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SPRING 2021

Vol. 43 No. 3

FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE, WORK AND SHOP IN THE SHAKER SQUARE AREA

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COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION

Distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine has begun in Cuyahoga County. Visit ccbh.net/covid-19-phase-1b-provider-list/ to learn more about when you qualify to receive the vaccine and for a list of providers.

SHAD Member Meeting

The SHAD annual meeting is postponed until summer due to the continuing pandemic. Look for the date and time in the summer SHAD Connection, shad.org, and on Facebook.

North Union Farmers Market – Outdoor Hours

North Union Farmers Market will return to Shaker Square on Saturday April 3, 8 a.m. to noon.

Larchmere Community Association Plant Sale

The annual plant sale will be held on Mother's Day Weekend starting May 8. Organizers will provide contactless pickup, and preorders are being taken. More information on page 7.

Our Lady of Peace's 16th Annual Run for Peace

This year's event will be virtual during the weekend of May 1-2. Participants can post or email photos and messages of themselves participating in some exercise activity. To register contact Jim Cullen at 216.533.8804 or jpc@jpcullenlaw.com. More information at olpchurch.com.

Shaker Square Seeks New Owner

by Grant Segall

As of early February, several local leaders were hoping to transfer and bolster Cleveland's historic, challenged Shaker Square.

The Square's owner, Coral Shaker Square, LLC, signed a letter of agreement Jan. 6 for Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) to partner with Burten, Bell, Carr Development (BBC) in finding new owners.

Tania Menesse, president and CEO of Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, said, "Shaker Square is critically important to the health of the east side of Cleveland. This historic asset is where the community gathers and has tremendous potential."

Joy Johnson, executive director of BBC said, "Shaker Square creates economic diversity and racial diversity

that we don't see in other parts of Cleveland. It's smack dab on the border of Cleveland and Shaker Heights, so it attracts visitors from all over. It's very walkable."

Another leader seeking support to buy the Square is Brandon Chrostowski, who trains and supervises former offenders at the ever-growing Edwins Leadership and Restaurant Institute on the Square and on Buckeye Road. Chrostowski said of the Square, "There is no other place like this, unless you go to Barcelona. There's nothing with the history. There's nothing with the diversity. There's nothing with the passion."

Chrostowski would welcome other nonprofits like his at the Square. "This could be an incubator for a whole center for social enterprise."

Last July, Coral Shaker Square defaulted on a \$10.7 million



Michael Ann Johnson

payment due to Wilmington Trust to finish repaying a \$12.2 million loan. Coral's president, Peter Rubin, said he'd lined up refinancing well ahead, but the lenders backed out near the

See *Shaker Square Seeks New Owner*, page 6

Feedback Given for Buckeye Road Project



Michelle Bandy-Zalatoris

by Kristen Romito

For too long Buckeye Road has been neglected. The road has been riddled with pot holes and has been a traffic nightmare. It lacks aesthetic, diminishing the beauty of the historical buildings that line it.

The Buckeye Refresh Project is finally addressing these issues focusing on Buckeye between Woodhill Road and South Moreland Boulevard. The project is a Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI), which provides funding to rethink major roads, streets, and corridors that impact the overall health of a neighborhood. The

\$100,000 planning project, funded by the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency and led by the City of Cleveland, includes the repaving, redesigning and beautification of Buckeye.

A community trivia night/meeting attended by 68 participants on Jan. 14 kicked off the initiative, where community leaders and City Architecture, the urban design and architecture firm leading the project, received feedback on perceived issues with Buckeye.

"One of the silver linings of COVID is that people are used to virtual interaction, so we probably got more people to participate than

pre-COVID," said Joy Johnson, executive director for Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc.

Some of the issues brought up at the meeting included the importance of on-street parking, too many one-way streets and the desire for trees, as there are none.

"Trees calm traffic; there's a natural tendency to slow down. They provide better air quality and support mental health, as well as increase property values," said Michelle Bandy-Zalatoris, one of the urban designers and project managers from City Architecture leading the project.

Trees and landscaping can be implemented, but the planning group must first address the 260 utility poles – some of which are not functional – that line the 1.4-mile stretch of the project. If distributed evenly along the street, that's one pole every 28 feet. According to Bandy-Zalatoris, there will need to be an assessment of which poles can be eliminated or consolidated, and if there's a possibility to bury some of the utility lines. Reducing the number of poles will impact how the design affects improving the narrow 6 to 11 feet wide sidewalks.

See *Feedback Given for Buckeye Road Project*, page 4

Spring Groundbreaking Likely for Former Shakertown Apts

By Thomas Jewell

With numerous funding sources now shored up, the new owner of the formerly condemned Shakertown Apartments plans to move forward this year with a \$2 million restoration on South Moreland Boulevard. At the end of December, Rakefet Landes learned the project had been awarded Ohio historic tax credits for extensive renovations to the abandoned building she bought just about two years before at sheriff's auction for \$120,000 in back taxes owed by previous owners.



Provided by Rakefet Landes

“Most of the financing is lined up, and we’re waiting on the go-ahead from the city for our environmental permits,” Landes told the Shaker Square Alliance at its Jan. 27 virtual meeting conducted online via Zoom. “We’re almost there for the groundbreaking – sometime in the next few months. In the meantime, good things are happening.” Prospective tenants are already lining up for the 23 apartments at 2804 South Moreland on the corner of Drexmore Road, directly across from the Shaker Square Dave’s Market. The walk-up building (no elevator)



will feature five double-bedroom apartments, nine singles and nine efficiencies. As new luxury market-rate apartment complexes continue to amass nearby, Landes noted that people are still looking for “nice, renovated affordable housing that is safe,” including security cameras and other features that she plans to install. Right now, “the inventory isn’t there, with very limited apartments available that are affordable. But the demand is deep,” said Landes, who also owns another building on South Moreland. “It’s important that property owners and the community come together.”

Once the permits are approved, both of her buildings will require some asbestos remediation. “Hopefully this will be the year it happens, if everything falls on schedule and without any ‘surprises’ beyond our control, such as COVID, which set us back a bit,” she noted.

Even without a pandemic, state and federal processes take time, she noted. The project has also qualified for the City of Cleveland’s Housing Trust Fund. “We’re going to keep the historic features, but everything will be upgraded, inside and out: floors, windows, kitchens, appliances, heating and cooling will be completely redone,” Landes said of the building that is near the century mark, according to National Landmark records.

Plans also call for an environmentally “green” building, with “water and electric efficiency to the highest level possible to reduce our carbon imprint,” Landes added. Former Cleveland City Councilman and East 130th Street Working Group facilitator Jay Westbrook recalled the last time he was in the former Shakertown, “standing in a foot of water in the basement of a derelict building.” Proceeds from Landes’ purchase were quickly transferred to the Shaker Heights City School District.

Shaker Square Alliance Director Chip Bromley also gave a “tip of the hat” to former Cuyahoga County Commissioner, state rep and Larchmere resident Mary O. Boyle for identifying at-risk properties around the Square and working to bring them under “community control supervision” through Cleveland Housing Court.

“Rakefet did what everyone refused to do: take on this risk,” said Jennifer Wintner, Landes’ attorney and consultant on the project.

In addition to asbestos removal, any remaining mold problems will also be remedied once the necessary permits are in place, Landes added.

“We’re hoping that the wheels start moving,” she said. “And once that happens, we will be unstoppable.”



SHAD MISSION STATEMENT

To provide the Shaker Square area with the leadership needed to re-imagine and foster well-maintained, diverse and vibrant neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOODS	COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS
• Apartment Corridor	• Shaker Square
• CHALK	• Larchmere Blvd.
• Drexmore/Chadbourne	• Van Aken Plaza
• Historic Shaker Square	• Shaker Boulevard West
• Larchmere	
• Ludlow	

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In Memoriam

Former SHAD board member **Anthony Troia** passed away in Fall 2020. The long-time Shaker resident, who later moved to Shaker Square, performed the legal work for SHAD’s transition from Friends of Shaker Square (FOSS) to a Community Development Corporation (SHAD), through the merger with Larchmere Development Corp. Tony, as he was known, served on the Greater Shaker Square Development Corporation board as secretary for many years. He is survived by his wife Susan and two daughters.

Ludlow resident and notable Cleveland judge **Diane Karpinski** passed away in December. Diane had an extensive law career working as the Assistant Attorney General for the State of Ohio for 13 years. She was elected as a Judge in the Court of Appeals of the 8th District of Ohio and volunteered for professional associations. Diane was a founding trustee of the East Side Catholic Shelter for the Homeless, former trustee of SHAD, and Ludlow Community Association board member. She sang in Our Lady of Peace Church Choir and honored her Polish heritage by serving in local ethnic organizations.



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Destination Cleveland Helps to Boost Business for Greater Buckeye Restaurants

by Kristen Romito

Many businesses have been impacted by the pandemic over the past year, but restaurants have been hit particularly hard. Destination Cleveland wants to give a boost to Cleveland’s restaurant industry and, by doing so, hopes to make a positive impact on the city’s neighborhoods.

In January, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) and Destination Cleveland launched “Eat & Explore CLE,” a wintertime initiative to increase business and outdoor activity in city neighborhoods. The initiative’s goal is to partner with community development corporations (CDCs) to have residents and visitors explore Cleveland’s diverse neighborhoods

for dining and shopping needs, patronize restaurants and other nearby small businesses, and take advantage of unique, safe and friendly outdoor spaces. “Eat & Explore” runs through April and features a different city neighborhood, 34 in total, each week. The Greater Buckeye area, which includes the Buckeye, Shaker Square and Larchmere neighborhoods, will be featured March 30 through April 5. “Cleveland Neighborhood Progress is pleased to partner with Destination Cleveland and community development corporations across the city to bring exposure and foot traffic into local businesses. Sales during the winter months are traditionally slower, and COVID-19 health concerns present an even bigger challenge for these businesses. This Eat & Explore CLE initiative helps remind residents and visitors that their support of locally-owned establishments is vitally important,” said Tania Menesse, president & CEO of CNP.

To ensure that this program is as COVID-friendly as possible, Destination Cleveland is providing equipment for outdoor eating, chairs for outdoor takeout waiting areas and firepits for areas for people to hang out. Destination Cleveland is also making sure that all safety protocols are being followed. “The idea is to activate outdoor space so that people will explore the neighborhoods and encourage Clevelanders to be outside safely and support our local businesses and economy,” said Bianca Butts, Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc. Neighborhood Services Coordinator (Larchmere, Ludlow, Shaker Square). “We are pleased to hear early positive feedback from participating neighborhoods. The activated outdoor spaces created by CDCs are attracting visitors, and the small businesses are appreciative of the added exposure, with many reporting a noticeable jump in sales.”



Provided by Jeff Kipp

New Buckeye Restaurant is Sure to be “Sweet”

by Grant Segall

Tonya Griffith Bullard says that she’s been nourished all her life by southeastern Cleveland. Now she wants to nourish it in turn. “I love being in the ‘hood,” she says. “I want to bless my hood.” She and her husband, Marvin Bullard, plan to reopen a former Kenny King’s on April 1 as Sweet Tee’s Kitchen, a multicultural takeout restaurant and institutional kitchen at 12716 Buckeye Rd. In this 1972 building with a steep peak, they’ll serve up oxtails, ribs, sauerkraut, cabbage, pork chops, meat loaf, lasagna, quiches, omelets, vegetarian dishes, vegan ones, and other fare. Bullard, mother of 12, grandmother of 28, loves people. Her answering machine says, among other things, “If anyone hasn’t told you that they love you today, I do. God bless.”

According to Bullard, “Sweet Tee” stands for “Tremendously Talented.” Her many lines of work have included security guard, hairdresser, pantry coordinator, phlebotomist, and Cleveland Racquet Club chef. She has also helped family food businesses in Cleveland and Brook Park. Bullard hopes Sweet Tee’s will help boost Buckeye Road. Edwin’s Leadership and Restaurant Institute keeps expanding there, a new owner is renovating Buckeye Plaza, other investors are moving in, a city study of the corridor is due for completion this summer, and the road is due for repaving next year. Bullard has a five-year lease from landlord Mazen “Sam” Ali. He’s renovating the building with guidance from architect Daryl Mapson. Sweet Tee’s will use Uber Eats and DoorDash. It also has contracts to make meals for some day care centers.



Daryl Mapson

In October, residents told Marka Fields of Cleveland’s planning department that they wanted Sweet Tee’s to come. In November, Fields told the Board of Zoning Appeals, “I think it’s a nice use of the building and a resource for the community.” The board approved a variance unanimously.

The building’s councilman Kenneth Johnson of Ward 4 stated, “People are interested in investing in our neighborhood. It shows that our neighborhood is on the rebound.” The Bullards plan to hire 10 people, mostly local youths and senior citizens. They’ll be open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sundays, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.



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Leasing Office 216.991.3057; cpm-ltd.com
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Shaker House/Shaker Town House
12929 Shaker Blvd., Cleveland

\$589 to \$1150; includes heat; 152 suites: 15 efficiencies; 113 1-bedroom; 24 2-bedroom; garage \$40-\$70/lot \$35; laundry; cats*; intercom entry; cable; internet; roman tubs; ceiling fans; hardwood floors; elevators; sundeck; security patrol; 24-hour emergency maintenance.

Leasing Office 216.991.3057; shakerhouseapts.com
A Capital Properties Management Ltd. Community



Shaker Park East
2540 North Moreland Blvd., Shaker Heights

\$505 to \$1674
75 suites: 5 efficiencies; 28 1-bedroom; 39 2-bedroom; 3 3-bedroom; garage \$40/lot \$25; dishwasher, disposal; laundry; pets* (dogs/cats); cable; internet; A/C; sundeck; elevators; carpet; security patrol; 24-hr maintenance.

Leasing Office 216.991.3057; shakerparkeapts.com
A Capital Properties Management Ltd. Community



Shaker University Apartments
10955 Shaker Blvd., Cleveland

\$505 to \$600; includes garage & parking lot 59 suites: 50 efficiencies; 9 1-bedroom; all electric bldg.; laundry each floor; no pets; disposal; elevator; intercom entry; carpet/hardwood; large efficiencies or one bedroom with huge closet space; clean.

Darryl Major 216.401.1693
pijwells@gmail.com



Twenty-Six, Twenty-Six
2626 North Moreland Blvd., Cleveland

\$695 to \$825; includes heat, cooking gas 24 suites: 1 efficiency; 19 1-bedroom, 4 2-bedroom; garage \$55/lot \$35; basement laundry; no pets; cable-ready; dishwasher; carpet/hardwood; intercom entry; ceiling fans; newer kitchens & baths; no smoking building.


Sylvia Kaye 216.371.1229
k-property.com; email: at kproperty@att.net

All units include a refrigerator and stove.

* Some pets have restrictions and/or require a deposit or additional fee

Although Shaker Square Area Development Corp. (SHAD) attempts to limit participation in our Rental Connection Program to apartment buildings that satisfy a number of basic maintenance standards, SHAD does not represent or endorse the condition of any property included in this Guide. Any and all information provided to SHAD in this Guide is subject to change. Shaker Square Area Development Corp. takes care to provide current and accurate information, but SHAD disclaims any and all liability for any errors, inaccuracies

or omissions found in this Guide. This Guide is printed one time per year. Additional information regarding rental properties can be found at shad.org.

 Shaker Square Area Development Corp. produced this publication through financial support from the participating apartment owners.



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Heard Around the Square

by Margaret Simon

Family Connections has moved to the Shaker West Professional Building. The folks who offer year-round and low cost programs and services for families can be found in 11811 Shaker Blvd., Suite 220.

Are your fingers itching to try something new? Join Shaker Library's remote **Knit Night's** knit/crochet group! Grab whatever you're working on, a beverage, and your computer or tablet, and join in an hour of chat and fun at 7 p.m. Thursdays, March 18, April 15 and May 20.

Up a tree looking for activities for the kids this March? Take a screen time out and enjoy the great outdoors on Shaker Library and the City's Tree Advisory Board's **2021 Arbor Day Scavenger Hunt**, available online or at the Library March 15. Children in grades K-6 are invited to take a stroll outside and find items on the scavenger hunt and then write a brief poem or a few short sentences about why trees are important. Entries are due by 5 p.m. Friday, April 10 and the virtual awards ceremony includes real trees for the winners. And if you really want to get rid of your screens and CPUs, keyboards and mice, drop them off at the City of Shaker Heights' Service Center April 10 and 11 for recycling.

Weed it and reap the benefits! Join the **Doan Brook Annual Stream Sweep & Weed Pull**. Meet at Corner of Fairhill and East 127th at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 17. Spiffing up your garden? Don't be a late bloomer! The Nature Center is holding its **39th Annual Plant Sale** Saturday morning May 8 when you can choose from a variety of affordable herbs, vegetables, perennials, annuals, natives and hanging baskets. Save water. Make a rain barrel with the Nature Center on Thursday, May 20. They'll have all the parts; you'll just have to bring your green (\$60). (Remember it's just a drop in the bucket.)

In the indoor organizing department, the Library wants to

help you to **Organize Your Photos and Documents and Let Go of the Clutter**. Join them on Zoom Tuesday evening, April 20 and learn how to store and save photos and documents—and be able to find them when you need them.

Neighbors in the News. Harvard grad and former Shaker Heights City councilman and state rep turned thespian and playwright **Peter Lawson Jones**—now a member of SAG-AFTRA and actor's Equity—has appeared in over 20 films. If you tuned into NBC's *Chicago Fire* last January you would have seen his acting chops. **Christine Snyder** changed careers from teaching to litigating at Tucker Ellis. The former high school English teacher can school employers in employment law, and maybe do it in plain English. Life coach **Penny Casselman** turned her cancer adventure into an encouraging memoir, "How to Get Free Boob Job."

Published poet (*If It Heals at All*, Jacar Press) and Shaker Library's Community Engagement Specialist, **Ali Black**, created an exciting series of virtual events for Black History Month. Stay tuned for more interesting and engaging activities from this creative force of energy.

The Kids' Book Bank will celebrate its 5th birthday on Saturday, May 1. The organization kicked off Black History Month by purchasing 2,000 new books that feature characters of color with funds from the **Judy Payne Multicultural Book Fund**, established to honor her in retirement.

Shaker Heights High School has a new Raider Athletic Center and it got a boost from **Shaker Sports Boosters** and fans. Located in the former high school wrestling room, its equipment is spaced strategically around the room to allow for more students to train safely.

Enjoy sounds of spring as you stroll the Square . . . *and keep your ears open for me.*
heardaroundthesquare@gmail.com

Feedback Given for Buckeye Road Project

Continued from page 1

In addition to the unsightly view of Buckeye, "We're really hearing safety is number one for the community," said Bandy-Zalatoris and added, "Traffic, pedestrian and personal safety are all intertwined." Bandy-Zalatoris believes that the design changes to Buckeye Road can address many of those concerns. "A combination of additional lighting, safer crosswalks and increased

activity will help to create a safer environment." Also, creating predictable traffic movement through dedicated parking and bike lanes where appropriate will improve safety and alleviate traffic issues. There's no opportunity to widen the road.

In the end, the hope is that the beauty and charm of the Buckeye neighborhood will shine with all the improvements.

"There's a cozy feel to the street because of the historic nature of the neighborhood," said Bandy-Zalatoris. Johnson added, "The buildings on Buckeye are still intact and there are viable businesses, so from a real estate perspective this [project] is just the cherry on top...it's another level of work to stabilize the community."

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Tammy Eaton

During Pandemic, Two Storefronts Bring Community, Culture

by Jason Novak

During this time of crisis, some businesses have managed to weather the storm and build a niche for themselves. Two such stores call Larchmere their home: Kings and Queens Cultural Village and Laluna the Boutique.

Kings and Queens Cultural Village, located at 12806 Larchmere, is an Afrocentric boutique selling masks, clothing (designed by store owner Sister Queen), artwork, health and beauty products, cultural goods from Puerto Rico and Mexico, and Rastafarian supplies.

The store opened over a year ago in the former location of Mama Fasi's, and in some ways seems like a continuation of Fasi's celebration of African heritage. "We talk all the time," Sister Queen says of Mama Fasi. "I had a store on Buckeye in the 80s, and [in 2019] I was looking to open a store in Columbus." When plans for Columbus fell through, Fasi told her that she was planning to retire and suggested Queen move into her storefront.

Besides the cultural goods, Kings and Queens Cultural Village also hosts events. "We have live jazz on the third Sunday of the month, from six to eight, with Hashtag Virgo (#Virgo), and in the spring, we'll restart our drumming classes."

Down the street, you'll find another new storefront: Laluna the Boutique. Laluna offers clothing from the Free People clothing line, as well as handmade jewelry from St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

Owner Tammy Eaton opened Laluna at 13002 Larchmere in November despite the pandemic being in full swing. "It was rough opening the store during the pandemic," Eaton says. She had to contend with shipping delays, as well as the reduced foot traffic on Larchmere, but she has not let it get her down. Eaton says she hopes to incorporate other clothing lines besides Free People soon.

Laluna is the realization of Eaton's dream of owning her own business. "This is my first venture," she says. "I was dying to have a spot on Larchmere. I lived on Buckeye, and I love the area. There's so much diversity...I love the people."

Sister Queen agrees with Eaton. "We have people from Puerto Rico, from Mexico...There's always something happening, and I just want to be a part of it."

Kings and Queens Cultural Village is open 1 to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, noon to 6 p.m. on Saturday, and opens for live jazz on the third Sunday of every month. Laluna the Boutique is open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Willow Cove Teaches Teen Girls Self Love During Difficult Times

by Pamela Zoslov

Lawna Gamble left a comfortable management job in Minneapolis, with "all the material things any person would desire," to follow her dream of opening a business to help people heal in body, mind and spirit.

Her personal journey, inspired by a therapist who urged her to share her artwork and listen to what it was saying, led to her founding of Willow Cove Art and Wellness Boutique in 2018. Willow Cove resides in an exquisitely renovated house at 12404 Larchmere, providing art therapy, emotional support coaching, massage, Reiki and other holistic services.

Gamble, an artist, therapist and educator, has now turned her attention to helping adolescent girls. The idea was sparked by her experiences working at an area high school. "The students had so much trauma in their lives," she says, from family problems, racial injustice, and deaths of friends and relatives by violence. Added to these stresses is the anxiety and isolation arising from the pandemic. "They don't know how to identify the trauma, how to express it and cope."

Young people also contend with social media messages that make

them feel inadequate. "There is an overarching 'I'm not good enough' message." Adolescent girls, Gamble observes, can be led to believe "I'm not as pretty as the girl on social media, the superstar, or the influencer. I don't have that kind of money, or that kind of job."

To address these challenges, Gamble designed an eight-week program called Treasure Cove, tailored to adolescent girls, ages 12 to 15. The program's mission, she says, is "to teach young women how to love themselves."

The program, funded by a grant from Neighborhood Connections, was originally planned for spring 2020, but was put on hold by the pandemic. The funding has been extended, and Gamble hopes to be able to launch it this spring.

"The themes and activities are designed around three things: Positive connection, personal and collective strengths, and confidence and competence." The six core sessions will focus on "adventurous, spiritual, physical, mental, sensory and emotional self-care."

The young women will learn how to create art and about how color, in their clothing and environments, can affect their moods. They will learn how to prepare healthy food.

They'll learn to do self-massage. They will go on a guided nature hike, during which they'll journal, take photos and do nature-inspired art projects. The sessions will be led by practitioners in various disciplines, a team of presenters that will include some Larchmere merchants. Enrollment in the program is limited to 12.

Gamble wants to rescue the self-care concept from commercialism. "Wellness is everyone's birthright," she declares. "It should be a household agenda."

For more information, call 216.230.7636, or log on to willowcove.org or Facebook.



Pamela Zoslov



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Shaker Square Seeks New Owner

Continued from page 1

deadline in fear of the pandemic's depressing the value of real estate. In November, Wilmington sought to foreclose. This January, Judge Ashley Kilbane of Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas appointed John Rothschild Jr. of Columbus as the Square's receiver. Coral has challenged the appointment, and a magistrate is supposed to issue findings at a date unknown. The buildings were raised in 1929 by brothers Oris and Mantis Van Sweringen, developers of Shaker Heights and owners of the Square's rapid transit line. The property was

one of the nation's first shopping centers meant to accommodate cars. The Square's 10 acres are really a traffic circle inside an octagon of buildings. The brick colonial structures hold about 130,000 square feet of rental space. In 2004, Coral Shaker Square bought the property for \$7.5 million and hired the Coral Company to manage it. Both organizations are led by Peter Rubin. Coral Company manages some 5 million square feet of properties around town. Rubin says the Square was nearly 60 percent vacant when he came. He

spent some \$6 million on renovations and a security system. Now he says the place is more than 90 percent full. The popular Fire Food and Drink closed last summer, but the haute Edwins Too took over the space in November. The historic Balaton Restaurant recently reported raising more than its \$60,000 goal in a crowdsourcing campaign to weather the pandemic. According to court records, the Square is appraised at about \$17 million and earns more than \$2 million per year. Local leaders praised Rubin's stewardship. Councilman Kenneth Johnson, whose Ward 4 includes the Square, said, "I just hope that we can get an owner that is as responsive as Peter Rubin was, somebody that cares about the neighborhood."



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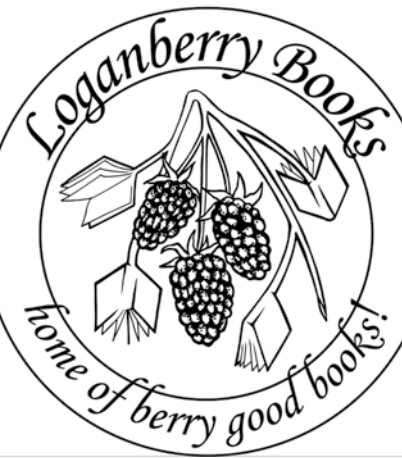
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Up and Down the Boulevard

After surviving a rough pandemic year, Larchmere merchants are creating new opportunities to attract business to the neighborhood this spring.

by Barbara Mooney

While it's difficult getting back to normal after a whole year of coping with the Covid-19 pandemic, signs of life and hope on Larchmere are blooming along with the spring flowers. Speaking of flowers...the 22nd annual **Larchmere Community Association Plant Sale** is on for May 8. "This year especially, as we continue to stay physically distanced and close to home, the sale provides a wonderful way to welcome spring and bring beauty to the boulevard, our homes and neighborhoods," said Jane Donnell, an event organizer. Plant flats, pots of flowers, hanging baskets, vegetables and herbs will be available. Preorder forms can be found on April 1 at Larchmere.com/Events, at Loganberry Books, and in the Larchmere Life newsletter. Preorders are due May 1, and a 10 percent discount will be applied. For more information or to get involved, email larchmereplantsale@ameritech.net or call/text 216.269.9010.

New Businesses are Blossoming
With the completion of the **121 Larchmere** apartment development imminent, that portion of the neighborhood has sprouted a new business. **Status Boutique**, with its dynamic, boldly painted windows and interior, opened at 12609 Larchmere right before the holidays. Specializing in local designers, the shop carries women and men's clothing and athletic shoes, hats and fashion accessories. Brands include Vintage Wave, Kindrick Klub and Top Notch.

Status's owner Aisha (she goes by one name) said she spent 16 years in retail in preparation to opening her own boutique. "Cleveland has a lot of talented designers that don't get a lot of attention or outlets," she said. The shop's hours are 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, and noon to 6 p.m. Saturday. Call 216.205.4313 for more information.

Favorite Things Hub
Another Larchmere boutique, **Our Favorite Things Boutique & Event Center** (12730 Larchmere, 216.536.7928), is a hub of activities planned this spring. Owner Lisa McGuthry, who has been named Business Woman of the year by the Iota Phi Lambda professional women's group, has a full agenda, as usual. In lieu of a sidewalk sales event around Memorial Day, she is organizing a rolling fashion show that she hopes will involve each of Larchmere's boutiques for that weekend. She has also made room in her store for after-school programs for children and has made the shop a distribution point for free PPE supplies. Additionally, Ms. McGuthry's 12-week course, Entrepreneur 180: Vision to Provision, starts March 25. Through a grant from St. Luke's Foundation, she's able to offer the course for free to residents of the Larchmere, Shaker Square and Woodhill neighborhoods (a \$360 value). Through the SCORE program of the Small Business Administration, she recently published an article about finding financing, and she continues to host her "QVC in the CLE" Facebook sales program several times a month.



SPRING 2021

Fiddlehead Thriving, Too
Nearby, **Fiddlehead Gallery** (12736 Larchmere, 216.231.9400) has also become a neighborhood hub of sorts. It's now a drop-off and pick-up location for UPS. Otherwise, owner Susan Rozman says her business is in fact thriving during these difficult times because of its unique offerings. The gallery is featuring collections of African baskets, art made of bottlecaps, and she has also recently launched her own line of handmade jewelry.

Wellness Center Opening
Another sign of new life on the boulevard is the renovation and imminent opening of a mental health practice in the Victorian house at 12620 Larchmere where Fine Points shop had been. **The Larchmere Center For Well Being** (216.279.0398) will house a practice offering an inclusive range of family, couples and individual therapy and counseling services.

The space will open on March 15, but the Center's five counselors are operating virtually already.

Loganberry Books' New Chapter
In the face of ongoing health precautions, Loganberry Books (13015 Larchmere, 216.795.9800), is continuing to conduct its events virtually. The annual Edible Books Festival will be held online April 3. The contest invites people to submit photos of edible creations depicting books or inspired by literature, which are then voted on. Go to LoganberryBooks.com for details. Loganberry has also added a book club to its events lineup. Starting the fourth Thursday of March and every subsequent month, it will conduct an online book club for teens ages 14 to 19. Elisabeth Plumlee-Watson, Loganberry's communications manager, said the club is called "Not YA Average Book Club."

How the Garden Grottos Grow
Another fine example of name branding is in practice at **Felice Urban Café** (12502 Larchmere, 216.791.0918). While other restaurants may call their outdoor domes "pods" or "igloos", Felice's "garden grottos" have been very popular since their fall installation, said manager Michael Murtaugh. The grottos seat up to six diners and are available by reservation, with a \$150 minimum charge. Inside Felice, the three-floors of the restaurant have an upgraded HVAC system and spread out seating to accommodate social distancing. For the spring, Felice is also updating its menu with more vegan options, he said.

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