self-confidence," Jones said. And the way to do that is through community events and outings that connect the survivors to their passions and talents by building relationships. Trafficking is a very isolated lifestyle and some victims and survivors lose their family in the process. Even though everything has been traumatic for them, they learn the beauty of friendships through bonding with others, all while creating new memories and experiences that connect to happy memories.

The annual Break the Chains of Human Trafficking Gala, now in its 8th year, is held every November and is one event that helps the ladies step out of their comfort zone as well as raising funds

for the center. There is a cocktail hour, a raffle, auctions, \$100 plates and live music, but the highlight is the Survivor Spotlight where some of the ladies tell their stories and give updates on their life as a survivor. They all step out in style with dresses donated from "INSERT HERE" and debut their elegant looks on the dance floor as they ballroom dance with gentlemen volunteers. What may be seen as a fancy fundraising party to the naked eye is a golden opportunity for the women to present themselves to family and friends in a new light and to take up space replacing old traumatic horrifying memories with newer better ones.

Recently there has been an uptick about human sex trafficking in the news and while awareness is being raised on the act itself, it is important to know how you can identify victims and SAFELY help them. Here are several indicators and red flags according to the State of Ohio's website on human trafficking that could alert you to someone being exploited: •Living with employer • Poor living conditions • Multiple people in cramped space •Inability to speak to individual alone • Answers appear to be scripted and rehearsed • Employer is holding identity documents • Signs of physical abuse • Submissive or fearful • Unpaid or paid very little •Under 18 and in prostitution.

Some victims may be too afraid to receive your help, but if you are able to speak with the individuals alone, then ask them questions like- Can they come and go as they please? Have you been hurt or threatened if you tried to leave? Has your family been threatened? Where do you sleep or eat? If you think someone is being trafficked, do not try to save them yourself because you could possibly end up doing more harm. Call 911 for immediate help and then follow up with the 24-hour, multi-lingual National Human Trafficking Hotline 1-888-373-7888.

Other ways that you can help RJEC are by going on the website to find out how to donate money, time or provide a service or expertise for victims and survivors. If you are a business, first responder, federal employee, educator or in law enforcement, human trafficking training is available to you. For more information visit the RJEC website [www.rjecempower.org](http://www.rjecempower.org)

## COMMUNITY BOARD

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### EMPLOYMENT

**WEST SIDE CATHOLIC CENTER WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT JOBS PROGRAM:** The program runs from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, Monday thru Friday for a period of eight weeks. All jobseekers are guaranteed job offers in the area of their interest and may exit the program prior to the eight weeks upon accepting an employment opportunity. We assist with obtaining childcare vouchers and provide childcare in the interim. We assist with bus tickets for all SNAP eligible individuals. Work clothes, interview clothes and all supplies needed for class are provided for free. A free lunch is provided after class. Those individuals who are interested or need additional hours for SNAP will have a choice of two exploratory introductions to either FOOD SERVICE or MANUFACTURING. Question or registration.....call Frank Johaneck 216-631-4741 ext. 167

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### SERVICES

**RENEE JONES EMPOWERMENT CENTER, 3764 W. 25<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200.:** Restoring the lives of Human Trafficking Victims through holistic services and advocacy. Services include therapy, case management, life skills, employment assistance, weekly support groups and more. Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays from 12:30-8:30 p.m.; Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. To make an appointment call 216-417-0823. For more information visit: [www.rjecempower.org](http://www.rjecempower.org) or email: [rjones@rjecempower.org](mailto:rjones@rjecempower.org).

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER'S LATINA PROJECT** offers culturally sensitive services that take into consideration the realities of the Latino life. Services provided in Spanish and free of charge include information about legal rights & Justice System Advocacy, personal assistance & escort, counseling services, weekly Spanish-speaking Support Group/child-care and more. For more information call 216-229-2420 or visit [www.dvcac.org](http://www.dvcac.org).

## END POVERTY NOW COALITION

continued from page one

balance to get his power turned back on. Jefferson says without electricity, his apartment has no heat. He says, "I have been going to Metanoia to stay warm on the cold nights, but I am about to be evicted from my apartment because I do not have electricity, which is required by my lease."

Joyce Manz says her electricity was shut off even though she had a medical certificate on file to prevent disconnections due to living with a relative who is dependent on the electricity for her oxygen machine.

One of the member organizations of the End Poverty Now Coalition is Organize Ohio. Larry Bresler, Organize Ohio Executive Director, says, "It is pretty clear what the legal issues are." He notes that Cleveland Public Power (CPP) is not following City of Cleveland codified ordinances that outline the process of notifying customers of pending shutoff. It is also violating due process rights in established federal law. He notes that Cleveland Public Power does not publicize the availability of certificates to get a doctors' notice to avoid shutoff. Bresler says CPP's procedures for shutoff should be no different than that of the water department – both are vital utilities.

End Poverty Now activist Diane Howard, a resident of Lakeview Terrace, called for Cleveland Public Power to provide a monthly list to Cleveland City Council and the public showing the number of shutoffs for each Cleveland City Council Ward. Howard also called for Cleveland Public Power to make public how the Energy or Ecological Adjustment Charge (EAC) that appears on the bill is calculated. She demanded that, "Any rate increase in the EAC must require a

vote of City Council."

Jacie Jones, an organizer with Organize Ohio, talked about due process and customer rights. She called for Cleveland Public Power to make available the names of members of its Review Board and the meeting records of the board. She also urged that Cleveland City Council require that Cleveland Public Power place information about due process rights of customers and a statement about the medical waiver on its bills. She called for a link to the medical waiver to be placed on the bills as well.

Delaney Jones, also an organizer with Organize Ohio, called on Cleveland Public Power to have personal contact in person or by phone with people who are disabled or age 62 or over within 48-hours prior to shutting off their electricity. She said in cases where landlords pay the electric bill, tenants should be individually notified prior to shutoff. She called for a customer's current address to be used to send shut off notices. Delaney Jones also called upon Cleveland Public Power to start a sliding scale payment plan for customers based upon their income.

Activist Tim Walters called for Cleveland Public Power to improve its communication with the community. Walters called for reducing wait time on the phone to less than 30 minutes. He called on Cleveland City Council to make

sure that Cleveland Public Power has adequate customer service staff based on the number of calls they receive. He said all calls to Cleveland Public Power should be answered within 24 hours and all staff should be adequately trained to know what assistance programs are available to customers. Walters called upon Cleveland Public Power to hold community meetings to let the public know what utility assistance programs are available and make sure local nonprofit organizations that work with the community are also aware of these programs.

Brian Mallory, an organizer with Organize Ohio working with the End Poverty Now Coalition, said the goal of the End Poverty Now Coalition is to reduce the overall number of CPP shutoffs, institute a moratorium on winter shutoffs, and increase transparency in the billing process. Mallory says he would like Cleveland Public Power be an asset rather than a detriment to the community.

Mallory said the End Poverty Now Coalition is working to raise \$5,000 so it can offer assistance to help people in need that are facing utility shutoffs. Mallory said the End Poverty Now Coalition plans to speak with members of the Cleveland City Council Utilities Committee about the issues and concerns raised at the Press Conference.

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