

**Bohemian Treasure:
Demantius’
“St. John Passion”**
Sunday, March 6 at 4 p.m.
St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church

In celebration of Lenten season, Quire Cleveland will perform music of the Bohemian composer Christoph Demantius (1567-1643): a 17th-century setting of the Passion text paired with Demantius’ companion piece using the prophet Isaiah’s writings on the suffering and death of the Messiah.

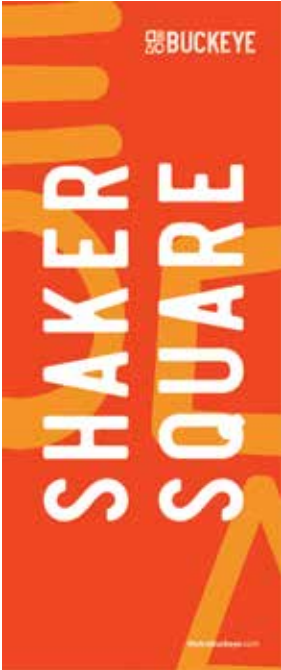
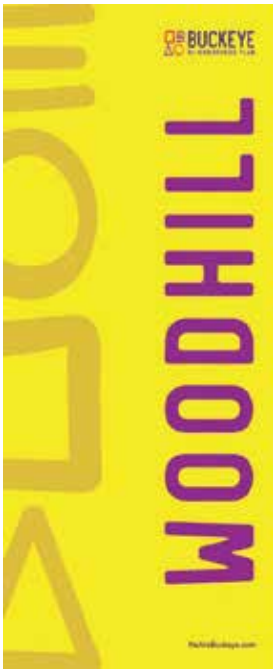
Admission is free. Seating is open, and no tickets or reservations are required. Masks are required, regardless of vaccination status. (9016 Buckeye Rd.)

Mobile Food Pantry
March 19 & May 21, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Greater Cleveland Delta Foundation Life Development Center will host its first mobile food pantry of 2022 on March 19, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The second mobile food pantry will take place on May 21, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The mobile food pantry events will take place at the Delta Center located at 11955 Shaker Blvd. Cleveland, 44120. This event is free for everyone. Just drive up and pop your trunk. Keep an eye out for volunteer opportunities on our Facebook page at facebook.com/gcdfldc.

**23rd Annual Larchmere
Community Plant Sale**
May 7, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Order by May 1 for the best selection and a 10 percent discount. Look for flyers/pre-order forms at Loganberry Books, UnBar Café and SomethinGood to Eat on Larchmere, and Edwin’s restaurant at Shaker Square and its butcher shop on Buckeye. See Larchmere.com/Events beginning April 1. Pots, flats and hanging baskets of flowers, veggies, herbs and houseplants will be available. The Mother’s Day weekend sale proceeds benefit LCA activities. More information at larchmereplantsale@ameritech.net or call/text 216.269.9060.



These proposed designs for light post banners will identify and unite the neighborhoods and are part of the branding for commercial corridors.

Burten, Bell, Carr Development, Inc. Update

by Kristen Romito

Despite the various organizations involved in the Greater Buckeye neighborhood planning process, it’s the voices of community members that are truly driving the process.

Since Fall 2021, Burten, Bell, Carr, Development Inc. along with a steering committee of residents and stakeholders, and fellow planning partners City Architecture, Seventh Hill, Urban Partners and designExplorr, have met with community members at virtual meetings and in-person events to having meaningful dialogue around what the Greater Buckeye neighborhoods should be in the next five years.

“It [community involvement] has been amazing,” says Dawn Mayes, director of neighborhood planning and engagement for BBC. “Despite the fact of COVID, we’ve had an amazing turnout.” She cited that 75 people attended the January Zoom call, and given the technology barrier that some face, a significant number of people used the dial-in option so they could still participate.

See *Burten, Bell, Carr Development, Inc. Update*, page 6

Talks of Shaker Square Plans Stalled for Now

by Thomas Jewell

One year into court-appointed receivership and potential foreclosure on Shaker Square, residents and civic groups around the landmark have renewed their call for a local transition of ownership.

At the same time, the nonprofit organizations still interested in overseeing the proposed public-private partnership have made it clear that “there are no plans to close Shaker Boulevard,” an idea predating the foreclosure action.

That earlier proposal called for rerouting traffic around the circle to create more green space in the historic commercial and transportation hub. This had many merchants and residents leery of the subsequent involvement of

Cleveland Neighborhood Progress (CNP) and Burten, Bell, Carr Inc. (BBC) in further plans to acquire the embattled square outright.

The BBC and CNP announcement about keeping Shaker Boulevard open “indefinitely” came at a recent Shaker Square Alliance meeting as the affiliated Morelands Group threw its support behind legislation that had stalled at the end of 2021 when no action was taken by Cleveland City Council at the last meeting under Mayor Frank Jackson’s administration.

“Retired Mayor Jackson and current Council President Blaine Griffin proposed a dynamic solution with an ordinance that will allow the city to finance the purchase of this asset from foreclosure,” the Morelands Group statement read, referring to a \$12 million plan

that would no longer draw from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

Shaker Square Area Development Corporation also supports the plan, as it sees local control of the Square essential to neighborhood stabilization.

The legislation would provide a \$6 million loan to be paid back with interest to the city, BBC Executive Director Joy Johnson said.

See *Talks of Shaker Square Plans Stalled for Now* page 10

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Shaker Park East
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\$525 to \$1709
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Twenty-Six, Twenty-Six
2626 North Moreland Blvd., Cleveland

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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 List is subject to change. Shaker Square Area Development Corp. takes care to provide current and accurate information, but SHAD disclaims any and all



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SHAD MISSION STATEMENT

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

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 • Larchmere
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Councilman Griffin Takes on a New Role: Cleveland City Council President

by Grant Segall

Does Blaine Griffin's rise to council president make it easier or harder for him to deliver to his ward?

"I think a little bit of both," Griffin said recently. "Of course, I am going to make Ward 6 a priority. But I've always looked at myself as a servant of the entire community, and this role helps me advocate for all the city."

"We have to change the perception, real or perceived, that this is not a safe city. . . . We're going to restore confidence in our police department."

—Blaine Griffin

Griffin, Ward 6's councilman since 2017, was guaranteed the council presidency last November by a Democratic caucus and formally elected by a reconstituted council in January. With Justin Bibb as the new mayor, this is the first time that both of the city's top elected posts have been held by African Americans.

Event Space Rental

Are you looking for some event space to host your next event? The Greater Cleveland Delta Foundation Life Development Center is a newly renovated building that offers a large event space, office suites, and business incubator space to meet your event and business needs. Their beautifully equipped building offers a fully equipped kitchen, elevator access, multiple restrooms, secured covered parking, technology and audio equipped space and more! Email them at gcdfldc@gmail.com for inquiries.

For southeastern Cleveland, Griffin supports plans underway for Burten, Bell, Carr Development and Cleveland Neighborhood Progress to buy Shaker Square, currently slated for foreclosure. The Square lies just outside Ward 6, which snakes from Little Italy to Larchmere to Slavic Village. Griffin says, "It's a priority to have an anchor like Shaker Square and a major focus on the southeast side of town."

Griffin also expects growing benefits to Ward 6 from the new Opportunity Corridor and the current Buckeye Road Refresh project.

Among Griffin's citywide goals, "We have to change the perception, real or perceived, that this is not a safe city." He wants both to reform police and support them. "We're going to restore confidence in our police department." He wants to give police more tools, such as drones for surveillance and decoy cars for nabbing carjackers.

Griffin also hopes to improve education and job training and to help residents restore their homes.

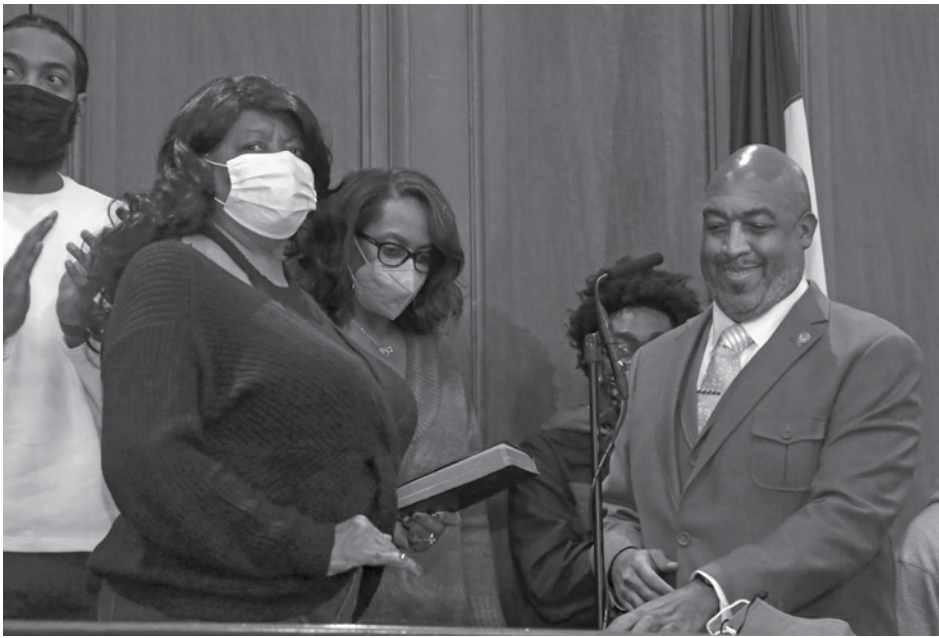
Improvements cost money, and the pandemic has cost the city revenue from suburbanites now working and shopping at home. On the other hand, the federal government has given Cleveland about \$511 million in pandemic relief aid.

Griffin says about his plans. "We're going to have to approach this in a very frugal way."

Council started last year to allow public comments at meetings, and

" . . . Iron sharpens iron, and we all are in this together. Mr. Mayor, please know, all we want to do is to take care of people."

—Blaine Griffin



Ward 6 Councilman Blaine Griffin was sworn in as Cleveland City Council President on Jan. 3, 2022 at Cleveland City Hall.

Griffin expects to wield the gavel lightly. "I've never been on a clock when it comes to our meetings. Whatever can enrich the democracy we'll be glad to do."

Early in his career, Griffin worked for the Harvard Community Services Center, East End Neighborhood House, Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland, and Cuyahoga County Department of Justice Affairs. Then he ran Cleveland's community relations board for 11 years. He was appointed to council in 2017, won a full four-year term that November, and cruised to re-election last November against a write-in candidate.

Last year, Griffin and most council colleagues endorsed then Council President Kevin Kelley for mayor. But Griffin says he's been meeting regularly with winner Justin Bibb. "It's going to be imperative for us to have a mutual respect for each other."

At Griffin's swearing-in, he warned Bibb that council was "a rowdy bunch . . . But iron sharpens iron, and we all are in this together. Mr. Mayor, please know, all we want to do is to take care of people."

Our Lady of Peace Run 6th Annual Run/Walk/ Exercise for Peace

May 1, 9:15 a.m.

This year's race will be held in person and virtually. To register for the 5k/1-mile walk visit olpchurch.com or contact James Cullen at 216.533.8804 or jpc@jpcullenlaw.com.

Participants will meet at Cummins Hall and proceed to 126th Street and Larchmere to begin the race. There will also be a Tot Trot category for children grades K-3.

Virtual participants can be anywhere in the world. Runners are being asked to run at least 3 miles; walkers walk at least 2 miles; and other exercise aficionados exercise for at least 30 minutes. Children can also attend virtually – a run, walk, or exercise for children who should exercise for 30 minutes in whatever way they want. Participants can send in a report of their activity and a photo, so it can be included on the OLP Facebook page.

Entrance fees are \$20 for participants and \$5 for the Tot Trot. All participants will receive a T-shirt.

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Heard Around the Square

by Margaret Simon

If you missed the January *New York Times* special section on “52 Places for a Changed World” check it out online and read about EDWINS, which it described as a restaurant that “serves dinner with an eye to entrepreneurial training and social justice.” They list it as number 9, but it will always be number 1 to us. Plus Brandon Chrostowski, founder, CEO and president, garnered press locally for his side gig as *arbitre de hockey* aka hockey referee.

Congratulations to **Laura C. Barnard** who was appointed to the Shaker Library Board to serve the unexpired term of **Melissa Hirsch**. Shaker voters elected **Ifeolu Claytor** to Shaker Heights City Council and re-elected **Anne Williams** and **Tres Roeder**. They join and rejoin fellow city council members **Sean Malone, Nancy Moore, Carmella Williams, and Earl Williams**.

Shaker Heights High School has the *write* stuff for authors. Notable graduates include Pulitzer Prize winner and *The New Yorker* staff writer **Catherine Schulz**, whose latest book is “Lost & Found,” a touching memoir and love story about losing her father, lawyer and past Shaker School Board President Isaac, and finding her wife. Schulz now lives on the Eastern Shore of Maryland with her family. Proud mother and artist, **Margot Schulz** is a local treasure. Borrow Schulz’s book from the library or buy it from Loganberry Books. Now living in Massachusetts, Shaker Heights native **Celeste Ng** recently tweeted the good news that her new novel, “Our Missing Hearts,” is coming out on October 4. The dystopian novel follows a 12-year-old’s search to

find his mother. And **Carter Bays’** novel, “The Mutual Friend,” comes out in June. The co-creator of “How I Met Your Mother” has written a hilarious debut novel set in New York City, featuring a sprawling cast of characters as they navigate life, love, loss, ambition, and spirituality: without ever looking up from their phones.

The evening of April 4, Shaker Library and the City’s Sustainability Committee will host another illustrious Shaker grad, *New York Times* best-selling author, and “CBS Sunday Morning” correspondent **David Pogue**, to speak about his new book, “How to Prepare for Climate Change.”

Local Lomond author **E. S. Curry** has published “The Flying Sabuki,” a heartwarming story about parent-child bonding and the magic that happens when you’re fully present with someone you love. Another local author **James Bond** has written an uplifting memoir, “The Man in the Arena: Surviving Multiple Myeloma Since 1992,” and is donating profits to the American Cancer Society, University Hospitals of Cleveland, Dana Farber Cancer Center, and the Mayo Clinic—each of which played a critical role on his ongoing story.

Calling all ballet dancers! Cleveland Public Library invites you to Zoom with **Misty Copeland** at 2 p.m. March 19. Copeland is the first African American woman to be named a soloist to the American Ballet Theatre and the first Black principal dancer at a major international dance company. Kudos to her local **Boys and Girls Club** where she discovered her talents. She is the author of a memoir, “Life in Motion: An Unlikely

Ballerina,” a children’s picture book, “Firebird,” and a health and fitness guide, “Ballerina Body.” She has even found time to create her own dancewear. Register for a free ticket at cpl.org/events/classes/upcoming-authors/

Cheers for 30 Years! **The Shaker Schools Foundation** will present its 30th benefit, A Night for the Red & White, March 5 at 7 p.m. at Landerhaven. Get your ticket to dine and dance to the No Name Band (with big name musicians) and bid on great auction items at ShakerSchoolsFoundation.org/RedandWhite. All you’ll need is your checkbook and your proof of COVID vaccination records.

Calling all high school students: Boot up your computers and enter The City Club of Cleveland’s Essay Contest to be eligible for monetary prizes. **The Hope and Stanley Adelstein Free Speech Essay Contest** challenges high school students to examine the role of free speech in the 21st century. This year’s writing prompt is about Critical Race Theory and the deadline to enter is March 31. Read more and enter at cityclub.org/support/support-student-programs/free-speech-essay-contest

Looking to create or design, but don’t have the tools? Visit **Shaker Library’s Creation Spaces** at the Main Library, which consist of the Tech Studio and The Workshop. In the Workshop, adult crafters can use a Cricut Maker 3, Cricut EasyPress 2, and a PC with Cricut Design Space, a Button maker, and a Laminator with pouch to protect documents up to 12.5 inches. The Tech Studio has a professional-grade collection of technology and tools for creative or practical purposes. The space

has a Sound Recording Studio for podcasting or laying down musical tracks; a Memory Studio for digitizing old photos, slides, and film; and graphic design software to create logos, draft or draw objects to scale, and create artistic designs for business or pleasure. Visit shakerlibrary.org and sign up for an orientation to the spaces and then get ready to create something awesome.

April 29 is National Arbor Day, and Shaker Library and the City Tree Advisory Board are again branching out to invite youth in grades K-6 to help celebrate. Stop by the Library or City Hall any time between April 1-29 and join in for *Tree-mendous* fun.

Planning a Sunday drive? **The Shaker Historical Society** has put together a Self-Guided Tour: History-Making Homes at shakerhistory.org/programs-events. And while on the website, sign up for the May 15 program “The Courtship & Marriage of James & Lucretia Garfield” presented by Debbie Weinkamer.

“Be prepared” is their motto and the **Girl Scouts** have prepared a new way to collect your *dough*. You can now order cookies the modern way by texting “Cookies” to 59618 or downloading the Cookie Finder app.

Planning on stepping out? **The 2022 Union Home Mortgage Cleveland Marathon** is scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, May 21 & 22 and – a sign of the times – they offer virtual options.

You don’t have to step out far to stroll the Square and when you do . . . keep your ears open for me.

beardaroundthesquare@gmail.com

Benjamin Rose to offer Cybercrime Support Services

by Jason Novak

The COVID pandemic has lingered on for two years now, and the people who have been hit hardest are the elderly. It’s not just the coronavirus they have to watch out for: cybercriminals have used the lockdowns as an opportunity to prey on them.

“When COVID happened,” explains Tamar Cooper, the director of Behavioral Services at the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging, “people were housebound for safety. Older adults couldn’t visit senior centers, and family had to stop visiting. Seniors were on their smart phones and computers more, and there was a drastic increase in cybercrime.”

In response to this increase in cybercrime, the Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging is organizing a support service for victims of cybercrime through their Behavioral Services department. “We look at it from a mental health aspect,” says Cooper. “We provide counselling for older adults, 55 or older, who have been victims. In particular, of romance scams.”

Many cybercrimes are confidence scams, in which the criminal gains the trust of the victim either immediately, or over a span of time, to get money and personal information. Often, these take the

form of romance scams. “You go on a dating app,” explains Cooper, “and you think you’re talking to someone who you really connect with. You text all the time, maybe even talk on the phone. You trust them, and then—boom. They ghost you, and your bank account is empty.”

Often, these victims are left facing more than just financial distress; the psychological toll is also devastating. “There can be a lot of shame and guilt,” Cooper says. “In therapy sessions, we go through the stages of the grieving process, and the trauma.”

Benjamin Rose also offers wraparound services for clients. “These victims are often financially wiped,” says Cooper, “and it can even affect generational wealth, with property and life savings being transferred to the [criminal].” Benjamin Rose can help victims get connected to entitlement programs, help them get access to food and shelter, and even help them talk with their families.

Though Benjamin Rose has never had a cybercrime support



Courtesy of Benjamin Rose Institute on Aging

group before, they are not new to the problem. Many of the institute’s clients have experienced cybercrime in some way, and the institute has participated in the Cuyahoga County Consumer Affairs Scam Squad.

Benjamin Rose’s cybercrime support services are available to adults 55 or older. Call intake services at 216.791.8000 for details.

One of the many negative impacts of COVID is the increase in cybercrime among senior citizens. Benjamin Rose offers therapy and wraparound services to help victims reclaim their lives.

Shaker Library Rededication Ceremony Unveils Modern, Light-Filled Space

Shaker Heights Public Library re-opened its doors on Monday, December 13 to unveil its newly renovated facility. Library Director Amy Switzer and Library Board President Michael Bertsch thanked the community for its patience after 18 months of construction during the \$10.4 million renovations of the former Moreland Elementary School, made possible through a 1.9-mill levy passed in 2018.

Library Director Amy Switzer thanked the current Library Board – Mike Bertsch, Tom Cicarella, Doreen Katz, Troy Meinhard, Timeka Rashid, and Bruce Rogen for their leadership and vision. She also extended special thanks to former Board presidents, Chad Anderson and Brian Gleisser. “Their thoughtful leadership and guidance helped us arrive at this monumental day,” said Switzer. “Thanks to the Friends of the Library for their unwavering loyalty, thanks to our staff for their dedication and adaptability, and last but not least,

thanks to you—our community, our steadfast library lovers whose support and commitment are the very foundation of this beautiful library,” she continued.

Shaker Library Hours
Monday-Thursday: 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
Friday & Saturday: 9 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Sunday: 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Highlights of the Newly Renovated Shaker Library

- Exterior restoration work, plumbing and electrical work, a new roof, and a new HVAC system
- Throughout the building space has been opened up to allow natural light in and allow views out the windows to the neighborhood
- Patio with outdoor seating and wifi access
- Metal letters spelling out SHAKER READS, which affirms the library’s dedication to reading and learning

- Passport application office
- Self-check Stations with larger screens and a more efficient checkout process
- Children’s Room arranged in different areas to appeal to different age groups with a family rest room and self check out station
- Café offers a place to enjoy a light snack or visit with a friend
- Friends of Shaker Library Never-ending Book Sale Shelves
- Teen Room with collaborative spaces for homework or socializing and gaming equipment
- Tech Hub offers laptop kiosk where those over 18 with a library card in good standing can check out a laptop to use in the library

See Shaker Library Rededication Update, page 5



Shaker Heights Public Library Director Amy Switzer cuts the ribbon to officially unveil the newly renovated library.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony took place on December 13 at the main branch at 16500 Van Aken Blvd.

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Cornucopia place

7201 Kinsman Road, Suite 103b

Cleveland, Ohio 44104

Burten, Bell, Carr Development, Inc. Update
Continued from page 1



Residents can be leery of this process because of past leadership Mayes says, “but I believe residents always want their voices to be heard.”

In addition to community engagement, the planning initiative, which has been branded “We Are Buckeye,” also includes a market study that is being conducted by Urban Partners, one of the consultants a part of City Plus. The research focuses on four main areas: housing, businesses, green space and design. The study, which is expected to be completed in March, has already provided some key takeaways.

“We have some snapshots of the housing situation,” states Mayes, noting that research brings to light the percentage of renters and homeowners, and how many landlords are local versus out of town. According to the research, more than half of the rental properties are owned by out-of-town buyers, leading to less opportunities for home ownership and high rental rates. The study also revealed that half of renters are paying more than 30 percent of their income in rent.

The study also looked at available business space within Greater Buckeye and existing businesses compared to the demand for businesses not in the service area. “Do we need another daycare

here? Do we need more fast-food restaurants? These are the types of questions the study is asking,” Mayes explains.

“Once we’re done with the study, we’ll be able to put together a strategic plan to recruit businesses on the commercial corridor,” adds Mayes, noting that the Buckeye commercial corridor will be the focus.

And when a business wants to come into the neighborhood, it will have to adhere to the design guidelines outlined in the master plan, which City Plus will seek approval of from the City of Cleveland.

The study is also highlighting the need for additional greenspace throughout Greater Buckeye. When speaking with youths in particular, Mayes said that they want more grass to play on and safer public places to play. More greenspace and tree planting have been a unifying idea across all age groups though.

When the research phase ends in March, the next step is for City Plus



Courtesy of City Architecture

to develop an implementation plan based on the conducted research. The plan will be presented to the community in the spring and that’s when BBC and City Plus can begin to make some of the hopes and dreams a reality.

“Our funders already know about the neighborhood planning process, but now we’ll be able to leverage our findings and request the funds for the implementation plan.”

designExplorr created the proposed neighborhood signage that would be placed throughout Greater Buckeye. The same branding would be used in all marketing materials, helping to better identify and unite the community.

Below is a map indicating the boundaries of what is considered Greater Buckeye.



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Once home to Next clothing store located at the corner of the southeast corner of Shaker Boulevard, the 6,960 square foot retail space will be renovated by Paran Management Company.

Plans for Van Aken Plaza Get Refreshed

by Kristen Romito

Paran Management Company has reignited discussions around plans to redevelop Van Aken Plaza and the buildings that formally housed Goodwill and Next clothing stores.

Under the proposed plan, the 34,000 square-foot Van Aken Plaza will be demolished to build a market-rate apartment building. Paran’s other buildings are a two-story, 17,150-square-foot office building where Paran is headquartered, and the other is a single-level retail building measuring 6,960 square

feet. Joe Shafran, Paran’s chairman and CEO, said he will retain and renovate the structures yet there are no definite plans for the buildings.

“The investor group acquired the building with the notion of preservation. The property was in danger and because it’s an important historic place – and we are in the business of identifying and planning for uses that have local economic benefit – it fits our mission,” says Shafran.

Timing of the proposed plan comes at a time when the City of Cleveland is discussing a finance package to save Shaker Square from foreclosure.

“The genesis of our development project was a commitment to Shaker Square. Now that there has been a formal refresh through talks with the city, we’re engaging partnerships that have wherewithal to play a role in redevelopment. While market-rate apartments are the key piece in

development consideration, we are now discussing a grander project than initially anticipated,” says Shafran.

Paran also hopes that its project will help support the end goal of Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc.’s neighborhood planning process.

“We hope that our role in providing new apartment options in this neighborhood will integrate with the larger plan for Shaker Square. We realize our project is tangential, and we want to maximize the benefits of what we’re doing to

support and add to the strength of the larger plan,” adds Shafran.

While plans for the development project are still being fine-tuned, Paran will be eager to get started once everything is finalized.

Shafran says, “Construction is always a complex program and given the current housing demand, we see no reason to go slowly. We’re excited and optimistic to further develop our plan and share it widely.”

New Councilwoman Deborah Gray Sworn In



Ward 4 Councilwoman Deborah Gray was sworn in on January 3 at Cleveland City Hall along with four other new Cleveland City Council members. Pictured here is Gray during her community swearing-in ceremony on January 7 at the Zelma George Recreation Center. Ward 4 includes Shaker Square and portions of the Buckeye-Shaker, Woodland Hills and Mount Pleasant neighborhoods.

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary Feast Day Mass and Dinner



21,240 attendees participated at a solemn mass that included a procession of Hungarian scouts and dancers in traditional Hungarian attire. The mass was followed by a Hungarian feast that included goulash (gulyás), stuffed cabbage, Hungarian pastries and cucumber salad. Entertainment was provided by Saint Elizabeth dancers and a cimbalom player.

Morelands Group Makes Progress in Neighborhood Improvement

by Pamela Zoslov

Spring, the season of renewal, is the perfect time for a ribbon-cutting that will celebrate the rebirth of a formerly blighted property that was saved from a date with the wrecking ball.

The former Shakertown Apartments, at 2804 South Moreland at the corner of Drexmore Road, had been placed under community control by the Cleveland Housing Court in 2015. “The building was in great distress over a long period of time,” says the Shaker Square Alliance’s Charles



Meg Weingart



(Chip) Bromley. Vacant and boarded up, it was attracting squatters and illegal activity.

In 2018, before the building could share the fate of its three demolished neighbor buildings, it was purchased at a sheriff’s sale by Rafaket Landes, a recent transplant from New York who saw potential in the distressed building and decided to rehabilitate it. Working with development attorney Jennifer Wintner, Landes obtained \$2.5 million in state and federal historic tax credits to help finance the restoration. The work is scheduled to be completed this April or May.

Several community groups were active in combating blight at the intersection, including the Shaker Square Alliance, Shaker Square Area Development Corp. (SHAD), East 130th Street Working Group and Ludlow Community Association. When Landes and Wintner discussed the project at an Alliance meeting, several members were inspired to form the Morelands Group, an organization dedicated to preserving, protecting and advocating for the residential South and North Moreland corridor and engaging tenants, owners and managers in improving conditions of the area’s historic 1920s- and 1930s-built apartment buildings.

Working with the City

The pandemic surge altered, but not deterred, the hard-working Morelands Group’s efforts. Members continue to meet twice a month, albeit via Zoom for now, and have made significant progress. The group held several meetings with the City of Cleveland’s Interim Director of Building and Housing Toni Allen

Committee Action

The Morelands Group’s committees have also been quite busy. The Safety and Security Committee is evaluating the possibility of bringing a Safety Ambassadors program to the Moreland Corridor, as well as Buckeye, Larchmere and Fairhill. Safety Ambassadors are the blue-and-gold-uniformed workers in downtown Cleveland, Shaker Square, Little Italy, Gordon Square and other parts of town, who help keep the neighborhoods clean, safe and friendly.

The Code Compliance Committee, led by Westbrook, continues to pursue code compliance; Westbrook also performs “court watch,” monitoring when area properties come before the Housing Court. “It’s really important,” Bromley notes, “because it’s the one way we can hold landlords accountable for investment in properties.”

The buildings at 2828 and 2840 South Moreland are currently on the docket. Group member Jay Westbrook, the former Cleveland City Council president, recently outlined two root causes of decay of the area’s once-proud properties: speculative buying and “flipping,” and the need for vigorous enforcement of building and housing codes. According to Westbrook, “flipping” leads to decline because often buyers don’t invest in maintenance or taxes — leaving it to community members to pressure the city to enforce codes.

Giving Tenants a Voice

A major part of the Morelands Group’s mission is working directly with tenants, as group Convenor Meg Weingart describes it, “lifting them up and giving them a primary voice.” Last December, the group organized a meeting with tenants and the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, represented by Senior Attorney Michael Russell. Weingart reports that more than 40 tenants attended and received information about their legal rights.

The group also obtained a \$10,000 grant from the St. Luke’s Foundation to work with Resident Tenant Liaisons, or RTLs. Bromley explains that the RTLs “will work with other tenants to build communications and bridge the gap between themselves and tenant organizers in other buildings in the neighborhood and help them understand their rights under the Landlord-Tenant law.”

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The Helen Simpson Park

Committee is dedicated to the beautification of the “pocket park” on South Moreland and Buckeye, which was named to commemorate Simpson, the slain African-American broadcast news pioneer. Burten, Bell, Carr is working with Project EverGreen, a national nonprofit that helps create healthy green spaces, providing resident ideas for a planting program to begin this spring. It will be, Bromley promises, “a substantial planting – more than just putting five mums in a circle.”

Shaker Square area residents are passionate about preserving and improving their neighborhoods. The Morelands Group’s membership has grown so much – Weingart reports that they email 80 members, and 30 people attended a recent Zoom meeting – that they are seeking a larger space for when in-person meetings resume.

For information on the Moreland Group, email morelandsgroup@gmail.com



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Thank You: Two SHAD Staffers Bid Adieu

by Kristen Romito

Because of Carole Grady and Greg Staursky, Shaker Square Area Development Corp. (SHAD) operated smoothly and efficiently, even during some of the organization’s most challenging times. SHAD would like to thank Grady and Staursky for their time and dedication to the organization.

A Legacy of Revitalization

Greg Staursky had been with SHAD for nearly twenty years and retired two years ago from his part time position.

Staursky began his SHAD career as Real Estate Project Director for the Shaker West Professional buildings where SHAD eventually moved its offices. He was responsible for the revitalization of the 80 percent vacant/distressed commercial spaces, which included all facets of the process from rehabilitation of building systems to the final securing of tenants. This initial SHAD position utilized Greg’s background in real estate, architectural design, and construction experience

as well as his Bachelor of Arts degree in Urban Studies and prior employment at the City of Cleveland’s Department of Community Development.

“I enjoyed the variety of the work and appreciated the support of the former Executive Director Reid Robbins as well as the SHAD/ Greater Shaker Development boards,” said Staursky.

After the Shaker West project completion, Greg continued property management responsibilities at Shaker West and pursued new projects including the Fairwood Court Apartments renovation, construction of the Uptown townhomes on E. 116th Street, renovation of several distressed homes in the Larchmere and Ludlow neighborhoods, and as team member of the massive conversion of the Moreland Greens complex to the mixed income Livingston Park Apartments.

As SHAD eventually dealt with fewer employees, Greg stepped into new roles in the neighborhood. Greg enjoyed meeting and working with the variety of community-minded residents, merchants, and activists, especially in Larchmere.

During the last three years at SHAD, Greg worked part time for SHAD and part time for the new owners of the Shaker West buildings as a consultant and property manager.

Neighborhood Projects and Bookkeeping

Grady worked as SHAD’s bookkeeper twice: from July 1979 (when SHAD began as Friends of Shaker Square – FOSS) through December 2005, and then came back part-time from April 2016 through December 2021.

“A friend of mine, Carol Lowenthal, who was then the editor of *The Connection*, told me that there was a job opportunity at FOSS because the office person was leaving. I was hired by the Executive



Director, Catherine Dickman Merritt. In 2016 Greg Staursky called and asked me if I was interested in a part-time position. I took the job because

I was ready to go back to work part time,” stated Grady. Some of Grady’s fondest memories are from when SHAD was Friends of Shaker Square. “I worked with volunteers on The Square Affair and Band Concerts. We also opened The Colony Theatre which had been closed. We showed six movies and the attendance showed that people were excited about having a movie theater again at the Square. As a result, the theater was opened again.”

Grady added, “As SHAD, we concentrated on neighborhood projects. I enjoyed the new way that SHAD was moving.”

Grady, who took two years of accounting at John Carroll University and later worked with her husband, who was a CPA, in his office, plans to continue to operate her tax return business for the next few months.

“After that, I will just have to see what interesting things I can find to occupy my time,” Grady said.

SHAD Welcomes New Office Manager

John Supinski has been hired by SHAD as the new bookkeeper and office manager. He started in February, and will take over for Carole Grady. Supinski has his own accounting business called John’s Bookkeeping Services Inc. and has over 30 years of experience.

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“The SHAD board of trustees and I are more than grateful for having had Greg and Carole on our team, particularly through the last few years.

We thank them for their great dedication, their expertise and professionalism as SHAD navigated through its transition to focus on communication and advocacy. And they are both a pleasure to work with! We wish them great joy in whatever they endeavor in the years ahead and hope they will pay us a visit now and then.

– Mary Ann Kovach

Up and Down the Boulevard

Let's give a tip of the hat to a new merchant and more signs of spring renewal along Larchmere Boulevard.

by Barbara Mooney

Memorial Day Sidewalk Sale Returns

After a year's pandemic-induced hiatus, and the most miserable winter weather in recent memory, the **Larchmere Memorial Day Sidewalk Sale** will be especially welcoming this year when it's held May 28–29. Merchants will have stands set up along the street and many will also host outside vendors, giving it a real street-fair vibe, said Lisa McGuthry, owner of **My Favorite Things Boutique & Event Center** (12730 Larchmere, 216.536.7928), and a leader with the Larchmere Merchants Association.

The store, which recently expanded its hours 11:30–2:30 p.m. on Sundays, will take the opportunity to show off its additional lines of jewelry, greeting cards, candles, fair-trade clothing and other kinds of boutique items that had been carried by The Dancing Sheep before it closed last fall.

Staying with the store's mission to hold community-unity programs, Ms. McGuthry will launch "Self-Care Saturdays," free sessions entailing product demonstrations and giveaways, on April 16 and the second Saturday of the month thereafter. Makeup applications, and wig and hair braiding will be among the topics. The store is also hosting an entrepreneurship workshop for youths between 10–18 years old through this April. Meanwhile, the store's affiliate, **Whole Hearted Transport Service**, (800.975.0731) is also expanding its services for seniors and after-school students.

The Larchmere Sidewalk Sale will give Tracey Hilbert, owner of **Eclectic Eccentric** (13005 Larchmere,

216.798.3002) the chance to present expanded offerings of handcrafted, vintage-inspired jewelry made by local artist Lori Pastor. The vintage store will invite at least two outside vendors to set up stands at the Sidewalk Sale and will have its own \$5 rack of vintage apparel.

Welcome, Mr. Gilbert's Hats

Robert Harris is no stranger to the hat business. He worked at Mike the Hatter downtown for decades, and his van is a familiar sight around eastside neighborhoods. But as of late March, his shop, **Mr. Gilbert's Hats**, will have a brick-and-mortar home at 12900 Larchmere (216.374.4745). The store will carry famous men's hat brands such as Biltmore, Dobbs and Stetson, along with several women's hat lines, and will clean and repair hats. Mr. Harris said. "I've sold hats at stands around here for years. When this space came available I grabbed it."

Virtual Loganberry Activities

The activity calendar of **Loganberry Books** (13015 Larchmere, 216.795.9800) is beginning to return to its normal hectic pace, albeit remaining mostly filled with virtual programs. The store will hold the annual Edible Books Festival online again this year on April 2. Participants may submit photos of their creations inspired by books and literary figures, which are then judged in a contest.

"Broaden Your Bookshelf" is another virtual competition the bookstore is hosting. Participants are encouraged to "read boldly where you've never read before," as they log each book they've read over a year's time and enter to win prizes,

said Elisabeth Plumlee-Watson, the bookstore's communication manager.

Another virtual event Loganberry is very excited about will have an international scope. On May 7, the bookstore will host a new book/author event that represents the U.S. debut for "Thin Places," a memoir by Irish writer Kerri ní Dochartaigh. The book, which blends the story of her traumatic childhood during "the Troubles" in Derry, Northern Ireland with a mix of history and nature writing, put the author on the short-list for the 2021 Wainwright Prize for nature writing.

Loganberry's latest book club is also virtual for the time being. The Berry Good Books program has a staff bookseller recommend a favorite book, then lead a discussion about the book online first Wednesday of the month. To register for these programs or for more information, visit loganberrybooks.com.

But those who visit the store in person can view work by these artists in its Annex Gallery: Irma Withani through March; Scott Kraynak through April; and Ava Reiss through May.

Coming Soon: The Gilded Cage

Early this year, the operating partner of the spot going into the Larchmere Tavern space (13051 Larchmere) announced online that The Gilded Cage will be the name of the restaurant. Jennifer Petrone said the restaurant will feature high-end, innovative cocktails, a menu of shareable plates, live music and weekend brunches. She said it remains on schedule to open sometime this summer, with Shaina Kovatch coming on board as bar manager.

More Time for Tacos

On the heels of the closing **Hola Tacos** (12718 Larchmere, 216.938.9301) recently added nachos to its menu and concurrently expanded its hours. The restaurant is

now open Monday-Thursday, noon to 10 p.m., Friday–Saturday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

More Larchmere Miscellanea



Barbara Mooney

The Larchmere streetscape project is underway, as evidenced by the cones and construction tape outside the **UnBar Café** at 12635 Larchmere, though the January storms may delay the scheduled June completion of the curb bump-outs at four intersections. The downside: residents and merchants have been vexed by an acute dearth of convenient parking along the boulevard.

Larchmere Fire Works (12406 Larchmere, 216.246.4716) is continuing to offer "One Day, No School" discounted classes in glassblowing for kids from school ages K-12. It has also asked its friends, neighbors and fans to drop-off newspapers and paper-handled bags that it can use in its operations.

SomethinGood To Eat (12210 Larchmere, 216.956.5701), the whole-food, plant-based fast food restaurant, started open mic night Fridays at 8 p.m.

Mikros on Larchmere (12607 Larchmere, 216.241.0200), the newest apartment/condo development that features fully furnished "right-sized" units is showing the property for September move-ins.

and chaired the East 130th Street Working Group, added that properties around Shaker Square are being "grabbed up" already. Most recently two apartment buildings, The Vista at 12500–12600 Shaker Blvd. and the Residences at 12701 Shaker Blvd. were sold to the Chetrit family from New York for \$12.4 million. Adam Glickman from suburban Chicago is a minority owner.

"This area has been ravaged by real estate speculators, buying, trading, flipping and abandoning once highly-valued properties," the Morelands Group statement continued. "This degree of plunder is an indicator of the risks that exist to Shaker Square.

"The future stability and vitality of Cleveland's national landmark is hanging in limbo due to lack of unified and decisive action to secure this essential asset," the Morelands Group statement added. "Stabilization and revitalization are essential for the health of the historic square and the surrounding residential and commercial properties."

A Sense of Passion

by Adam Zimmerman

When walking into Lotus Candles, first time visitors will see an array of high-quality hand-poured candles, melts, essential oils, and pluggable warmers, each represented by a diverse profile of fragrances and carefully branded designs.

But perhaps, just as importantly, one also takes in an experience that threads together essences of authenticity and local charm. Whether it's the curated hometown décor or the complimentary assortment of local products, such as nail polish and puzzles, a recognition of family and community is embedded within the DNA of one of the newest shops to open on Larchmere Boulevard.

Lotus Candles' passion for everything locally made, Larchmere is a hand-in-glove fit for its first physical storefront location, which opened in September 2021. "We enjoy the smallness of the area," owner Gwen Penn notes. "It's a tightknit community where business owners look out for one another."

Founders Gwen Penn and her children, Chris and Clara, always wanted to go into business, and candles seemed like a natural fit. "Our family was always full of candle fanatics," Gwen shares. In 2017, that dream became a reality.

The family began both independently researching and

connecting with experts in the fragrance business as a starting point. Next steps involved the purchase of a candle-making kit, in which candles were created, tested, and surveyed amongst family, friends and associates.

Penn credits her product management background with helping her family business' success. This includes an appreciation for customer focus and setting proper price points across product categories.

These skills help differentiate Lotus Candles from commercial alternatives. "We want our brand to stand out. Our candles are made with a labor of love."

The business' namesake is a constant reminder of the family's roots. "We grew up on Lotus Drive in Cleveland," Penn recalls. "It has a dual meaning, as the lotus flower is also symbolism for our business blossoming into something beautiful."

That blossoming extends to Lotus Candles' giving, which has included campaigns with the Cleveland Clinic comprehensive Breast Cancer Program and currently with May Dugan Center.

Customers can look forward to continued innovation by Lotus Candles. This includes new categories and labels in which shoppers can more easily identify products and particular fragrances that meet their individual needs.



Courtesy of Lotus Candles

"We are very passionate about what we do," Gwen shares. "If a product does not meet our standards, we won't sell it."

Those interested can visit the website (shoplotuscandles.com) and subscribe to the shop's mailing list to keep up to date on offers, such as a 15 percent discount on a given fragrance of the month.

Customers can also place online orders and pick them up at the store, located on 12617 Larchmere Boulevard, which is open Tuesday to Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.



Pictured above: Lotus Candle owner Gwen Penn

Lotus Candle sells candles in a variety of seasonal scents inspired by different times of the year and even food and beverages, such as Caramel Macchiato and Avocado and Sea Salt.

Talks of Shaker Square Plans Stalled for Now

Continued from page 1

The other \$6 million would be a forgivable loan as long as certain requirements are met, with CNP's real estate subsidiary New Village Corp. serving as managing general partner and owning 90 percent, with BBC having 10 percent ownership for a short-term period.

New Village consultant and treasurer Terri Hamilton Brown

emphasizes that this would not be a "blanket forgiveness loan" from the city.

Brown added that the public-private acquisition team continues to work on assembling a separate pool of \$4 million to implement the plan and stabilize the property, as meetings with Cuyahoga County officials and various foundations continue.

Meanwhile, "there's concern about the Square going on the international auction block," noted former Cleveland City Councilman and current Shaker Square resident Jay Westbrook. "This is what happened to the Severance Town Center, which now sits languishing in Cleveland Heights due to the hazards of financial speculation and out-of-state owners."

Westbrook was referring to the \$10.5 million purchase of Severance at an online auction in 2016 by Namdar Realty Group, based in New York. The complex remains partially vacant and deteriorating to this day.

"This could happen at Shaker Square, and we're not just crying 'wolf' here," Westbrook said. "As this new administration kicks the tires on the proposed legislation, they really need to be concerned about the level of risk avoidance."

Westbrook, who has also worked on urban programs with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Post Office Reopens on East 130th Street



Mary Ann Kovach

After being temporarily shutdown since November 2020 due to safety and security concerns, the Cleveland Shaker Heights Finance Station at 2855 E. 130 Street reopened on December 1 with various improvements made, along with a ceremonial planting of a flowering ornamental tree. Pictured is Ward 6 and Cleveland City Council President Blaine Griffin, Alicia Rauckborst, USPS representative for the project, along with community members and USPS staff.



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